

The Patarei Sea Fort

*Perspectives on heritage, memory and
identity politics in post-Soviet Estonia*

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Abstract:

The Patarei sea fort is a heritage site that is at the moment either being remembered or ignored. National and international voices, like the Estonian Heritage Society, Europa Nostra and the EIB plead for the restoration of the fort. While the Estonian government, and the municipality take distance from the case by appointing the State Real Estate company RKAS to sell it to a private investor. However, when sold the private investor is still supposed to handle the heritage site properly because it is on the list of national heritages of Estonia. In order to uncover the either explicit or implicit perspectives on the how the past of Patarei should be remembered according to the discussed stakeholders, I position the case in the ‘critical heritage debate’ that emerged around the 1970s and post-Socialism in Estonia. In the theoretical framework/academic discussion, where I discuss the critical heritage debate, I take note of the connection heritage has with memory and identity. I also discuss the developments in the debate: what started as a linguistic post-modern inquiry focused on in what way heritage serves the national identity, it changed into something that can even represent a global and European community. Also, the idea that heritage studies are about material objects and that there are several stakeholders governing the fate of heritage sites emerged around the 2000s and 2010s. With post-Socialism I primarily focus on the ‘third memory boom’ and place it in the context of the developments of Estonia after regaining their independence in 1991.

Introduction

In the night of April 31, a part of the roof of the Patarei Sea Fort has been blown off due to a big storm, making the protected heritage site suffer great damage.¹ However, the state of the site has not been good for over ten years. From 1920 until 2005 the building has been in use as the central prison of Estonia. After the building lost its purpose, it became neglected and its conditions got worse over time.² At the same time, the government decided to sell it to a private investor because the building is seen as a burden. The state appointed the state real estate agency Rüigi Kinnisvara AS (RKAS) to sell the building.³ In the meantime, former politician Andrus Villem was allowed to be a museum manager of the fort. Under his lead several cultural events and historic tours were organized in the fort. These tours were very popular amongst tourists interested in dark tourism and urban exploring. In the last few years, it slowly became popular to visit Patarei by the local population. Yet, it was difficult to keep the fort into good shape with lack of funding and therefore the state of the building got worse and worse over the years until RKAS decided that it was too dangerous to enter the building and closed it in October 2016 for the public.⁴ The Estonian Heritage Society (EMS, derived from 'Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts') believes that preserving the heritage site is of great importance and that it is a very bad decision to sell the fort to a private investor. For that reason, they nominated the Sea Fort for Europa Nostra's and the European Investment Bank's *7 Most Endangered* (7ME) list, hoping that international attention will awaken the government and let them realize that the past it represents is important for the Estonian national identity.⁵ However, the restoration will approximately cost over 100 million euro.⁶

¹ 7 Most Endangered, 'Patarei Sea Fort in Tallinn Severely Damaged in a Storm' (last modified on 2 May 2017), <http://www.europanostra.org/patarei-sea-fort-damaged-storm/> (accessed on 25 July 2017).

² 7 Most Endangered, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report* (Luxemburg, November 2016), 2.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ 7ME, 'Patarei Sea Fort in Tallinn Severely Damaged in a Storm'.

⁵ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 2.

⁶ Ibidem, 3.



Image 1: Bird-perspective of Patarei Sea Fort lacking a piece of roof.⁷

The Patarei Sea fort knows a rich history. It was commissioned in the 1820's by the Russian Tsar Nicolas I as a fortification to protect the Russian Empire from dangers coming from the Baltic Sea. It was completed in 1840. During the Crimean War (1853-1856) it was used as a fortification, after that, due to changes in warfare tactics it lost its defensive function. Until 1918 the fort was used as barracks. From 1918 on, Patarei became the central prison of Estonia and fulfilled that purpose until 2002.⁸ During the first and second Soviet occupation (1940-1941 and 1944-1991) the prison held, and executed, political dissidents, and prisoners of war along regular criminals. It was also a prison that held people awaiting their trials and kept prisoners before their deportations to Siberia. During the Nazi occupation (1941-1944), the prison functioned as a transit concentration camp that held Jewish people, political dissidents and prisoners of war.⁹ After the prison closed in 2002, four years later it housed many cultural events and it became a touristic attraction where the dark, mainly Soviet, past of the fortress was remembered.

⁷ Uwe Gnadenteich, 'Nädalavahetuse torm viis Patareilt katuse', *Postimees*, 1 May 2017. Photo by: Mikhel Maripuu.

⁸ P. Belford, 'Patarei Prison, Tallinn: Problematic Built Heritage and Dark Tourism', *Institute for Archaeologists Buildings Archaeology Group Newsletter* (2013), 50.

⁹ Belford, 'Patarei Prison, Tallinn', 50.

Although the Patarei Sea Fort could be a symbolic place for the remembrance of the occupations and atrocities Estonia went through throughout the past, the fort has mostly been ignored by the locals. According to former tour guide of the fort, Kadi Pilt, this hesitant attitude stems from dark and painful past it bears of which people do not want to be reminded of.¹⁰ However, there are also voices, for instance from the EMS, that emphasize that for exactly that reason the fort should be restored and turned into a museum to commemorate this past.¹¹ Europa Nostra, a pan-European NGO that sees saving important European heritage sites as its main objective, working closely with the European Investment Bank (EIB), placed in 2016 Patarei on the 7ME list of the continent to attract attention to it by calling it endangered, and help to preserve it that way. The Estonian government on its turn appointed the real estate agency RKAS to sell the fort to a private investor, now it is state-owned because the building is seen as a both symbolic and economic burden and might become an (economic) opportunity once sold. However, the building is a protected monument that is supposed be kept in its original form, even if it is sold to a private investor.

In short, Patarei is a heritage site that has been neglected over the past decades. There are national and international instances that plead for restoration, underlining the historical importance of the heritage site. Europa Nostra and the EIB believe that Patarei is a site that should be preserved due to its unique architectural history and social past. They believe that this site represents a past that is an important part of the European identity, and not only the national Estonian identity. EMS is the local NGO that underlines the importance of the site regarding the national past. However, the Estonian state is willing to sell the site to a private investor because the restoration will be very costly (100 million euro) and appointed RKAS to do it. On the other hand, it could be possible that the Estonina state is wary of restoring the site due to the difficult socio-political situation with its large Russian-speaking minority that consists 25% of the society and Russia as its neighbour.

Estonian Nationalism in Context:

As became apparent in the short description of the past of Patarei discussed above, Estonia has been occupied by both Nazi-Germany and Soviet Russia from 1940 until 1991. Before that the country has merely known 22 years of independence since the Treaty of Tartu in 1918 until the

¹⁰ K. Pilt, 'Kadi Pilt 1', Interview by Onessa Novak. *75 minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 24, 2017. 2'09-2'16.

¹¹ A. Kraut, 'Ants Kraut 1', Interview by Onessa Novak. *22 minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 21, 2017. 6'36-6'44.

first Soviet occupation in 1940. Making the independence acquired in 1991 the longest lasting period of uninterrupted independence the country has ever known. I consciously call it ‘uninterrupted independence’ since in the Estonian historical discourse the periods of independence from 1918 and from 1991 are seen as a one period of one and the same ‘republic’. A continuity, which has been temporarily discontinued by the Nazi and Soviet occupations. Whether these two periods could be seen as one is not a question I am going to touch upon, but the fact that it is seen as a continuity does give away that the Estonian national identity is perceived as something historical and continuous and that the occupations are seen as external factors suppressing the Estonian identity. This is a rather essentialist perspective on the Estonian national identity.

Maria Malskõo writes in the introduction of *Historical Memory and Communist Identity* that after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence of the Republic of Estonia memory plays a big role in identity forming of the country.¹² Not only that by focusing on memory, Estonia tried to get rid of the manipulation of the past that fit the Soviet ideal imposed by the occupier, but the role of memory for identity building is generally understood as an emotional source of healing and reconciliation, rather than a technique of political engineering. For this reason, Malskõo warns against a simplistic essentialization of the national historical memory against the equally reified communist identity.¹³

Vieda Skultans wrote in *The Testimony of Lives* that in post-Soviet states the spoken, rather than the written word, is perceived as the bearer of truth. The consciousness that history is shaped to support the political regime created the feeling that memory is important for the preservation of authenticity and truth rather than history.¹⁴ Because heritage sites are in fact ‘memoryscapes’, as Sharon Macdonald argues in the book *Memorylands*, these sites play an important role in the remembrance of the past that is perceived as the true past: the collective memory.¹⁵ In that sense, it is politically strategic to create or alter heritage to make it fit the desired identity. The question is whether Malskõo is right about that replacing the communist history by memory in the Estonian official histories is merely just a way of dealing with the past, or that it might be in fact a form of political engineering at the same time.

In the book, *Memorylands* Macdonald describes the intertwined relationship of national identity, collective memory, and heritage. She argues that heritage has a meta-cultural status, it is both material as symbolic. Heritage sites themselves do not bear meaning, but once they are

¹² M. Malskõo, ‘Introduction’, in: *Historical Memory versus Communist Identity* (Tartu 2011), 10-11.

¹³ Ibidem, 14.

¹⁴ S. Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (London 2013), 50.

¹⁵ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 15-16.

identified as heritage its meaning is inevitably altered. From this moment on the object starts bearing the collective memory attributed to it.¹⁶ Rarely material factors govern the fate of material culture; human decisions determine what happens to material structures. Which means that heritage sites are in fact materialized collective memory. Macdonald writes that collective memory is mostly understood the way personal memory is described in psychology and psychoanalysis. Although she believes this analogy is problematic, since personal memory is episodic, singular and lasts one lifetime opposed to the plural, intergenerational collective memory, she stresses that this commonly used analogy does influence the way collective memory is perceived.¹⁷ It is seen as glue for identity forming like personal memory: memory, as a body of recollection, can itself become an indicator of identity. Because heritage is perceived as materialized memory, these sites are often used in debates about identity politics or are reflections of these social identities.

Research Questions:

The fact that the Patarei Sea Fort is now in such bad shape is not only due to external factors like bad weather conditions or wear and tear over time, but is also, just like the attributed meaning of the site, in the end governed by people. The fact that the site slowly became a ruin might not be a conscious decision, but neglecting a building, like restoring or using it as a commemoration site, is in the end, always a political decision. Jan-Werner Müller writes in his introduction to *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe* that the post-communist myths of nationalist salvation, which are in my opinion prominent in Estonia's national identity, lead to the collective forgetting of certain, often the darker, parts of the Soviet-past.¹⁸ He argues that selective remembering and forgetting are essential parts of nation building. This proposition might bear even more meaning in the Estonian case considering that the Russian minority in Estonia consists of twenty-five percent of the Estonian society.¹⁹ Of which the country of origin of the minority borders Estonia itself and still emits influence over the minority.

Since the memory boom in the (western) history discipline, dating back from the end of the Second World War, and the cultural turn in the 1970s after which the attention of historiography was turned to cultural outings and had an increased attention for 'history from

¹⁶ Ibidem, 18.

¹⁷ Ibidem, 11-12.

¹⁸ J.-W. Müller, 'Introduction: the Power of Memory, the Memory of Power and the Power over Memory', in: J.-W. Müller (ed.), *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe* (Cambridge 2004), 12.

¹⁹ Amnesty International, 'Estonia: Linguistic Minorities in Estonia: Discrimination Must End' (n.p., 2006).

below', a great number of publications appeared about the tensions between academic history and collective memory, and about heritage and identity. The post-modern relativist attitude towards the ability of historians to actually write history 'as it was' created the space for the discipline to include unofficial, undocumented histories, remembrances of the past or outings of culture which led to a greater and multi-layered understanding of the past that had the ability to represent a broader part of society. This trend in western historiography would, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, legitimize the creation of so-called 'authentic', nationalist histories in post-Soviet countries to replace the Soviet histories. Writing these 'new' nationalist histories was not only a way of creating a new truth and legitimizing a national identity but was also seen as a way of healing and reconciliation after the severe Soviet oppression.

Although, as stated above, there are many publications touching upon the topics I have just described. My research of the Patarei Sea Fort is new in a sense that the fort is a heritage site that is at the moment in the process of being either remembered or forgotten. To underscore the relevance of the fort and to secure its remembrance Europa Nostra placed it on the list of seven most endangered heritage sites of Europe in 2016. For that reason, this research is relevant because it creates an overview of the different points of view on the site from the different stakeholders. This thesis is also important because there is just one academic publication about the Patarei Sea Fort, which is an article about the history in the fort rather than an analysis of the remembrance of the fort. This means it is an overlooked building and that it is in danger of being 'forgotten'. This thesis might help it being collectively remembered.

In short, either the conscious or subconscious act of remembering or forgetting of heritage sites bears a political meaning about the past the heritage site in question is associated with. It also reflects the way the identity bound to that memory is expected to be remembered by the ones commemorating or forgetting it. This brings me to the question: how can the act of remembering or forgetting heritage, seen as a form of materialized collective memory, be used to understand the identity politics and the portrayal of a national identity after the radical change of political climate that post-Soviet Estonia underwent? In order to answer this question, it is important to look critically into the academic debates surrounding the topics memory, heritage and identity and create an understanding in what way these topics correspondent with each other and how it relates to the Patarei-case.

Also, it is important to know the Post-socialist context of Estonia in order to get a clear understanding of why certain stakeholders have the opinion they have. This brings me to the following sub-questions: in what way can the development of Estonia as an independent nation be understood in a broader context of the post-Soviet transition to capitalism or the west? How

does this relate to the political decision making surrounding heritage? What do the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with the restoration of the Patarei Sea Fort tell us about Estonian identity politics and their way of commemorating the past? How can this be compared to other heritage sites in Estonia?

For both the theoretical framework and the Estonian case I will do secondary literature research and position the Patarei-case within the broader context of these subjects. For the theoretical framework, I will be focussing on the discussions surrounding memory, heritage, and identity. To shed light on the Estonian case I will explain the historical context in which the Estonian republic came to be with the Treaty of Parnü (1918) as a starting point. Here I will be drawing on the Estonian academic tradition of memory studies and analyze the victim narrative connected to the occupations of Estonia throughout the years.

Methodology:

Chapter one 'Theoretical Framework/Academic Discussion' and chapter two 'Post-Socialism in Estonia' serve as chapters that give context to chapter three: the case study of the Patarei Sea Fort. Both chapters are mostly based on secondary literature about the themes that are discussed. This is done consciously to form both a context for the case-study, but also because by doing this I reflect on the academic tradition of the themes that I discuss what by itself can serve as a valorisation for the research. It shows the reader for what reasons inquiries done to a heritage site like Patarei are necessary, what the different perspectives are on the restoration of heritage sites, and why these kind of heritage sites are being restored.

