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**PUBLISHING AND BOOK DISTRIBUTION  
IN ESTONIA IN 1940–2000**

Abstract

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## INTRODUCTION

Books are one of the most important tools of spiritual communication and the institutions, which produce and disseminate them – the publishing houses, printing offices and bookshops – occupy a central place in the intellectual and cultural system of the society. The publishing of books is directly influenced by the political, social and economical conditions of the society. The access to information, which is disseminated through printed matter, is an important factor in the development of every society, the volume and contents of information depends on the general atmosphere of the society, its democratic or totalitarian nature. The dissemination of books is also influenced by their prices, which depend on the economical conditions of a country. The books help to pass on the knowledge, acquired by previous generations, to maintain the cultural traditions and create the preconditions for progress, future development. The study of the book publishing system in a certain country gives a picture of the society as a whole, the past and present situation in the various fields of economy, science, culture and their potential. On the other hand, a closer look at the publishing world and book production of a country presupposes the acquaintance with its political structure, educational system and the development of science and techniques.

The present research work concentrates on the development of book publishing, printing and dissemination in Estonia in 1940–2000, analysing the political and economic factors, which had impact on these processes. It also includes an analysis of the book production of this period, studying the number of titles, the number of copies, thematic aspect and the types of literature.

The work is theoretically based on the functional theory of book science, which has been, above all, presented in the works of book researchers from Poland. For example, in the works of K. Migon (Мигон 1991: 87) the object of book studies is the book and the processes connected with this phenomenon like the creation of a book, its dissemination and reception, the results of these processes and the persons and institutions which take part in these processes. This matter, the book, is treated from cultural and social aspects and through the functions deriving from them, excluding other aspects such as the chemical structure of the different parts of a book, the technical details of the printing machines etc. The book studies study the movement of a book from the creator of its content to its reader. Thus methodologically the book studies concentrate on the structure and functions of a book, the contents and the form of a book, the processes and institutions of book production and dissemination (publishing, printing, book trade) and the reader.

The book studies study a certain content in a certain form, in the case of this work it would be the book production issued in Estonia during the Soviet occupation in 1940–1941 and in 1944–1991, the books published during the Nazi occupation in 1941–1944 and the books issued in the Estonian Republic in 1991–2000. In order to present as whole a picture on the Soviet Estonian book as possible, the publishing in the Estonian language in the Soviet rear in 1941–1944 has also been treated.

The book science treats the book processes in historical, contemporary or prognostic aspects. The present work belongs to historical works and therefore the object of book history should be formulated. According to K. Migon (Мигон 1991: 115) the book history studies the history of creation, dissemination and reading of books or, in other words, the history of communication which is accomplished through books. The history of book should be studied in connection with the social, economic, political processes of the society. During this research the facts should be established, which demonstrate the changes in the functioning of books. Their interpretation and generalisation enable the researcher to find the mechanisms, which direct the development of the society and culture.

Analogous definitions of book history could be found also in the works of other book historians, for example J. Feather (1981), P. Raabe (1976) and R. Darnton (2002). R. Darnton has pointed out that the most fruitful approach to book history presupposes its treatment as a form of social and cultural history of communication in the society. According to his ideas the research should be based on a communication circle, which includes the text, author, printer, mediator and reader. Thus he also looks at the elements of the book production and dissemination processes as components of a unitary communication process.

In accordance with the above-mentioned concepts the object of this research includes publishing, printing and book trade in Estonia in 1940–2000. As to the problems of dissemination of books it treats only the work of bookshops, not the dissemination of books through libraries, which has been studied in special works. The information on book production mirrored in bibliographies has also been omitted, as this is also a field of special research. The question of reading and the most popular types of literature are treated in connection with the issues of book trade. The issues of book design are studied in the parts of the work, dedicated to the treatment of printing. The book production of each period is analysed by types of literature – textbooks, fiction, scientific, popular-scientific, children’s and reference literature. The types are formed on the basis on the function of books.

There are not many works on the publishing history of the Soviet period in Estonia. One of the main characterisations of this period is to be found in a collective monograph “Eesti raamat 1525–1975: Ajalooline ülevaade” (“The Estonian Book 1525–1975: A Historical Overview”) published in 1978. The part on the Soviet Estonian book in it is divided into three subdivisions. The first of them treats the changes in the book world during the first year of the Soviet occupation in 1940–1941, the second describes the publishing of books in Estonian language in the Soviet rear area during the World War Two and the third gives an overview about the publishing and book distribution in Estonia in the post-war years up to the 1970s. This monograph, as a whole, was an important achievement of the Estonian book historians. On the one hand, it is a summing up of the work done in the post-war years and, on the other hand it is a basis for future research. However, the treatment of the Soviet period in it was written as an outline, giving many statistical facts but containing no in-depth scientific analysis of the period. And of course the time when the monograph was written – the Soviet period – marks the character and content of the review.

The matters connected with book publishing and their dissemination were the topic of numerous articles printed in the periodicals in the Soviet period, but these were mostly comments on the day’s news. It might be said that the researchers were not interested in taking a closer insight into the period. This is explained by the general political situation in the society, which made an objective presentation of various sides of life in the USSR impossible, the lack of academic freedom hindered the truthful analysis of the topic.

The interest of the general public and the researches towards the fate of the book in Soviet Estonia arouse in the second half of the 1980s in connection with the changes in the political situation in the USSR, when in the atmosphere of *perestroika* the censorship became less rigid and was eventually liquidated. This opened a possibility to write on all themes freely and without distortions. The fact that in the end of the 1980s – in the beginning of the 1990s the researches obtained an access to the archives, which were closed to them so far, was also of great significance.

Many interesting articles on book publishing have been published in the periodical press since the middle of the 1980s, containing analysis of the structure of the book production and publishing practices in Estonia during the Soviet period. One of the first noteworthy articles was written by M. Lauristin and P. Vihalemm (1986), summing up the results of the study on book demand in Estonia, which was organised by the order of the State Publishing Committee of the ESSR. U. Liivaku treated the structure of the book production in Estonia in the Soviet period in several articles (1987, 1989). The author described the stagnation of the Estonian book pro-

duction in this period, its lack of contacts with the Estonian history, the contemporary world and one-sided contents. H. Hansen (1989) in his turn compared the book development in different Soviet republics, coming to a conclusion that the manipulation of statistics was used to give the world a false picture of the flourishing of national cultures in the USSR.

The limited choice of foreign literature available for Estonian readers in the Soviet time was the topic of E. Soosaar (1988, 1991, 1993), who demonstrated the disproportion in issuing the works from different countries and periods.

The first articles on destroying books during the Soviet occupation were published in 1988. Their author A. Lõhmus was the first to describe how the banned books were removed from the libraries brought to Tallinn and Tartu and chopped up.

The publishing activities of the Soviet period was also the topic of the XIV scientific conference on Estonian book studies in January 1991, where many participants (E. Pillau, J. Toomla, U. Ussisoo) gave papers on publishing fiction, encyclopaedias etc at that time.

In the middle of the 1990s time was ripe for issuing more deeper and voluminous treatments on various aspects of the Soviet Estonian book. "Eesti raamatu lugu" ("The Story of the Estonian Book") by U. Liivaku was published in 1995, containing also a part on the years 1940–1991. The style of this book is mainly statistical, presenting numerous facts on Estonian book production and comparisons with the situation in Latvia, Lithuania and Finland. The author has also quarried a lot of data from the periodicals, giving a popular review of the book production in the Soviet Estonia and its dissemination among the Estonian people. His work does not, however, treat the work of publishing houses, printing offices and bookshops, the development and number of these enterprises and their working conditions.

The book "Nõukogude une-laadne elu" ("The Soviet Sleeping-like Life") by K.-O. Veskimägi (1996) treated the actions of censorship from its organization in 1940 till the liquidation in 1990. This work is based on archival material, using widely the archives of the Communist Party of the ESSR. Many documents, previously unknown to the researches and the public were published in this book. The most detailed description treats the years 1940–1953. This work is the first more profound study on censorship in Estonia and forms the basis for future research on this topic.

The first articles on the book life at the time of the German occupation were published in the beginning of the 1990s. This period was kept in total silence during the Soviet period. E. Annus (1991), S. Pärt and J. Tomingas (1995) have treated the book production of the years 1941–1944 in Estonia. J. Tomingas is one of the authors of the bibliography of the period – "Estonian National Bibliography. Books 1941–1944" accomplished in 1996. This topic has also been treated by Ü. Matjus (2001).

The first articles on the underground publications (so called self-publications) in Estonia during the Soviet period were also issued in the end of the 1980s-in the beginning of the 1990s. M. Soidro (1989) studied the leading illegal political publication in Estonia, "The Additions to the Free Dissemination of Ideas and News in Estonia". M. Kukk (1991) treated the political opposition in the Soviet Estonia, characterising also their leading publications. The same topic has been treated in the collection of texts on the Soviet period "The other Estonia" (1996), in the articles by T. Sarv (1987), K. Unt (2001) and in the book by V. Niitsoo (1997).

During the Year of the Estonian Book in 2000–2001 two major conferences were organised where the fate of the Estonian book during the Soviet period was treated in many papers (A. Lõhmus, P. Tulviste, A. Tamm, J. Adams). The contemporary development of publishing and the book in Estonia was analysed by M. Väljataga and P. Torop. The papers were published in the collections of articles (Raamatu ... 2001; Kloostrist ... 2001).

The conferences dealing with the problems of book publishing and dissemination in the Estonian Republic at the present time were organised in cooperation of the Estonian National Library, The Association of the Estonian Librarians and the Association of the Estonian Publishers in 1995 and 1997. The practitioners from libraries, publishing houses, bookshops talked about their present problems and made suggestions for the improvement of the situation.

The material mentioned above demonstrates, that there is no profound, thorough and all-embracing study on the development of the book production and dissemination in Estonia in the years 1940–1991, which would give a general picture of the development of publishing, printing and book trade. The earlier works present a short outline or treat one narrow aspect of the book processes. The present work aims at giving a more detailed characterisation of the system of managing and organisation of publishing, printing and book distribution, to demonstrate the principles of building the network of publishing houses, printing offices, bookshops and to enclose the political and economical conditions for their activities. It also includes an analysis of the book production, which is the result of the above-mentioned processes. In order to reach this aim the following research tasks have been formulated:

- To examine the formation and the changes in the system of managing the publishing, printing and book trade in Estonia from the introduction of the Soviet publishing system in 1940 until its collapse in 1988, taking into account the general development of the society and the role of the communist party in directing and controlling the book production
- To characterise the formation of the network of the state publishing houses, the political and economic conditions of their activities and to analyse the publishing activities of the organisations other than publishing houses
- To study the managing and the formation of the network of printing offices, to analyse the technical, economic and personnel problems of the printing industry; to characterise the quality of print and the book design
- To analyse the development of the network of book-shops, the number and locations of various book outlets, the different forms of selling books, the indices of book sales of the Soviet period
- To demonstrate the relations between the three fields of book production and dissemination – publishing, printing and book trade
- To analyse the quantity and thematic range of the title output of the Soviet period, the edition sizes, the trends in issuing various types of literature, to study the factors which caused the differences in the share of various types and genres
- To study the development of book production in Estonia during the Nazi rule and in the Soviet rear area in 1941–1944, pointing out the principles for the selection of manuscripts and characterising the work conditions of the publishing houses and printing offices.
- To give an overview of the trends in the book production since the end of the 1980s and in the Estonian Republic in 1991–2000, analysing the changes of the volume and contents of the title output, the changes in the economic conditions of book production and the legal framework for publishing activities. To study the development of printing industry and book trade in Estonia in 1991–2000.

