

**HOW TO GET INVOLVED?
THE INTEGRATION STRATEGIES OF WORLD WAR II
REFUGEES**

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Abstract. During World War II, tens of thousands of people of different social backgrounds fled to the West from Estonia. There were approximately two hundred musicians among them, half of whom received asylum in Sweden. Some opera singers, conductors, and composers had built a successful career already before the war and were also known to a certain extent in the Nordic countries. While in Sweden, the musicians tried to get involved in the cultural life of the host society. They believed that this would ensure them an income, yet they felt an inner need to continue their careers as musicians and to preserve their professional identity. The aim of this article is to highlight the circumstances that either supported or hindered the integration of these highly-skilled refugees. The research is based on the manuscript memoirs of Juhan Aavik (1884–1982), an Estonian conductor and composer, who, before fleeing, occupied the leading position in Estonian music life.

Keywords: WWII refugees, integration process, professional career, musical activities, memoirs

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1. Introduction

World War II advanced the formation of multicultural societies, yet along with this acculturation problems arose, which are discussed in the article, based on the example of the Estonian refugees who belonged to the cultural elite. About 80,000 people fled Estonia for the West for political reasons.¹ The receiving countries were Sweden and Germany; later on part of the refugees moved on to some other countries. 22,000 Estonians resided in Sweden permanently, constituting the most

¹ In 1940, the Soviet Union occupied Estonia; in 1941, Germany occupied Estonia; the Soviet Union reoccupied Estonia in September 1944.

numerous World War II refugee group (Reinans 2008a:1028). The average Estonian refugee had a secondary education and came from the coastal region, as they had good opportunities for an overseas trip (Raag 2004:181, Kumer-Haukanõmm 2014:51). However, people of other backgrounds also escaped to Sweden, including more than 1,000 persons who had occupied leading positions in political, economic, and cultural life (Horm 1960:7, 1961:4–5).

The problem of immigrants' adaptation appeared on anthropologists' agenda long before World War II. In their memorandum for the study of immigrants' acculturation, Redfield et al. (1936:150) describe various sources, which can be employed in acculturation studies. They do not mention life writing, yet it is valuable material for the study of migration processes and adaptation strategies in post-World War II period. Memoirs, diaries, letters, and other life writing texts show what refugees felt and how they tried to behave when they had to contact with domicile population, and whether these so-called personal strategies resulted in overcoming the cultural barrier or not.

Refugees' adaptation to host countries is an acculturation problem, therefore the research is based on the works elaborating the definition of Redfield, Linton, and Herkovits, according to which acculturation comprehends those phenomena that result when groups of individuals, having different cultures, come into continuous first-hand contact (Redfield et al. 1936:149). Berry (2001:619) differentiates four group-level acculturation options: *assimilation* (immigrants do not maintain their cultural heritage and seek interaction with other cultures), *separation* (immigrants maintain their culture of origin and avoid interaction with others), *integration* (immigrants are interested in both maintaining their culture of origin and engaging in interactions with other groups), and *marginalization* (immigrants have little interest in cultural maintenance as well as in having relations with other groups). My earlier research (Ojamaa 2011, 2012) shows that a great part of Estonian refugees preferred integration, this way choosing a two-dimensional model in which preservation of their culture of origin and adaptation to the host society can coexist independently (Phinney et al. 2001:495).

Based on Estonian material, one can say that memoirs are a genre specific to political refugees. Compared to voluntary immigrants, whose main aim in most cases is to achieve economic welfare in another country, political refugees are characterised by a strong emotional connection with the lost homeland (Pennar et al. 1975:vii–ix, 85). Usually authors begin their reminiscences with descriptions of happy youth in a safe home, and then continue with horrors related to escaping from the war, and economic hardships in the new country of residence. For the writers themselves memoirs were important for several reasons: through these the older generation tried to preserve the younger ones' historical memory in exile, yet the writing process also enabled them to ease the pain of losing their homeland. From the point of view of cultural history, Raag (2004:188) regards as the most valuable sources the memoirs of politicians and leading cultural figures. The axis of the following discussion is the memoirs of Juhan Aavik, who belonged namely to this group.