However, in chapter two a few primary sources are consulted. In this chapter I do not only give an overview of post-Socialism in Estonia, but I also discuss the Estonian demography because the big Russian-Speaking minority influences the way Estonian identity politics are shaped. Estonia has been occupied for 48 years by Russia and many Russians were sent to live in Estonia to enforce the Russification of this part of the former Soviet Union. I also use reports of the United Nations (UN) and Amnesty International on how Estonia deals with the minority to give a broader impression of the controversies regarding this minority from an international perspective. Apart from that, I believe that these reports give a perspective on this kind of controversies that mostly differs from the national perspective. Together both perspectives give a more complete impression of what is exactly going on in Estonia with its minorities. I tried to interview certain people of the Russian minority when I visited Estonia, but unfortunately my

invitations got declined. I e-mailed a politician that is part of the Russian-speaking minority, and a sociologist working at the university of Tallinn.

My handling with the demographical sources is not very critical because I use them as a sort of factual illustration of the size of the minority. However, I am aware of the fact that not every Russian-speaking person in Estonia is officially registered as inhabitant of Estonia and therefore are counted in the demographical statistics. The reports of the UN and Amnesty International are used as one of the points of view on the situation and therefore I did not analyse it too much. Lastly, in this chapter I also use newspaper articles as a primary source on the Bronze Soldier case in order to provide of multiple interpretations on the case.

In chapter three, 'Case Study: Patarei Sea Fort', the most important primary source material is the report of Europa Nostra on the Patarei Sea Fort for 7ME, newspaper articles on the subject, websites of the stakeholders, and the interviews that I have taken between the 19th to the 25th of April in Tallinn. Since the interviews are focussed on the points of view of the different stakeholders concerned with Patarei, and are not about the past itself, it is not oral history. The interviews are anthropological, done with a meta-historical perspective: it is not about what happened in the past, but rather how people think about the past. I have chosen to interview people for two reasons. The first reason is a very practical one, namely that there is not very much written about Patarei. RKAS, EMS and the Estonian government did not write a report on Patarei. Also, there is just one academic article about Patarei written by P. Belford. Secondly, I interviewed people because I believe that official reports and interviews for newspaper articles are often very flat and 'proper': people are usually careful with giving their opinion when they are aware that they are being recorded and that a big number of people will read it. By taking open anthropological interviews, where I do not influence the interviewee by asking too much questions, I hoped to get a more honest opinion of the stakeholders on the situation. I decided to do it this way to help me uncover the real reason why restoring Patarei is an issue.

With my interviews, I took a top-down approach, focussing on the stakeholders that have direct influence on the fate of the site. I did this because the academic context I refer to in my thesis is the 'critical heritage debate', namely, the understanding that the meaning of heritage sites is governed by people and represents an institutionalized, presentist past in service of creating a (national) identity. Although I do believe that citizens who are not directly in power do influence the power discourse on this subject, I chose to restrict myself to a top-down perspective simply because of the length of the thesis itself. I would rather give a complete as

possible overview of the opinions of the stakeholders, than a scattered and incomplete story that also incorporates the citizens of Tallinn from the different social groups.

I analyzed the interviews by placing what they said in the interview in the context of the institution the interviewees work for, and by keeping the person's own context in mind. I did this in order to uncover the goal the interviewee wants to reach by either remembering or ignoring Patarei. I did a critical discourse analysis; my goal was to uncover the implicit opinion of the interviewee on the remembrance of the past of Patarei. I interviewed five people who work for EMS: Helle Solnask, Trivimi Velliste, Ants Kraut, Andrus Villem and Kadi Pilt. Helle Solnast, rather acting as the Estonian representative of Europa Nostra. I interviewed Timo Äärmaa of RKAS, and Merilin Piipuu (director) and Sander Jürriison (exhibition manager) of the Museum of Occupations. I tried to interview spoke persons from the Russian speaking-minority in Tallinn to get a better perspective on that social group, people concerned with heritage and culture from the Estonian Government and the municipality of Tallinn, and people working for the museums that are interested in being housed in Patarei when it is restored (War Museum, Fire Brigade Museum, Police Museum), but they either declined my request or ignored my e-mails. Also, in retrospect I could have interviewed more people from Europa Nostra and the EIB.

Structure Thesis:

This thesis will be divided into four chapters and a conclusion. In the first chapter I will describe the theoretical framework and academic debate about the cultural historical perspective of heritage. In this chapter I will take David Lowenthal's ideas on heritage as the starting point of the critical heritage debate and describe the developments of- and conflicting perspectives on this debate in order to create an understanding of what I mean when I write about heritage. Also, in this chapter I will also discuss and explain the concept collective memory, what is closely connected to heritage and I will also categorize the different perspectives on heritage and memory into modernism and post-modernism.

In the second chapter I will build further on the first, here I am going to zoom in on the memory and heritage debate in the post-Socialist context, explicitly giving the Estonian academic debate more attention to create a context in which the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with Patarei can be understood in. In the last and third chapter I will zoom in even further. Here I will be describing the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with the fate of Patarei. Here I will describe what the current status is of the remembrance and restoration of

Patarei is, and focus on the conflicting opinions of the stakeholders. I believe that the opinion of the stakeholders on how Patarei should be preserved has a hidden message about what their perspective is on the traumatic Socialist past and their understanding of what the Estonian identity exactly encompasses.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework and Academic Discussion:

In the discussion about whether and why the Patarei Sea Fort should be restored, the past and the memories of the people connected to the fort are often brought up as a reason to restore and conserve the heritage site. Demolishing the building or letting it be as it is, is perceived as a way of (slowly) forgetting the past that is associated with it. May it be conscious or subconscious, this concern is connected to the idea that heritage is either a representation of the collective memory, or a physical place where the collective memory is mediated to the public to secure its remembrance.

In order to uncover the implicit meaning of what the opinions of the different stakeholders concerning the restoration and conservation of the Patarei Sea Fort exactly mean, it is important to analyze the case alongside a broader academic context of the themes memory, heritage and identity. These three concepts in combination are important because heritage is often perceived as the concretion of the collective memory and therefore a material manifestation of the (national) identity. The governing of heritage sites like Patarei therefore could say something about the point of view of the stakeholders on the representation of the (national) identity and therefore collective memory. For that reason, in this chapter I will give an overview of the academic debate surrounding the topics memory, heritage and identity and I will answer how these topics correspond with each other.

I will describe the trajectory of the differing points of view on the ‘critical heritage debate’ since the cultural turn in the early 1970s alongside the development of the use of memory in the historical discipline: the period where the emphasis shifted from the object (material value of the heritage site) to the subject (what the heritage sites mean for people) and the period where memory became an important source for the historical inquiry. Later, in the fourth chapter, the chapter specifically concerned with the Patarei Sea Fort as a case-study, I will explain how the case fits within the framework described in this chapter.

The beginning of the ‘Critical Heritage Debate’, the cultural turn, and post-modernism:

In the academic literature on heritage, David Lowenthal’s article ‘Fabricating Heritage’ (1985) is often considered as one of the first works of the so-called ‘critical heritage debate’ that started in the 1980s in the western world.²⁰ Rodney Harisson describes in the introduction of *Heritage*:

²⁰ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 22.

L. Meskell, *Global Heritage: A Reader* (Oxford 2015), 3.

Critical Approaches (2012) that before this article, the literature on heritage was mostly focused on the archaeological and architectural side of heritage.²¹ In other words, what the value of a building is and why it is considered valuable. Lowenthal switched the emphasis from the object, in other words the heritage site itself, to the subject namely 'society' and the stakeholders that decide on the value of a building. He stresses that heritage does not represent history, but is actually a religious celebration of the past. It mandates misreadings of the past and is therefore not historical, but a way of making use of the past in the present for the future.²² With this I mean that Lowenthal argues that the exaggerated past presented through heritage is one of the building blocks of a national identity. Actual history is often too abstract and nuanced for directly forming a national identity. A simplified version of the past that is communicated through heritage is universal and therefore it is easier to identify with. In this perspective heritage is actually the concretion of the collective memory that fits the narrative of the nation state. The meaning attributed to heritage is not primarily concerned with the past or history, but rather represents the desired narrative of the national identity that is ought to be identified with in the present and future. In other words, the past shown through heritage is a form of presentism according to Lowenthal.

The idea of heritage as a legitimation of the national identity is in line with E. J. Hobsbawms and T. O. Rengers invention of tradition. Graham for instance argues that with the preservation of heritage authenticity is unattainable. Restored buildings are mostly restored in a style that fits the trends of the period they are restored in rather than they are brought back in exactly the style they were built in.²³ This a form of material presentism, but at the same time it gives the perceiver the impression that the restored building is brought back to the original way it looked like. In other words, the heritage site is reinvented to bring the past into the present in a relatable manner that fits Howbsbawms and Rengers idea of invented tradition.

With his criticism on heritage, Lowenthal actually described two ways of dealing with the past: on one hand critical history, that is based on historical evidence (for instance, official documents found in archives). On the other hand, 'religious' heritage that is meant for one group, for instance the dominant ethnicity of a nation or the elites. This form of history thrives on errors and mostly bases its information on 'collective memory'. Although Lowenthal's perspective on heritage is often perceived as the starting point of a new understanding of

R. Harisson, 'Critical Heritage Studies and the Discursive Turn', in: *Heritage, Critical Approaches* (New York 2013), 6.

²¹ Ibidem, 3-5.

²² D. Lowenthal, 'Fabricating Heritage', *History and Memory* 10:1 (1998), 19.

²³ Graham, 'The Uses and Abuses of Heritage', 33.

heritage, it fits into a greater trend within the historical discipline that started in the early 1970s, like Hobsbawm's and Ranger's perception, called the cultural turn.²⁴ The cultural turn is a movement that made culture the focus of academic investigations. In the historical discipline, the focus moved away from 'what was when' to *how* people deal with the past and *how* they think about it. In other words, it is a shift in emphasis towards meaning and away from a positivist epistemology. This is called the metahistorical perspective. Also, the focus shifted to subaltern groups and to 'history from below', and away from grand narratives.²⁵

Amongst the cultural turn, post-modernism as a school of thought emerged. These movements are closely related to each other, but not the same. Post-modernism is a relativist attitude towards the possibility of finding hard truths in the historical discipline and being able to actually 'know' the past. The established knowledge on history is the result of discursive power structures of the elites. The past cannot be grasped, there is no linear progression towards the future, so the way the past is portrayed is a presentist narrative. What makes post-modernism different from the cultural turn is that the cultural turn moves away from positivist epistemology, while post-modernism does not believe in the possibility of positivism in the historical discipline. Lowenthal dangles between being a modernist and post-modernist. Although he argues that heritage is constructivist and presentist, he does believe in the possibility of 'knowing' the past. Though he argues it cannot be found through heritage and collective memory, but he believes that with critical history it can be found.

In short, the critical heritage debate is a way of thinking about heritage that fits into the cultural turn and post-modern perspective of (not) 'knowing' the past. Namely, that the institutionalized past is presentist and that the worth of a building is decided by discursive power structures rather than that it is inherent to the building. For the heritage debate, Lowenthal was an influential scholar. Before continuing with the developments of the 'critical heritage debate' that came after Lowenthal's influential article, I will first describe what my understanding of the word 'collective memory' is. This is important because in the critical heritage debate, heritage is seen as the material representation of the collective memory. Other than that, the developments concerning memory in the historical discipline are quite similar to heritage.

Collective memory:

²⁴ Actually, the cultural turn was something that happened within all the humanities and social sciences, rather than only the historical discipline. But since I am a historian I mainly reflect on the historical discipline out of habit.

²⁵ S. Gunn, *History and Cultural Theory* (New York 2006), 54.

‘Collective memory’ is an essential concept for this topic because heritage is seen as the materialized form of this phenomenon ever since the critical heritage debate. Although the term ‘collective memory’ seems quite familiar and self-evident, it turns out to be more complex than it might seem. Firstly, because it is often not clear what is exactly meant by the term ‘collective memory’. Secondly, it is constructed and institutionalized, which is confusing since the word ‘memory’ implies that it is a natural process of remembering rather than a selected and taught body of knowledge.

Maurice Halbwachs is the scholar who popularized the term ‘collective memory’ in the 1950s. He makes in the article ‘Collective Memory and Historical Memory’ the distinction between ‘individual memory’ and ‘collective memory’. Halbwachs argues that both these forms of memory are from an individual perspective.²⁶ Individual memory being the memory of past events the person lived through, while the collective memory is an individual remembrance of historical moments of the society the person is living in.²⁷ In my case that would be, for example, my memory of 9/11, but could also be the ritual of the Dutch Remembrance Day of WWII. I did not personally live any of these events, and my memory is solely based on information I have acquired externally. Being it either through live-TV when the event was happening (9/11) or through the yearly ritual of commemorating the WWII victims (Remembrance Day). Individual memory is episodic, embodied and lived. It only exists for one generation, while collective memory is semantic, social and has to be taught. It transcends the lifespan of one person, making it intergenerational. Halbwachs argues that the difference of collective memory and history lies in the fact that history is an institutionalized, recorded and abstracted form of memory, while collective memory is the personal, continuous perception of taught historic events of the past.²⁸

Jan Assman describes in his article ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’ (1988) that Halbwachs’s term ‘collective memory’ only takes note of the fact that it is socially mediated and relates to a group. To give the ‘individual’ versus ‘collective’ memory dichotomy more depth, Assman divides collective memory into ‘communicative’ versus ‘cultural’ memory. Where communicative memory is a socially mediated form of memory relating to a group which is disorganised and non-specialized, it is the memory of everyday communication or perhaps even oral history.²⁹ Cultural memory relates to the transcendental side of collective memory: it has

²⁶ M. Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (New York 1980), 51-52.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Ibidem, 82.

²⁹ J. Assman and J. Czaplica, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’, *New German Critique* 65:1 (1995), 128-129.

fixed points in time which are maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance). Cultural formation and institutional communication are what Assman calls figures of memory. Cultural memory is therefore an objectification of memory, the concretion of identity.³⁰

The definition of collective memory or cultural memory to which I mostly refer to as 'collective memory' in this thesis is, in fact, Assman's 'cultural memory'. The institutionalized, objectified aspect of cultural memory is essential to my understanding how memory, heritage and (national) identity relate to each other. Contrasting with Halbwachs idea that the difference between memory and history is that history is institutionalized, recorded and abstracted, while collective memory is not. Assman's 'cultural memory' in fact blurs the line between history and memory.

Jay Winter describes in *Remembering the War* (2006) that the 'memory boom' had a similar intellectual trajectory as the 'critical heritage debate'. According to him, the first phase of memory boom started in the 1890s and lasted until the 1920s where the collective memory was perceived the way Halbwachs described it in 'Collective Memory and Historical Memory', the personal remembrance of the shared national past.³¹ In other words, a modernist understanding of collective memory. Here memory and history are perceived as separated: history can influence the collective memory and the other way around, but they do not overlap.