The Soviet period has not yet been studied thoroughly and interpreted neither by the general historians nor by the researchers of different fields. One of the signs of the growing attention towards this period is the founding of the Research Center of the Soviet Period in Estonia by the Estonian State Archive in 1996, which draws together the historians from various institutions. As the articles about the founding of the Center point out, the studying of the Soviet period should become the priority of the Estonian historical research which would enable to create an understanding about the functioning of the Soviet society and about the formation of *homo soveticus*. The Soviet power understood fully the important role of books in this process and aimed at total control over this field. Thus studying the book production of the Soviet period fosters the creation of the complete conception of the nature of the Soviet society.

The treatment of the book production and distribution is divided in the following chronological sections in this work: The first year of the Soviet occupation from June 1940 till July 1941; The years of the World War Two from July 1941 till Autumn 1944 (it includes the treatment of publishing during the German occupation and the publishing of books in Estonian language in the Soviet rear area); The first post-war decade 1944–1955 as the heyday of Stalinism and the years 1956–1991 till the restoration of the Estonian independence. These periods have been traditionally used in the general history.

Among the sources, used for writing the present work are the books, issued in the Soviet period, also the bibliographical publications such as the national bibliography, bibliographic lists and catalogues of the leading libraries. A very important place was occupied by the archival material, which presented general data and concrete facts about the activities of various institutions. Numerous documents on the topic of the study were found in the collections of the Estonian State Archive, including the material on the State Publishing Center of the ESSR and the four book publishing houses which worked in its subordination, the material on the Board of Printing Industry, Publishing and Book Trade by the Council of Ministers of the ESSR, on the Estonian State Publishing House, on the State Publishing Committee of the ESSR and others. The same archive also preserves documents of the institutions, which existed during the German occupation, the Estonian Self-Government and its Directorate of Education, the Publishing Board and publishing houses.

Interesting data was found in the collections of the Archive of the Communist Party of the ESSR, mostly from the material of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda and Department of Science and Culture of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party. Many of the archival documents are presented to the public for the first time.

A lot of data is drawn from the Estonian periodicals, which printed news and articles on the activities of the publishing houses, printing houses, bookshops, also reviews of the publications. The situation on printing and book distribution was regularly discussed in the journal "Poliügrafist" ("The Printer"), issued in 1956–1988 by the Scientific-Technical Union of Printing Industry and Publishing Houses. In addition to the Estonian periodicals the all-union professional periodical publications are used as well as some studies on the Soviet publishing by Western authors, for example G. Walker (1978) and S. Lovell (2002). During the work on the monograph the material on general history, the history of literature, the development of economics, science and culture was studied.

The studying the Soviet period is hindered by the incompleteness of the sources, even the archives have been "purified" from the documents, which the communist party wanted to hide. On the other hand the documents are not totally trustworthy. The reports and overviews as well as articles and news have been written in accordance with the requirements of the communist party, giving a distorted picture of the situation, reflecting life as the party wanted to see it. The information they present cannot be treated as totally objective and truthful. It was also characteristic of the Soviet period that many decisions were never documented as the persons at power gave oral instructions and made deals during meetings and telephone calls without leaving a written record.

The analysis of the book production of the period is based on the statistical data and demonstrates the changes in the general production of titles and copies as well as in issuing different categories of literature and books on various topics. The main statistical sources were the books "25 aastat Nõukogude Eesti trükisõna (1940-1965)" ("25 years of the Soviet Estonian Printed Word" (1940–1965)) and "Nõukogude Eesti raamat 1940–1974" ("The Soviet Estonian Book in 1940–1974") compiled by L. Püss. Of great value were also the annual statistical overviews issued by the State Book Chamber of the Estonian SSR in 1963–1990. The statistical data on the book production in the Estonian Republic after 1991 has been obtained from the Acquisition Department of the Estonian National Library and from the Master's thesis by L. Metsar (2000).

## **1. THE ORGANISATION OF BOOK PRODUCTION DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF THE SOVIET RULE IN ESTONIA IN 1940–1941**

The first chapter of the monograph is dedicated to the first year of the Soviet rule in Estonia, 1940–1941. Epoch-making changes took place in Estonian history in 1940. In June the Soviet power was forcibly established here and in August Estonia was compelled to become a part of the USSR. The following cardinal reforms in politics, economics and culture unfolded, naturally, also the sphere of book publishing. Immediately after power had changed hands the physical and legal persons were deprived of the right to found printing offices, publishing houses or bookshops. All the corresponding enterprises were nationalised. The nationalised publishing houses were handed over to the State Publishing Center of the ESSR, which had been founded on September 2 in the same year. This center was formed after the pattern of the All-Union Association of State Publishing Houses (OGIZ). OGIZ was the product of the Stalinist “general offensive of socialism”. It was founded in 1930 and marked the victory of the administrative system in publishing. Henceforth the publishers lived by commands and ordinances from the authorities. The whole publishing system went under the control of the government apparatus and a certain liberty in issuing books typical of the new economical policy (nep) became a thing of the past. The OGIZ consisted of publishing houses, which were specialised by categories of literature or types of books and directed from one center. OGIZ also included associations of book trade institutions and printing offices. This structure demonstrates the urge of the Soviet system of managing the book production to concentrate all the three fields – publishing, printing and book trade under one directive body.

The structure of the State Publishing Center of the ESSR copied that of OGIZ. It included four book publishing houses, all of them specialising in a certain category of literature – political, pedagogical, scholarly literature, fiction and a publishing house of periodicals. Every one of them had a monopoly in their category. In order to disseminate the books issued by these publishing houses a special Trading Center was founded, which directed the activities of the nationalised bookshops. The printing offices were subordinated to the State Publishing Center of the ESSR in March 1941. So the all-union model for producing books had been accomplished in Estonia, publishing had become a state monopoly.

The main goal in developing the printing industry was the founding of big enterprises. This was achieved by merging the smaller and middle-sized firms, concentrating their equipment and personnel. The big enterprises were specialised on certain types of production.

The content and character of the books issued during the first year of the Soviet occupation demonstrate a complete change in comparison with the book production of the Estonian Republic before 1940. Book publishing as all other fields of social and cultural life were turned into propaganda tools of the communist party and had to serve as a medium of affecting people’s minds. The demand for books and people’s interests played no part in book production and only ideological considerations were taken into account. The books about Marxism-Leninism and socialist lifestyle, which were printed in huge print runs had to mould Estonians into “soviet” people, make them receptive to the new order. In the output of most types of literature the translations from Russian had the biggest share, as the works by the Estonian authors were no longer considered suitable for reading.

A new and important feature of book production was the change of its economical basis. It turned from market economy to state subsidies for the publishing houses and planned losses. Of great importance for propaganda purposes was also the cheapness of books, so they would be within everyone’s means. This was achieved by the subsidies to the book publishing system.

The special body to control the content of all the publications was founded in October 1940, called the Board of Literature and Publishing of the ESSR, which censored all the books and periodicals. No publication could be issued without the previous consent of the censors. The activities of the board also unfolded banning and destroying the books which had been published in the

Estonian Republic before 1940 and considered unsuitable by the communist party. Religious books were among the first to be removed from the public and school libraries as well as the books on geography, history and politics of the Estonian Republic before 1940 and its neighbouring countries. It is clear that the Soviet power wanted to destroy all the publications reminding people of Estonia as an independent state. On the lists of banned books we can also find the publications of various associations and unions, fiction, children's books, books on medicine and morals etc.

The activities of the State Publishing Center of the ESSR came to a halt in July 1941 when the battles of the World War Two began in Estonia and the Soviet troops were compelled to pull out as the Germans marched in.

## 2. THE ESTONIAN BOOK DURING WORLD WAR TWO IN 1941–1944

The second chapter of the work treats the situation in the book production branch during the World War Two in 1941–1944. The German rulers like the Soviet ones started their activities with removing the unsuitable books from the libraries and bookshops. This time these were mostly the titles, which had been banned on the territory of the whole *Reich* – communist works, the books by authors of the countries at war with Germany (with the exception of classical literature), Jewish literature, German antifascist authors.

The German authorities did not restore the freedom of press lost during the Soviet occupation – all the publications were controlled both by the Estonian as well as the German officials before printing. The attempts to reopen the publishing houses, which had worked in the independent Estonian Republic before 1940 were mostly unsuccessful. Publishing was subjected to the Publishing Board of the Estonian Self-Government and to the corresponding German *Amt für Verlagswesen*. For founding a publishing house a license by the Director of Education of the Estonian Self-Government and by the German authorities was needed.

As the German authorities were interested neither in reopening the former publishing houses which had worked during the independent Estonian Republic before 1940 nor in starting large publishing activities in Estonia, only a couple of publishing houses, *Eesti Kirjastus* (Estonian Publishing House) and *Tartu Eesti Kirjastus* (Estonian Publishing House of Tartu) to issue textbooks were established here at first. One of them was situated in Tallinn, the other in Tartu. Soon a third publishing house, *Agronoom* (Agronomist) was found for issuing books on agriculture and publications, offering help on solving everyday practical problems. For example many brochures suggested how people could substitute various food products and chemicals, which could not be obtained because of the war. Among popular topics were also books on building and different fields of handicraft. Later permission to start publishing was also given to institutions of higher education, religious societies and various organisations. Scholarly works were published by academic societies. The publishing house *Revaler Buchverlag*, which was subjected directly to the German authorities, issued the books in German. There were altogether 19 publishing houses and institutions with publishing rights in the end of the German occupation.

So in organisation of publishing the policy of preferring a small number of larger publishers continued like during the first year of the Soviet occupation. Licenses to open publishing houses were admitted also to a couple of private persons, who were already known to the authorities as directors of existing publishing firms. Still, opening private publishing houses had been absolutely impossible under the Soviet regime.

For publishing every publication a special permission was needed by the German publishing board. For acquiring this permission the manuscript was first sent to the Publishing Board of the Estonian Self-Government, where the first step of control took place. It was easier to get permission to publish textbooks and practical brochures. In case of fiction and scientific literature more manuscripts were rejected than allowed to publishing. Permission to publish was granted only to works, which were suitable for Nazi ideology, to manuscripts, propagating positive attitude, forbearance, and hard work. These values were acceptable to the authorities and were used to create a more favourable disposition towards the occupation among people, to foster acceptance with the situation.

*Amt für Verlagswesen* of the German authorities often demanded that the manuscripts should be changed. For example they often required, that the German names should always be on the first place in the lists of names. But the German authorities also gave orders to publish distorted versions of the Estonian history, which had to stress the role of Germans. The textbooks on Estonian literature could not include stories, depicting the conflicts between German landowners and Estonian peasants. So if during the first year of the Soviet occupation it inevitable to point out the special role of Russians in Estonian history, then during the German occupation this was replaced by propagating the role of the Germans.

Due to the lack of paper and censorship the book production of this period was modest, containing 799 titles. The most valuable publications of these years were the first editions of fiction by many Estonian writers and books, which analysed the events of the first year of the Soviet occupation.

All the sources point out the extraordinary popularity of books at that time. Reading was a good pastime during the long hours of curfew. There was also a shortage of consumer goods, so books were valued as an investment. Although the average print run was not small, amounting up to 3000–4000 copies, the demand was almost never satisfied.

The example of textbooks allows to compare the similarities and dissimilarities between the attitude of German and Soviet authorities. Both gave this field the priority in publishing and started publishing activities with producing new textbooks. The Soviet authorities banned the textbooks on history and geography, issued during the Estonian independence before 1940 immediately after the seizing of power. Many books on Estonian language and literature as well as nature and mathematics were also removed from the schools. The German authorities too began with replacing the textbooks. This time it were the books, published during the first Soviet year in 1940–1941. The books published during the Estonian Republic before 1940 were principally allowed because the writing and printing of new books took time. The only textbooks dating before 1940, which were banned were the books on history, Estonian and literature.