Juhan Aavik was born in Estonia in 1884. He graduated from St. Petersburg Conservatory under world-famous composers, such as Lyadov, Vītols, and Glazunov (EMIC). Very soon Aavik became the leading figure in Estonian music life. In January 1944, cultural and political circles celebrated the maestro's 60th birthday in the most representative concert hall in Estonia, yet in September of the same year he became a refugee, carrying a suitcase with only a few personal items and some sheets of music paper to complete the piece started at home. Aavik was convinced that Estonia would be free soon, and he would return to his ordinary daily life. This never happened, and he died in exile in Stockholm in 1982.

The aim of the analysis carried out using close reading is, on the basis of Aavik's memoirs, to deduce new knowledge about (i) what were refugees' integration motivators; (ii) which circumstances supported and which hindered their adaptation in host countries. As additional material, memoirs of Aavik's fellow sufferers have been used (Nieländer 1982, Allas 2001, Kures 2008, Toona Gottschalk 2013, Libe 2014, and Jurison 2016).

Aavik wrote his memoirs *Muusika radadelt: Mälestusi ja mõlgutusi eluteelt* (*On the Paths of Music: Reminiscences and Reflections on a Life*) in Stockholm in 1954–1972. The memoirs covered all his life and were planned to be published in six volumes. The first one, covering his reminiscences of childhood, was published in Toronto in 1959 (Aavik 1959). The Orto Publishing House concluded a contract with Aavik for publishing all the volumes, yet terminated it as in the 1960s the readers' interest in memoirs gradually started to wane – Estonians in exile were more interested in the future, and were willing to move on with their lives. In spite of this, Aavik continued work on his manuscript, believing that one day it would reach the reader. Aavik's hopes did not come true, but his manuscripts are preserved in the Swedish National Archives.² This study is based on the last volume titled *Rootsis (In Sweden)* (Aavik MS), which is comprised of 1276 handwritten pages, including chapters “Elutsemine laagrites“ (“Life in camps”), “Arhiivitöö ajajärk. Uppsala-Bergsbrunna“ (“Era of archival work: Uppsala-Bergsbrunna”), and “Stockholmis” (“In Stockholm”). Aavik tells about pieces of music composed in exile, attempts to establish working relationships with Swedish colleagues, Estonians' music activities in exile, and contacts with fellow countrymen who had emigrated to other continents. These topics help to reflect the adaptation process of a creative person of high social status in a new environment.

2. Analysis of Juhan Aavik's memoirs

2.1. Aavik's expectations for the host society and striving for integration

Aavik went into exile from the position of the director of the Tallinn Conservatoire; the wider public knew him as the chief conductor of song

² Svenska Riksarkivet, Baltiska Arkivet, Juhan Aaviks arkiv.

festivals³. Already in the 1920s, song festivals started to acquire, besides national importance, also international dimensions. For the last pre-war song festival in 1938, singers gathered from all over the Baltic Sea region: Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland (Põldmäe et al. 2002:106–107). It was not only Aavik's idea; it also points to the foreign policy interests of the Republic of Estonia. In addition to choirs, the organisers invited politicians and journalists, trying to generate a regional feeling of belonging. The song festivals enabled the musicians to establish cooperation contacts with the western neighbours, on which later on, while in exile, they tried to base their adaptation strategy.

Many years prior to the Great Escape, in connection with Gustaf V's state visit in 1929, Aavik had composed a piece "Pühendus Rootsile"⁴ ("Dedication to Sweden"). It was an exceptional political event for the young Republic of Estonia (est. in 1918): the Swedish king was the first head of an 'old historical state' who visited Estonia. The reception ceremony took place in front of the Parliament building, where a mixed choir conducted by Aavik sang a song, the words of which emphasised friendship and cultural closeness of the two nations; the score was given to the king as a present (Rebane 1929:1, Kaja 1929:3). When the maestro reached Sweden as a refugee, Gustaf V was still in power. Memories of the personal contact with the king and convictions about good relationships with the neighbouring country made Aavik optimistic about the near future.