Assman's perspective on collective memory, or rather cultural memory, fits into the second phase of the memory boom that started in the 1960s. In this period, memory played a big role in the commemoration of the Second World War victims because there were no official documents on the atrocities inflicted on the victims of WWII. Therefore, it became popular to record their memories and use that to fill the gaps in the institutionalized histories on WWII. The fact that the victims lacked official documents that described their past, the awareness arose that it is impossible to write objective, all-encompassing histories without the use of memory, and that histories written in the past are mostly based on information that was recorded by the elites or the ones in power. However, at the same time memory was perceived as unreliable and therefore does not help with making history more objective, though it makes it more inclusive of and open for new narratives that cannot rely on official documentation.³² In this period, the attention was shifted from the victors to the victims and the narrative was mostly anti-modern and anti-nationalists because modernity and nationalism were perceived as the cause of WWII.

³⁰ Assman & Czaplica, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', 131-132.

³¹ J. Winter, *Remembering the War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (London 2006), 1-3.

³² *Ibidem*, 275.

This is the post-modern understanding of collective memory. Here, the line between history and memory is blurred since both are products of power discourses and it is believed that both cannot produce hard facts.

Because of the strong similarities between the trajectory of memory studies and the ‘critical heritage debate’, Macdonald argues that memory and heritage should be seen as a whole because both phenomena represent a presentist understanding of the past. Only Macdonald calls this past-presencing. Nevertheless, the development of the intellectual debates about memory and heritage did not end with the cultural turn and post-modernism. Although post-modernism has had a lasting impact on the historical discipline (and the humanities and social sciences), not all academics should and would want to be perceived as post-modernists. Within the heritage debate the (post-modern) idea of presentism and power structures remained, but it has lost its solely linguistic and discursive face: the awareness arose that when analysing heritage, one is also analysing material objects along with the meanings and memories attributed to the heritage sites.

Foucault’s Governmentality:

To get back to the second problem with the term ‘collective memory’, Macdonald describes in *Memorylands* that with the ‘memory boom’ the scholars who were struck by the ‘memory mania’ see established history as a product of elites, who mystify their interests under the misleading banner of value-free facts, while memory is elevated to a state of greater honesty. The general awareness of the subjectivity of memory would make it more transparent.³³ However, when taking Assman’s cultural memory in consideration it becomes clear that the same problem of mystification applies to collective or cultural memory – it is, in the end, institutionalized, intergenerational and has to be taught. There are gatekeepers who decide what is to be remembered or forgotten and what is transferred to the upcoming generations. The difference in this case between memory and history is that each has other gatekeepers. Meaning that what is remembered or forgotten is governed by man and does not happen naturally whether it is history or memory. A natural remembering or forgetting only applies to personal memory, which on its turn, explains the wariness of Macdonald in using personal memory as an analogy of collective and cultural memory, as I pointed out in the introduction.³⁴ The governing of cultural memory and figures of memory (for instance, heritage) is often, but not necessarily a conscious process, that relates to Michel Foucault’s idea of governmentality.

³³ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 13.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, 10-11.

In Foucault's lectures given at College de France (1978), Foucault describes the concept governmentality. Governmentality means that governing does not only entail the conscious, explicit act of governing, but that it is a combination of several governing technologies that vary in subtleness and subject and therefore can be unconscious.³⁵ The act of governing does not necessarily have to be done by a government or a person or instance of power, but can be done by anyone, as long as it has disciplinary aspect to it. With heritage, this can relate to the stakeholders exerting pressure to preserve a heritage site, but it can also mean a government that specifically governs the restoration of a site or a part of the society making action so the government decides to preserve it – in the second example the governing is subconscious, because the group perceives the government as the governing party rather than the power they are exerting with their action themselves.

Müller writes in his introduction for *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe* that memory and identity are always in danger of giving rise to absolute moral claims and becoming non-negotiable regarding the governed figures of memory (like heritage) that used to construct the national identity.³⁶ For this reason, memory and figures of memory, like heritage, are a popular way of expressing the desired (national) identity and underlining the essentialism of the identity in question. Although, paradoxically, by doing exactly this an identity is literally being constructed. The mystification of collective/cultural memory by using personal memory as an analogy might be the reason why memory has this quality. To the general public, it is mostly unclear who the gatekeepers are and what is actually being forgotten or remembered and why. In addition, the analogy also makes collective/cultural memory seem as if it just is, instead of that it has been engineered by people.

Further developments of the critical heritage debate:

After the cultural turn, the idea that the meaning attributed to heritage is presentist was generally acknowledged. Sharon Macdonald stresses that collective memory, heritage and presentism cannot be separated, and therefore advocates to unite the two terms into 'past-presenting'.³⁷ This stance shows that presentism, heritage and collective memory are interlinked. Although the awareness of presentism in heritage and collective memory arose in the 1970s, Laura Jane Smith,

³⁵ G. Burchell, C. Gordon & P. Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago 1991), 139.

³⁶ Müller, 'Introduction: the Power of Memory, the Memory of Power and the Power over Memory', 22-23.

³⁷ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 16.

Denis Byrne and Brian Graham argue that about a century earlier heritage was already used to govern national identities, despite the fact that in that period national identities were perceived in an essentialist and modernist manner.³⁸

In 'The Uses and Abuses of Heritage' (2005) by Brian Graham et al. is described that the understanding of the concept of 'heritage' we have nowadays traces its origins around the same time as the creation of nation states in Europe. This was in the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century. Graham describes that before this period only sacred and religious places were deliberately restored and the change of an (urban) environment was perceived as progress and was therefore desired.³⁹ However, with the rise of nation states the past became a resource for the present. Leftovers from the past were proof of a historical continuity of the national identity. In this period, heritage was deliberately used for the 'discovery' or creation of the national identity. Within the narrative of the discovery of a national identity, the heritage sites acquired an unchangeable value and gave rise to absolute moral claims connected to the meaning or identity they portrayed. It went even further than that: heritage also helped combat the claims of national territory and was therefore used as an instrument to draw borders.⁴⁰ Heritage was the result of modernity, it was therefore actually a meta-narrative of nationalism. And since this development took place on the European continent, the conceptualization of heritage nowadays is singular. It has Eurocentric roots and imperialism is an integral part of the western understanding of heritage.

Heritage as a social action: who controls the power discourse?

The notion that heritage is used as a form of political engineering fits into Smith's Authoritarian Heritage Discourse (AHD). Smith also traces back the roots of this way of handling heritage back in the nineteenth century. In the 'Uses of Heritage' (2006) Smith describes that heritage is heritage *because* it is subjected to management, preservation and conservation processes and not simply because it just *is*. In other words, heritage is governed and heritage sites are not inherently valuable.⁴¹ With this she stresses how crucial the attribution of meaning is to heritage, and she

³⁸ L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London 2006), 42.

D. Byrne, 'Heritage as Social Action', in: Graham Fairclough, Rodney Harrison, John H. Jameson Jr., and John Schofield (eds.), *The Heritage Reader* (New York 2008), 150.

B. Graham et al., 'The Uses and Abuses of Heritage', in: *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader* (London 2005), 32.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, 31.

⁴¹ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 18.

also underlines that heritage is both a material ‘thing’ as a social process. With this she goes further than the post-modern understanding of heritage that emerged in the 1970s, and shares it with several others engulfed in the heritage study like Macdonald, Harrison, and Tilley. They stress that although the power discourses linked to heritage sites are important when analysing the phenomenon, it is important to remember that the academic inquiry is about material ‘things’.

With the AHD Smith also sheds light on who the gatekeepers are that determine what heritage is and which meaning should be brought forward. According to her, the management of heritage is a top-down process where ‘professionals’ or ‘experts’ decide on what can be counted as heritage. The decisions made by these experts mostly fit within the nationalist narrative of the nineteenth century which is rather elitist, Eurocentric and imperialist. She argues that the AHD erases the traces of subaltern groups in the national landscapes because it focusses on the dominant ethnicity of a place, and that global heritage organizations like UNESCO often operate within the European tradition of conservation and restoration and therefore misinterpret non-European heritage sites.⁴²

Graham believes that due to the demand of late-capitalism or neo-liberalism to commodify everything, the meaning of (institutionalized) heritage can be divided in two purposes: the economic and the socio-political. Using heritage in a presentist manner in order to support nationalism and help forming a (national) identity is part of the socio-political category, as described in the former paragraphs. And the second purpose, the heritage ‘industry’ or ‘enterprise’, or in other words heritage with the purpose to attract tourists, is part of the economic category. He argues that due to differing conceptions of what the heritage site means, the duality creates a dissonance: the multi-consumption of heritage sites is problematic for bringing a clear narrative forward.⁴³ De Cesari and Herzfeld add another problem with the economic category of restoring a heritage site. Namely, that by commodifying heritage sites the social geography and real estate value changes in the neighbourhood what leads to gentrification.⁴⁴ Therefore, heritagizing and claiming possession over a heritage site leads to homogenizing of the area that erases differing conceptions and meanings attributed to the heritage site by social groups, because the social groups in the neighbourhood disappear due to the gentrification.⁴⁵

⁴² Smith, *The Uses of Heritage*, 28.

⁴³ Graham, ‘The Uses and Abuses of Heritage’, 37-38.

⁴⁴ C. De Cesari & M. Herzfeld, ‘Urban Heritage and Social Movements’, in: *Global Heritage: A Reader* (New York 2015), 172.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, 171.

In short, around the late 2000s and the early 2010s the awareness arose that heritage is about material ‘things’ and that it therefore can influence the social geography of places and that the meaning of the site is not inherent to the site itself but attributed to the site by people. Smith for instance, believes that the attribution of meaning to a heritage site is top-down and describes the AHD, the discourse that is mostly attributed to heritage sites by these elites. This can be either done by the state in order to shape the national identity, by (international) interest groups like UNESCO by making a list of global heritages, and lastly, by investors interested in commodifying heritage to make profit.

Globalized heritage and heritage ethics:

Reflecting on UNESCO’s list of global heritages in light of Smith’s AHD, and the homogenizing function of heritage De Cesari and Herzfeld describe, Lynn Meskell argues that there should be an ethical cosmopolitan approach to heritage. With cosmopolitanism Meskell does not mean the universalist Euro-American understanding of cosmopolitanism where the ideal is to unify the world within a ‘western’ framework Harisson argues against. But she believes that cosmopolitanism encompasses the overarching framework of global politics and with that it would be easier to direct the attention to the concerns of small communities and individuals.⁴⁶ Her main point with ethical global heritage is that with this understanding of cosmopolitanism the ignored or unacknowledged minorities and subaltern groups will be taken into account with the restoration and preservation of heritage sites and that the ‘experts’ move away from the strong nationalistic, singular and essentialist conceptions of heritage.⁴⁷

In line with Meskell’s global heritage ethics, Gertjan Plets et al. argue in ‘Repatriation, Doxa and Contested Heritages’ (2013) that heritage is a pluralistic social phenomenon. Each heritage site has several layers of cultural meaning that are ever changing and each speak to different groups in society, Plets calls this ‘heritage in the making’.⁴⁸ This relates to Foucault’s conception of governmentality where governing is not seen as something static but as ever changing: heritage is understood as a social action rather a static material place with a meaning attributed to it. Because of the changeability of heritage and the layers of meaning Plets argues that heritage should be perceived in the plural rather in the singular: each layer represents another heritage site.

⁴⁶ Meskell, 3.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, 5.

⁴⁸ G. Plets et al., ‘Repatriation, Doxa and Contested Heritages: the Return of the Altai Princess in an International Perspective’, *Anthropology and Archaeology in Eurasia* 52:2 (2013), 75.

Tuuli Lähdesmäki discusses in her article 'The EU's Explicit and Implicit Heritage Politics' that the EU tries to emphasize the promotion of the intercultural dialogue in the EU by legitimizing the European identity with heritage sites that represent the plurality of social groups in the member states of the European Union. The EU calls this 'united in diversity'.⁴⁹ However, this conception of heritage make specific heritage sites turn universalistic that fits the European identity. Lähdesmäki argues that this identity is mostly western-European. Reflecting on Meskell's ideal of cosmopolitan heritage ethics, and Plets' conception of heritage as a social action: Lähdesmäki shows that the fact that heritage is a social action can be instrumentalized in order to create a singular, universalist meaning while it is actually something that could empower specific social groups.

Conclusion:

Before the cultural turn in the 1970s, heritage was mostly analyzed by the architectural and archaeological value of the site. After the cultural turn and the emergence of post-modernism the emphasis shifted from the object to the subject: it became important to research how people think about the past, rather than what happened in the past or what the value of a material object is. For heritage, Lowenthal was the one of pioneer's in this regard with his article 'Fabricating Heritage'. He articulated that heritage is presentist. However, heritage, collective/cultural memory and identity are concepts that are strongly related to each other, Assman's understanding of cultural memory and Hobsbawm's and Ranger's invention of tradition all discuss to the same idea. Namely, that the past can be used in the present to construct a (national) identity that will legitimize that identity in the future. This way of using the past for the present already dates from the nineteenth century according to Tilley, Smith and Graham.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s the 'critical heritage study' developed itself in roughly two ways: firstly, the emphasis on only the subject was deemed too shallow and it became important to take note of the object as well. Graham, and De Cesari and Herzfeld for instance argue that the neo-liberal commodification of heritage as a touristic attraction not only shapes the meaning attributed to the heritage site into something universalist, but also influences the urban space the heritage site is situated in, causing for instance gentrification. Secondly, the awareness arose that the meaning attributed to the heritage sites shapes the national identity and is only done by the government, but that there are several other national and international stakeholders that exert influence on the heritage site. Smith for instance describes the AHD, a

⁴⁹ T. Lähdesmäki, 'The EU's Explicit and Implicit Heritage Politics', *European Societies* 16:3 (2014), 406.

universalist discourse that is handled by experts when giving meaning to a heritage site, this is a top-down understanding of the attribution of meaning to heritage sites. Here one can think of the ‘unification in diversity’-ideal of the EU (Lähdesmäki) or homogenizing global institutions like UNESCO. In this regard Meskell argues that working with heritage globally, could help breaking away from the universalist understandings of the heritage sites by taking a cosmopolitan perspective where minorities and subaltern groups get the chance to keep their meaning of the heritage site in collaboration with the heritage ‘experts’. This is a bottom-up approach of heritage, and with this approach the plural meanings of heritage sites (or heritages) might be able to be represented alongside each other.

Chapter 2: Post-Socialism in Estonia:

As described in the introduction, Estonia has had a tumultuous past. Merely 22 years after establishing the Estonian Republic (Treaty of Tartu, 1918) the country was annexed by the Soviet Union. The occupation lasted until 1991, with a brief interlude from 1941 to 1944 when Nazi Germany occupied Estonia.⁵⁰ Due to a harsh period of Russification starting in the late 1950s, expressions of nationalism were strongly oppressed and the national history was altered to fit the socialist ideal.⁵¹ Therefore, after the confirmation of independence of Estonia in 1991, the act of recovering or rediscovering the national identity became popular in the Estonian historical discipline and public history.