The printing offices were subordinated to the Estonian Self-Government. 40 enterprises worked during the years of the German occupation. The firms, which had not been liquidated by the Soviet Regime, were given back to the previous owners.

Publishing of soviet books in Estonian language continued in the rear areas of the Soviet Union during the war, mostly in Leningrad and Moscow, where publishing started with issuing newspapers and later extended to books. Mostly political brochures were produced here, fiction formed one fifth of the production, and publications on military topics formed another fifth. Half of the fiction issued here were works by Estonian authors, the other half – translations from Russian. The Estonian authors wrote mostly poetry on political and military topics, arousing to fight and agitating rage towards the enemy. The difference between the content of the books, produced in Estonia and in the Soviet rear at that time can be noticed here. Intensive publishing of political literature continued in the Soviet rear as it had already been seen during the first year of the Soviet occupation in Estonia. Fiction was also turned into a tool for agitation and propaganda. At the same time only a few political books were published in Estonia under the German occupation and the character of belle-lettres was mostly neutral by content.

Despite the political character of the publications issued in Estonian in the Soviet rear area, publishing in Estonian language was of great importance to the Estonians who had been evacuated here. One of the main tasks of political education among national units of the Soviet army and evacuated people was to force them to adopt the Russian language. Even the few Estonian newspapers and books helped to resist the pressure and to preserve contact with the mother tongue.

### **3. THE ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK BRANCH IN 1944–1955**

The third chapter of the monograph deals with the system of book publishing, printing and book trade in 1944–1955. After the end of the World War Two the Soviet occupation continued. The first post-war decade was characterised by the severe atmosphere of Stalinism. Estonia became firmly united to the Soviet empire and the local differences were nearly wiped out during these years. The decade marks the start of the assimilation of the Estonian culture, when the specific national features and historical traditions were systematically driven out. The all-union models were used in organising the educational system, academic and cultural activities as well all other fields of life. The Estonian culture, which had close ties with the rest of the world during the independence was now isolated from the cultural life of the foreign countries and the only possible contacts were with the Soviet republics, above all with Russia.

In the course of the all-union reform in publishing in 1949 the State Publishing Center of the ESSR was liquidated together with the four book publishing houses. All book production activities were concentrated in the Estonian State Publishing House, formed by merging the former four book publishing houses. It was the only publisher in Estonia in 1949–1964, issuing all types of books and categories of literature. The ultimate concentration hindered natural development of publishing and made it impossible to cover all the types and topics in necessary extent. Academic circles raised the question of founding a special publishing house for scholarly literature for many times, writers were interested in opening new publishing firms to speed up publishing of their works, teachers longed for a special publishing house for textbooks, but all the attempts to open additional publishing houses were unsuccessful. The applications to open new publishing houses had to be directed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Estonia, who in its turn had to ask permission from Moscow. The Central committee of the Communist Party of the USSR had a central role in directing and controlling the publishing activities all over the Soviet Union. But it seems that the attempts to establish new publishing houses were rejected already in Estonia.

Many people who had been active in publishing already in the Estonian Republic before 1940 continued to work in the publishing houses in the first post-war years. However, these editors and other workers were pushed aside in the end of the 1940s and the connection with the pre-war publishing practices, which had been alive through them, broke off. This took place at the same time when the campaign of disclosing the “bourgeois nationalists” was raging in the society. Practically everybody who was interested in preserving certain national features in the future development of Estonia could be called a “bourgeois nationalist”. But mostly this campaign was headed against educated people, who had been active in culture, science or administration in the independent Estonia before 1940. As a result the staff of cultural institutions, schools, universities, ministries, etc. was purged from them.

The situation in publishing houses reflected the political campaigns going on in the society in general. These were for instance the offensive of T. Lyssenko’s ideas in science, the theory that the class struggle becomes more violent in the process of building socialism, the founding of the collective farms etc. Every such campaign was accompanied with critical remarks from

the communist party in the address of the publishing houses for issuing ideologically unsuitable, politically false publications. The publishing houses had to admit their errors and redo their plans, removing banned ideas and authors. So there was a lack of manuscripts in the publishing house in the beginning of the 1950s. Only about 500 titles meant to general public and sold in bookshops were issued in Estonia in the first years of the 1950s. The majority of these titles were textbooks, practical brochures, political and technical books.

A multistage and complex system for censoring the manuscripts was introduced in the second half of the 1940s, that had to guarantee that only politically suitable texts would be published. Two “politically educated” persons read every original work at first. In addition to that, publishing councils were formed in every publishing house for discussing the manuscripts. In order to get the manuscript published it was also necessary to organise discussions in the societies of creative workers or scientific institutions. All the people, who had participated in the discussions, were made responsible for the political quality of the manuscript. It was hoped that in fear of a possible punishment everybody would try to find and remove all the disputable parts already before the reading by censors. The communist party officials also read many manuscripts. So the manuscript was read several times and “screened” thoroughly.

The Soviet publishing system achieved probably the most extensive control over the content of the book production, which has ever existed. This embraced all the publications and, as said before, all the manuscripts were read before publishing more than once. And in addition to censoring the books before publishing they were also controlled afterwards.

The communist party directives for organising the work in publishing houses stressed, that everything should be done according to the plans. The Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party, who sanctioned all the plans, was itself often behind the schedule, causing the whole production cycle to be late. Meeting the deadlines was also hindered by the time that was necessary for controlling the manuscript by the censors, which often lasted longer than expected. So the whole production process tended to be much longer than planned. The Communist Party often changed the plans, which had been already approved, removing some titles and adding new ones, mostly concerning current political campaigns. At the same time the communist party considered fulfilling the plans a proof of loyalty and people, who failed in it, were threatened with severe sanctions during the first post-war decade.

In addition to the ideological aspects the book production in the Soviet Union was influenced by the lack of paper and the fact that every publishing house could only use a certain amount of paper for its production. This amount of paper was allocated to the publishing house by the governing body of the book branch, who got it from the State Planning Committee of the ESSR. The republican committee in its turn got the indices from the all-union committees. It was impossible to obtain more paper for publishing than allocated to the branch by these bodies. The material for binding and the printing capacity were allocated to the publishers in the same way. So the publishers had to act within these limitations, which hindered them to react freely to the needs of the public.

Textbooks, practical publications, political literature, books on agriculture and technical publications dominated the book production of the first post-war decade. The latter increased especially in the last years of the 1940s, indicating at the beginning of industrialisation in Estonia. The books on agriculture were published in large quantity due to the forming of the collective farms. The practical publications include mostly norms, instructions, regulations, decrees and laws etc., which directed life in Estonia into the all-union model.

The output of fiction was quite modest. Only 27 books by Estonian authors were published in 1952 whereas the number of translations from Russian literature was 77. The circle of the Estonian writers whose works were allowed for publishing had become very limited due to the purges in the Writers' Union of the ESSR and the disclosure of the “bourgeois nationalists”.

In fact, the translations from Russian dominated not only fiction, but also all other categories of literature. The attack on national sciences in the end of the 1940s and in the beginning of the 1950s brought along a nadir in the publishing of national publications. The series of the Estonian classical authors were prepared to publication in the beginning of the 1950s, but this was due to the decree of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party from 1951. The decree provided that it was necessary to publish classical literature with commentaries and evaluations, explaining readers how the works should be understood. This was part of the campaign of re-evaluating the literary heritage and demonstrated the communist party's aspirations to show its favourable attitude towards culture. It should also be mentioned that the publishing of the literary journal with long traditions "Looming" ("Creation") continued even during the worst years of Stalinism, but the content and general style of this publication changed. The attempts to maintain its earlier bearing were criticised by the party and later articles disclosing the "bourgeois nationalists" were published here.

The first post-war decade was the gloomiest period for the Estonian book, and not only because of the above-mentioned processes, but also because of the banning and destroying of books, issued in the Estonian Republic during the years 1918–1940. Many lists of banned books were compiled after the war, including at least 3000 titles. Many books were simply shredded. The amount of the destroyed publications has been estimated to reach ten-twelve million copies of books and five-six million yearly sets of periodicals, which is a big loss for the Estonian culture.

Like in the first year of the Soviet occupation, books were published in large print runs in the post-war decade. The average print run went up to 8000 copies in the first post-war years. Both the print runs of books and periodicals were reduced in 1947. This was explained with the lack of paper, but one of the reasons was, without doubt, the lack of interest towards the communist literature among people. The warehouses of the Trading Center were full of books, which no one wanted to buy. Although book publishing operated at a planned loss, the party was not willing to produce books, which were never sold. These did not help to propagate the communist ideas nor were reasonable economically. Regardless of the domination of the ideological aspect in publishing, the economical aspects were not entirely forgotten either.

In the field of printing the main task after the World War Two was the restoration of the printing houses, which were destroyed during the war. The development of the network of printing offices is characterised by the centralisation of production by means of liquidating a part of small printing offices and merging the other.

The number of printing offices changed many times due to the reforms of the administrative division of Estonian territory in the 1950s. New counties were formed and then liquidated again. Every county should have had a printing office for printing the local newspapers and so with the forming of a new county a printing office was founded also. As the division into counties was changed a couple of years later, the printing offices of the liquidated counties were closed down.

The network of bookshops grew rapidly in the post-war years, the number of shops subordinated to the Trading Centre of the State Publishing Centre of the ESSR grew from 21 in 1945 to 67 in 1953. The communist party was interested in the distribution of the Soviet book production and fostered this as a branch of propaganda work. Books were sold also in 528 shops operated by the Association of the Estonian Consumer Co-operatives, which were mostly situated in the villages. The distribution of books in the country became a political issue since 1947 with the foundation of collective farms. The village shops were accused of ordering political and agricultural books in small quantities. In response mass book propaganda campaigns were organised. During these campaigns people were often forced to buy the soviet editions.

#### 4. THE ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF BOOK PRODUCTION IN 1956–1991

The fourth chapter of the work analyses the development of the publishing, printing and book trade in 1956–1991. The period started with the so-called thaw, which began after the 20<sup>th</sup> congress of the Communist Party of the USSR in 1956, bringing along a certain liberalisation of the society. In book production it marked an increase in the output of titles, widening of the thematic range of the publications, publishing of the books by some of the Estonian and foreign authors, who had been banned earlier. This made it possible to restore the connections with the world and with the traditions of the Estonian literature to some extent. The thaw lasted until the end of the 1960s. The 1970s and the 1980s are known as a period of stagnation, characterised by the decline in the economy and stronger ideological pressure on social and cultural life.

A following all-union reform in publishing took place in 1963 when the State Publishing Committee of the USSR and corresponding committees in the Soviet republics were founded. The aim of organising the committee was to achieve total control over all forms of book production, over the publishing houses as well as over the publishing activities of organisations and institutions. As to the reorganisation of the network of the publishing houses the reform was oriented on forming a small number of specialised firms. There were two book publishing houses in Estonia in the beginning of the 1960s: a small publishing house *Kunst* (Art), found in 1959 and the Estonian State Publishing House, which issued the majority of books. Due to the reform, which favoured specialisation, the Estonian publishing officials achieved the division of this huge publishing house into two. One of them, the publishing house *Eesti Raamat* (Estonian Book) specialised in fiction, books for children, political literature and books on humanities. The other, the publishing house *Valgus* (Light) issued textbooks, books on natural and technical sciences as well as reference books. The forming of the two publishing houses was a positive event in Estonian publishing, however both the new publishing houses had too large profiles. The network of publishing houses was more developed and methodically specialised in many other Soviet republics. Estonia was, for example, the only republic without a special publishing house for scholarly publications. As it was already mentioned in the overview of the first post-war decade, the leaders of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Estonia and other persons at power showed little interest in developing the network of publishing houses. The small number of publishers meant that the authors were strongly dependant from the publishers. For example, if a manuscript of an author of fiction was rejected by the publishing house *Eesti Raamat*, he or she could attempt to publish it in the serial publication ““Loomingu” Raamatukogu” (“The Library of “Looming””) and if this also failed then the possibilities were exhausted. The limited publishing possibilities had a negative effect on their creative activity.