While arriving in Sweden, Aavik had to face the reality, which turned out to be quite different from his imaginations. Before World War II, Sweden had been culturally homogeneous; it was a country with more emigrants than immigrants. According to the law on immigration, passed in 1937, Sweden committed itself to receive political refugees. They came from Norway, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, thus the Baltic refugees were part of those who opened up Sweden to immigration (Kõll 2015:428). When the war ended, the number of refugees had risen to 185,000 (Byström 2008:66). Due to the unexpectedly great influx of refugees, an article was added to the law about detaining the refugees in quarantine camps (Kangro 1976:43). When Aavik reached Sweden, he was accommodated in a camp together with other refugees who did not belong to the elite, and he was subjected to the same rules than any other immigrant (Aavik MS:1–57). In spite of that, Aavik behaved as a person of high social status and considered himself the official representative of Estonian composers in Sweden. Aavik decided to establish working contacts with Swedish music institutions. He was convinced that Estonian composers, whose oeuvre belonged to the Nordic cultural space, might enrich Swedish music with their own contribution. On the other hand, Aavik expected that integration would help him find professional work and guarantee that his subsistence needs were met.

³ The Estonian Song Festival (Song Celebration) is one of the largest amateur choral events in the world. The first festival was held in 1869.

⁴ Texts by P. Grünfeldt, mixed choir, Tallinn 1929. The manuscript has gone missing (Aavik 1968:6).

A few weeks after his arrival at the quarantine camp, Aavik turned to the authorities with a request for an official permit to leave the territory of the camp, and visited the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in Stockholm. He introduced himself as the director of the Estonian Conservatoire. The conversation took place in German and French: Aavik spoke German, which was the most common second language among Estonians until the end of World War II, and his Swedish colleague used French. In his memoirs Aavik speaks about the idea of the visit and its results:

It seemed to me that it was necessary and in every respect natural that I, as a representative of Estonian music, indicate my presence to the appropriate Swedish representation, thus ensuring that some connection is established in terms of the musical arts of two neighbouring people which was naturally important for the creation of awareness of our state of exile especially in view of the future, because we had to remain here for a period of time, the length of which at that point we were not able to foresee. Besides, it was incumbent as a matter of common courtesy. [---] Aside from being a general introduction, there was a special reason on my part. My intention was to create a connection with State Broadcasting for a performance of one of my compositions. [---] I have to say that my reception at the Academy was courteous, friendly and collegial. Although, as an exile I could not exert any openly favourable influence over them, their expressed attitude toward me was correct and accommodating. It also appeared that they were particularly interested in recent events in Estonia. As well, I was able to make contact relatively easily with the broadcasting director who was well disposed toward me. In mutual conversation it appeared that he was misinformed regarding events in Estonia as was the majority in Sweden at that time: Was not the German regime more terrible than the communist one? With great difficulty did I try to explain that there was still a vast difference between communist [---] brutality and German ultra-strict order (Aavik MS:74–79).

Aavik gave the score of the Estonian anthem and his own Andante cantabile for string orchestra to the broadcasting company to be played on the radio. Some time later, he received 50 kronor, which he briefly commented on in his memoirs: “Obviously this money was meant simply as support to the poor refugee, as the anthem was never played; nor have I ever heard Andante cantabile on the radio” (Aavik MS:81).

Aavik was disappointed in the broadcasting company. As to the anthem, he failed to understand that the Swedish radio could not play the anthem of a state that officially did not even exist anymore. It is not known why Andante cantabile was not played, yet two reasons could be speculated upon. Firstly, the quality of the composition might have been not high enough – Aavik was above all a choral composer. Secondly, the broadcasting company’s decision might have been influenced by Aavik’s German-friendly attitude, which he expressed outspokenly, yet did not elaborate on. Personally, Aavik had justifiable reasons for preferring the German occupation over the Soviet one. In 1940, the Soviet authorities dismissed Aavik from the job of the director of the conservatoire and his son was

accused of anti-Sovietism and killed in Siberia (Ojamaa 2016:985–987). During the German occupation Aavik was again appointed to the director and his leading position in Estonian music circles was restored.

