

Kultur og Samfunn Materialitet og Etnisitet

I denne oppgaven jeg vil se på det moderne tiden i Estland 2022-2024 og forandringer i samfunnet siden Koronavirus pandemien og starten av krigen mellom Russland og Ukraina.

Estonia has a very diverse population and many different cultures, including several languages. The official language is Estonian, but Russian is also one of the main languages. English is also used. Many Scandinavians, Africans, Ukrainians, and people from America and Great Britain live in Tallinn. This creates a very rich cultural environment where communication, understanding and resolution of conflict situations are not always achieved peacefully, since the desire to understand or the motivation to understand is partially absent. Which in turn leads to increased levels of discrimination and violence in the local environment, as well as complex cultural problems associated with ethnicity, nationality, cultural background, ethnicity and language. The latter mentioned above can be noticeable even in simple everyday situations, such as the example of the Finnish supermarket "Prisma" and serving customers of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

With the Coronavirus pandemic and the outbreak of war between Russia and Ukraine in Estonia, many changes have occurred related to measures against Coronavirus, vaccination, the reaction of the population, the arrival of military and political refugees in Estonia. These mentioned factors led to changes within the cultural field and changes in relationships within different social and ethnic groups, in my opinion, as well as an increase in the level of discrimination and intolerance, and an increase in conflict between different cultural and ethnic groups. At the moment, there is not enough understanding of cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences at the proper level, and sufficient motivation to understand and accept these differences without abrupt transference.

Since 2022, a lot of war refugees from Ukraine have come to Estonia under agreements of the European Union. There are also a lot of people with dark skin color whose homeland is Africa, or some other country, such as Egypt or Morocco. The largest population groups in Estonia in terms of percentage are "Estonians" and "Russians"; for "Russians" the first language may not be Russian, but for example Belarusian, Ukrainian or Georgian (therefore, such statistics are relative), taking into account the countries of the former USSR.

If we consider a group of the population and people from non-Baltic countries and with dark or non-white skin color, for example there may also be people from Italy or France, then they adhere more to their culture and remain in their cultural field without spilling over into the local culture, remaining partially observers and participants with a clear cultural and linguistic boundary, not trying to be like anyone else and not trying to merge with the local population, having an understanding of their belonging and being carriers of their culture, which has deep historical and cultural roots. Many of these non-natives (those from other countries) have a deeper level of awareness of their ethnic, cultural and historical identity, knowledge of their family culture, family history, acceptance of historical changes, acceptance of historical, family and cultural values, respect for culture and language another person, without the desire to assert himself at the expense of another person and prove that he is right.

In many ways, the ethnic-linguistic conflict observed in Estonia has historical roots, partly rooted in non-acceptance of historical changes, agreements reached, and unawareness, ignorance of one's family history or non-acceptance of this history, ignorance, non-acceptance of cultures and languages in family history or contact with other cultures, ethnicity, languages and events in this story, including an unconscious way of life. The first language, mother tongue, family language, first language in the family is an important part of a person's identity. The development of the native language, its understanding and mastery of this language is an important part of understanding one's culture and its acceptance, being in one's cultural field is one of the opinions and interpretations of the theory of ethnicity, cultural and linguistic affiliation, as is understanding of culture, family values or a clear understanding and affirmation of one's values. Belonging can be determined not only by actual nationality or language, but also by a person's choice - who a person has chosen to belong to. As an example, a person may be born in Europe and be considered Russian according to his passport, having multicultural roots, but may consider himself an African in culture and temperament, have a circle of friends from Africa, and this ethnicity and culture may be closer to this person than European culture, European culture may be very problematic for such a person due to the level of conflict, non-acceptance, level of discrimination and conflict self-affirmation.