After the reform of 1963 the new rules for planning the activities of publishing houses were elaborated. The work on the thematic plan started a year and a half before the beginning of the planned year. The plans were, on one hand, based on the volume of production in the standard size of printing paper and printed sheet copies, which were interrelated with the supplies of paper and the printing capacities. On the other hand they were based on the requirements for the thematic structure of the publishing output. The thematic plans had the leading role among the plans, especially after 1976 when the all-union committee started to give detailed instructions on the proportions of different types of literature in the plans. Among the thematic plans there were a preliminary plan, annual plan, five-year plan and special plans. The plan was evaluated and discussed in the State Publishing Committee of the Estonian SSR, in the Department of Propaganda and Agitation and in the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party as well as in the State Publishing Committee of the USSR. Sometimes they were studied also by the representatives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. A system of all-union co-ordination of the plans was introduced in 1975. The publishing houses had to send information on the titles they wished to publish to the republican State Publishing Committee and after receiving a positive answer from there, they had to send the information card to the all-union State Publishing Committee. A special Head Office of Thematical

Planning and Co-ordination was found in the committee, whose task was to look through all the planned titles from all the publishing houses of the Soviet Union with the help of a computer system. However, the amount of the information cards, which arrived at the office was huge and the system did not start to work. The publishing houses received no feedback and it was agreed, that if there was no answer from the all-union committee in two months, the publishing house had a right to include the title into its thematic plans. In spite the fact that the all-union coordination actually never began to function, the requirement to send the information cards to Moscow was not revoked.

For decades the thematic plans were not compatible with the financial plans, the latter were approved many months earlier than the thematic plans. The first attempt to co-ordinate the thematic and financial plans was made in 1976, but did not give much effect. The publishers had to combine really skilfully to issue the necessary number of titles, accepted by the republican and all-union publishing committees, which would also fit with the amount of paper at their disposal. In addition to that, the production had to be considered from the point of view of print runs and printing capacity. The most popular titles had to be printed in sufficient number of copies to meet the financial targets.

The situation in the Soviet economy deteriorated gradually in the 1970s. This influenced also the book production. There was more attention to profitability and the reduction of losses and economy of paper and other materials. For example reducing the losses from issuing textbooks became a live issue in the first years of the 1970s. A system was invented according to which all the textbooks were used many times and the students did not buy them each autumn as earlier but borrowed from the school libraries. One of the methods of economy was also reducing the costs on book design. Paperbacks were made instead of bindings; cover papers were not used anymore. These measures, of course, did not contribute to the design of the publications and the Estonian books of the 1970s look quite expressionless.

In pursuit for greater profitability the leaders of publishing were also ready to consider the buyers' interests. The structure of the book production was adjusted to the demand in some extent, within the limits of ideological requirements and economical possibilities. One of the indicators of that policy was the increase in the print runs of fiction and books for children. The number of titles and print runs of political literature as a less popular category among buyers was reduced in the middle of the 1970s.

Although the share of publications by organisations with publishing rights was quite big in the annual title output (64 per cent of all the titles produced and seven per cent of the copies in 1974; 61 per cent of the titles and 7,5 per cent of the copies produced in 1987) it was one of the features of the Soviet publishing system to suppress such type of publishing. This was explained with need to avoid duplication and economise paper, but evidently the authorities were more concerned with maintaining control over publishing in the numerous organisations. The more publishers there were the more complicated it was to monitor them. So the circle of organisations with publishing rights was revised regularly and usually the number of organisations was reduced. The pressure on publishing by organisations intensified especially after the founding of the State Publishing Committee in the middle of the 1960s. Above all, it had negative consequences for scholarly publishing as the Academy of Sciences of the ESSR and institutions of higher education were deprived of the right to publish monographs. The literary publications, issued by schools, containing stories, poems and articles by students were also forbidden on the basis of the regulations, limiting publishing by organisations. The censorship watched that the organisations with publishing rights would not issue publications for general public and with large print runs, which they could have sold. They were allowed to publish only small brochures, mostly norms, standards, instructions and regulations, which were used only by the workers of these organisations. The wider publishing activities of the organisations would have been especially welcome in Estonia, where the specialisation of the publishing houses was limited. The organisations could have issued, for example, scholarly publications, textbooks for universities, music literature and other special publications.

The thematic analysis of the book production demonstrates that the technical publications, books on industry, communication and transport formed the greatest part of the production, one fifth of all the books. Technical literature, especially the technical publications issued by publishing houses and sold to general public in bookshops had a weak position in the title output. The larger part of the publications, classified under technical literature was issued by various ministries, organisations, factories etc. Political and social literature formed 14 per cent of the whole production, fiction – 11,7 per cent. The modest share of fiction in the book production indicates that it was not attempted to offer a wider range of titles but the preference given to this category since the middle of the 1970s lied only in larger print runs.

Despite the constant surveillance of the authorities a small number of underground self-publications were issued in Estonia. On the one hand these were underground political publications, for instance the journals “Demokraat” (“Democrat”) and “Lisandusi mõtete ja uudiste vabale levikule Eestis” (The Additions to the Free Dissemination of Ideas and News in Estonia), which presented uncensored material about the real situation in Estonia, the news on the actions of underground dissident groups in Estonia and elsewhere in the USSR. On the other hand the young authors issued literary publications, which passed no censorship and were written freely. The heyday of these literary publications was during the 1960s, but the tradition extended also in the 1970s, though in a much smaller scale. These publications, not directly banned at first, were declared ideologically harmful in the end of the 1970s, as the political climate had become more severe after Brezhnev came to power. The editors and authors of the literary journal “Jumala Tuul” (“The God’s Wind”) were persecuted in 1972 etc.

The network of the printing offices stabilised in the 1960s. Until the middle of the 1980s books were mostly printed in five big printing plants *Kommunist* (Communist), *Punane Täht* (Red Star), *Oktoober* (October), *H. Heidemanni nimeline trüükikoda* (Hans Heidemann Printing Office) and *Ühiselu* (Joint Life). In addition to these printing plants there were three town and nine county printing offices in Estonia, which were subjected to the State Publishing Committee. These were meant for printing the local newspapers. The republican newspapers and journals were printed in the printing plant of the Publishing House of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Estonia, which was opened in 1970. All the printing plants in direct subordination to the State Publishing Committee of the Estonian SSR were concentrated into the industrial association *Eesti Trükitööstus* (The Estonian Printing Industry) in 1973. This was the another step towards the centralisation of the activities of the printing plants. The founding of the association was in correspondance with the general tendency towards forming very big enterprises in the Soviet economy in this period. The management of all the printing offices, which were merged into the *Eesti Trükitööstus* was handled from one centre. This central body compiled the plans for every printing office, divided the orders among them etc. The printing offices were deprived of the rights of independent legal bodies and lost the possibility to decide their own activities. The other course of action of the association *Eesti Trükitööstus* was the specialisation of the printing offices, which was carried out partly. For instance the printing plant *Oktoober* was mainly specialised in colour production, one unit of the printing plant *H. Heidemanni nimeline trüükikoda* specialised in the printed matter with complicated composition.

Besides the printing plants of the State Publishing Committee of the Estonian SSR there were around 50 printing offices of ministeries, universities and other organisations in Estonia. The first of them was found in the Tartu State University in 1958. The task of these small printing offices was to print the publications of organisations, universities etc., which were issued in small print runs.

The work in the printing plants was hindered by the dilapidation of the equipment, its moral obsolescence after the war. The equipment of the majority of the book printing plants was renewed in the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. This enabled them to increase the capacity of production and improve its quality. The weakest link in the printing process was binding, where mainly manual labour was used. This slowed down the production cycle of books. The network of the town and county printing offices was reconstructed in 1975–1984. At the same time the renewal of the book printing plants was neglected and new equipment was bought for them only casually, so most of the machines were worn-out by the end of the 1970s. The equipment of the printing plants was procured inconsistently, new machines were obtained only when the existing ones were already out of order.

Another factor, hindering the progress of printing industry was absence of modern buildings, built specially for printing plants. The first special building of a book printing plant was accomplished in Tallinn in the end of the Soviet period, in 1983–1986. To the bottlenecks of printing pertain also the lack of workers and low quality of the materials. This disturbed the adherence to the requirements of the technology of production and caused disturbances in the working process, which had negative effect on the quality of the products. The new machines could be obtained mostly from the Soviet republics and they often needed repairing already before the start of work. The printing of scholarly books, dictionaries and textbooks was hindered by the lack of special types.

In order to improve the quality of the printed matter the Scientific-Technical Society of Polygraphy, Publishing and Book Trade of Estonia organised a special competition in 1957. It was a favourable moment for this sort of activities as new equipment had been procured into the printing plants and the optimistic atmosphere of the thaw favoured such enthusiastic actions. The competition was called “The Best 25” and it continued during the whole Soviet period. This annual event played an important role in improving the design and polygraphic construction of the Estonian books. Soon after the beginning of the competition the Estonian books won their first international awards for design. However, the general decline in economy, the damping of the equipment of the printing plants and deterioration of the quality of materials in the 1970s lead to the decline in quality. The professional enthusiasm and the striving for better results was also undermined by the constant increase in the production targets, which forced the workers to think mainly about meeting the plan tasks in quantity. The decline in quality affected also the commercial success of the Estonian books in the international market as some clients annulled their orders because of the poor quality of the books.

The deterioration of the Estonian printing became a factor, which hindered the whole process of book production in the beginning of the 1980s. Besides the quality problems it was evident by that time that there were not enough printing capacities in Estonia to meet the planned targets of the publishers. The old machines in unsuitable buildings could not print the necessary amount of books.

The situation was not helped by the differences in the economic interests of the printing plants and publishing houses. The printing offices preferred publications with very large print runs, which helped them to meet their plans. They also tried to banish works with complicated composition, which would take a lot of time and effort and thus harm the fulfilling of the plan targets. As a rule, printing books brought loss, that was compensated by printing others kinds of production (covers, wrappers, labels etc.), which were profitable. The association *Eesti Trükitööstus* as a whole gained profit. The work in the printing offices was often unrhythmical because there was not always enough paper and printing materials available for the printing plants. Therefore the printers were late in delivering the ordered books to the publishing houses. This in its turn made it difficult for the publishing houses to meet their plans.

The network of the bookshops increased rapidly after the World War Two. There were 21 bookshops in Estonia in 1945, their number had increased to 85 in 1963. There were 90 bookshops

subordinated to the Book Trade Organisation of the State Publishing Committee of the ESSR in 1985. In addition to the bookshops books were sold in the shops of the Estonian Republican Association of Consumer Co-operatives (ETKVL), which were situated in smaller towns and villages and in the kiosks of the *Ajakirjanduslevi* (Distribution of Press), an organization for selling periodical publications. The printed matter was also sold by the so-called public distributors, who sold books and periodicals in big factories and other institutions.

Thus the network of the book trade institutions was quite dense and covered the whole territory of Estonia, reaching all inhabitants. The structure of book distribution fostered the development of book trade, guaranteed good service for the buyers and increased the turnover. The Estonian book trade was one of the most developed in the whole Soviet Union and was leading by many indices, which characterise the level of book distribution (the relation between the number of bookshops and the number of inhabitants; the number of inhabitants per one salesperson; the sum of money for which books were sold per capita) during the 1960s.

Such progressive and buyer-friendly methods of bookselling as open shelves, self-service and second-hand trade in books were used since 1960s, later also book exchange and auctions were organised. The second-hand trade in books and the book exchange were aimed at reducing the shortage of books. When there were few new books, it was attempted to offer people additional reading matter from the older editions. This was also a welcome solution for the buyers as there was often little room for big book collections in their small apartments, so people could sell the publications they did not wish to keep any longer and buy new ones.