While commenting on Aavik's 'political awareness-raising' at the broadcasting station, it has to be noted that most Estonians believed the German occupation to be a lesser evil than the Soviet occupation. In addition to violence and deportation, the press, literature, and arts were censored and subjected to the Stalinist propaganda. The German invasion in 1941 gave hope for relief from Soviet terror and the restoration of statehood (Kasekamp 2003:92, 2010:130–133). However, the Western world's viewpoint was different than that of Estonians. At the end of the war, the Nazi regime was considered as the principal enemy also in the countries that had not participated in the war. In Sweden, the Balts were seen as fascists (Byström 2008:69, Kõll 2016:172–175), and Aavik with his naïve explanations, partly due to language barrier, involuntarily confirmed this opinion.

Aavik's visit to his Swedish colleagues also had some positive results – the contacts expanded steadily. In the subchapter "Vastuvõtt Rootsi Heliloojate Ühingu" (Reception at the Swedish Composers' Union) Aavik (MS:323–335) speaks about an official dinner in the composers' house. Formally the hosts observed the customs of high society, but the language barrier impeded conversation: Estonians' Swedish was poor and Swedes did not speak German. His experiences during the dinner formed his first impression of the Swedes, which he did not change until the end of his life:

The Swedes are polite and kindly disposed when relating openly, but this kindness is rather official and conventional, in which personal warmth and sincerity seem to be somewhat overshadowed. Perhaps there is not enough of it left for open expression (Aavik MS:331).

This dinner was not the only event to demonstrate Swedes' benevolence towards their Estonian colleagues. On the initiative of the Swedish Composers' Union a meeting was organised in the form of a concert, where the language proficiency was not so important. Exile composers' oeuvre was played, which expressed ideas of nationalism. In Aavik's opinion it was namely these works that could have enriched Swedish music culture with Estonian sounds; however, he was mistaken and the concert was not followed by a breakthrough to the Swedish music market. Aavik realised that he was supposed to be satisfied with earning a living according to Swedish immigration regulations.

2.2. Aavik's career in exile

From the quarantine camps on Gotland and the eastern coast of Sweden, the refugees were dispersed to different labour camps (logging, field and road labour). The camps operated for a couple of years and were then closed down by the state as they were too expensive to maintain (Andræ 2005:188–189) and the refugees themselves were eager to move on to free labour market. Until 1946–1947, foreigners were principally prohibited to live in the big cities, but by 1953 they had settled in industrial towns; a quarter of the refugees lived in Stockholm

(Reinans 2008b:1373–74). Aavik managed to rent an unheated summer cottage in Bergsbrunna near Uppsala, with a range in the kitchen; he spent seven winters in this room. He summarises his reminiscences about the years in Bergsbrunna with a dismal conclusion: “It was not much that we refugees needed, and what could we demand in this destructive situation that the ruthless eastern regime had blessed us with” (Aavik MS:311).

At the time of writing his memoirs, Aavik already lived in Stockholm, in his daughter’s three-room apartment. The Swedish Labour Office helped him find a job, assigning him to archival work. Archival work consisted in low-paid activities which might but did not need to be related with the employee’s profession. This kind of work was mainly meant for aged intelligentsia, who was not able to do factory, forest, or field work. About a third of the refugees with a higher education started with archival work; the rest had to start as blue collars (Reinans 2008b:1343–1344).

Aavik’s archival work consisted in rewriting scores and giving piano lessons. The latter were meant to provide Swedes with hobby education free of charge. Thirty Swedes of different ages and music education backgrounds started studying with Aavik. Some of them were quite talented and it was a pleasure to work with them but some others had no makings of a pianist. Aavik writes:

I remember a youth – a railway worker who arrived from the factory with oily hands and fingernails black from iron dust. [---] Often in the evening on my way home I kept hearing the students’ error-prone melodies droning in my ear and these sounds would not let me shift from a stressful mental state to a more relaxed one (Aavik MS:528–536).

