

## **SOCIALISATION TO VALUES: COLLECTIVISM AND INDIVIDUALISM IN THE ABC-BOOKS OF THE 20TH CENTURY ESTONIA**

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**Abstract.** This study examines the representation of collectivist and individualistic values in Estonian ABC-books, published between 1900 and 1997, in the context of societal transformations. Grounded theory analysis and pragmatics were used as initial models to develop a method for analysing the pattern of values in ABC-books. The open coding of the text and illustrations revealed preliminary value categories. The next phase of coding involved comparison of preliminary codes with value indicators developed by Schwartz (1990, 1996). On the principle of semantic proximity, all codes were associated with Schwartzian value clusters. Estonian ABC-books were found to convey collectivist rather than individualist values. The ABC-books of the 1990s, however, pay slightly more attention to individualistic values. The individualism-collectivism construct was found to be applicable in textbook research, provided that the specificity of the educational media is taken into account. Some options in the education of values are also discussed.

### **1. Introduction**

Cultural artefacts, educational media, instruments of socialisation – school textbooks are simultaneously all of these. Even the ABC-books<sup>1</sup> serve several functions: they teach first-graders to read and write, and “tell children what their elders want them to know” (FitzGerald 1979:47). ABC-books (as well as other school textbooks) represent values, attitudes and world views that are considered to be worthy of passing on to the next generation, as a part of “socially approved knowledge” (Schutz 1964). These values are taken for granted by textbook authors, officials, teachers, parents and, finally, by pupils.

The values selected for a primer’s curriculum thus reflect the moral aims of the educators in that period of time. (For some exemplary studies based on that

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<sup>1</sup> An ABC-book or a primer (later in this paper used as synonyms) is a first-grade textbook that teaches children to read and write single letters, words, and sentences; it includes pictures, grammar, and short narratives and poems adjusted to children’s reading and writing skills.

assumption, see Koski 1998, London 1984.) In addition, the values represented in ABC-books (and other school textbooks) serve as a valuable source of knowledge about societal culture on the macro-level. While aggregated individual culture is observable through averaged “micro-data” from a questionnaire survey, indicators of societal culture or “macro-data” are predominantly obtained from textual analyses of curricula, textbooks, media content, etc.

Individualistic and collectivist values, in particular, occur quite infrequently in textbook studies or pedagogical research, not to mention the discussion and comparison of (American) individualistic and competitive education *vs.* (Soviet) collectivist education (see Keltikangas-Järvinen and Terav 1996, for overview). For psychologists and sociologists, on the other hand, the concepts of individualism and collectivism have served as almost magic words, especially during the last decades (see Kagitçibasi 1997, for overview). The terms have been in extensive use in cross-cultural psychological research as well as in sociological descriptions of the differences between traditional and modern types of societies. Yet this concept, like many other terms in social sciences, is not completely unproblematic. The construct of individualism-collectivism encompasses various meanings and components, as well as different levels of analysis (the individual and the cultural level) (*ibid.*).

The 20th century Estonian society serves as a perfect testing ground for somewhat ambiguous social scientific concepts. During this century, Estonia has gone through radical political and ideological changes. Estonians gained independence from Tsarist Russia in 1918, suffered German and Soviet occupations between 1940 and 1991, regained independence in 1991, and are now building up a new political and economic order (see, e.g., Høyer et al. 1993, for overview). At the same time, processes of modernisation have taken place, altering people’s lifestyle and value orientations. These changes provide a good opportunity for well-grounded longitudinal measurements, which help to estimate the validity of social scientific terms and constructs, including theoretical value axes.

This article has several analytical facets. First, it explores the socialising content of the ABC-books of the 20th century Estonia in terms of individualistic and collectivist values. The results are juxtaposed with the ones from some other studies on individualism-collectivism in Estonia, and interpreted in the context of cultural and political transformations that have occurred in Estonian society. Also, I will try to evaluate the usefulness of the individualism-collectivism construct for the interdisciplinary field of textbook analysis. Finally, I will discuss some options in the education of values.