The content and channels of book propaganda were modernised during the 1960s, reviews on book news were broadcast in radio and advertising clips were presented on TV and in the cinemas. This differed from the character of the book propaganda in the 1940s and 1950s, when the ideological side dominated and mass campaigns were organised.

The period of the intensive development of the network of bookshops in Estonia falls on the 1940–1960s. Later, when the economical situation started to deteriorate, the investments into the cultural sphere were reduced. This had adverse effect on the development of the network of the bookshops. The majority of Estonian bookshops were situated in old, narrow buildings, where there were no normal conditions for storing the books nor using mechanisation of the work. The situation was especially bad in Tartu. Regardless of that only a few new bookshops were built and no space was given for opening bookshops in the new districts of bigger towns. For instance there were no bookshops in the new districts of Tallinn till the end of the 1970s. The other republics surpassed Estonia in the development of book trade in the 1970s. Due to the lack of space self-service was replaced with selling across the counter in many shops.

One of the shortages of book distribution system was selling special literature, which was mainly issued by the all-union publishing houses in Russian. The shops had to offer the buyers a possibility to order these books by securing a place where the clients could study the publishers' catalogues, but often there was no room for browsing the catalogues and sometimes there were no catalogues in the bookshops. It was also problematic to obtain these books in necessary quantity as the all-union books trade organisation Sojuzkniga sent to Estonia much less copies than ordered.

Another weak link in the book distribution system was the selling of printed matter in the consumer co-operative shops in the villages. The book counters were opened nearly in all these shops, but the co-operative system was not very interested in selling books as slowly circulating goods, which did not help in meeting their targets of turnover. Only a small number of the titles sold in the towns reached the countryside, the problem lay in the fact that the ETKVL shops in the county centers, responsible for sending the books to smaller shops gave them less popular books and sold the works in demand themselves.

The interest in studying the demand for books increased in the 1960s when book buyers and readers were asked to answer the questionnaires on their preferences. The sales personnel in

the bookshops used special notebooks to write down the wishes of buyers they could not satisfy. The special department of studying the demand was formed in the Estonian Book Trade Organisation of the State Publishing Committee of the Estonian SSR in 1971; a department of book propaganda was opened in 1976. Although the book trade system passed the information on to the publishers and the State Publishing Committee of the ESSR and the data was known to the whole book production branch, the ideological impediments and the rigid bureaucratic nature of the publishing system prevented the publishing houses from meeting the demand. When evaluating the work of the bookshops the State Publishing Committee did not consider the satisfaction of the buyers but rather their achievements in turnover and profit, also the availability of political publications.

The Estonian people stood out as very active book buyers and readers. The studies demonstrate that three thirds of the Estonian population bought books more or less regularly and the more active buyers also read them a lot. Nearly the whole population read fiction, scholarly books were read by two thirds of the population and political publications by half of the population in the seventies. The book prices, which had been stable during the 1950–1960s were increased for the first time in 1977 when the prices of the most popular types of literature and topics, fiction, reference literature, books on domestic life, sports, tourism, agri- and horticulture were doubled or even tripled. The prices of the scholarly publications were also risen. This however did not have a notable influence on the book-buying activity. But after the rise of the prices in the beginning of the 1980s many people admitted that they had reduced their book purchases. At the same time the studies indicated that the younger generations were less oriented on books and preferred television as a channel for information and entertainment. The high activity of book buying and large book collections at people's homes can be partly explained by the deficit of many consumer goods. But even more important was the traditional respect for printed matter, characteristic of Estonians for centuries and their desire to preserve the culture in the mother tongue in the constant threat of Russification.

As the books were cheap, people bought them without hesitation. All the titles that were of any interest to readers were sold in a very short time. The smaller the number of titles published the greater the demand on them. So eventually even very large print runs of the classical fiction or reference works did not satisfy the need. The constant shortage of books caused an abnormal situation where the most popular titles were sold mainly to the acquaintances of the bookshops' personnel ("under the counter" as it was called in the Soviet time) or on black market for a manifold price. Sometimes the most popular books were sold only in a set with some political publication. These features were characteristic of both the all-union and Estonian book market. Due to the limited assortment of books, the collections at people's homes often did not reflect their individual taste, hobbies and preferences, but represented a certain standard choice of the best publications of the Estonian publishing houses. Demand remained unsatisfied on nearly all the types of literature, especially on reference works and books popularising science.

The policy of *perestroika* created the preconditions for reforms in Estonia in the second half of the 1980s. The most important step in reorganising the publishing system was the liquidation of the State Publishing Committee of the Estonian SSR in 1988. The publishing houses, printing plants and bookshops became independent and organised their activities themselves, without direction from higher bodies. The general tendency in the development of the book branch in these years was democratisation, demonopolization and decentralisation. Censorship was liquidated in 1990 and the ideological pressure vanished. Every person and institution obtained a right to issue publications freely. A considerable increase in the number of publishing houses and firms, who issued books besides other activities demonstrated the huge need in publications. The number of publishers exceeded 700 in the beginning of the 1990s, stabilising later around 500 firms. It is also characteristic of the new publishing scene that the publishing firms are situated not only in Tallinn as during the Soviet period but in Tartu and other bigger and smaller towns.

The economical basis of the book branch changed completely. The transition from socialist economy to market economy began quite painfully. The former state publishing houses were put

in a totally different situation when the subsidies were abolished. It was difficult to obtain paper and other materials as the Soviet economic system collapsed but there was little hard currency to buy the necessary materials from the West. The prices of printing increased rapidly and there was too little printing capacity in Estonia considering the rise in the number of publishing firms.

## **5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOOK PRODUCTION IN THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA IN 1991–2000**

When Estonia's independence was restored in 1991, the publishers and printing plants had already had time to adjust to the new conditions. Still, the production of titles decreased in the first years of independence (1991–1992). Its character and contents changed considerably. No compulsory political publications were issued, only the books, which were of interest to the readers. Many publishers were also driven by the desire to gain big profits. This aim was accomplished by publishing literature on topics, which were completely forbidden or less favoured in the Soviet time such as erotic books, books on astrology, graphology and detective novels. Books on history were also very popular as people desired to read the truth about the events of the past fifty years after the period of silence or falsifications. More complicated fiction and scholarly books were issued by a small number of publishers.

The publishing in contemporary Estonia is based on the principles known in the rest of the world. The situation in the book market has stabilised; its first division between the publishers is over. The bigger publishing firms and many smaller ones have a certain publishing strategy, their publications have an original design or they are known for a certain programme. The societies, unions, firms, schools and institutions of higher education have become active in publishing, as it was typical of Estonia already before the World War Two. Among the biggest publishing firms in the end of the 1990s were textbook publishers *Koolibri* and *Avita*. Most of the Estonian publishing firms have a universal programme, as the market is small and it is hard for a specialised firm to find enough buyers.

The legal and organisational arrangement of the branch was in line during the first half of the 1990s, including the elaboration of the copyright law, joining the Berne convention of protecting the works of art and literature, the enforcement of the law on deposit copies.

The number of titles published is increasing from year to year, reaching over 3000 titles. The print runs on the contrary are diminishing. Considering the huge print runs of the Soviet time it could be expected. The wide choice of titles dispels the demand on them. At the same time the demand is influenced by the high prices on books, which limits the book purchases of individuals as well as libraries. There are a lot of interesting, fascinating books on sale now. The Estonian book production has achieved the variety that was missed during the Soviet period, but the low standard of living does not allow to enjoy it fully.

The situation stresses the importance of the public publishing policy. The restoration of the Fund for Furthering the Culture in 1995 was the greatest achievement in this area. It makes it possible to issue the types of books and genres, which, as a rule do not have big commercial success such as poetry, the works by the Estonian writers, books on humanities etc. In order to foster the distribution of books the Parliament agreed to lower the value-added tax from 18 per cent to five per cent in 1998.

The reorganisation of printing took longer than founding new publishing houses, it presupposed much larger capital investments. The first private printing offices started to work in the end of the 1980s. In order to earn money for new equipment they mostly printed posters, covers, advertis-

ments and other material, which brought profit. Many new printing offices were found during the 1990s, but the majority of them are still oriented on the advertising market. There were over 20 printing offices in Estonia in the end of the 1990s which printed books, among them five or six major printing plants. They have been able to buy modern equipment, improve the quality of work and fulfil the orders in a short time. But this has led to a rapid increase in the prices of printing. Sometimes it is less expensive for a publisher to order the printing from abroad than from Estonian printers.

The number of bookshops exceeded a hundred shops in 2000. Several shops, active in the Soviet period have been closed down, while many new ones have been opened. For example nine shops in Tallinn were closed and five new ones opened in 1991–1994. The most spacious and modern bookshops are situated in Tartu, in Tallinn the largest bookshop is *Apollo*, owned by the Finnish book trade firm *Suomalainen Kirjakauppa* (Finnish Bookshop). *Apollo* is the first chain of bookshops in Estonia, which has shops also in Tartu and Pärnu. Among other new forms of dissemination are book-clubs and online bookshops. The book-clubs are especially popular among the readers who live in the country and towns without good bookshops. The online bookshops have proved to be successful only in combination with brick-and mortar shops. The shop, which exists only online cannot find enough clients in the limited book-market of Estonia. The Estonian book-trade suffers from the absence of a large wholesale firm, which would exempt the bookshops from need to order books directly from hundreds of publishers.

The publishers, printers and booksellers have united into associations, which take active part in the activities of corresponding international associations. The representatives of the Estonian book branch participate in book fairs and exhibitions, organised in different countries, which helps to broaden the programmes of the publishing houses and also to introduce the Estonian books to the world.

Regardless the problems it could be said, that the Estonian book is on the path of progress after a long time. Its content has become wider, the design has improved considerably. The books are in orbit of the public interest more and more, the competition between the publishing firms urges them to advertise, print catalogues and organise presentations. The printing is also going up as many printing plants are obtaining modern equipment and small printing offices present flexible possibilities to print small print runs. In order to get a publication of high quality and fashionable design it is not necessary to turn to foreign companies anymore. The most important change in the book branch is, however, the adjustment of its actions to the needs and wishes of the people. It is hereby the task of the public publishing policy to avoid the absolutism of the commercial considerations and to guarantee the issuing of books without commercial success, but vital for normal advancement of the intellectual life and progress of the society.

## CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the research, the following findings and conclusions could be pointed out:

- ◆ After the occupation of Estonia by the Soviet Union reforms were carried out in Estonian book production, similar to the changes in the publishing systems of the Russian Federation and the other Soviet republics in 1917 and the following years. The Estonian publishing became a part of the Soviet publishing system in 1940 and it was organised by the same principles as in the rest of the Soviet Union.
- ◆ The book publishing in the Soviet Union, including the Soviet Estonia, formed a part of the political education of the masses. The publishing houses as institutions of ideology were governed by the communist party. The communist party determined both the structure and contents of publishing. The Estonian publishing institutions were directed, above all, by the Communist Party

of the Estonia, but their decisions in their turn were based on the instructions received from Moscow, from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Communist Party of the USSR made ultimately all the most important decisions concerning the book branch, for example founding of the publishing houses and printing offices, the thematic development of the book production etc. In Estonia, the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Estonia watched closely the work of the publishers, listened to their reports and discussed the suitability of different works to their plans, controlled the appointment of the directors.