An ethnic-linguistic conflict can also be based on a lack of understanding of differences and the desire to build as one wants, without taking into account all interests and differences, without respect for cultural and linguistic differences, historical and any other values. If we take into account the events of the last 20 years, then mass market culture has had a huge impact on culture and values - in music, the film industry, advertising, chain stores, television (integration in culture and in language can be considered as a mass market phenomenon where there is no understanding of the clear affiliation of culture and a clear cultural field, or skills to communicate within a clear cultural field, or understanding/accepting another person's cultural field or self-expression that is different from one's own.

By non-acceptance of another person's self-expression we also mean differences in communication - linguistic, cultural, as well as different ethical boundaries and norms based on a person's cultural gender or affiliation, level of understanding, interpretation, interpretation of a particular message, word, expression, form of expression, history, opinion, position, cultural, gender, ethnic orientation.

When a conflict arises, also on an ethnic-linguistic or cultural basis, it is important to be able to communicate, take initiative to resolve relationships and sort out such conflicts in order to find possible solutions to this situation instead of hiding and not responding to attempts to resolve the conflict situation peacefully instead.

several illustrative examples from the Finnish supermarket chain "Prisma", 2 cases:

Case 1.

My Egyptian friend and I went to the Prisma store in Tallinn in May 2023 to buy milk and coffee. We scanned the item at the self-checkout and my friend paid for the item with her card. My friend's skin color is not white and she differs in behavior, communication and

behavior from "traditional Estonians", just as I differ from the behavior and thinking of "traditional Estonians", having a rich multicultural and multilingual experience. In the self-checkout department at that time there was an employee who could be defined as "traditional", traumatized by the events of at least the last 2 years and transferring his traumas to customers. After my friend paid with a card for the goods and wanted to start putting the goods in her bag, the Prisma employee came up to us and began to conflictively find out whether we had paid for the goods and practically accuse us of theft, switching to an aggressive manner of communication. This was not entirely clear to me, since I assessed this as a lack of or misunderstanding of the ethical boundary between the store employee and the customer. Age difference 36-42 vs 20-23. In the employee's behavior, I saw an attempt at self-affirmation, psychological transference to the client, conflict, misunderstanding of the workplace and an attempt to prove that he was right, practically snatching the goods from the hands of my friend - harshness and aggression of psychological transference, stress and reluctance to consider the situation calmly in the employee-client relationship, threatening to call the guard, taking a position of monopoly. It was extremely unpleasant when an employee considers himself a monopoly in the client-employee relationship, a network that serves the population and makes money from it, without taking into account the interests of the client, his position, differences in cultural and linguistic communication. We left the store in a depressed mood, defining this as discrimination. No one apologized to us for the behavior of such an employee.

Case 2.

Queue at the checkout of the Prisma supermarket. Employee Prizma age 23-25 is not polite in service, does not speak to the client in his/her language, acute psychological transference, misunderstanding of work responsibilities and the ethical client-employee boundary, desire to assert himself and remain right, unwillingness to apologize and admit that he has not fulfilled his duties work duties and treated the client impolitely, discriminating against him and raising hatred on ethnic and political grounds. I am 42 years old, I was born in Estonia. Employee Prizma called me a Ukrainian "We've come in large numbers here," which can be interpreted as saying that Ukrainians are not loved and not welcome here. I was very unpleasant about this attitude as a person, in addition to the fact that I am a customer of the supermarket and do not divide people by nationality. Why, if I am Ukrainian, should I go back to Ukraine and receive such compliments in the Prizma store, standing in front of the cash register and paying for my purchase? I asked to call the store manager to sort out this situation, reach an understanding and find a common language to prevent the recurrence of such cases in the future. To this they answered that the manager was not there and gave me the kid's phone number to call. Since I prefer to deal with such cases in such situations on the spot, talking personally with a person or in writing, in order to calmly discuss the nuances that may arise, I did not call and wrote a letter to the management of Prizma, to which I did not receive an answer. I don't quite understand this kind of ignorance on the part of Prizm's management, the inability to sort out the situation and apologize to the client, which is extremely inconsistent with the concept of a family supermarket.