## **2. Theoretical and empirical background**

### *2.1. School textbooks as instruments of socialisation*

The function of school textbooks is to represent to each generation of pupils a sanctioned or desired version of human knowledge and culture (de Castell 1991:78). Textbooks and other educational media tell us what educators believed *ought* to

exist, though those materials cannot tell us what we might like to know about a teacher's interaction with pupils, a school's relationship to a community, or a pupil's reception of or reactions to what the school has to offer (Clark 1984:3). I maintain that socialisation is an ongoing dialectical process, a continuous interplay and interaction between two sets of actors – the individuals being socialised, and the agents of socialisation (Bar-Tal and Saxe 1990, Berger and Luckmann 1991 [1966], Gallatin 1980, Rosengren 1994). In line with this balanced view on “agency” and “structure”, I hold that meaning is not given by the text (in textbooks or other media) but constructed in the social process of reading when reader meets text (Buckingham 1993, Iser 1980, Taxel 1989). Nevertheless, it seems most reasonable to treat textbooks as texts possessing institutionally defined authority (Olson 1989, Selander 1995). Such texts invite or prefer particular kinds of reading and set the stage for “legitimate” interpretation, which means that the potential for different meanings is “much less than infinite” (Buckingham 1993:270). The attitudinal and value content of school textbooks is therefore a matter of great interest.

Insofar only few value-forming aspects of textbooks have been studied intensively: the representation of males and females, and the role division between the sexes; the depicted relations between different nations as well as between immigrants and indigenous people; the representation of human rights, democracy and peace; and achievement motivation (see Johnsen 1993:109–127, Mikk 2000:315–320, for overview). Some studies reveal that the amount of the textbook stories supporting achievement is positively correlated with the economic development of the country (Mikk 2000:330). For instance, a good harmony between achievement motivation in the textbooks and the number of patents in the USA in the period from 1800 to 1960 has been found (de Charms and Moeller 1962, cited in Venezky 1992:448). Except achievement, an individualistic value, textbook researchers have systematically analysed no other values directly related to the individualistic-collectivist typology.

## 2.2. *Individualism and collectivism as sets of values*

On cultural level, values are defined as “the vocabulary of socially approved goals that societal members use to motivate action and to express and justify the solutions” (Smith and Schwartz 1997:95). There are several theoretical value axes, and the individualism-collectivism dimension is one of them. It is important to note that the very nature of the individualism-collectivism construct has been a crucial topic in the development of the concept. At the outset, Hofstede (1980) viewed individualism and collectivism as two opposite poles of a unidimensional scale. In the middle of the 1980s, Triandis and his colleagues suggested that individualism and collectivism might not be two opposite poles of a single dimension, but rather multidimensional constructs (Triandis et al. 1988). Another possibility is that they are “two independent factors both at the cultural and personal levels” (quoted from Realo 1998:27). Triandis (1993) puts it also as follows: “... individualism and collectivism can coexist and are simply emphasised more or less in each culture,

*depending on the situation*" (p. 162). In accordance with this, he has suggested that individualism and collectivism should be thought of as *cultural syndromes* characterised by their "organising themes". For an individualistic culture, the central theme is an autonomous individual, a concern with "what makes me happy", "how can I have fun". For a collectivist culture, the central theme is the collective – family, organisation, state, ethnic group, etc., as well as a concern about what is a good society or what happens to others (ibid., p. 156, 161). In the most general terms it is possible to argue that a link between a cultural shift of these two value orientations and major political changes appears. For instance, "We can see a shift from socialism toward free-market economies in most of the world, as a shift from collectivism toward individualism accelerates" (ibid., p. 161).

To compare societies in terms of individualism-collectivism, Schwartz (1990, 1996) has specified the relationship between his system of values (up to 56 indicators clustered around the ten motivational goals they express), and individualism-collectivism as a macro-level societal dimension<sup>2</sup>. According to Schwartz, two motivational goals, *self-direction* and *stimulation*, and some universalistic values (world at peace, social justice, equality) should be more important to the average person in more individualistic (contractual) societies. *Conformity*, *tradition* and *benevolence* should be more important in more collectivist (communal) societies. The rest of the motivational types of values, characterised by Schwartz as "collectivist" (*security*) or "individualistic" (*hedonism*, *achievement* and *power*), do not show adequate differentiation between societal types. Schwartz, however, admits that *power* may be valued most highly in societies undergoing rapid change from communal to contractual structures, where individuals "strive enthusiastically to increase their power and prestige" (1990:155).

Two other basic dimensions, indirectly related to individualism-collectivism, traverse Schwartz's system of values. One dimension opposes Openness to Change (combining *self-direction* and *stimulation* value types) to Conservation (combining *security*, *conformity*, and *tradition*). The second dimension opposes Self-Enhancement (combining *power* and *achievement*) to Self-Transcendence (combining *benevolence* and *universalism*). *Hedonism* shares elements of both Openness to Change and Self-Enhancement (Schwartz 1996).