◆ For the realisation of the policy of the communist party in the book branch, a special administrative organ was found, which had different names in different years, but it always controlled publishing, printing as well as book trade, thus the control over these three branches was concentrated in the hands of one directive body. The centralisation and control were realised in the widest range after the founding of the all-union and republican State Publishing Committees in 1963. The all-union State Publishing Committee had extensive rights to interfere in the work of the republican committees. These rights were extended even more in 1972. All the publishing units on the territory of the USSR, regardless of their belonging to ministries, universities etc. were subordinated to the committee. All the main aspects of work of the publishing, printing and book trade institutions were sanctioned in Moscow. These included the number of titles published by all the republics during a year, the printing capacity, which could be used for printing books and the amount of paper at the disposal of the publishers etc. For example, the all-union committee gave permission to publish series of books and multi-volume editions, it gave instructions on issuing the reprints etc. The Estonian book branch was a part of the all-union book production system and all the rules, worked out in the all-union committee were obligatory for the Estonian publishing houses, printing plants and bookshops, Estonia lacked an independent book policy.

◆ One of the characteristic features of the all-union book policy was the orientation on increasing the print runs and stabilising the number of titles. The success of book production was measured, above all, in the total number of copies produced and the size of the average print run. It was important that the ideologically acceptable content was read by as large public as possible. The variety of books and wide range of topics was, on the contrary, not considered to be desirable. The rises and declines in the number of titles issued coincided with the general fluctuations in the social atmosphere. The liberalisation in the society in the end of the 1950s and in the 1960s brought along the boom in publishing. The number of titles increased considerably and the thematic range of the books became broader. During the stagnation of the 1970s and the 1980s the annual title output also stagnated on a considerably modest level (about 2000 titles a year). The number of copies and the volume of the production in printers' sheets were important indices in evaluating the results of a publishing house. The large print-runs were explained to be inevitable as the readers' demand was unsatisfied. There were no discussions on the possibility, that the wider assortment of titles could avoid the concentration of demand on a few popular titles. On the whole, a small number of titles were issued in large print runs and this resulted in one-sidedness of culture, impoverishment of the reading material and did not help in overcoming the book deficit.

. The work of a publishing house was also evaluated by the fulfilling of thematic plans. This aspect is connected with the content of the book production. Although the general attitude towards different types of books and categories of literature was the same during the whole Soviet period, some minor changes could be detected in it. During the post-war decade the political books were attributed the leading role in the production and occupied a large share of title output.

But since the middle of the 1970s it was recommended to issue only publications on the most actual topics, which lead to the decrease in the general number of titles on political topics. At the same time the print runs of fiction and books for children were increased considerably as the demand for these topics had been unsatisfied for a long time. Due to the fixed amount of paper at the disposal of the publishing houses, it was necessary to reduce production of other categories to accomplish it. So the number of scientific and technical publications was reduced in the second half of the 1970s. The reference works and popular-science books were also among less important types of literature. The textbooks as means to influence the young people were considered to be an important field of production. But here too the number of copies was the most important characteristic. In spite of the large print runs of textbooks, there were not enough copies for every pupil. Therefore special collections of textbooks were found in the school-libraries for lending the textbooks.

- ◆ The different position of different types of literature and topics was mirrored in the different fees the authors of different types of literature could earn and in the prices of books on different topics. Due to their special role in disseminating the ideological message books in political subjects and textbooks had to be sold for the cheapest prices. The lowest fees were paid for the authors of popular-science and technical literature that demonstrated the low value given to these topics.

- ◆ The dominance of the ideological function of books presupposed that the Soviet readers could obtain only books that were thought suitable for them by the communist party. This was guaranteed by a number of controlling bodies (the publishing house itself, the State Publishing Committee, the departments of the communist party) including a special body of censorship, found in 1940 and liquidated in 1990.

- ◆ Although the communist party documents stressed the importance of publishing in the ideological work it was a part of economy and worked by the same rules as other branches of economy. The state subsidies and planned loss did not exclude the requirement of profitability. This became a live issue especially since the 1960s. Many campaigns for increasing profitability were organised, aiming in reducing the state subsidies and realising a profit. In general the Estonian book production worked with profit (except political literature and textbooks). If the publishing house worked in a field where loss was accepted (mainly political publications and textbooks), it had to fulfil the plan for decreasing the loss. In order to fulfil the financial plans the publishers tried to include in the thematic plans at least some popular titles, which would sell in large quantities. The party officials often condemned such practice, although it was considered normal for a publishing house to gain profit. The greater part of the profit was given to the state budget. Thus in the question of profits a certain inconsistency could be seen – the ideological considerations were interwoven with striving after economic success.

- ◆ One of the political imperatives was the cheapness of books. The policy of maintaining low prices on books was given up only in the end of the 1970s as the situation in economy general was becoming unfavourable. The cheapness of books was in itself a positive phenomenon, but it aimed at disseminating only the publications accepted by the communist party. The books did not cost much, but the choice in the bookshops was very limited and contained few books, which would be of interest to the buyers. It was a result of the small number of interesting books and their limited editions – they were sold very quickly and many readers were left without them. Thus the readers could not fully benefit by the cheap prices.

- ◆ An essential feature of the Soviet book publishing was the complex system of planning and of co-ordinating the plans, which became especially multi-stage and rigid since 1975. It was impossible to publish any title, which was not included in the plan and approved by various bodies. The planning process was characterised by strong ideological control, rigidity, slowness and caused a lot of unnecessary work, especially after the introduction of the all-union co-ordination of the plans in 1975. This was an attempt of utter centralisation of the publishing process in the range of the whole Soviet Union. Although this system failed, it was still inevitable to send the

information cards to the all-union committee, thus the publishing houses were determined to accomplish meaningless complementary tasks. The slow cycle of planning hindered the publication of books on actual topics. The incompatibility of financial and thematic plans was another circumstance, which decreased to usefulness of planning. Thus planning, which in principle is a reasonable and necessary activity became quite senseless in the socialist environment, turning into a factor, which disturbed the normal working process and hindered the development of the branch.

◆ The Soviet publishing policy was characterised by a limited number of publishing houses and the confinement of the publishing activities of organisations, ministries etc. There were only two big book publishing houses and one small book publisher in Estonia in the 1960s–1980s. Some books were also issued by the publishing house *Perioodika*, which mainly published periodicals. The socialist system did not need institutions which would compete with each other. The other important aspect was the control over the content of the production – it was easier to control a smaller number of firms. The shortage of paper and limited number of printing plants were also causes for limiting publishing activities.

◆ Although the publishing houses could act only in accordance with numerous regulations and norms, they still had some independence in the selection of manuscripts, they were able to decide, which works were included in the preliminary plans. In addition to the obligatory publications the publishers tried to issue the titles, which would foster science and culture, include new ideas, use modern form or express the real situation in the society. It was often connected with risk, which in the worst cases lead to punishment of editors, their dismissal of office, but sometimes the sanctions were limited to omissions or changes of some words. The people who were active in the Soviet publishing system were supposed to be able to tack through the restrictions and be ready to compromise. But there were also authors who could no accept these conditions and their works were not published.

◆ The list of the banned authors and topics did not remain the same during the whole Soviet period. The greatest number of authors and works were banned during the first year of the Soviet rule 1940–1941 and during the first post-war decade. Later, during the thaw it was possible to publish a part of these works until the situation changed again in the 1970s, when the policy became more rigid. The decisions to ban an author or a topic on all-union level were made in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR, the publishing houses got their orders through the local censorship body.

◆ The book production of the Soviet period consisted largely of the publications, which were necessary for the soviet-type economy and management, political brochures and the so-called compulsory translations of fiction (the books by the authors from the Soviet republics, who were favoured by the communist party). Regardless of that, the publications in the Estonian language had a decisive role in preserving the language and culture, in resisting the assimilation and maintaining the Estonian nation. The books issued in Estonia during the Soviet occupation are a part of the Estonian culture, which, besides other functions helped to form the terminology in the Estonian language. Besides the publications for propagating the Soviet way of life and communist ideas the publishing houses issued also many valuable books by Estonian and foreign authors, classical and modern, including fiction, reference and scholarly works.

◆ On the other hand, the content of book production of the Soviet period was limited. For example the range of foreign authors, whose works could be published was limited during the whole Soviet period and it contained mostly classical, not contemporary authors. The attitude towards the category fiction (literature for diversion such as mystery, romance etc.) was negative and this kind of publications were few – this kind of literature was unworthy of the Soviet reader. This reader was supposed to be quite demanding and conservative and the publishing policy was expected to keep his or her reading habits in the officially desirable channel. The selection of manuscripts for publication oriented on imaginary readers, who were alike in their tastes, there

was no room for different interests and preferences. In books for children, for example, there were no special books for boys and girls.

◆ Besides modern fiction people could not read the philosophical works and scholarly books, which treated the development of the Western philosophy and science (or the books on these topics, published in the West). This had an especially negative impact on the level of higher education and turned normal academic discussion with scholars from the other countries impossible. The top scientists had some contacts with their colleagues from abroad and they could obtain professional literature, published in the West, but the larger circles of intelligenzia were, as a rule, deprived of these possibilities. This kind of isolation led to the stagnation of the creative process. The bureaucratic system of book production typical of a totalitarian state was unable to foster the development of the society and offer the information, inevitable for its progress. The publishing houses could neither provide the publications, which would interest people nor support the development of science and technology or social life in the whole.

◆ In spite of the control of the authorities some underground (self-published) publications were issued in Estonia during the Soviet period. The underground publishing was not very extensive in Estonia, but it played an important role in expressing political views freely and as a channel for publishing alternative literary texts. These publications were of great value in the fight for freedom, in maintaining the belief in the temporary nature of the Soviet Union and a possibility to influence and to undermine its existence.

◆ In organising the network of printing plants the policy of the all-union State Publishing Committee was the same as in publishing – a small number of firms, which were under strong surveillance of the republican committee and censorship. The printing houses possessed the machines for copying the texts, therefore it was important for the authorities to make sure that only the manuscripts approved by the censorship could be duplicated. The renewing of the buildings and of the machinery of the book printing plants was neglected. The management of the printing plants was centralised, the plants could not make independent decisions about their activities.

◆ The network of bookshops was quite well developed in Estonia during the Soviet period, the system of book trade embraced practically all the inhabited places. But the activities of the book-trade were influenced by the shortage of popular books. The disproportion of supply and demand was a result of the publishing system, which was not oriented on the needs of the reading public. During the post-war decade no attention was given to demand but the book-production was formed only by ideological considerations. During the thaw of the 1960s there were attempts to study the demand but it was impossible to adjust the book-production to the needs of the readers. Still, the buying activity of people had some influence on the publishing system, for example the publishing of political literature was reduced during the 1970s. As mentioned before the book publishing was supposed to be profitable and producing books, which were left unsold in big quantities led to losses. As in publishing the contradictory attitude of the authorities could be registered also in book trade: on one hand the book trade was a part of the communist propaganda work, the shops were expected to sell, above all, political literature and present special reports on this. On the other hand the success of the shops was measured in fulfilling the plans of turnover, which was achieved by selling the popular editions of fiction and reference literature.

◆ Although the whole book production and distribution process was concentrated under the same ruling body, the publishing committee, the plans and activities of its various branches were not co-ordinated sufficiently. Their interests were different, which did not guarantee the harmonious development of the book production process. For instance by compiling the plans of the printing plants and bookshops the plans of the publishing houses were not taken into account. Every branch tried to act in a way, which was the most useful to them – the printing offices oriented on publications with the largest possible print runs, the booksellers ordered the most

popular titles. Of course, the bookshops had to order political literature in sufficient amount as provided by the requirements of the State Publishing Committee.

◆ As to the development of publishing during the German occupation in 1941–1944 then the publishing system of the German occupation was characterised by many features similar to the first year of the Soviet occupation such as severe and all-embracing control over book production, censorship and banning books. However the totalitarian regime appeared to be slightly milder during the German occupation, presenting a bit more freedom to act for the publishers. Both the totalitarian systems attacked, first of all, the national sciences and tried to efface from the Estonians' memories the values and traditions, which they had preserved for centuries. Both regimes attempted to replace history, written by Estonians themselves with the history, treated from the viewpoint of the big powers. They both aimed at alienating Estonians from the idea of independent existence and tried to ban and destroy everything reminding it.