Aavik gradually succumbed to depression. Several studies have demonstrated that some individuals adjust well while others experience difficulties. At the individual level, acculturative stress can appear which manifests itself in anxiety and depression (Berry 1992:69–70). Estonian refugees themselves called this condition ‘refugee disease’ (Kures 2008:389). It was manifest, above all, among elderly people, who had belonged to the elite while in homeland, and made their adaptation a complicated process, in which success alternated with backlashes and contentment with despondency.

Aavik’s problems resulted not only from his students, who could not be compared to the ones at the conservatoire in his earlier pedagogical career back at home. He was ashamed of his poor knowledge of Swedish, which, in the context of the host society, placed him even lower than his poorly educated students. However, he was most dispirited by the fact that the Swedish society did not accept him as a composer; he continued writing music, yet no-one played it. Aavik did not dare to turn to a doctor or use antidepressants, as he was afraid to become an addict. He was trying to relieve stress by means of ‘natural therapy’, going for long walks in the forest in the evenings, as walking had a calming effect (Aavik MS:538). The fact that nature in Bergsbrunna was quite similar to Estonian nature might also have helped:

Nature was beautiful especially in the spring and summer: forests, meadows, open fields for flocks and herds and a stream [---] and other aspects shaped a harmonious terrain, where I could take numerous walks (Aavik MS:313–314).

It also happened in other host countries that many highly-skilled immigrants started from a lower position than what they had had back at home. At the end of the 1940s, Australia was beginning its massive post-war immigration programme. The men were seen as a source of labour, many of them were sent to unskilled jobs in rural areas (Sheldrake 1986:V). Occupational dislocation was a problem experienced by all Baltic immigrants. The officials recorded each person's age, education, and work experience; nevertheless, a brilliant pianist was sent to a metal-working factory (Putniņš 1986:76).⁵ In the United States, about half of Estonian white collars became blue collars. Previous teachers, government officials, or actors ended up as factory workers and a majority of women who had been housewives in Estonia as maids (Haas 1992:8, Vesilind and Kõva 2016:2017–2018).

Aavik felt the loss of professional identity as a traumatising experience, yet many immigrants demonstrated a pragmatic attitude towards the lower position. Jaak Jurison (2016:185) writes in his memoirs that his mother had been granted an entry permit to America as she had found a job as a 'live-in maid for a family'. Her son asked: "Is this really right for you? Back home, before the Russians came, you had a housemaid who worked for you." But the mother explained: "If this is what it takes to get to America, I will do it. [---] Look, it is only for one year. After that, I can find a better job." Some of the immigrants were not able to behave as was expected from a refugee by the host society. Kristi Johannson (2014:14) recalls that her mother as the wife of the former director of the Bank of Estonia was not able to change her ladylike manners and this irritated the Swedish factory workers. To put the foreigner in her place, they left dead rats in her shoes. Toona Gottschalk's⁶ memoirs of the period exemplify how the Baltic elite tried to preserve their pre-war image, not realising that the locals saw them as weirdoes. The highly educated gentlemen did not mingle with the 'low class'; they dressed in shabby but well-cut overcoats. They carried an expensive briefcase when they went to their daily job in the factory, although it contained, instead of important documents, only their lunchbox (Toona Gottschalk 2013:262). Sticking to their habitual outside image might have helped them preserve their inner self-respect and identity. Unfortunately, research shows that almost all diasporic groups have troubled relationship with the host society that is usually caused by visible distinction between minority and majority groups. Because of distinctions, immigrants may experience fewer opportunities for contact with insiders, thereby limiting their chances for successful adaptation (Cohen 1997:186, Padilla and Perez 2003:44).

⁵ Quite the opposite examples can also be found about professional careers. Allas (2001: 223–224) recalls how, as an immigrant who had reached Australia, he found work as an engineer already within the first few weeks. However, this was rather an exceptional case.