I conducted my analysis along three value axes: individualism-collectivism (where *self-direction*, *stimulation*, *power*, *achievement* and *hedonism* belong to

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<sup>2</sup> In fact, Schwartz has specified two sets of value clusters – one for the individual level and the other for the culture level of analysis (see Schwartz 1994). Since ABC-books are macro-level phenomena, the use of culture level value clusters seems more appropriate and logical. However, Schwartz's culture level constructs (*Mastery*, *Hierarchy*, *Conservatism*, *Affective and Intellectual Autonomy*, *Egalitarian Commitment*, and *Harmony*) have been criticised for being confusing and for making no immediate psychological sense (Kagitçibasi 1997). I would add that Schwartz's culture level value clusters are actually less appropriate for a study of textbooks (or for any other textual analysis) since they are more coarse (compared with ten motivational goals on the individual level, only seven culture level clusters exist), and semantically indistinct and incoherent (for instance, the value "humble" falls in the cluster of *Hierarchy*, and "freedom" is located in the cluster of *Egalitarian Commitment*).

individualistic motivational types of values, and *conformity, tradition, benevolence* and *security* are collectivist motivational types of values), Openness to Change vs. Conservation, and Self-Enhancement vs. Self-Transcendence.

### 2.3. *The position of Estonia on the map of individualism-collectivism*

Since the beginning of the 1990s, frequent attempts have been made to anchor Estonia on the sketch map of this theoretical construct. I will highlight some upshots of that endeavour. According to comparative studies of individualism-collectivism made by Schwartz at the beginning of the 1990s, Estonia fell among the highly collectivist societies (Schwartz 1994). Empirical evidence of that kind could result from the cumulative effect of several factors: relics of the traditional peasant culture and strong national feelings among Estonians, the influence of the official Communist ideology, and some objective socio-economic conditions (scarcity of living space and a connections-based supply network) (Lauristin and T. Vihalemm 1997). However, Realo (1998) has argued that these results may be partly due to the effects of the sample type (Schwartz drew most of the conclusions on the results based on the schoolteacher samples).

The Balticom value surveys conducted in 1991–1995 have revealed the movement away from the collectivist cultural syndrome. That is, the surveys unveiled the existence of a growing individualism and openness among the Estonian population: a more active, achievement-associated individualism among Estonians, and a more consumer-oriented individualism among the Russian minority (Lauristin and T. Vihalemm 1997). Several recent studies have shown that Estonians rank fairly low on collectivism, including meta-level collectivism<sup>3</sup> (Kants and Realo 1999, Realo and Allik 1999). Furthermore, available macro-level evidence – the demographic factors such as urbanism and small family size, as well as the Estonians' autostereotype or national myth, about their extreme individualism – support the image of Estonia as rather an individualistic (non-collectivist) country (Realo 1998).

Thus, the position of Estonia on the map of individualism-collectivism remains somewhat ambiguous. The case has already earned a name denotative of paradox – “collectivism in an individualist culture” (ibid.). Dissonance between the results of various empirical studies, as well as between the public opinion of the community of cross-cultural researchers (labelling Estonians as “collectivists”) and the Estonians' autostereotype as being individualists, still intrigues. Realo has argued that this may be “due to the all-embracing definition of the individualism-collectivism constructs that holds and tolerates a wide range of miscellaneous opinions” (ibid., p. 35). I assume that primers (or other school textbooks) will serve as an additional source of macro-data about the predominant pattern of individualistic vs. collectivist values. My hypothesis is that Estonian ABC-books contain collectivist values more than individualistic values. New primers (published in the 1990s) may transmit more

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<sup>3</sup> Meta-level collectivism was measured by asking the judges from three nations to rank ten nations, including their own, along ten collectivistic statements (for more details, see Kants and Realo 1999).

individualistic values. ABC-books in Russian are probably more collectivist than their temporal counterparts in Estonian. Textbook data, when interpreted in the context of societal transformations, will help in turn to evaluate the utility of the concepts of individualism and collectivism.

### 3. Sample

Among more than 200 editions of Estonian ABC-books published in 1900–1997, I selected 14 primers (11 in Estonian and 3 in Russian) for my study (see Appendix, Table 1A). I used two main criteria for selection:

- To select a primer per decade of both *widespread* or “*popular*” (according to the number of editions and copies, and to historical sources), and *typical* nature (published primarily and/or for the first time during the given decade). ABC-books designed for exclusive home use were cast aside.
- To select, where possible, the edition published in *mid-decade* (year ‘‘5 or ‘‘4) to keep the time distance between different primers in the sample more or less equal. In Tables 1 and 2A, the sampled ABC-books are marked through the publishing year. “R” stands for the primers in Russian.