These 2 cases already show that there is a certain level of intolerance in the local environment and a lack of understanding of cultural differences, a partial failure to recognize the fact that in addition to “traditional Estonians” there are also people living on the territory of Estonia and having different cultural and ethical standards of behavior, a different language environment, level of education, level of analysis and understanding, in addition to cultural differences and self-expression - as cultural, linguistic or gender/orientation. According to my observations of the “traditional Estonians” of the Prizma supermarket, it determines the level of aggression, intolerance, conflict and acute psychological transference to people who do not want to dance to their tune, the level of monopoly without the desire to accept and understand the cultural and ethical norms of other self-expression, as well as the inability and lack of skills communication and understanding of conflict situations and why it is important to sort out such situations, and not to hush them up without analysis and apologies.

Why might there be a lack of understanding of values or cultural and linguistic differences, a lack of acceptance or understanding of ethnic differences, an inability to take initiative and offer conflict resolution? One of the factors may be an insufficient level of education or an insufficient level of intellectual development, patterns and models of behavior imposed by the so-called “society”, the educational system, ethical standards that can be designated as complexes and complexities, and not as modesty, ethics and politeness, or a certain cultural field, in some cases.

Can mass market culture be a cultural asset if we look at mass market culture in Estonia over the past 20 years? To what extent can the culture of social networks - Instagram, Facebook or any other social network, advertising, the modern film industry and other products of modern culture influence the culture of supermarkets such as Prizma in Estonia? What does a lack of understanding of the boundaries between social networks, the consumption of any media product and the workplace, understanding one's work responsibilities lead to? How much has the intellectual level of the population in Estonia decreased, the level of degradation increased and the level of violence and aggression in the local environment increased thanks to digitalization and the development of Instagram, Facebook, YouTube?

Can digital culture teach an understanding of cultural differences, an understanding of discrimination and the development of tolerance, rather than the selfishness of the culture of a separate local territory, individualism and increased health risks, both physical and mental?

How does the culture of social networks influence the culture of a local territory if we think about understanding the border between the digital and real world? Why do social networks, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube exist?

Who are these people who are in the digital world? who are they in reality? Who are they without all this? Who do they consider themselves to be in the digital world?

Who does a Prizma employee, for example, think he is when he calls a person a Ukrainian and sends him to Ukraine?

Maybe the division of people according to nationality, ethnicity, and language is discrimination? Why be in your chest and shout “I'm Russian, I'm Ukrainian, I'm Estonian”? No need.

Many people talk about cultural, linguistic, gender, ethnic differences, but conflict can be resolved by understanding the difference in communication, understanding the language of a

person's self-expression, accepting another person's language of self-expression even if it is very different from your own and a willingness to understand, openness to resolving one or another situations not necessarily understanding of cultural differences if to think about country level or accepted one or another local or digital culture.

Condemning, for example, modern digital culture is a completely normal phenomenon if you think about the values of a person as an individual, historical values, family values, personal values, personal cultural values, moral values.

Conflict is also a normal phenomenon and self-expression. It is very important to understand conflict and make a contribution in order to be able to resolve the conflict peacefully, perhaps by taking the initiative to do so. Conflict resolution is not entirely possible when one of the parties does not respond or ignores attempts to discuss the situation and resolve the conflict. This applies to both cultural and political conflicts, ethnic conflicts and conflicts in general.

Culture is, among other things, communication, respect for a person's personal space, understanding of language, gender and ethnicity differences, understanding another person's self-expression and the principles of his/her ethics in various situations, since ethics and self-expression can be at an individual level according to the situation personal values of a person, which may relate to his/her personal life, personal relationships and any sensitive information, such as photos, videos, any media content that violates a person's personal boundaries, his privacy and safety (for example, taking photos or video content in a public space without the permission of the person/people being filmed - this could be the garden of the house where the person lives, public transport, a gym or any open city space, as well as a drone flying up to a window and filming a person through the window, which is contrary to the law on the protection of personal data.