⁶ Helin Toona Gottschalk (b. 1937), Estonian writer. In 1944, she fled to Germany with her mother and grandmother; currently resides in Florida.

The general descriptions of refugees in Sweden contained a number of negative stereotypes. The Balts were portrayed as drunkards who came from primitive countries and were not interested in working (Byström 2008:68–71, Nordlund 2000:133). Estonians, on the other hand, considered themselves diligent and their culture western. The refugees were aware of the low estimate of the host society. They developed an inferiority complex, which is well illustrated by an excerpt from an essay by exile politician Arvo Horm:

We think that we are so capable, so cultural, so educated, and so rich in cultural creativity. [...] But of this entire outside world knows nothing. If an inhabitant in an enclosed capsule [...] by some miracle is compelled, for instance, to enter into a conversation with a Swede, then [...] he would have to explain in an embarrassed, stuttering manner that we [...] in our homeland, after all, have seen trams and knew what a telephone was (Horm 1946:22).

Swedes' attitude towards the refugees was not entirely standoffish and excluding. Already in 1944, some volunteers established a society under the name *Hjälp krigets offer* (Help the victims of war). They collected money and clothes for Baltic refugees as well as helped Estonians to introduce their ethnic group through music. Estonian musicians organised long concert tours all over Sweden, performing mainly in churches and playing, besides Estonian music, also Western classics (Aavik MS:104–111, Raud-Pähn 2014:21). Recalling Kristi Johannson's example, one can say that her mother's story also ended well due to the Swedes' help. As the lady knew Russian, English, German, and Italian, her employer transferred her from assembly line work to the factory's library, where friendly colleagues taught her the Swedish language and manners.

Similar to some other elderly refugees, Aavik also had a small rise in his career. He found work at the Stockholm Music Museum (Musikhistoriska museet), where he was supposed to catalogue Swedish folk music. This work required expertise in music analysis, which meant that Aavik was able to utilise his professional skills to a certain extent (Aavik MS:717–720).

In Sweden Aavik never became famous. Several musicians, who could be considered Estonian pre-war stars, fled to Sweden, but only a few of them have made such careers that they have become familiar figures in the Swedish mass media. The best known was probably the pianist and TV-entertainer Käbi Laretei (b. 1922), who hosted several programmes on literature and music (Rebas MS:6). Laretei was also known for her marriage to and professional collaborations with film director Ingmar Bergman. Contrary to Aavik, a considerable part of Laretei's activity reached beyond the borders of exile-Estonian narrow cultural space, and she defined herself as a cosmopolitan (Kurvet-Käosaar 2003:318).

Both Aavik and many other Estonians regarded music as a means through which it was possible to integrate into a new society. But did this means actually work? Based on Laretei's example, the answer is affirmative, yet Aavik's example is rather negative. Inno Salasoo's (1985:150–151) immigrant experience proves that the aspects of culture can be divided into two groups: those involving language and those not involving language. The latter were more readily under-

stood and taken over by others. But it also depended on how dominating was the ethnic component included in a work of art. When introducing Estonian music to Swedes, Laretei placed it in a wider cultural context, showing how diverse music in general can be. Aavik, on the contrary, emphasised its singularity by means of national features. Behind these contrary behavioural modes one can see differences between worldviews and generations. By trying to maintain Estonianness, the older generation involuntarily complicated the process of adaptation; this could be regarded as immigrants' common problem (Phinney et al. 2001:504). However, the older refugees did not aim at ethno-cultural isolation – they tried to achieve the recognition of their culture of origin by the host society.

Younger refugees cared for their culture of origin, yet were also open to other cultures. In addition to this, their adaptation strategy reveals certain pragmatism. In their choice of profession they proceeded from the needs of the post-war world, opting for a technical speciality and realising their love for fine arts with ethnic background through hobby activities in Estonian cultural societies. By doing this, they pursued successful careers in host countries, yet did not cut their ties with their culture of origin. Kābi Laretei's contemporary Viktor Libe's (b. 1922) story is a good example of the typical stages in the career development model of a young refugee:

- quarantine camp (6 weeks, 1944);
- lumbering camp for immigrants (1944–1945);
- transfer to free labour market in Swedish-language environment (1945);
- professional education (graduated from an engineering institute in 1951);
- starting well-paid professional work (Libe 2014:122–126).