### 4. Methods

I drew on principles of *grounded theory analysis* (Strauss 1987) as well as *pragmatics* (Blakemore 1992) to develop a method for revealing the pattern of values in ABC-books. Grounded theory analysis is characterised as a research technique by which data are analysed systematically, intensively, and in detail (“often sentence by sentence, or phrase by phrase”) to create a theory that is *grounded* in the data (Strauss 1987:22). The specificity of that method lies in the fact that codes are not strictly preconceived. Concepts, categories and, finally, a theory, emerge during the analysis. Grounded theory analysis is based on a *concept-indicator model* that directs the conceptual coding of a set of empirical indicators. The latter are actual data that indicate a concept or a coded category derived by the analyst. The initial type of coding is termed *open coding*. This type of coding is done by scrutinising the data very closely with the aims of commencing the process of inquiry, and producing concepts that seem to *fit the data*. Open coding will usually develop into *axial coding*, which consists of intense analysis done around one category at a time. A further phase of analysis is termed *selective coding*, which consists of coding systematically and concertedly for the core categories in the theory (Strauss 1987).

In this study I did not aim to develop a kind of elaborated grounded theory. Rather, I used some valuable tools provided by that approach (principles of the concept-indicator model, and two types of coding – open coding and axial coding). They were combined with the application of the pre-existent theoretical categories developed by Schwartz (1990, 1996). I reached preliminary value categories through open coding of the text (and, in some exceptional cases, of illustrations): I

gave any of the values conveyed through the text the “most fitting” code. In this way, I coded all values found in the text, regardless of the number of different values instantiated in one and the same textual unit. In addition, I made use of pragmatic interpretation, i.e. I took both *explicatures* and *implicatures* into consideration. It means that explicit value concepts (such as “politeness” and “loyal”), concepts or images symbolising values (an expensive watch as an indication of wealth), as well as values implicated through a narrative or an utterance, were given a preliminary code. During the next phase of coding, I compared these codes with value indicators developed by Schwartz. Those preliminary codes that were overlapping with, or substantially similar to, Schwartz’s value indicators, were given a corresponding conceptual label (“helpful”, “freedom”, etc.). In the case of other preliminary codes, I retained their original conceptual labels (“masterful”, “orderliness”, “selflessly brave”, etc.). On the principle of semantic proximity, I associated those codes with theoretical value clusters – the ten motivational goals suggested by Schwartz. For instance, I categorised “masterful” in the cluster of *power*, “orderliness” fell in the cluster of *conformity*, and “selflessly brave” went with *benevolence*. For every primer, I counted the occurrence of values, and calculated the relative frequencies of value clusters<sup>4</sup> (see Appendix, Table 2A).

To make the pattern of values more lucid, I developed an easily comprehensible system of plusses and minuses (Table 1):

“+ + +” refers to “very frequent” value clusters, with a relative frequency of at least 10% (before rounding), and an absolute frequency of at least 3.

“+ +” refers to “relatively frequent” value clusters, with a relative frequency of 5–9% (before rounding), and an absolute frequency of at least 2.

“+” refers to “less frequent” value clusters, with a relative frequency of less than 5%.

“–“ refers to value clusters not represented in the primer.

In addition, I had a look at the discourse on home in the ABC-books to reveal the patterns of *Familism* – a subtype of collectivism focused on relations with family (Realo et al. 1997), and *a Sense of Ownership*. The latter is my term to sum up the desire and the respect for a household of one’s own, as well as the attitudes and a sense of the rights and obligations that arise from being a master of private property. The concept is closely related to, and shares elements of, Schwartzian *Achievement* and *Power*.

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<sup>4</sup> Though the relative frequencies are calculated, my analysis is qualitative rather than quantitative, and aims at revealing the pattern of values in the ABC-books. Since the primers vary to a great extent in their volume and the total number of represented values (whereby many occur very rarely), no measures of statistical significance are used.

Table 1

## The distribution of Schwartz's motivational types of values in Estonian ABC-books

| Schwartz's Value Types | ABC-Books (Year of publication) |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |      |      |      |      |        |      |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|
|                        | 1907                            | 1914 | 1922 R | 1927 | 1935 | 1938 R | 1944 | 1955 | 1965 | 1974 | 1985 | 1995 | 1996 R | 1997 |
| SELF-DIRECTION         | -                               | +    | +      | +    | +    | +      | -    | -    | +    | +    | -    | -    | ++     | ++   |
| STIMULATION            | -                               | -    | -      | ++   | -    | +      | +    | +    | +    | ++   | +    | +    | +      | +    |
| HEDONISM               | +                               | ++   | +      | +++  | ++   | +++    | +++  | ++   | ++   | +++  | +++  | +++  | +      | +++  |
| ACHIEVEMENT            | +                               | +    | -      | +    | +    | +      | -    | +    | +    | +    | +    | -    | ++     | +    |
| POWER                  | +                               | +    | -      | +    | -    | +      | -    | +    | -    | -    | -    | +++  | -      | -    |
| SECURITY               | -                               | ++   | ++     | +    | +    | ++     | +++  | +++  | +++  | ++   | ++   | +    | ++     | +    |
| CONFORMITY             | +++                             | +++  | +++    | +++  | +++  | +++    | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++    | +++  |
| TRADITION              | +++                             | ++   | +++    | +    | +    | ++     | +    | +    | +    | ++   | -    | -    | ++     | +    |
| BENEVOLENCE            | +++                             | +++  | +++    | +++  | +++  | +++    | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | -    | +++    | +++  |
| UNIVERSALISM           | +++                             | +++  | +++    | +++  | +++  | +++    | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | +++  | ++   | +++    | +++  |