Apart from that, these historical studies are also perceived as a way of dealing with the traumatic past. For example, during the Russification, an estimated amount of 10% of the Estonian population was at some point sent to a gulag in Siberia.⁵² Because this kind of events were barely officially recorded, memory became an important source of information.⁵³ Although this took place in the 1990s and is ongoing, content wise it fits within Winter's second wave of the memory boom situated in the 1960s. The memory boom Winter described mostly paid attention to the narratives of the victims of WWII. The Estonian histories based on memories also handle a victim narrative. Interestingly enough, although the Post-Soviet memory boom is mostly focused on the recent (Soviet) past, this memory boom also unfroze inquiries concerned with uncovering a non-Socialist version of the WWII-past.⁵⁴

The last paragraph gives a brief impression of the difficult past Estonia went through the last century and how they are dealing with it nowadays. Apart from the fact that the past itself is hard to deal with, Estonia also has Russia as its neighboring country and houses a vast Russian speaking minority. This makes writing histories where Russia is seen as the main perpetrator difficult and problematic. In this chapter I will therefore look into several academic concepts that will clarify the Estonian case regarding to its past and its big neighbor. The concepts I will discuss are Post-Socialism connected to imperialism and the memory boom in post-Socialist states. To give extra context to specifically Estonia as a post-Soviet country, I will discuss the

⁵⁰ J-J. Subernat, *Estonia: Identity and Independence* (New York 2004), 156.

⁵¹ E. Pilve, 'Ideological Pressure in School Lessons in the Estonian SSR', in: *Historical Memory versus Communist Identity* (Tartu 2014), 47.

⁵² Subernat, *Estonia: Identity and Independence*, 138.

⁵³ Müller, Introduction: the Power of Memory, the Memory of Power and the Power over Memory?, 19.

⁵⁴ M. Frucht Levy, 'From Skull Tower to Mall: Competing Victim Narratives and the Politics of Memory in the Former Yugoslavia', in: *Life Writing and Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe* (New York 2015), 203.

demography of the country regarding its Russian Minority. When looking into these concepts, I will answer the following questions: In what way can the development of Estonia as an independent nation be understood in a broader context of the Post-Socialist transition to capitalism and the west? And, how does this relate to the political decision making surrounding heritage? The last question will be answered by looking into the case of the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn that bears confliction memories of the Soviet occupation or salvation. By having an understanding of how the country dealt with other heritage sites that are connected to the Soviet past, in combination with an understanding of the Estonian context, it will be easier to understand the positions of the stakeholders concerned with the heritage making of the Patarei Sea Fort.

Post-Socialism in Estonia:

According to Katharine Verdery post-Socialism refers to ‘whatever would follow once the means of production were privatized and the Party’s political monopoly disestablished’.⁵⁵ As her understanding of the concept indicates, post-Socialism is a very broad field. It mostly refers to a period of big political change in countries that used to have a Socialist regime, but post-Socialist studies also concern themselves with a broad spectrum of societal and economical changes and transitions in the post-Soviet area. For this reason, post-Socialism can be studied by a wide range of disciplines and therefore the inquiries are often interdisciplinary.⁵⁶ However, I will mainly focus on the societal and cultural changes mostly in the urban sphere and the way of dealing with the past and memory after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

When thinking about Estonia in a post-Socialist perspective, it is important to realize that Estonia and the other Baltic States were part of the Soviet territory itself ever since 1940. This was decided at the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact on August 23, 1939. After WWII, at the Yalta Conference in 1945, it was decided that the faith of the Baltic states will stay the same, what made Estonia remain a part of Soviet territory up until 1991.⁵⁷ In order to enforce the Russification of the Baltic States, and to make the integration into the Soviet Union easier, a lot of Russians were sent to the Baltic states after the 1940s. Nowadays, in Estonia the Russian

⁵⁵ S. Chari & K. Verdery, ‘Thinking Between the Posts: Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography after the Cold War’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51:1 (2009), 6.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, 8.

⁵⁷ T. Kavaliauskas, ‘Different meanings of May 9th, Victory Day over Nazi Germany for Russia and the Baltic States’, in: *Interdisciplinary Studies on Central and Eastern Europe: 20 Years after the Collapse of Communism: Expectations, Achievements and Dissolutions after 1989* (2011), 320-321.

speaking minority makes up about 25% of the total population, this is a direct consequence of the Russification politics during the Soviet regime.⁵⁸ In the capital city Tallinn about 37% of the population is Russian, and in Narva (a city at the border of Russia) the Russian speakers make up 94% of the population.⁵⁹ Also, Estonia is a very small country that has about 1,4 million citizens in total. In addition, these demographics only take the Russians in account that have the Estonian nationality or a grey passport.

The majority of the Russian speaking minority is, or descends from, blue collar workers that were sent to Estonia after 1940 to accelerate the Russification. After the independence of 1991, all Russians that lived in Estonia before 1940 were naturalized. However, the ones that came afterwards were perceived as occupants and therefore could only acquire the nationality by taking an Estonian language and constitution test and they had to officially pledge their loyalty to the Estonian state.⁶⁰ This test turned out to be very difficult and expensive. Due to the bad position of this minority on the social ladder and a disproportionately high level of unemployment, taking and passing the test was nearly impossible because if they already could pay for the test, adequate lessons to prepare for the test would be too expensive. Amnesty International and the United Nations pressured Estonia to stop the discrimination of the Russian population in 2006, and asked the country to make acquiring the Estonian nationality easier for this minority.⁶¹ A few changes were made at that time, but the social difference between the groups is nowadays still big. Apart from that, Marju Lauristin, an Estonian sociologist, did research in 2014 to the integration of the Russian minority and has written that half of the minority is successfully integrated.⁶²

Considering these demographics, the combination of a painful past and the social issues the minority in Estonia faces today makes dealing with the past and reviving the Estonian identity a politically charged activity. Especially because Russia takes interest in the fate of Estonia and the Russian minority in Estonia. Moreover, ever since the recent developments in Crimea and the installment of missiles in Kaliningrad by Russia, the looming presence of the neighboring country and the fear of annexation has grown significantly over the last few years.

⁵⁸ With 'Russian speaking minority' I mean both ethnic Russians as cultural Russians.

⁵⁹ Amnesty International, *Estonia: Linguistic Minorities in Estonia: Discrimination Must End* (n.p., 2006).

⁶⁰ Amnesty International, *Estonia: Linguistic Minorities in Estonia: Discrimination Must End* (n.p., 2006).

⁶¹ Ibidem

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: United Nations, 'Tenth and Eleventh periodic reports of states parties due in 2012: Estonia', (n.p. 2013).

⁶² K. Koort, 'The Russians in Estonia: Twenty Years After', *World Affairs* (August 2014), <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/russians-estonia-twenty-years-after> (accessed on 25 July 2017).

The increase of NATO soldiers on the Estonian-Russian border, and the daily prepping of the Estonian militia on the border speak for that.⁶³

Nicolas Hayoz et al. discuss in 'Introduction: Paths of Ambiguous Transformation after 20 Years' that mostly the countries that were directly part of the Soviet Union had most difficulties with their transformation into democratic and capitalist countries after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.⁶⁴ Interestingly enough, Hayoz stresses that the Baltic States are an exception, and that they even had an accelerated transformation compared to the other countries that were part of the Soviet bloc.⁶⁵ However, in this article it is not discussed why there is a difference in development of the countries in the post-Soviet area. And I believe that there is no clear or easy answer to that question since every country has its own unique context and development that influences the transformation process. It is interesting to realize that the development of post-Soviet countries is mostly analyzed by the degree of success of turning into a modern, 'European', and capitalist countries in tune with a dominant neo-liberal agenda. Craig Young and Sylvia Kaczmarek describe in their article 'The Socialist Past and Postsocialist Urban Identity in Central and Eastern Europe' that often in post-Socialist studies the emphasis lies on the transition to 'the west' rather than the either visible or invisible remains of 'the east' or the Socialist period.⁶⁶

The past, memory and creating an identity:

As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, in the period after Estonia regained its independence the past and cultural or collective memories were essential in shaping the transition from a Soviet country to a modern, democratic, capitalist and European country. The past and collective memories were used for roughly two purposes. Firstly, to uncover and reinvent the national identity, and secondly as a form of healing or reconciliation with the difficult past. The second use of the past or the collective memory became important around the

⁶³ The Guardian, 'Russia Transfers Nuclear-Capable Missiles to Kaliningrad', last modified 8 October 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/08/russia-confirms-deployment-of-nuclear-capable-missiles-to-kaliningrad>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

The Guardian, 'British Troops Land in Estonia for Nato Mission to Deter Russia', last modified 18 March 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/mar/18/british-troops-land-in-estonia-for-nato-mission-to-deter-russia>, accessed 25 July 2017.

⁶⁴ N. Hayoz, et al. 'Introduction: Paths of Ambiguous Transformation after 20 Years', in: *Interdisciplinary Studies on Central and Eastern Europe: 20 Years after the Collapse of Communism: Expectations, Achievements and Dissolutions after 1989* (2011), 12.

⁶⁵ Hayoz, 'Introduction', 12.

⁶⁶ C. Young & S. Kaczmarek, 'The Socialist Past and Postsocialist Urban Identity in Central and Eastern Europe: The Case of Lodz, Poland', *European Urban and Regional Studies* 51:1, 59.

2000s, around the time that Estonia acquired its membership of the European Union, while the first purpose already played a big role right after and during the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. In this context ‘the past’ can be perceived in the plural since for every different purpose another fitting past is used.

The first post-Socialist development of dealing with the past in the 1990s is in line with Svetlana Boym’s concept of restorative nostalgia. This development is, as noted earlier, mainly focused on the transition from a Socialist to a ‘western’ country and the legitimization of the uncovered nationalist identity. Boym describes in her book ‘The Future of Nostalgia’ two forms of nostalgia: restorative nostalgia and reflective nostalgia. With restorative nostalgia Boym means a form of nostalgia focused on rebuilding the past, while reflective nostalgia is a feeling of longing and loss for the past. Boym describes that restorative nostalgics often do not consider themselves being nostalgic, but think that they are dealing with the historical truth. This is in line with the paradox of a modernist and essentialist perception of nationalism that construct their communities with restorative nostalgic actions.⁶⁷ This form of nostalgia can be connected to Hobsbawm’s and Ranger’s invented tradition, and within the heritage debate it relates to the rebuilding and restoring of monuments instead of lingering on ruins. In other words, it relates to the presentist nature of heritage and therefore, in many cases, these actions serve the purpose of constructing or uncovering a national identity.

According to Irina Novikova in ‘Baltic *Lieux de Mémoire* of the 1990s to Early 2000s: Nostalgia, Trauma, Change’ the post-Socialist context of the Baltic States restorative nostalgia manifests itself as a longing for the pre-occupation period of the 1930s and earlier.⁶⁸ Here the post-Socialist context and identity is linked with the pre-occupation period making the development of the national identity a continuity. The Soviet past is not even seen as a disruption of the continuity, but a form of imperialism, where the national identity has been hijacked for a certain amount of time by the occupant. The periodization is essential to the Estonian case, because this is at the peak of the Estonian republic that was founded in 1918.⁶⁹ Novikova uses the city center of Tallinn as an example of this: right after Estonia regained its independence, Tallinn’s old town was considered as proof of this historic continuity due to the Hanseatic look and past of this part of the city that has a bigger resemblance with north-western European cities than (post-)Soviet cities.⁷⁰ Ever since the fall of the Soviet regime, the city center

⁶⁷ S. Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001), 41-43.

⁶⁸ I. Novikova, ‘Baltic *Lieux de Mémoire* of the 1990s to Early 2000s: Nostalgia, Trauma, Change’, in: *Interdisciplinary Studies on Central and Eastern Europe: 20 Years after the Collapse of Communism: Expectations, Achievements and Dissolutions after 1989* (2011), 307.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, 300.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, 307.

has also been ‘decolonized’ from obvious signs of the occupation. This is an example of Kaczmarek’s and Young’s idea that even in the urban space the emphasis is laid on a ‘western’ identity. I will give an example of such an action of urban ‘decolonization’ by discussing the Bronze Soldier later in this chapter.

However, Malksõo argues that it is too simplistic to assume that uncovering the national past is merely technique of political engineering in order to make the transition to the liberal, western discourse. She stresses that this is also a form of dealing with the past, because during the Soviet occupation any forms of nationalism was suppressed in Estonia and the institutionalized past was changed to fit the socialist ideal. By uncovering the national past, and documenting memory Estonia got the chance to deal with the occupation by dealing with pasts that were in danger of being forgotten for good.⁷¹ One of the developments of uncovering the national past in order to deal with it is by unfreezing the ‘national’ perspectives on the WWII past and altering the Soviet understanding of this past to make it fit to the national narrative.⁷² Unfreezing this past was essential in the development of Estonia as a post-Socialist country since it gave the country the chance to deal accordingly with the WWII traumas of the start of the second Russian occupation, that should be understood as a liberation rather than occupation according to Russia until Estonia regained its liberation in 1991.

As becomes clear, not only the remembering was an essential part of (re)constructing the national identity, also the act of forgetting the Socialist past was important. Timothy Garton Ash describes in his article ‘Trials, Purges and History Lessons: Treating a Difficult Past in Post-Communist Europe’ that a clear political decision to forget can be found in Poland: shortly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Polish president at that time declared that there is a thick line to be drawn under the ‘bad’ (Socialist) history.⁷³ With this metaphor, he meant that the ‘bad’ past is to be ignored and that the country’s political decision making should be future oriented. Garton Ash argues that this decision was made because the line between victim and perpetrator in Soviet times, or during any totalitarian regime, is very thin and that it would be unfair to discredit people for acting against the contemporary norms or laws, while the actions were done in a completely different context where other rules were at hand.⁷⁴ Being the Soviet regime.

This is a form of memory aphasia, that can be compared to Mary Ann Stoler’s colonial aphasia where imperialists lose touch with the complete reality of colonialism and only

⁷¹ M. Mälksoo, ‘Introduction’, in: *Historical Memory versus Communist Identity* (Tartu 2011), 12.

⁷² T. Garton Ash, ‘Trials, Purges and History Lessons: Treating a Difficult Past in Post Communist Europe’, in: J.-W. Müller (ed.), *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe* (Cambridge 2004), 271.

⁷³ Garton Ash, ‘Trials, Purges and History Lessons: Treating a Difficult Past in Post Communist Europe’, 267.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, 271.

remember the pleasant and nostalgic parts of the past. According to Garton Ash, memory aphasia results into a big historiographical loss, because after a period of time witnesses either die, or their memories become less and less reliable over time.⁷⁵ It is interesting to see that both the act of remembering the formerly suppressed national past with restorative nostalgia and urban decolonization, and the act of forgetting ‘memory aphasia’ both can be compared with concepts of post-colonialism. Making the occupations of the Soviet Union feel like a form of imperialism.