◆ The development of the book branch has restored its European essence since the end of the 1980s. The annual title output is on a high level and presents reading matter on a wide range of topics. At the same time the Estonian publishing houses face the same problems as their colleagues in Europe – the costs of book production as well as book prices are increasing. It diminishes the buying activity of the individual buyers as well as libraries and other big partners of the publishers. The situation also has negative impact on publishing scholarly works and other books with small market. Electronic publishing and publishing on-demand could be a solution for overcoming these problems. But the development of these possibilities would suppose more active book policy by the state.

## **KIRJASTUSTEGEVUS JA RAAMATULEVI EESTIS AASTAIL 1940–2000: Kokkuvõte**

Käesolev uurimistöö keskendub raamatuprotsesside käsitlemisele Eestis aastatel 1940–2000, jälgides raamatute publitseerimist, valmistamist ja levitamist ning poliitilise õhkkonna ja majanduslike tegurite mõju sellele valdkonnale. Samuti esitatakse nende aastate raamatutoodangu struktuur ning analüüsitakse seda temaatilisest ja tüpoloogilisest aspektist. Tüpoloogilise analüüsi raames on lähema vaatluse alla võetud teadusliku ja populaarteadusliku, õppe-, ilu-, laste- ning teatmekirjanduse väljaandmine. Käsitluse teoreetiliseks aluseks on raamatuteaduse funktsionaalne teooria, mille peamised seisukohad on esitatud poola raamatuteadlaste, eelkõige Krzysztof Migoni töödes. Töö keskendub peamiselt Eesti territooriumil asetleidnud kirjastus- ja trükitegevuse jälgimisele ning siin väljaantud raamatutoodangu analüüsile. Eestikeelsete raamatute väljaandmise nõukogulikust süsteemist ammendava käsitluse andmiseks on vaatluse alla võetud ka aastatel 1941–1944 Nõukogude Liidu tagalas ilmunud raamatud.

Raamatuala arengu käsitlus Eestis on esitatud kronoloogilises järjestuses. Aastad 1940–2000 on poliitilise ajaloo periodiseeringu alusel jaotatud järgmisteks osadeks: nõukogude võimu esimene aasta 1940. aasta 21. juunist kuni 1941. aasta juuli alguseni; Teine maailmasõda 1941. aasta juulist kuni 1944. aasta sügiseni (selle raames kajastatakse kirjastamist Eestis Saksa okupatsiooni ajal ja lühidalt ka eestikeelse raamatu väljaandmist Nõukogude tagalas); esimene sõjajärgne aastakümme 1944–1955 kui stalinismi kõrgaeg ja aastad 1956–1991 kuni Eesti Vabariigi taastamiseni, Eesti Vabariik aastail 1991–2000. Taoline periodiseering vastab nõukogude aja traditsioonilisele perioodideks jaotamisele.

Töö kirjutamisel kasutatud allikate hulka kuuluvad kõigepealt antud ajavahemikul ilmunud raamatud ise, samuti bibliograafilised materjalid rahvusbibliograafia väljaannete näol. Tähtsale kohale asetuvad arhiiviallikad, mis pakuvad üldisi andmeid ja konkreetseid fakte erinevate insti-

tutsioonide tegevusest. Rikkalikku materjali uuritava teema kohta sisaldavad mitmed Eesti Riigi arhiivis leiduvad fondid. Huvitavaid andmeid leidub Parteiarhiivi fondides säilitatavates dokumentides, peamiselt Eestimaa Kommunistliku Partei Keskkomitee Büroo protokollides, samuti agitatsiooni- ja propagandaosakonna ning teaduse ja kultuuriosakonna materjalides. Mitmed arhiividokumendid jõuavad teaduslikku käibesse esmakordselt. Materjali on ammutatud samuti Eesti ajalehtedest ja ajakirjadest, kus on avaldatud arvukaid artikleid ning uudiseid kirjastuste, trükikodade ja raamatukaupluste tööst jm. Lisaks Eesti perioodikale on kasutatud ka üleliidulisi, eelkõige erialaseid perioodilisi trükiseid ning raamatuala puudutavate normatiivsete materjalide kogumikke. Samuti kasutati töö käigus mõningaid Lääne teadlaste uurimusi Nõukogude Liidu kirjastamistegevuse kohta. Töös esitatud raamatutoodangu iseloomustus tugineb statistilistele materjalidele. Nõukogude perioodi käsitlus eeldab allikakriitilist lähenemist, tollaste dokumentide objektiivsus on kaheldav.

Aastad 1940–2000 hõlmavad Eesti ajaloo mitmeid poliitilisi pöördepunkte – Nõukogude ja Saksa okupatsioonid ning taasiseseisvumine 1991. aastal. Suurema osa vaadeldavast ajast kehtis Eestis nõukogude võim ning just nõukogulik raamatutootmine ja levitamine moodustab käesoleva töö mahukaima osa.

Kirjastamine, raamatute väljaandmine oli Nõukogude Liidus ennekõike rahvahulkade poliitilise kasvatustöö osa. Kirjastusi kui ideoloogiaasutusi juhtis kommunistlik partei, kes võttis korduvalt vastu otsuseid raamatuala tegevuse sisu ja struktuuri kohta. Eesti raamatuala asutused puutusid kokku eelkõige Eestimaa Kommunistliku Partei suunava mõjuga, eesti kommunistide otsused omakorda lähtusid Moskvast, Nõukogude Liidu Kommunistliku Partei tasandilt saabuvatest juhtnõõridest. EKP KK propaganda- ja agitatsiooniosakond jälgis pidevalt kirjastuste tööd, kuulas aruandeid ning arutles plaanidesse lülitatud teoste sobivuse üle.

Eesti raamatuala oli Nõukogude Liidu raamatutootmise osa ning see toimus nõukogude perioodi lõpuni samade reeglite alusel kui kogu ülejäänud Nõukogude Liiduski, seda iseloomustasid samad tunnused kui üleliidulist raamatuala tervikuna. Raamatuala juhtimise tsentraliseerimine ja administreerimine saavutas haripunkti 1963. aastal üleliidulise ja vabariiklike kirjastuskomiteede moodustamisega. Üleliiduline kirjastuskomitee sai suured volitused vabariiklike komiteede juhtimiseks, dikteerides liiduvabariikidele kõik olulisemad näitajad. Üleliidulise komitee reglementeeriv roll tugevnes eriti 1970ndate aastate keskel, mil hakati määrama raamatutoodangu proportsioone tüüpide, keelte jm kaupa.

Üleliidulise kirjastuspoliitika üks suundi toodangu kujundamisel oli suurte trükiarvude eelistamine raamatunimetuste arvel. Raamatutootmise edu nõukogude ajal väljendati eelkõige raamatutoodangu kogutiraaži ja keskmise trükiarvu kasvu abil – oluline oli ideoloogiliselt vastuvõetava sisu võimalikult lai levik, mitte mitmekesise repertuaari pakkumine. Nimetuste arvu kasv ja langus oli seotud ühiskonnas valitseva õhkkonnaga – stalinistlikul perioodil anti nimetusi välja väga napilt, sulaajal kasvas nende arv märgatavalt ning alates 1970ndate aastate keskpaigast stabiliseerus, s.t tõusis mitte väga kõrgele tasemele (Eestis veidi üle 2000 nimetuse aastas). Teoste tiraažid ja toodangu maht tingtrükipoognates mängis olulist rolli ka kirjastuste plaanitäitmise arvestusel. Teine näitaja, mille alusel kirjastuste tegevuse edukust hinnati, oli temaatilise plaani täitmine, mis seostus kirjastuste toodangu sisulise küljega. Kui sõjajärgsel aastakümnel oli esiplaanil poliitiline raamat, siis 1970ndate aastate keskpaigast soovitati sellel teemal avaldada ainult n-ö aktuaalseid nimetusi ning ühiskondlik-poliitiliste väljaannete arv ja kogutiraaž tõmbus koomale. Sellal tõsteti esile ilu- ja lastekirjanduse eelisarendamine, rõhutades suurt rahuldamatat nõudlust just nende liikide järele. Sisuliselt tähendas see trükiarvude tõstmist, nimetuste arv jäi endiselt tagasihoidlikuks. Ka õppekirjandus kui vahend noorsoo kasvatamiseks oli pideva tähelepanu all, siingi oli rõhk suurtel tiraažidel. Erinev suhtumine erinevatesse raamatutüüpidesse ja teemadesse peegeldus ka nende autorite honoreerimises ja neile kehtestatavates hindades (nominaalides). Kõige odavam hinnaga pidid müügil olema poliitiline raamat ja õppekirjandus kui ideoloogilise sõnumi peamised levitajad. Populaarteadusliku ja tehnika-alase kirjanduse autoritel tuli leppida kõige madalama honorariga, milles väljendus nende tüüpide tõrjutus.

Lisaks ideoloogilistele kaalutlustele mõjutas kogu raamatutootmist Nõukogude Liidus valitsev paberinappus ning asjaolu, et kirjastused pidid mahutama oma toodangu nende käsutusse antud paberikoguse raamidesse. Kirjastuskomitee kaudu eraldati kirjastustele lisaks paberile ka trüki- võimsused ja köitematerjal.

1940. aastal mindi turumajanduselt üle sotsialistlikule plaanimajandusele. Raamatutootmises tõi see kaasa riiklikud dotatsioonid ja planeeritud kahjumid, kuid teisalt kehtis ka rentabluse nõue, mis tugevnes eriti 1960ndate aastate keskpaigast. Et täita finantsplaan ja tagada töötajatele toimetulekut võimaldavad preemiad, olid kirjastused huvitatud kasumitandvate nimetuste lülitamist plaanidesse. Nendega n-ö liialdamist heideti kirjastustele ka ette, kuigi neilt kasumi teenimist nõuti. Seega võib kasumi küsimuses näha võimude suhtumises teatud ebajärjekindlust – ühelt poolt etteheited hästimüüvate raamatute väljaandmise eest ja teiselt nõue kasumit toota.

Trükiste levi rahvahulkadesse pidi soosima nende madal hind, mis tõepoolest oli suuremale osale inimestest vastuvõetaval tasemel. Sõjajärgsetel aastakümnetel püsis raamatuhind kaua stabiilsena, 1960ndate aastate rentabluse tõstmise kampaaniatega ei käinud kaasas hindade tõstmist. See võeti ette 1977. aastal, mil ühtlaselt madalate hindade hoidmisest loobuti ning kõige populaarsemate teemade ja raamatutüüpide (ka nt ilukirjandus, entsüklopeediad, sõnaraamatud, kodundusalased väljaanded, turismikirjandus, põllumajanduslikud ning spordiraamatud) hindu lubati kahe- või isegi kolmekordistada. Samuti tõsteti väikesetiraažiliste teadustööde hindu. Järgmine hinnatõus leidis aset 1981. aastal ning erinevalt eelmisest avaldas see osa ostjate ostuaktiivsusele pärssivat mõju. Odavad hinnad olid iseenesest positiivne nähtus, kuid nende eesmärgiks oli siiski n-ö nõukoguliku trükise viimine lugejateni.