It is important to mention that the younger generation's success in completing education and finding work could have had a positive impact on the older generation's attitude towards the host country. Aavik's initial disappointment in Swedish immigration politics was alleviated by his daughter's welfare, which in general terms was an indication of the majority's acceptance of the minority group.

2.3. *Developments in Aavik's identity process*

As it is known, adaptation is a dual process which consists of adjustment to the host society, as well as to the changing attitudes among the refugees themselves – immigrants have to rebuild their family and social networks (Aun 1985:39, Vujadinović et al. 2011:252). Aavik also passed both levels of the process. The years when he was writing the last part of his memoirs featured the spread of global Estonianness. In thousands of places outside of Estonia one could find refugees who leading their Estonian lives and were uniting into a global society (Rand 1978:77).⁷ The refugees' understanding about their status changed: life outside the homeland was no longer considered as short-term absence. The

⁷ Rand (*op. cit.*) explains that there are also other nations that have dispersed outside their homelands and established new cultural networks there. He basically describes diaspora society without using the term. The concept of diaspora started to be used for political refugees in the 1980s (Cohen 2018:17).

refugees established new contacts with each other and this influenced Aavik's life considerably.

The chapter "Kanada ja Põhja-Ameerika reis" ("Journey to Canada and North America") (Aavik MS:855–975) shows how Aavik, after ten years of exile, suddenly understood that the compatriots with whom he had kept his distance, as they did not belong to his pre-war acquaintances, had become close as relatives in exile. Sharing language, culture, and memories of the homeland consolidated Estonians. The Estonian Days or ESTO festivals organised in Canada, America, Europe, and Australia were the direct output of the sense of belonging. Aavik became one of the leaders of the developing cultural network, and this position compensated, to a certain extent, for his professional failure in Sweden as well as cured him of his 'refugee disease'. It is interesting to mention that in Nieländer's⁸ opinion the heyday of ethnic culture in the 1950s–60s caused the acceleration of the integration process:

Along with the flowering period of our choral activity, it was possible to notice in our ethnic community a growth in fulfilling our duties as citizens. People were starting to participate in cultural activities as well as in physical training via various American organizations (Nieländer1982:199).

Thus the freedom to preserve the culture of origin dispelled the fear for the possible loss of culture and encouraged the refugees to establish contacts with the host society. It is an expected tendency in the context of acculturation theory: if the minority group does not perceive the pressure of assimilation, it becomes more open to the host society. Another important factor in Aavik's identity process is related to citizenship. In Sweden, the process of naturalisation started in the mid-1950s, and beginning from that time refugees could become citizens of their new country. Aavik acquired Swedish citizenship at the age of 70, in 1954; the procedure included writing a petition to the king, passing a language examination in Swedish, and political interrogation (Aavik MS:1164). Aavik was proud of his citizenship for two reasons: he was able to successfully pass this complicated procedure, and citizenship freed him from the low status of a refugee. Aavik's loyalty towards Sweden gained fresh impetus. As a side remark, it is interesting to note that in refugees' opinion the sense of belonging has different sources in the case of host country and country of origin: relationship with the host country is a 'matter of brain' and that with the country of origin – a 'matter of heart' (Ojamaa and Karu-Kletter 2014:179). Although immigrants with a refugee background claim that loyalty towards the host country derives from 'logical reasoning', there is still emotion behind it – a feeling of gratitude towards the country that granted them asylum. Besides Aavik, examples of gratitude can be found in the memoirs of Toona Gottshalk and Nieländer; the latter recalls how the Estonian choir in Washington D.C. sent a letter of gratitude to President Eisenhower for his help to war refugees.

⁸ August Nieländer (1887–1986), Estonian musician and serviceman, fled to Germany in 1944 and from there to the USA later on.