Eva-Clarita Onken argues that the Baltic States had a similar trajectory as Poland. During the 1990s these countries shied away from dealing with the Soviet past in order to accelerate the transition to a modern, European nation-state.⁷⁶ The problem with leaving the past alone and focusing on the future is that ‘the future’ cannot replace the past. The past can only be replaced with another past, and in the case of the future, often a past that fits the narrative of the desired future is chosen.

Only in the 2000s a truth commission was established in Estonia in order to write an ‘objective’ history on the period of occupations.⁷⁷ Tomas Kavaliauskas, however, argues in the article ‘Different Meanings of May 9th, Victory Day over Nazi-Germany for Russia and the Baltic States’ the timing of these mnemonic operations is heavy with symbolism. He stresses that if the Baltic States would have dealt with the past right after the fall of communism or the Soviet Union, the impact would have been marginal because at that time there was a common understanding of the Soviet Union as the perpetrator and ‘loser’.⁷⁸ By reviving the debate in the 2000s, the dealings with the past receive more attention and it underlines the position of Russia as the perpetrator. Emphasizing this position of Russia gives the mnemonic operations yet another layer of meaning when considering that president Putin, unlike his predecessor Yeltsin, started campaigns of reinventing the Russian identity by building on the socialist legacy instead of actively forgetting it. Which also is a development that started around the 2000s.⁷⁹

Simona Mitroiu’s perception of the dealings with the memory and the past in post-Socialist countries in ‘Life Writing and Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe’ aligns with Kavaliauskas opinion. She writes that victimhood can become political capital in order to sustain

⁷⁵ Garton Ash, ‘Trials, Purges and History Lessons: Treating a Difficult Past in Post Communist Europe’, 271.

⁷⁶ E.-C. Onken, ‘The Politics of Finding Historical Truth: Reviewing Baltic History Commissions and Their Work’, *Journal of Baltic Studies* 39:1 (2007), 113.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, 109.

⁷⁸ Kavaliauskas, 330-331.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

a national narrative and can help with 'becoming European'.⁸⁰ In other words, the change from forgetting in the 1990s to remembering in the 2000s could be seen as the next step in the transition. Which on its turn fits within Graham's idea that narratives of place or heritage are fundamental to the modernistic ideas of political legitimacy. Müller warns us in 'Introduction: The Power of Memory, Memory of Power and the Power over Memory' that this kind of dealings with the past make the newly institutionalized past non-negotiable and normalizes the incomplete and one-sided narrative brought forward.⁸¹ Before concluding this chapter about the different uses of memory and the past in post-Socialist countries (with emphasis on Estonia) I will first write about a case that represents all these post-Socialist struggles concerning the past and national identity. Namely, the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn. This case will later serve as a context for the Patarei Sea Fort case.

Case: The Bronze Soldier of Tallinn:

The Bronze Soldier, or officially *Bronzovyy Soldat*, is a Soviet World War II war memorial that used to be located at war graves on the Tõnismägi hill in the city centre of Tallinn. The statue was erected on 12 June 1945 by Soviet officials as a tribute to the soldiers of the Red Army that liberated Tallinn on 22 September 1944, and as a remembrance site for the soldiers that had fallen during the liberation. However, after heavy riots broke out on 26 April 2007 concerning the fate of the monument, on 27 April the Estonian government decided to remove the monument from its original location and bring it to the Cemetery of Estonian Defence Forces in Tallinn (outside the city centre).

In 2006 two men who were wearing Estonian flags, which was a forbidden symbol during the Soviet occupation, attacked the Bronze Soldier and demanded the statue to be removed on Victory Day, a Russian holiday on 9 May where the victory over Nazi-Germany is celebrated.⁸² The men demanded the removal because the liberation of Estonia in 1944 is perceived by Estonians as the starting point of the second Soviet occupation and therefore the statue does not represent an appropriate symbol for the city centre. Andres Krug argues in 'The Bronze Soldier Monument and its Public' that at this moment the statue changed from a repressed subject to the most talked about issue in Estonian news. Early 2007, the Reform Party (a centre-right party) used the removal of the Bronze Soldier as one of their main points in the

⁸⁰ Mitroiu, in 'Life Writing and Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe', 11.

⁸¹ Müller, 'Introduction: the Power of Memory, the Memory of Power and the Power over Memory', 18.

⁸² A. Kurg, 'The Bronze Soldier Monument and its Public', in: K. Norman, *After-War* (Tallinn 2009), 50.

parliamentary campaign, and this party later won the elections. Dealing with the statue was officially the task of the Tallinn municipality, but they decided on keeping the statue where it is.⁸³

Novikova describes that the official reason of relocating the statue was because the Reform Party was afraid radical nationalists would destroy the statue themselves, and by removing it officially they believed they would deescalate the situation.⁸⁴ However, around 27 April the Russian speaking minority started gathering around the statue to protest against the removal of the monument. The police were sent to keep the situation under control, however, due to their aggressive way of handling the situation the protest escalated and turned into a riot. Approximately 50 men were injured, one young man was killed (part of the Russian-speaking minority) and the city centre was completely vandalized. Due to the empty protesting slogans, it is believed that the protest or riot was perhaps organized by Russia, and not by the Estonian Russian-speaking minority.⁸⁵

Kavaliauskas argues that there is an enormous gap between the Russian-speaking Estonians and the Estonian nationalists. The end of WWII is perceived completely different by both parties. The Russian-speaking minority sees the end of WWII as the liberation of Estonia, the victory over Nazi-Germany and it fits into the Russian messianic idea of liberation with sacrifice (an idea predating the Soviet era). Estonian nationalists, however, see the end of WWII as the start of the second occupation of Soviet Russia and therefore perceive it as a part of the traumatic past the country has known.⁸⁶ Removing the statue is hence a form of urban 'decolonization'. But because the statue is an important symbol for the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia, who are official citizens of Estonia, the removal of the monument is a form of erasing their heritage and identity of the urban space. Making the image of the city centre of Tallinn mono-ethnic and lacking of symbols that represent sub-ethnic groups.

It is also important to realize that the most of these Soviet symbols were removed right after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the period where the Estonian national identity was (re)constructed. But in the 2000s, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, it became popular in Estonia to deal with the traumatic occupation period instead of forgetting or repressing it. Apart from that, around the same time (1999) Putin started a campaign to reinvent the Russian identity by building on the Soviet legacy. Also, in 2004 Estonia was accepted to the EU and was perceived as an example country of representing the 'European identity' (whatever

⁸³ Kurg, 'The Bronze Soldier Monument and its Public', 52.

⁸⁴ Novikova, 313.

⁸⁵ The Baltic Times, 'Tallinn Erupts into deadly Riot', last edited 28 April 2007, <https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17774/>, accessed 25 July 2017.

⁸⁶ Kavaliuskas, 332.

that means). And lastly, in 2006 the UN and Amnesty International pressured Estonia to end the discrimination towards the vast Russian-speaking minority. Although some changes were made, it strikes me that in the same year radical Estonian nationalists decided to vandalize a statue of such big symbolic value of the Russian-speaking minority. Also, regardless of the fact that Estonia was criticized for discriminating this group and that dealing with the Soviet past became more important in this period, the government still decided to 'decolonize' the city centre by removing this symbol. Making the city centre an even more western-oriented urban space.

In the former paragraph, I discussed that in Post-Socialist countries like Estonia there was a third memory boom that served for two purposes: Firstly, to uncover and reinvent the national identity, and secondly as a form of healing or reconciliation with the difficult past. The controversies surrounding the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn actually serve both purposes. Firstly, by removing the statue the signs of the Soviet occupations are erased from the urban sphere and emphasis is laid on the Estonian past, making the city center of Tallinn more 'Estonian' and less 'Soviet. Secondly, by removing a statue that celebrates the Russian victory of WWII, or in other words, the beginning of the second Russian occupation of Estonia, signs of the traumatic occupation period are erased. Erasing a statue that reminds the Estonian population of a long period of occupations might help dealing with the past by leaving it alone and moving further. However, according to some scholars, like Garton Ash, this is not the ideal way of dealing with a traumatic past.

Conclusion:

Past-wise a lot happened post-Socialist Estonia after the fall of the Soviet Union. In the 1990s the Socialist past was repressed in order to uncover the national identity that used to be repressed during the Socialist regime, but at the same time, also to transition into a capitalist democracy. This was done by perceiving the Soviet past as a disruption, the national identity was perceived as a continuity of the pre-occupation period. In this period, many remains of the Socialist and Russian past were erased from the urban sphere, disregarding of the symbolic value these monuments have for the vast Russian-speaking minority. In the 2000s, around the time Estonia actually became part of the EU, it became popular in to deal with the traumatic Socialist past by commemorating the memories of the victims during that period. Interestingly enough, although commemorating became more popular, acts of erasing the past did not end.

Chapter 3: Case-study: Patarei Sea Fort:

As described in the introduction of this thesis, Patarei Sea Fortress is a neglected heritage site that is perceived as a symbol of the difficult past of Estonia regarding its history of occupations by certain groups in society like EMS. At the moment, the fortress is at the point of either being remembered or forgotten. There are both national and international voices that plead for a restoration to stop the quick deterioration. The Estonian state is the owner of the building but due to a lack of a budget to carry out the restoration, which will approximately cost 100 million euro, the state decided to sell the building to a private investor. The state appointed the State Real Estate Ltd RKAS (Riigi Kinnisvara AS) to sell the property. The idea of selling the property to a private investor already dates from 2005, the time when the building stopped functioning as the central prison due to too high maintenance costs.⁸⁷

A decade of neglect and decay later (2015), the Estonian Heritage Society (EMS, short for the Estonian full name 'Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts') nominated the building for the 7 Most Endangered (7ME) list of Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank (EIB) in order to gain attention on a European level and therefore receive international help saving the site. The EMS believes that the past associated with the heritage site should be remembered and that it is important to preserve the building for the future. Apart from that, architecturally the building is also significant and unique and should be preserved for that reason as well. The EMS does not agree with the zoning plan made by RKAS and the fact that the building will be sold to private investors. In 2016 Patarei Sea Fortress made the 7ME list. In October 2016 RKAS closed the building down for visit because they deemed it was too dangerous due to the bad condition of the building.

As becomes clear in this introduction, there are several stakeholders that are concerned with the fate of the heritage site. Either they want to get rid of it and sell it, or they believe that the building is of strong symbolic importance concerning the tumultuous past Estonia has known and therefore plead to restore it. This brings me to the questions: what do the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with the restoration of the Patarei Sea Fort tell us about Estonian identity politics and their way of commemorating the past? And, how can this be compared to other heritage sites in Estonia? For instance, the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn.

The stakeholders concerned with the fate of Patarei can be divided into three groups. Firstly, the stakeholders that see the significance of the heritage site on an international

⁸⁷ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 2.

European level. This are the NGO Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank (of the EU) that together started the 7 Most Endangered project and are, apart from the Patarei Sea Fort, occupied with helping several heritage projects all over Europe. The second stakeholder is the local NGO that is strongly interested in the fate of the heritage site, being the Estonian Heritage Society. The last group is the Estonian State. The Municipality of Tallinn, the ministries involved with the heritage site and RKAS fall into this category. In this chapter I will discuss the different perspectives of the stakeholders on the restoration of the heritage site, but more importantly, I will analyze the positions of the parties regarding their perspective on how should be dealt with the past connected to Patarei. This I will do in a separate section for each stakeholder. I will place these perspectives in the theoretical context of post-Socialism and neo-liberalism in Estonia and critical heritage studies in order to unravel a deeper level of meaning of their points of view. The points of view of the stakeholders are partly based on interviews I have taken in Tallinn between the 19th and 26th of April 2016, during the Heritage Month.

Since the zoning plan brought forward by RKAS is something the stakeholders strongly disagree on I will elaborate on that before I continue with describing the different perspectives on the development of the building. In the zoning plan the idea is to split the site (that is 3.7 hectares in total) into five sections: section one being the fort itself; section two is an open plot located west of the fort, towards the Seaplane Harbor museum; section three is the mortar battery; section four is the music building, and finally, section five is another part of the fort not included in section one.⁸⁸ For a clear visualization, see the picture below.

⁸⁸ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 6-7.

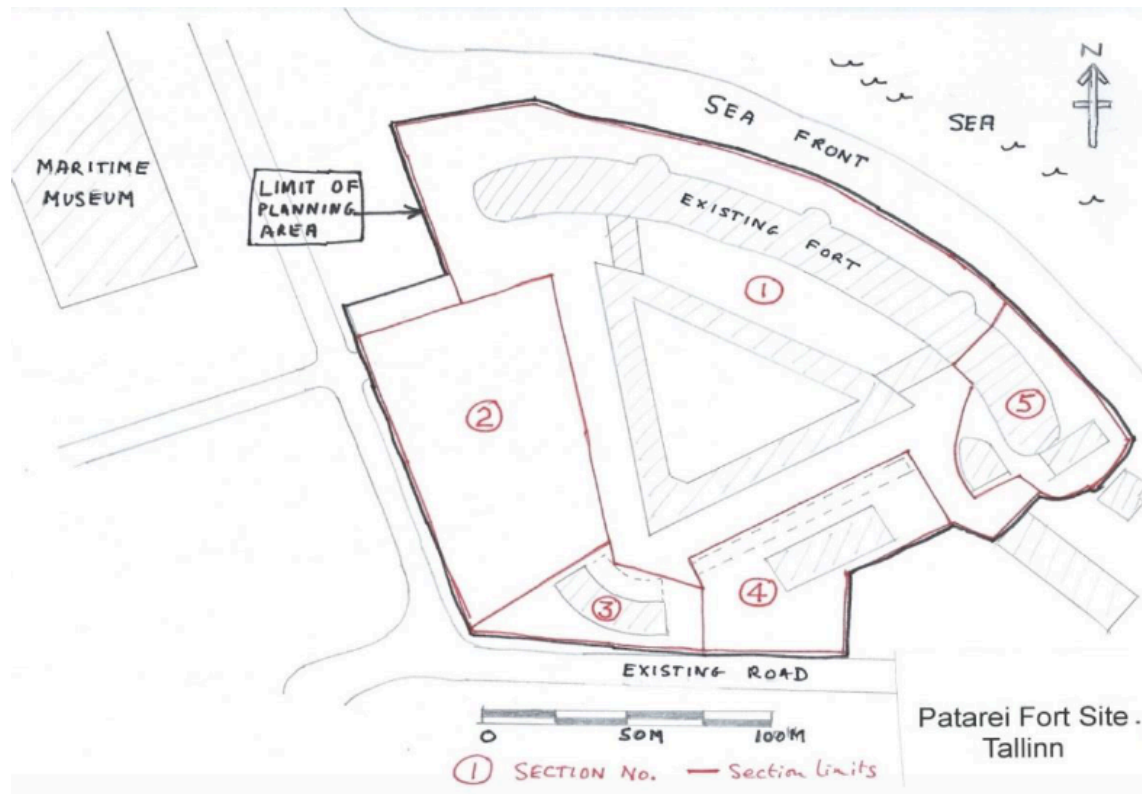


Image 2: Zoning plan Patarei Sea Fort taken from the report of 7ME

Initially RKAS planned on building a parking lot on section two between the Seaplane Harbor museum (this was before it was a museum) and the fort. Later, after receiving criticism, RKAS changed their plans and the newest idea is to build dwelling apartments between the fort and the museum.⁸⁹ By dividing the site, it is argued that it will be easier to identify the different uses of the building for future developers.