Nõukogude raamatutootmine toimus, nagu muud tootmisharud ja eluvaldkonnadki, rangete plaanide kohaselt. Planeerimise korda täiustati pidevalt ning kirjastustegevuses saavutas see apogee pärast 1963. aasta reformi ning üleliidulise kirjastuskomitee ja vabariiklike kirjastuskomiteede loomist. Kirjastuste planeerimistegevus toetus ühelt poolt mahulistele ettekirjutustele, mis hõlmas neile eraldatud tingtrükipoognaid ja tingtrükipoogentõmmiseid (mis olid seotud paberi ja trüki- võimsustega), teiselt poolt tuli arvestada toodangu temaatikale esitatavaid nõudeid. Teemaatilise ilmumisplaanide koostamine algas vähemalt poolteist aastat enne planeeritavat aastat ning läbis mitmekordse läbivaatamise ja kinnitamise protseduuri. 1975. aastal ellukutsutud üleliiduline koordineerimine nägi ette kõikide kirjastuste plaanide kooskõlastamise üleliidulises kirjastuskomitees, ent kuigi selle tarvis püüti rakendada arvutustehnikat, ei hakanudki süsteem tööle, samas aga kehtis kirjastustele endiselt nõue kavandatavate nimetuste kohta koostatud infoplanke Moskvasse saata.

Nõukogudeaegset kirjastustegevust iseloomustas kirjastuste võrgu piiratus ning ametkondliku kirjastamise ohjeldamine. Ametlik poliitika eelistas väikest arvu kirjastusi, aastatel 1949–1964 tegutses Eestis sisuliselt üks ettevõtte, *Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus*, mille kõrval 1957. aastal alustas tegevust väike kirjastus *Kunst*. Pärast 1963. aasta reformi võeti üleliidulises ulatuses kursis teatud teemale või kirjanduse liigile spetsialiseeritud kirjastustele, mis Eestis tõi kaasa *Eesti Riikliku Kirjastuse* jagamise kaheks kirjastuseks – *Eesti Raamat* ja *Valgus*. Lisaks eelmainituile kirjastas vähesel määral raamatuid ka kirjastus *Perioodika*. Mida vähem kirjastusi, seda hõlpsamalt kulges nende ohjamine. Samuti ei lubanud kirjastamiseks määratud paberikoguse ja trüki- võimsuste piiratus ettevõtete arvu suurendada. Sama tendents väljendus pidevas ametkondliku kirjastamise kitsendamises, mis Eestis mõjus kõige ahvistavamalt teaduskirjanduse publitseerimisele. Iseseisvat teaduskirjanduse kirjastust ei õnnestunud siin pärast *Teadusliku Kirjanduse* liitmist *Eesti Riikliku Kirjastuse* koosseisu 1949. aastal enam luua, siis sõltus teadustulemuste avaldamine eelkõige ENSV Teaduste Akadeemia ja kõrgkoolide kirjastusvõimalustest.

Kirjastused tegutsesid niisiis rangete sisuliste ja majanduslike ettekirjutuste raames. Kuid siiski oli neil käsikirjade valikul teatav iseseisvus ning võimalus otsustada, milliseid töid üldse plaanidesse võetakse. Mõõdapääsmatute poliitiliste üllitiste kõrval püüdsid kirjastused publitseerida ka selliseid nimetusi, mis edendasid kultuuri ja teadust, sisaldasid värskeid mõtteid,

kasutasid uusi loomingulisi võtteid või üritasid väljendada ühiskonnas tegelikult valitsevaid meeleolusid, minnes seejuures tihti kas suuremale või väiksemale riskile.

Kui arvestada ametlikult vastuvõetavaks tunnistatud kirjanduse koosseisu, siis näiteks lubatud autorite ring ei püsinud kogu nõukogude aja vältel päris ühesugusena. Esimene nõukogude aasta ja sõjajärgne aastakümme olid nii välis- kui kodumaiste autorite või osa nende teoste kõige ulatuslikuma keelamise perioodiks. Hiljem, sulaajal, avaldati taas mitmeid äsja põlu all olnud kirjanikke kuni 1970ndatel aastatel olukord uuesti karmimaks muutus. Seetõttu on 1950ndate aastate lõpul – 1960ndatel aastatel ilmunud raamatutoodang sisuliselt palju avaram ja haarab enam autoreid kui varasemal või hilisemal ajal.

Kokkuvõtteks võib tollase raamatutoodangu kohta öelda, et ehkki väljaantud nimetuste hulgas leidis rohkesti nõukoguliku asjaajamise ja majanduse jaoks tarvilikku tarbekirjandust, poliitilisi brošüüre ja ilukirjanduse n-ö sundtõlkeid, oli eestikeelsel raamatul otsustav roll eesti kultuuri ja keele säilitamisel, assimileerimisele vastuseismisel ning rahvuse püsimisel. Vaatamata sisule on nõukogude perioodil ilmunud raamatud osaks eesti kultuurist, mis aitasid kaasa kas või eestikeelse terminoloogia kujunemisele. Propagandistlike väljaannete kõrval ilmus küllalt palju kodu- ja välismaiste autorite väärtuslikke ilukirjanduslikke ja teaduslikke raamatuid ning teatmeteoseid. Teiselt poolt, nõukogude aja raamatutoodang jäi siiski sisuliselt piiratuks. Näiteks avaldatavate väliskirjanike ring oli kogu nõukogude aja kestel kitsas ning orienteeritud pigem klassikutele kui kaasaegsetele autoritele. Meelelahutuslikku kirjandusse suhtuti kogu perioodi vältel tõrjuvalt ning seda ilmus napilt. Väljaantavate nimetuste valikul lähtuti ühetaolisest, eeldatavalt nõudlikust ja konservatiivsest lugejast, jättes arvestamata erinevate eelistuste ja huvide olemasolu.

Raamatute trükkimine leidis aset peamiselt viies trükikojas, mis kohandati suurte tiraažide valmistamiseks. Võrreldes teiste trükiteadustega andis raamatute trükkimine enamasti kahjumit, mida leevendati muudest trükiteadustest saadavate kasumite arvel, nii et Eesti trükindus tervikuna töi kasumit. Trükikodade vähesus ja viletsad töötingimused mõjusid Eesti raamatuala arengule pärssivalt, sest tootmistsükkel venis pikaks ning kvaliteet langes. Trükiteaduste poliigraafilise kvaliteedi viletsust tingisid samuti paberi ja muude materjalide ning trükiseadmete kehvus. Samuti oli kogu nõukogude aja vältel probleeme trükiteaduste koolituse ja vajalikul hulgal tööliste leidmisega, sest ala ei kuulunud populaarsete hulka. Siiski tegutses trükinduses rida entusiaste, kes seadsid eesmärgiks kaunite raamatute valmistamise ning püüdsid vastu seista hoolimatusele töö kvaliteedi suhtes. Selle nimel organiseeriti mitmeid üritusi, nagu nt konkurss “25 parimat” jms, tänu millele valmis igal aastal vähemalt vähesel määral tavalisest parema kvaliteediga raamatuid.

Raamatukaubandusvõrku arendati sõjajärgseil aastail ning 1960ndatel aastatel aktiivselt, raamatupoed asutati kõikidesse Eesti linnadesse. Alates 1970ndatest aastatest võrgu areng pidurdus, näiteks uutes elamurajoonides ei eraldatud reeglina ruume raamatupoodide tarvis, olemasolevad poed oleksid vajanud remonti ja uuendamist, ühiskondlike levitajate tegevus tõmbus koomale populaarsete raamatute vähesuse tõttu. Raamatuostjaile huvipakkuvate raamatute puudust püüti leevendada kasutatud raamatute müügi ja raamatuvahetuse organiseerimisega.

Pärastsõjajärgseil aastail ei pööratud sellele, milliseid raamatuid lugejad osta sooviksid, õieti mingit tähelepanu, vaid lähtuti ainult ideoloogilistest kaalutlustest. Sulaaja saabumisel hakati lugejanõudlusele siiski tähelepanu pöörama ning 1960ndate aastate keskel moodustati ENSV Kirjastuskomitee juurde isegi spetsiaalne nõudluse uurimise nõukogu, kelle initsiatiivil küsitleti raamatuostjaid, analüüsiti raamatukogude lugejakaarte. 1970ndail aastail taandus leviku uurimine aga suuresti formaalseks. Kogutud andmeid lugejate rahuldamatate soovide kohta ei õnnestunud tegelikkuses arvesse võtta, sest kirjastuste plaanide koostamisel tuli lähtuda üleliidulise kirjastuskomitee ettekirjutustest temaatilise plaani alajaotuste proportsioonide kohta, samuti ei saanud paberilimiitide tõttu täiel määral rahuldada ostjate ootusi tiraažide suhtes. Teatud mõju inimeste raamatuostuskäitumisel haru arengule siiski oli, see väljendub kas või poliitilise kirjanduse väljaandmise kärpimisel 1970ndate aastate keskel, sest nagu eespool mainitud, raamatutootmiselt

oodati rentaablust, kuid poliitiline kirjandus kippus kahjumit andma. Nagu kirjastamises, kohtab raamatukaubandusegi puhul võimude kahetist suhtumist – ühelt poolt kuulutati raamatukaubandus kommunistliku kasvatusöö oluliseks koostisosaks ning raamatupoodidelt nõuti aru poliitilise kirjanduse müügi kohta, kuid teiselt poolt mõõdeti nende edukust käibeplaani täitmise ja ületamise kaudu, millega saadi hakkama eelkõige tänu populaarsete ilu- ja teatmekirjanduse väljaannete müügile.

Kolm raamatutootmise ja leviga seotud haru – kirjastamine, trükindus ja raamatukaubandus olid kogu nõukogude aja vältel ühtse juhtimise all. See ei toonud aga kaasa nende harmoonilist ja üksteist toetavat arengut, näitajate kooskõlastatust.

Esimese nõukogude aasta ja Eesti taasokupeerimise vahele Nõukogude Liidu poolt 1944. aastal jäi kolme aasta pikkune Saksa okupatsioon. Saksa võimud polnud huvitatud endiste, sõjaeelses Eesti Vabariigis tegutsenud kirjastuste taasavamisest ega laialdase kirjastustegevuse organiseerimisest Eestis. Seetõttu ei tegutsenud selgi perioodil kuigi arvukalt kirjastusi, kokku oli kirjastavaid organisatsioone üheksateist, neist kaks suuremat kirjastust, *Eesti Kirjastus* Tallinnas ja *Tartu Eesti Kirjastus*, kutsuti ellu eelkõige õpikute väljaandmiseks. Eelistatud olukorras oli lisaks õpikutele veel põllumajanduslike väljaannete ja igapäevaseid praktilisi nõuandeid jagavate tööde üllitamine. Nende publitseerimiseks anti luba kirjastusele *Agronom*.

Saksa okupatsiooni aegne kirjastustegevus säilitas mitmeid esimesest nõukogude aastast tuttavaid jooni, nagu raamatuelu allutamine riigivõimu rangele kontrollile, tsensuur ja raamatute keelamine, trükiteodangu piiratud maht. Totalitaarne kirjastamissüsteem avaldus sel perioodil siiski mõnevõrra leebemal kujul, võimaldades pisut vabamat tegevust, näiteks anti luba paari erakirjastuse asutamiseks. Samuti võisid tegutseda eratrükikojad ja -raamatupoed. Erinevuste seas torkab silma ka poliitiliste üllitiste osa raamatuteodangus – kui nõukogude aega iseloomustas propagandistlike väljaannete rohkus, siis Saksa okupatsiooni ajal ilmus neid vähe.

1980ndate aastate keskpaigas alanud perestroika lõi eeldused muudatusteks Eesti elukorralduses, sealhulgas raamatualal. 1980ndate aastate lõpul likvideeriti ENSV Riiklik Kirjastuskomitee ning kirjastused, trükikojad ja raamatukauplused muutusid iseseisvaks ja korraldasid sõltumatult oma tegevust. Tsensuur likvideeriti ning ideoloogiline surve kadus. Põhimõtteline muutus leidis aset ka raamatutootmise siirdumisega turumajandusele. Nüüdseks toimib haru arenenud riikidele omaste põhimõtete ja tavade järgi, selleks on loodud seaduslik alus autoriõiguse seaduse, sundeksemplari seaduse ja muude aktide näol.

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