Removing barriers between immigrants and domicile population in Sweden has been a long process. In 1969, a linguistic nuance signalled a change in attitudes. In the post-war period, refugees were called *utlänning* ‘foreigner’ (lit. ‘outside of the country’), but in 1969 it was replaced in official language use by the term *invandrare* ‘immigrant’ (Rebas MS:18). A smart political decision could be guessed behind this change of term. In Swedish, the prefix *ut-* refers to exclusion and *in-* to inclusion, and immigrants wanted to be included in the society, as is confirmed by Aavik’s story.

3. Conclusion

Aavik (MS:1012–1092) summarises the positive and negative aspects of his exile life in the chapter “Õnnestumisi ja tagasilööke” (“Successes and failures”). We can detect an interesting regularity when analysing the chapter: Aavik always finds a positive aspect (*PA*) to balance a negative one (*NA*):

NA: The greatest tragedy was to lose homeland due to the invasion of the Soviet Army.

PA: The greatest success was to escape into the free world, which enabled him to build up a new life.

NA: The well-organised Estonian society in exile could not replace the real homeland.

PA: The evolution of new cultural network encouraged the belief in the preservation of ethno-cultural identity in the host country.

NA: The host society did not recognise Aavik as a high-status professional musician.

PA: Aavik was able to give, via the textbooks published in Sweden, music education to Estonian children, several of whom later on established their careers as musicians in the new society. This way Aavik still succeeded in making his contribution to Swedish culture, which was his primary aim.

Similar chapters are missing in other immigrants’ memoirs and unfortunately Aavik does not comment why he thought it was necessary to critically overview the balance of his exile years. The analysis of minuses and pluses in the adaptation process could be regarded as a way for Aavik to handle his acculturation stress.

Several scholars (e.g. Reinans 2008b:1358, Kyntäja 1997:68–69) characterise both the refugees of World War II and today’s voluntary immigrants as good integrators. Nevertheless, Raag (2004:191) notes that not all Estonian refugees integrated with their host societies. Some of them – mostly elderly people who had lost their professional and/or societal status – lived entirely in a world of Estonia in exile. In general terms we should agree with Raag, yet Aavik does not fit very well in this black-and-white picture. According to acculturation theory, immigrants assimilate, marginalise, separate, or integrate. Considering Aavik’s possibilities in this context, we could say that assimilation (exchanging culture of

origin for a new one) was above all hindered by his inseparable connection to his culture of origin – as a professional musician, Aavik was part of it. Marginalisation (distancing from both cultures) was excluded for the same reason. Separation (encapsulation in culture of origin) would have been expectable, yet an individual is not just a pawn in theory's playground. In order to maintain professional identity, Aavik needed a wide international auditorium, and this pushed him towards integration. His pre-war career, establishing friendly contacts with choir organisations in the Baltic and Nordic countries, made him believe that music can be a transnational unifier. In Sweden, however, it turned out that national music was not the best tool to integrate into the culture of another nation state, yet Aavik refused to change his style as it would have been in disagreement with his ethical and aesthetical principles. The target group of his music was mainly Estonian diaspora, while he continued communication with his Swedish colleagues and tried to learn everything about Swedish music. Aavik expected it would help him better understand the people among whom he was supposed to live for the rest of his life.

Shifts in Aavik's identity occurred on two parallel levels. His loyalty towards Sweden increased after he had been granted citizenship, yet at the same time his sense of belonging to diaspora Estonians also strengthened. These two tendencies created prerequisites for establishing hyphenated identity, in which ties with culture of origin and culture of the host society are equally important. The majority of the members of the younger generation integrated into the new society and evolved hyphenated identity (e.g. Estonian-Canadian). Aavik stopped half-way: similar to other older generation refugees he never identified himself as an Estonian Swede, but remained an Estonian in Sweden. However, many years after his death Aavik was also given his 'hyphen': in modern Sweden he is accepted as an Estonian-Swedish (*estnisk-svensk*) composer, conductor, and music educationalist (sv.wiki).

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