7 Most Endangered: Europa Nostra and European Investment Bank:

The Patarei Sea Fort-case has gained international attention when the Sea Fortress made the 7ME list. Before analyzing the position of these stakeholders and the 7ME list in the Patarei-debate it is important to know what Europa Nostra, the EIB and 7ME exactly encompass. Europa Nostra is a non-profit NGO founded in 1963. It is the (international) European equivalent of Italia Nostra, the organization that took action to save Venice from drowning in the sixties. It acts as a representative lobby for cultural heritage in Europe, it tries to function as a catalyst to save European Heritage in danger, and aspires to create a heritage network in

⁸⁹ Timo Äärmaa, Powerpoint presentation zoning plan (4 April 2017), 10.

Europe.⁹⁰ The EIB is the non-profit long term lending institution of the European Union. Established in 1958 under the Treaty of Rome. The shareholders of the bank are the members of the EU, and the bank is meant to finance projects that encourage European integration and a feeling of unity, part of the ‘united in diversity’ ideal of the EU Lähdesmäki discussed.⁹¹ On their website, the 7ME project can be found at the ‘safeguarding cultural heritage’-link. Illustrating that helping with these kind of projects is something that EIB wants to be known for.⁹²

In January 2013, the EIB and Europa Nostra started the 7 Most Endangered project. This project is meant to bring endangered heritage sites deemed important for the European identity under international attention and support and advise the restoration projects of these heritage sites. Annually a new 7ME list is made, it is a selection of heritage sites nominated by local interest groups. After the selection, Europa Nostra goes on a mission to the seven sites to find out what exactly is going on at the heritage site and on their return, they write an advisory action plan.⁹³ It is important to note however, that although the EIB is involved, 7ME is not an organization that offers financial help. Although the action plan does incorporate a financial plan what makes it easier for the local organization(s) to apply for a European grant at either the EIB or the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB). Since the 7ME is a recognized initiative by the EU due to the involvement of the EIB.⁹⁴

In July 2015, the EMS nominated Patarei Sea Fort for the 2016 7ME list. It made the list and in September 2016 some members of the 7ME project went on a mission to Patarei Sea Fortress in Tallinn.⁹⁵ The action plan written by Peter Bond (Consultant for EIB Institute) was published in December 2016 on the Europa Nostra website. In this action plan, it says that the Patarei Sea Fortress requires attention quickly due to its advanced state of deterioration. The complete restoration of the building is estimated at 110 million euro’s, but as said in the report, this estimation is rough and there is need for further research to the actual state of the building. The first step would be to build a roof in order to stop the further deterioration. This will cost around 1 million euro’s.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Europa Nostra, ‘Organization’, <http://www.europanostra.org/organisation/>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

⁹¹ European Investment Bank, ‘Some Dates and Figures’, http://www.eib.org/about/key_figures/index.htm, accessed on 25 July 2017.

⁹² EIB, ‘Safeguarding Cultural Heritage’, <https://institute.eib.org/whatwedo/arts/cultural-heritage/>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

⁹³ 7 Most Endangered, ‘About the Programme’, <http://7mostendangered.eu/about-the-programme/>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

⁹⁴ Ibidem.

⁹⁵ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 1.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, 3.

In the action plan, the fact that the Estonian state has a hesitant attitude towards their responsibility of the restoration is criticized. Europa Nostra believes that it is a bad idea to sell the building to a private investor with the zoning plan that is at hand at the moment for several reasons.⁹⁷ Firstly, there is not enough information available yet about the actual state of the building and the costs of the complete restorations. Secondly, if there is not a clear contract made about how the private investor should restore the building, Europa Nostra fears that the private investor might not respect the fact that Patarei Sea Fort is under official heritage protection. Thirdly, Europa Nostra is afraid that due to the zoning plan that is at hand, meaning that the site will be divided into five sections, the restoration will be done per section making it less durable. And lastly, because there are plans to build dwelling apartments in the empty plot in section two, Europa Nostra fears that the investor will mainly focus on that because it offers great opportunities. Therefore, Europa Nostra proposes to keep several parties involved in the restoration of the fort: the Estonian state, private investors and active NGO's (like EMS).⁹⁸

The neighborhood where Patarei is located in, the Kalamaja district, has become a very popular place to live in Tallinn over the last decade and therefore it is subject of gentrification.⁹⁹ For that reason, a great amount of money is invested in this area because it is an investment with almost guaranteed success. This fits in De Cesari's and Herzfeld's idea that heritagization ultimately leads to gentrification. Thus, Europa Nostra is afraid all the attention of the private investor will go to the planned dwelling apartments and they will not be interested in restoring the fort appropriately.



Image 3: Photo of the altered façade.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 5-6.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, 17.

⁹⁹ Tallinn City Government, *Statistical Yearbook of Tallinn 2015* (Tallinn 2015), 57.

¹⁰⁰ Photo from personal collection (Tallinn, February 2017).

Europa Nostra often describes in the action plan that the expertise and opinion of actively involved NGO's should be taken seriously.¹⁰¹ With this they mostly mean the EMS. Which is not surprising since Europa Nostra's report strongly resembles the narrative of EMS about Patarei. I will explain that later in the EMS chapter. Now the technical information is clear, and the opinion of 7ME is discussed regarding to the plans of RKAS I will now analyze Europa Nostra's/EIB's perspective on how the past of Patarei should be remembered. This is partly an analysis of their report and partly information I have gotten out of interviews with members of EMS, of which Helle Solnask is the representative of Europa Nostra in Estonia (and a board member of EMS).

First of all, there is a section about the 'historical context' in the action plan, describing the pre-occupation era of the fort described as an occupation by the Russian empire (approximately 1829 until 1920) and the occupation era dubbed as a 'tumultuous period'. It is described that Estonians have an emotional link to Patarei because of the recent past that took place in the building. Apart from that, the architectural significance and uniqueness of the fort is also underlined. It is the biggest and best preserved fort from this period in the Baltic states. The pre-occupations era gets three paragraphs in the text, while the period from 1920 until 1991 is described in one paragraph and a sentence.¹⁰²

Other than that, in the 'development context' paragraph on page 7, it is described that when Patarei got in use as a prison, the structure of the building was altered to fit its new function. For instance, a number of casemates were divided in half to generate more prison cells and the windows of the casemates were supplied of bars. Especially the sea façade underwent great modifications during this period.¹⁰³ On page 7 of the action plan Europa Nostra describes that it is important to restore the building to the way it was before it became a prison to retain its historical and architectural relevance. There are also some mentions about restoring the building appropriately so it can also function as a remembrance site of its dark past in the twentieth century, but most emphasis is laid on the architectural side of this site in this paragraph of the action plan.

¹⁰¹ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 3, 11 & 17.

¹⁰² 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 4.

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*, 7.

Although it is not mentioned specifically, the fact that most of the attention is given to the pre-prison era of the building in the action plan could mean that this period of the past is more relevant to Europa Nostra and the EIB than the occupations period. This would not be surprising since this is a past that fits a broader European discourse and is therefore easier to identify with due to its universalism. Namely, military history. Also, it fits in the modernist way of handling with heritage: determining the archaeological and architectural historical value of the building. Because this is a quite straightforward way of determining value, it could perhaps be used to valorize the restoration of the building. However, it could also mean that this institution has not yet adapted itself to the developments of the academic discussion since the cultural turn. Often it takes some time before these mentality changes get adopted by the public. The terror of the Soviet Union, especially the period of the Stalinist era, is not part of the non-post-Soviet collective memory. Or, as Sander Jürrison, exhibition manager of the Museum of Occupations said in the interview on the 21nd of April, the Soviet past is mostly perceived as ‘distant’ and ‘exotic’ by western-Europeans (or non-post-Socialist Europeans).¹⁰⁴ Regarding to this it is also interesting to note that in the ‘historical context’ paragraph, the Soviet occupation and Nazi occupation are described that way that it seems as if both regimes had almost equal impact on Estonia:

The period from 1920 covered turbulent times: the Russian revolution and its aftermath with independence, the Second World War with an initial Soviet period, then the German invasion and occupation, followed by the return of the Soviet Union at the end of the war. It became the main Estonian prison and over the years interned many political prisoners out of favour with the ruling authorities, including several eminent Estonian politicians and writers as well as Jews during the Nazi era, many of whom came from elsewhere in Europe.¹⁰⁵

However, Nazi-Germany only occupied Estonia from 1941 until 1944 making it three years. While the first Soviet occupation lasted from 1940 until 1941, and the second from 1944 until 1991. In other words, 48 years in total. Which is a significant difference with the three years of Nazi Occupation. Making it seem as if Europa Nostra has written this report from a Western perspective where holocaust is of great importance in the historical discourse, rather than a Post-Socialist perspective where the Stalinist era is the biggest subject when writing about WWII.

¹⁰⁴ S. Jürrison, ‘Sander Jürrison’, interviewed by Onessa Novak. *46 minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 21, 2017. 8’11-8’20.

¹⁰⁵ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 4.

Helle Solnask, member of EMS and representative of Europa Nostra in Estonia argued in her interview on the 23rd of April, that Europa Nostra and EMS mainly focus on the architectural side of Patarei because that would be the easiest way of receiving money from a (western) investor like the European Union.¹⁰⁶ Exactly the universal quality of this past makes the valorization of such a costly restoration clear. Also, a past that is focused on the material side of the past is more palpable than memories connected to it which do not even fit the western discourse of WWII. The 7ME project is, in the end, about saving ‘important’ *European* cultural heritage from disappearing, so the meaning of the site should clearly relate to ‘the European past’. Does 7ME aspire to restore heritage sites because of their unique architectural significance or because of the cultural and mnemonic significance? And are local memories deemed as significant as memories that fit the universal European collective memory? Unfortunately, in the ‘about us’-section of Europa Nostra’s website, nowhere is explained what Europa Nostra exactly means by ‘cultural heritage’ and therefore it remains an ambiguous term.¹⁰⁷ But due to their connection with the EU and EIB’s goal of supporting European integration and unification, it would not be surprising that the 7ME project fits into EU’s ‘unity in diversity’ discourse, where historically significant sites are seen as the unifying factor in such a plural landscape of nations. Therefore, it could mean that an organization like Europa Nostra or a project like 7ME choose a past they want to highlight strategically in order to achieve their goal more easily. Where in this case, getting the site restored is the main objective.

Active NGO: The Estonian Heritage Society:

As I just pointed out, the opinions of EMS and Europa Nostra, the EIB (as 7ME) on the Patarei case are quite similar. In this section I will describe the position of EMS towards the restoration of the Patarei Fort and its past and I will compare it with 7ME. In this section, the focus lies on the interviews rather on publications and reports, this is because EMS did not publish anything regarding this subject. Therefore, I have interviewed a number of members of the Estonian Heritage Society who are concerned with the Patarei case: Kadi Pilt, Helle Solnask, Trivimi Velliste, Andrus Vilem and Ants Kraut. But first a short introduction of what kind of organization EMS is.

¹⁰⁶ H. Solnask, ‘Helle Solnask’, interviewed by Onessa Novak. *28 minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 23, 2017. 5’06-5’11.

¹⁰⁷ Europa Nostra, ‘Organization’, <http://www.europanostra.org/organisation/>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

The Estonian Heritage Society is a NGO that was founded on 12 December 1987 by Trivimi Velliste. It was a merger of multiple smaller Estonian initiatives concerned with heritage, and was the only national society of this kind that was tolerated by the Russian occupier. Like Europa Nostra, EMS has solely a catalyzing and advisory position regarding heritage sites, they do not offer financial help.¹⁰⁸ Unlike Europa Nostra, EMS does have a description of what they perceive as heritage on their website. It says that they value heritage on the whole: both material and immaterial heritage is taken into account. Apart from that, environmental heritage is also mentioned.¹⁰⁹ Which is interesting, because this is a form of heritage that is often overlooked, as far as I have read. Although EMS did not write an official report on the Patarei Sea Fort, the organization is an official member organization of Europa Nostra.¹¹⁰ They were also the organization that nominated Patarei Sea Fortress for the 7ME list in the first place. This might indicate that what is written in Europa Nostra's action plan for Patarei mostly corresponds with the opinion of EMS. Especially regarding the development context. Also, because some EMS members are official representatives of Europa Nostra in Estonia sometimes the line between Europa Nostra and EMS blurs somewhat.

However, I believe that EMS does have a slightly different perspective on which narrative of the past of Patarei is the most important to bring forward for the collective memory. It is important to realize that Estonia is now for merely 26 years an independent country, after a traumatic period of occupations that lasted 51 years where almost all expressions of national identity were suppressed. Trivimi Velliste, honorary chairmain of EMS, for instance, described that for Estonians Patarei bears a similar symbolic meaning as the Berlin Wall: it is both a symbol of severe foreign occupation as a symbol of freedom and emancipation.¹¹¹ Due to the big amount of deportations and political prisoners during the Soviet regime almost everybody in Estonia has a family member of knows a person that was kept in Patarei. Ants Kraut and Andrus Villem for instance told me in their interviews that apart from their ideals concerning conserving heritage sites, they also have a personal and emotional connection to the past of Patarei because they both had family members who were held in Patarei.¹¹² Therefore, they understand what Patarei can mean for people who have a similar association with the fort.

¹⁰⁸ Estonian Heritage Society, 'Objectives and their Achievement', <http://182050.edicypages.com/board/objectives>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem.

¹¹⁰ Europa Nostra, 'Estonia: Country Representation', <http://www.europanostra.org/membership/estonia/>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

¹¹¹ T. Velliste, 'Trivimi Velliste', Interviewed by Onessa Novak. *68 Minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 23, 2017. 23'25-23'45.

¹¹² A. Kraut, 'Ants Kraut 1', Interviewed by Onessa Novak. *22 Minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 23, 2017. 7'03-7'10.

Ants Kraut argued that it's a very bad idea to sell the fort to private investors because then nobody can control if an appropriate historical narrative is being told there. Patarei is a symbol of the severe oppression during the occupations and therefore presenting its history to the public should be the main objective of the heritage site according to Kraut.¹¹³ During the occupation period, many heads of the Estonian state, founders of the Estonian republic, were held in Patarei and executed, therefore the heritage site is a place that bears a significant remembrance of the martyrs of the Estonian republic.¹¹⁴ Kraut believes that the Estonian government nowadays is mostly afraid that it will be a bad investment because Estonia already has many museums.¹¹⁵ When I asked him whether it might also be that the government is hesitant due to the Russian-speaking minority or Russia as a neighboring country, because the fort will bear the narrative of the Russians as the perpetrator, Kraut did not believe that was the case. Since joining the EU and being a member of NATO he believes that Russia is not something Estonians are really afraid of.¹¹⁶

Andrus Villem used to be the museum manager of Patarei for ten years until RKAS decided to close the fort for visitors in October 2016. Due to his experience in politics because of his former employment as a politician, he believes that the government is simply not interested in Patarei and that they are lazy to put effort in it. The politicians who are interested in the fort are silenced by their colleagues who do not take the case seriously.¹¹⁷ Apart from that, he believes that RKAS is a business company more than anything else and that they see an opportunity in Patarei by having the possibility to build apartments in section two. He also believes that RKAS did not close Patarei due to the developed state of deterioration it is in, but because they wanted to punish the Patarei-enthusiasts because they disagreed with RKAS' development plans and gave the case public attention.¹¹⁸ Villem believes that a 'PPP' (public, private partnership) solution is the best option for preserving Patarei because then the state will be able to control what is going on in the building and see whether the past is being respected, but at the same time the state is not completely responsible and they can restore with third party donations or cooperation.¹¹⁹ He explained the importance of Patarei's past by making an analogy with electric batteries (rather than cannon batteries, what the name 'Patarei' actually refers to): it

A. Villem, 'Andrus Villem', Interviewed by Onessa Novak. 27 *Minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 23, 2017. 15'50-16'01.

¹¹³ A. Kraut, 'Ants Kraut 2', 8'16-8'26.

¹¹⁴ A. Kraut, 'Ants Kraut 1', 18'24-19'48.

¹¹⁵ A. Kraut, 'Ants Kraut 2', 19'21-19'27.

¹¹⁶ Ibidem, 22'42-22'53.

¹¹⁷ A. Villem, 'Andrus Villem', 2'14-2'30.

¹¹⁸ Ibidem, 4'25-5'02.

¹¹⁹ Ibidem, 2'54-3'02.

is a memory battery, it has several layers of memories and there are so many different meanings and interpretations of this place.¹²⁰ Therefore, according to Villem, it is important to keep these plural pasts available for the public.

Trivimi Velliste, the founder of EMS, but also the former minister of foreign affairs, former Estonian ambassador of the UN and chairman of the Pro Patria Institute argued that heritage and a historical consciousness is the only way to protect one's national identity. He believes that the past is always in service of the future and that conserving sites like Patarei is the protection of the Estonian future, identity and nation.¹²¹ In other words, he is aware of the presentist nature of heritage and wants to use that strategically in order to secure the legitimation of the Estonian national identity. The slogan of EMS is for that reason 'heritage protection is the protection of our future'. Velliste believes that the politicians do not take action for Patarei because there is not enough money available, and there is no clear call of the public to preserve it.¹²² Therefore, he pleads for more publications in the media about Patarei and more campaigns to make people aware of the importance of the past of the fort. Apart from that, he agrees with Andrus Villem on the idea that the 'PPP' solution will be the most plausible and probably the most successful way of preserving the past.¹²³ Lastly, Velliste argues that it is also essential to find a common ground between the European perception of the Patarei past, and the Estonian one. He described that the European perspective is mostly focused on architectural beauty and uniqueness, while the Estonian past of Patarei is mostly associated with pain and the dark occupation past, in other words with the third memory boom.¹²⁴ Velliste believes that finding this common ground is very important because he realizes that European funding is key to preserving the fort in the best way possible.¹²⁵

Helle Solnask, member of EHS and representative of Europa Nostra in Estonia, argued that she does not believe that Europa Nostra perceives the past of Patarei that differently than the Estonians, as Trivimi Velliste argued.¹²⁶ She believes that Patarei is seen as a unity: it started as a fortress in 1840, but what happened between 1940 and 1991 is also deemed important. The unique architecture is just another reason why the fort should be preserved in an appropriate manner. Solnask argued that, although the fort's decay is continuing, in way she is happy that RKAS and the government did not manage to sell the fort to a private investor in the last ten

¹²⁰ Ibidem, 3'59-4'04.

¹²¹ T. Velliste, 'Trivimi Velliste', 55'26-55'37.

¹²² Ibidem, 54'51-55'02.

¹²³ T. Velliste, 'Trivimi Velliste', 7'08-7'15.

¹²⁴ Ibidem, 26'36-26'50.

¹²⁵ Ibidem, 27'43-27'51.

¹²⁶ H. Solnask, 'Helle Solnask', 5'06-5'11.

years because now the EMS and 7ME could take action and emphasize the importance of the fort to the public. With greater national and international attention, the chance is bigger that the fort will be restored the way EMS pleads for.¹²⁷ She believes that RKAS does not pay any attention to the past of Patarei and that the government just sees the building as a burden and that it is therefore needed that other parties also share their opinions.¹²⁸

Kadi Pilt, former tour guide of the Patarei fort and member of EMS believes it is a shame that the fort was closed in October 2016 by RKAS. She believes that RKAS just does not understand what this past means to people.¹²⁹ During her years as a tour guide she met a great number of people that are in one way or another connected to the fort. Former prisoners that came back to relive and cope with their traumas, same goes for the guards, wardens and executioners. Also, a lot of family members of former prisoners came to visit the fort to see what hardship their family members have lived through.¹³⁰ Pilt described that at the beginning, the years after the building stopped being a prison and Andrus Villem opened it to the public, Estonians were afraid to visit the place because of all the bad memories it carries regarding the occupation past. In the first place, the fort was mostly visited by tourists who are interested in urban exploring and dark tourism. But slowly, the place became more popular amongst Estonians and Pilt started to meet people who had memories of the past who started correcting her of the mistakes in her tours or adding extra information. For this reason, Pilt believes it is important to keep this heritage site open for the public. This way the site can help dealing with the traumatic past, teach the public about the past and the people working there can learn about an undocumented past and ideally document it for future generations.¹³¹

Although all these people are members of the same organization and their opinions are alike, there are small differences in the perception of the past and their opinion about which past should be put the emphasis on and how. Ants Kraut and Andrus Villem represent the people that have a personal connection to the past, and therefore want to keep these memories in the collective/cultural memory in order to remember what the country has been through. Along with Trivimi Velliste, Ants Kraut has unlike Andrus Villem a more nationalist perspective on the use of the heritage site: they believe the past should be placed into the national narrative in order to make it become a part of the national identity of Estonia. Trivimi Velliste even explicitly stated that the past remembered through heritage is presentist, and therefore a building block of

¹²⁷ Ibidem, 22'34-22'46.

¹²⁸ Ibidem, 23'12-23'34.

¹²⁹ Kadi Pilt, 'Kadi Pilt 2', interviewed by Onessa Novak. *75 minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 24, 2017. 2'49-3'02.

¹³⁰ Ibidem, 3'56-4'12.

¹³¹ K. Pilt, 'Kadi Pilt 2', 8'35-8'49.

(national) identities and in order to secure the future of the Estonian state it is important to use these tools adequately. He is also explicit about the differing interpretation of the past by Europa Nostra/the EU and Estonia. While Helle Solnask believes that Europa Nostra does understand the importance of the Estonian narrative of the place and that if the EU ends up helping with funding, this part of the past will be remembered. Andrus Villem pleads for a more plural and universal approach. Kadi Pilt believes that having the place open for the public will help the memories be remembered and, in the ideal situation, written down.

Although the stakeholders have different goals with bringing Patarei back to the collective memory, it does not necessarily have to mean that the pasts that are brought forward conflict with each other or cannot coexist. Europa Nostra is mostly interested in the past connected to Patarei that unites Estonia with the rest of Europe in order to pursue their ideals of European integration and forming a European identity through universal heritage. EMS on the other hand focusses on a past that fits the narrative of the national identity. The architectural pre-occupation period past of Patarei is, in fact, also part of the national identity because that past actually happened in Estonia because the Patarei sea fortress is located in Tallinn. The materiality of the heritage site makes it connected to the place it is situated in. The victim narrative that accompanies the occupation past, can on its turn also fit within a greater European historical narrative of WWII. Although in western-Europe mostly this victim narrative is about Nazi occupations or the holocaust, in post-Socialist countries also the Stalinist era falls into that category. Estonia is not the only post-Socialist country that became a member of the EU and therefore this addition to that narrative could be adopted or shown alongside the European narrative. Also, reflecting on Plets' article 'Heritages in the Making' Patarei is definitely not the only heritage site that represents several interpretations of the past and houses several public memories.

RKAS, Tallinn municipality and the Estonian government:

Both EMS and Europa Nostra/EIB have criticized the position of the government and RKAS. They criticized the government due to their lack of interest in the heritage site, and RKAS because of their business-focused perspective that gives the feeling that the company either does not care about the past or does not realize what the past means for people. I placed these three stakeholders in one section because RKAS is, although business oriented, the state real estate company, and the municipality of Tallinn and the Estonian government both take distance from

the restoration of the fort by appointing RKAS to have the responsibility over the fort (by selling it to a private investor).

Normally a case like Patarei would fall under the responsibility of the ministry of culture. But by making RKAS responsible, the case is in fact handled by the ministry of administrative affairs.¹³² Making the handling with and decision making of the fort done from a completely different perspective than heritage with a significant past normally has. Interestingly enough, the War museum in Tallinn is very much interested in being housed in the fort once the restoration is finished.¹³³ However, this museum falls under the ministry of defense rather than like most museums under the ministry of culture.¹³⁴ The ministry of culture argues that there are already too many heritage sites and museums in Estonia that, considering how much the restoration will cost, Patarei will be too costly and will not add enough to the cultural landscape to make the restoration worth it. In short, Patarei sea fort is seen as a burden by the government. The municipality of Tallinn is too small-scaled to take action themselves. But, according to Helle Solnask, the mayor of Tallinn is starting to understand the importance of the fort.

On the 20th of April I interviewed Timo Äärmaa, the development director of RKAS who is in charge of Patarei. He described that RKAS is aiming on a multifunctional use of the fort: apartments or a hotel, museums, and restaurants or shops. The building is under official heritage protection and therefore it will be kept the way it is supposed to be. This also with the PPP solution Andrus Villem and Trivimi Velliste suggested. Äärmaa described that people objected to the zoning plan due to the fact apartments would be built in or next to a place with such heavy history and the place would therefore have a bad 'aura'. He said he understood that people had bad memories of the place, but that it is essential to develop and look to the future instead of being stuck in the past. He argued that the negative reactions RKAS and the government received because of Patarei are mostly emotional and irrational. In the zoning plan a partition of the building is explicitly selected to house a museum, so forgetting the past will not be an issue. Also, RKAS believes that European funding is a distant dream. This might be because RKAS cannot apply for a grant themselves although they are the state real estate agency, only a government or actively involved NGO can get European funding for such a project.¹³⁵

The government and municipality of Tallinn declined my offer to interview them about Patarei. Saying that they are mostly focused on heritage management on the whole and that they

¹³² 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 5.

¹³³ Estonian War Museum, 'About the Museum; Patarei', <http://www.esm.ee/about-us/patarei>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

¹³⁴ Estonian War Museum, 'About the Museum: Introduction', <http://www.esm.ee/about-us/introduction>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

¹³⁵ 7ME, *7 Most Endangered 2016: Patarei Sea Fort – Report*, 5-6.

cannot help me with a single case. Especially concerning post-Soviet heritage because Patarei was built in the 1840's. Indicating that Patarei might be perceived as a heritage site due to its architectural past rather than the socio-cultural past from the 1940s until 1991. Which on its turn fits within the Polish 'gruba kreska'-policy concerned with the Soviet past Garton Ash described. A policy that also fits RKAS' future-oriented approach to the case. This because the Soviet past is ignored in order to develop. Interestingly enough, on the website of the Estonian government it says that Estonia is currently making preparations to join the 'Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value on Cultural Heritage' in 2018.¹³⁶ This is a convention especially focused on what heritage means for people and the collective memories attached to it. Rather than just the architectural side of heritage. Also, it says that the protection and conservation of heritage sites is a human right.¹³⁷ At the same time, there is no mention of Patarei on the page of the government and the same government is trying to sell the site to a private investor while there are numerous public pleas, both national and international, to restore the site because of its significant Soviet past.

Because the ministries declined the invitation to be interviewed it is hard to give a clear answer of why they distanced themselves from dealing with the restoration of the fort. It is, however another indication that they prefer not to give their attention to the case. Their unwillingness to be interviewed could either be because they simply do not have time to be interviewed, what could indicate that Patarei is not a priority or that they believe it does not require their direct attention. However, there is also a possibility that there is another reason they keep a distance. It could for instance mean that by taking their distance the government subtly shows their position towards remembering (or forgetting) the past that is associated with the fort. Namely, the traumatic Soviet-past. In 2007, the to be elected government promised their voters to remove the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn, a Russian WWII monument, from the city center to a military grave yard, erasing a representation of the Russian-speaking minority from the identity of the center of Tallinn.¹³⁸ Making it even more focused on the national Estonian identity and medieval past. Due to this decision, heavy riots broke out that lasted two days. Some people in Estonia believe that the riot was orchestrated by the Russian state. The big escalation that came with openly dealing with Soviet heritage could have made the Estonian state wary of creating another riot by openly erasing heritage of the Soviet period.

¹³⁶ Republic of Estonia, 'Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value on Cultural Heritage', last updated: December 20, 2016, <http://www.kul.ee/en/council-europe-framework-convention-value-cultural-heritage-society-or-faro-convention>, accessed 25 July 2017.

¹³⁷ Ibidem.

¹³⁸ I. Novikova, 'Baltic *Lieux de Mémoire* of the 1990s to Early 2000s: Nostalgia, Trauma, Change', 307.

It could be possible that the Estonian government is wary of creating this kind of problems either because, geopolitically, they want to have a good relationship with the neighboring country, Russia. Or they do not want to marginalize the Russian-speaking minority by portraying them as the perpetrator. The director of the museum of Occupation in Tallinn, Merilin Piipu described in her interview held on the 24th of April that the Russian-speaking minority for instance still takes offence of the name 'Museum of Occupations' and that the board of the museum is thinking of changing the name to VABAMU what is a merger of the words 'freedom' (Vabalis) and 'museum' to get rid of the nationalist, anti-Russian reputation the museum has.¹³⁹ Although the museum is a private museum instead of a state-owned museum,¹⁴⁰ this struggle with even the name of the museum illustrate how difficult portraying the past can be when one is aspiring to also take the position of the marginalized subaltern groups into account.

Lastly, it could also be possible that, simply put, the economic opportunities the fort offers due to its ideal location in the gentrified kalamaja district outweigh the importance of preserving the past. De Cesari and Herzfeld described that the city is the new key site of capitalist accumulation and exploitation, and that neo-liberal governments privatize heritage in order to make profit or to enforce austerity: namely, privatizing as much as possible in order to reduce government budget deficits.¹⁴¹ In this sense Patarei is ideal, the heritage site is located in a heritagized and gentrified area, and secondly for the government the costs of restoring the building are too high which would only make the government budget deficits larger. By selling it the government will earn money and the restoration will be in the hands of a private investor that will enhance the building, making the kalamaja district an even more profitable and appealing place.

Concluding, although there is not that much information at hand about why the Estonian government sees Patarei as a burden and does not want to deal with it, by analyzing another case-study and difficulties in the Estonian society one can think of several reasons. Firstly, it could be possible that the Estonian government believes that there are already too many heritage sites and museums that represent this past and due to how big the restoration of Patarei will be they decided to sell it to a private investor.

¹³⁹ M. Piipuu, 'Merilin Piipuu 2', interviewed by Onessa Novak. *36 Minutes*. Recording. Tallinn, April 24, 2017. 14'21-15'11.

¹⁴⁰ Museum of Occupations, 'About Museum: Who We Are', <http://www.okupatsioon.ee/index.php/et/home/whoweare>, accessed on 25 July 2017.

¹⁴¹ De Cesari & Herzfeld, 178.

Secondly, the Estonian government is not interested in portraying a past where the Russians are seen as the perpetrator. This could be because the Estonian government does not want that Estonia is associated with the post-Soviet past to make a clean transition to the 'western' European identity. This fits in the 'gruba-kreska' ideal that Garton Ash described: people cannot be held accountable for what happened in a dictatorship, in order to transition to a modern democracy, where everyone is seen as equal, the crimes of the past should be forgotten. However, in this case the concept of 'unity in diversity', the European idea that Europe's identity is the plural geography of heritage sites is ignored. The second reason could be that the government is wary of making a bold political statement towards Russia: by actively supporting the remembrance of the crimes Russia committed during the occupation, roughly twenty years after regaining their independence, could give off negative signals that might be interpreted as an insult. Russia already stopped importing Estonian products and sees the stationed NATO troops on the border as a provocation of the West. By actively remembering the Russians as the perpetrator might enlarge the hostility between the countries. Onken for instance argues that nowadays Russia does not identify itself with the Soviet Union, and therefore see the crimes as something the SU did and not them.

The third reason why the government keeps their distance of restoring Patarei could be because they do not want to marginalize the Russian-speaking minority even more by making them feel like the 'bad guys'. The minority mostly consists of blue-collar workers that were sent to Estonia after the 1940s to enforce the Russification. These people were, amongst others, the prison guards that worked in Patarei. In other words, the ones that enforced the terrible things that happened in Patarei. Estonia already came under international attention by being accused of discriminating the Russian-speaking minority by Amnesty International and the UN in 2007. Perhaps the government is actively trying to improve the living conditions of this group by stepping away from a narrative that blames them for the traumatic past.

Lastly, it could also be that the economic opportunities of selling the heritage site outweigh the importance of preserving the past, fitting the neo-liberal face of the Estonian government. This will enhance the already gentrified kalamaja district and dissolve a big investment, namely a restoration of estimated 110 million euro.

Conclusion:

At the moment, the Patarei-case is stuck. In the near future, it can be either remembered or forgotten and that depends on what kind of political decisions are made concerning the fort.

There are three main stakeholders to be discerned: The first is Europa Nostra and the EIB that put the fort in the 7ME list to underline the importance of the fort and help saving it in order to construct a common European identity with the 'united in diversity' discourse. The second stakeholder is the EMS functioning as the active NGO that is trying to influence the decision of the government to sell the fort to a private investor because they deem the past associated to the fort as important for preserving the Estonian national identity. And the third group is the Estonian government, RKAS and the municipality of Tallinn that want to get rid of the burden the fort is by selling it to a private investor. In fact, EMS and Europa Nostra are trying to reach the same goal, in other words, they want to save the fort, and therefore the problem concerning Patarei can be seen as a dichotomy of either remembering and forgetting.

However, I divided the stakeholders in three categories due to their reasons why the fort should be remembered or forgotten that is formed by their priorities concerning the pasts the fort represents. Europa Nostra/EIB want to restore the fort from an international and European presentist perspective: by restoring such a heritage site they are trying to strengthen the European identity by adding a significant heritage site to the list of European heritages. This fits into EU's idea that the European identity is a 'unity in diversity', where heritage is the most concrete example of due to its material quality. EMS wants to restore a fort from a nationalistic presentist perspective: the slogan of the society is 'heritage protection is the protection of our future', they see heritage as a building block of the national identity. By actively representing the atrocities Estonia lived through during the occupation period, they show that the nation has always been different than Russia and struggled to keep their autonomy. However, not all the members of the society explicitly think this way, some members are interested in Patarei because of a personal connection, or because of the ideal to preserve the past. RKAS, the government and the municipality are trying to sell the fort to a private investor. In this case, it depends on the private investor whether the fort will be remembered or forgotten. If it is remembered, the way the past is presented depends on the narrative the private investor brings forward. This narrative will not be controlled by the government and therefore it cannot be held accountable to it.

It could be that the government is not interested in preserving the fort or does not have enough funds to undertake such a big project. But there are also other, political reasons why the government decided not to be responsible for Patarei. This could be either because of an excess of museums and heritage sites in Estonia, or that the (neo-liberal) government sees an economic opportunity by selling the fort to an private investor, or because they are weary of dealing with the Socialist past. This could be because of three reasons: firstly, because the Estonian government wants to make an easy transition to a western democracy where a post-Socialist

reputation stands in the way of doing so. Secondly, because the act of actively remembering the Russians as the perpetrator, 26 years after regaining their independence, could insult Russia (that is already on edge). Thirdly, because the act of actively remembering the Russians as the perpetrator will marginalize the Russian-speaking minority even more and keep the hostility towards the minority in the Estonian society alive.

Conclusion and discussion:

The research question of this thesis is: how can the act of remembering and forgetting heritage, seen as a form of materialized collective memory, be used to understand the identity politics and the portrayal of a national identity after the radical change of the political climate that post-Soviet Estonia underwent? In order to answer these questions, I posed several sub-questions: What is the academic debate surrounding the topics memory, heritage and identity and in what way do these topics correspondent with each other? In what way can the development of Estonia as an independent nation be understood in a broader context of the post-Soviet transition to capitalism or the west? How does this relate to the political decision making surrounding heritage? What do the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with the restoration of the Patarei Sea Fort tell us about Estonian identity politics and their way of commemorating the past? And finally, how can this be compared to other heritage sites in Estonia?

In chapter one, two and three I answered the sub-questions. In chapter one I described the critical heritage debate that started in the 1980's. From a materialist perspective where emphasis was laid on the material worth of the heritage site, in this period the debate switched to a metahistorical perspective: the subject and how the subject perceives the object became more important than the object itself (the heritage site). An influential scholar on this subject was David Lowenthal with his article 'Fabricating Heritage'. Although Lowenthal believes that historical truth can be grasped, which is a modernist perspective, his understanding of heritage is post-modern because he steps away from the object and underlines the subjectivity of the past that is assigned to the heritage site. Lowenthal argued that the subjectivity tells us more about the present than the actual past and therefore Heritage is presentist. In other words, it shows the present ideal understanding of the past that will shape the future. The subjective understanding of the heritage sites is a form of institutionalized collective memory, or as Jan Assman would call it, cultural memory. The concept collective/cultural memory has known the same academic trajectory of modernism, post-modernism and the period after post-modernism where is still believed that the past cannot be grasped completely, but in some ways reality can be reflected. Making this trend more positivist than post-modernism.

After David Lowenthal, in the 2000s, the inquiry to heritage was focused on laying bare the institutionalized narratives that are associated to heritage sites (Smith, Graham, Macdonald). These narratives turned out to be mostly nationalist and essentialist, excluding the narratives of subalterns and minorities in society. Later, in the 2010s, scholars argued that no heritage site has

a singular meaning, and the institutionalized narrative is just one of many understandings of the heritage site (Plets). Also, heritage moved away from being presentist only in service of the national identity, but broadened itself to global narratives (Meskell, Harrison) and European/EU narratives (Lähdesmaki), adding yet another layer of meaning over heritage. However, although these narratives represent a bigger geographic field, they do mostly just represent a singular narrative. This chapter serves the purpose of giving an academic context in which the Estonian case can be understood, but can also serve as a framework to categorize the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with the Patarei-case in order to understand the underlying message of their actions.

In chapter two I answered the following sub-questions: in what way can the development of Estonia as an independent nation be understood in a broader context of the post-Soviet transition to capitalism or the west? How does this relate to the political decision making surrounding heritage? In this chapter I first gave a historical overview of Estonia's geopolitical position during the Soviet occupation and described the demographics of Estonia to highlight that, however the Russian occupation ended, a lot of Russian-speakers stayed in Estonia who were brought to the country to accelerate the Russification. The quarter of Estonia's population consists of this group, and however they are still perceived as perpetrators by many Estonians, they are a part of the Estonian society and therefore all political decisions relating to the occupation past has an impact on this group because their narrative often differs from the institutionalized narrative of the past.

Later in the chapter I described that right after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, when Estonia regained its independence in 1991, it became popular to erase traces of the Soviet past in the urban sphere and collective memory. Profiling Estonia as a country that fits the 'western' historical discourse by placing the emphasis on the medieval, Hanseatic past of Estonia and unfreezing a nationalist, western-European perspective on what happened in WWII. This was done in order to make an easier transition to the European/'western' identity. But also, it was a way of reconstructing the Estonian national identity, that has been suppressed since the first Soviet occupation in 1940. Around the time when Estonia got its membership for the EU, in the 2000s, it became popular to uncover the traumatic Soviet-past. This was a form of reconciliation. However, at the same time, forgetting or erasing traces of the Soviet past did not end. An example of this is the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn. A Russian WWII memorial that was erased from the city center of Tallinn in 2007. However, due to the great symbolic importance of this statue this was perceived as a form of marginalization of the Russian-speaking minority, and therefore riots broke out after the removal of the statue.

In the last chapter I discussed the perspectives of the stakeholders concerned with the Patarei Sea Fort, connecting these perspectives with what I have described in chapter one and two. EMS and Europa Nostra/EIB share their perspective on what should be done with the Patarei fort. Namely, the fort should be restored appropriately with the PPP-model (public, private partnership). Appropriately means that ideally the traumatic Soviet and Nazi past of the fort should be remembered by a museum that will be housed in this fortress after the restoration. Also, the architectural significance should be restored by turning back the alterations made to the fort in order to function as a prison, and making it look as a fort again. EMS wants to save the fort from its decay in order to make it part of the Estonian national identity, a country that has been victim of foreign occupations of two severe dictatorial regimes. And Europa Nostra/EIB is interested in saving the fort because it is a unique structure in the architectural tradition of the European continent, making it a perfect heritage site part of the collection of European heritage sites that represent the European 'unity in diversity' ideal.

The Estonian government, however, distances itself from the fort and tries to get rid of their responsibility of the heritage site by selling it to a private investor through RKAS. This could be done for three reasons: firstly, because the restoration of the fort is very costly (approximately 110 million euro's) and what history the fort represents is already represented in one of the many Estonian heritage sites or museums. Secondly, it because the fort is situated in a gentrified area it is a good investment to sell the fort to a private investor that will restore the fort and enhance the kalamaja district even more, generating more profit for the state. The third reason could be that the Estonian government is wary of actively remembering the Soviet occupation 26 years after regaining its freedom. This is either because the government identifies itself as 'western' or European, or it is afraid to provoke Russia or marginalize its big Russian-speaking minority. Although there is nowhere information to be found about the last two reasons, it could be very plausible when the position of the government is analyzed with the Bronze Soldier case in mind.

These sub-questions were posed to answer the research question 'how can the act of remembering or forgetting heritage, seen as a form of materialized collective memory, be used to understand the identity politics and the portrayal of a national identity after the radical change of the political climate that post-Soviet Estonia underwent?'. Although the answer of the last sub-question already answered this question, because the position of the government was never made clear to me and therefore I had to do a broader analysis, there are a few other things to be considered. Although the political climate radically changed after Estonia regained its

independence, and the long suppressed national identity was uncovered which is different than the identity Estonia had under the Soviet occupation, it is hard to say that these identities are two separate identities. An occupation that lasted 51 years does have a big impact on a country. Several generations grew up in occupied/Soviet Estonia, people did things that were considered acceptable in one regime but a crime in the other (or the other way around) and everywhere are remains to be found of that past: (collective) memories, trauma's, street names, the Russian-speaking minority, mentality, heritage sites, museums commemorating the atrocities the nation lived through the occupation and etcetera. Whether this past is seen as something that was opposed onto the nation or not, it is really difficult to argue that it is not a part of the identity at all. Every decision regarding the remembrance of this past, whether it is forgetting, partly remembering or remembering completely will one way or another cause for emotional reactions or new perspectives. Therefore, I believe that heritage sites like Patarei should be remembered, and in the act of remembering a plural landscape of differing pasts representing as much as possible groups and perspectives of the Estonian society should be represented.

By the inquires to uncover the different perspectives on the act of remembering or forgetting the Patarei Sea Fort, I tried to be as inclusive as possible. Unfortunately, due to the length of this thesis and the appointed time in which I could do research it was impossible to represent the complete spectrum of opinions on the fort. For instance, I tried to incorporate the perspective of the Russian-speaking minority in the narrative, but there were no sources to be found and every time I contacted someone about it my invitation got declined or I never received a reply. I believe that if I would have described my thesis and questions differently in my e-mails to these people, I maybe would have convinced them to be interviewed. Also, to strengthen my story about the EIB and Europa Nostra I could have interviewed more important players concerned with the selection process of the 7ME list and to uncover why exactly these international organizations chose Patarei and which past they deem most important to be remembered. Apart from that, theoretically I could have delved deeper into EU's heritage policies to give Europa Nostra and EIB a bigger context and clarify their points of view even more. Lastly, writing about neo-liberalism connected with post-socialism and the importance of NGO's in these countries would have helped contextualizing the positions of both the Estonian government, RKAS and EMS.

In order to get the full picture of the identity politics concerning the Patarei Sea Fort, at least a few months extra would be needed to interview representatives of several other groups in the Estonian society concerned with the fort. It might even be interesting to inquire whether the fear of angering Russia by portraying it as the main-perpetrator is rightly so or not. Apart from

that, my perspective on this case is now mostly a top-down perspective where the opinion of the citizens of Estonia is ignored (however, politicians, real estate agents and NGO employees are in fact also citizens). It would be interesting to also incorporate public opinions to see whether the stakeholders involved have a good understanding of what the public actually wants. Lastly, comparing this case with several other cases could also lead to a bigger understanding of what is exactly going on with the remembrance of Patarei.

Appendix: Abbreviations:

7ME: 7 Most Endangered

AHD: Authorized Heritage Discourse (concept by Laurajane Smith)

EMS: Estonian Heritage Society. Derived from: Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts

EIB: European Investment Bank

RKAS: State Real Estate Agency. Derived from: Riigi Kinnasvara AS

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