## 5. Results

The very first glance at Table 1 bears witness to the fact that value clusters associated with individualism (the upper half of the table) are represented less frequently than value clusters associated with collectivism (the lower half of the table, except *universalism*). Moreover, no easily perceptible changes in this pattern occur. In the most general terms one can thus say that no drastic transformation of values along the axis of individualism-collectivism has taken place in the 20th century. In particular, values best characterising the individualistic type of society (those centred around motivational goals of *self-direction* and *stimulation*) remain less important than motivational goals more prevalent in the collectivist type of society (*conformity*, *tradition* and *benevolence*). The three ABC-books in Russian are fairly similar to their temporal counterparts in Estonian.

Some non-extensive variation and important details still appear. In the ABC-books of the 1990s, slightly greater emphasis is laid on individualistic motivational goals. In 1997, *self-direction* (values such as independent, freedom and creativity) is represented relatively frequently. In the Russian primer of 1996, *self-direction* (independent, in particular) and *achievement* are emphasised to a remarkable extent. In the 1995 Estonian ABC-book, *power* (wealth) deserves much attention (wealth is implicated, for instance, through a picture of a living room with many expensive electronic devices). The relative importance of all individualistic values measures up to 56.3%, 23.5% and 27.2% in 1995, 1996 and 1997, respectively. Such numbers are relatively high: the average of individualistic values for the other ABC-books is 17.9%.

We can see that *hedonism* is the most frequently represented individualistic motivational goal in ABC-books. Perhaps this is due to the specificity of these teaching media: values like pleasure, cheerful and happiness are accepted to be suitable for the young readers. However, the oldest (and the most traditional) ABC-books in the sample are, *en bloc*, somewhat less “jolly”. The relative importance of *hedonism* is far less than 10% in 1907–1922.

I find it remarkable that *conformity* is the one and only motivational goal to be represented very frequently in all ABC-books. This, again, has probably something to do with the specificity of the medium. In other words, children of that age must be socialised into some behavioural patterns of society regardless of any simultaneous larger-scale societal transformations. The most recurrent and stable value categories for *conformity* are diligence, obedient and politeness.

Signs of modernisation can definitely be inferred through the decline of *tradition* (values like humble, respect for tradition, etc., are very frequent only in the oldest ABC-books). It is noteworthy that honouring one’s parents and elders is considered important in the oldest primers (1907–1938, except the 1922 Russian ABC-book) as well as in the Socialist primer of the 1970s. In the latter, this value is conveyed through Estonian proverbs (“Honour a hoary person, bow to a grey head”) as well as through newly created normative sentences (“October’s children [the children’s organisation in the Soviet Union] respect the elderly”).

It is worth mentioning that values related to *benevolence* (helpful, kind, friendship, etc.) are completely absent in only one primer, the 1995 Estonian primer. That ABC-book can be regarded as a “lawful child” and true reflection of the young and immature Estonian capitalism. It is the most individualistic and least collectivist primer. It appraises wealth and hedonism, while tending to ignore benevolence and traditions.

The analysis of values combined along two other Schwartzian dimensions reveals that Estonian ABC-books have systematically promoted Conservation (*security, conformity, tradition*) rather than Openness to Change (*self-direction, stimulation, (hedonism)*), and Self-Transcendence (*benevolence, universalism*) rather than Self-Enhancement (*achievement, power, (hedonism)*). The only exception to this pattern is the aforementioned 1995 Estonian primer where Self-Enhancement is sighted as a purpose more frequently than Self-Transcendence. It seems that these two dimensions do not serve as the most appropriate instruments for the measurement of *value change* in primary educational media. The institutionally defined collateral task of the medium – to *socialise* prospective members of society – obviously overbalances much of the influence of cultural and political transformations.

In most ABC-books in the sample, the construction of home-related identity comprises identification with one’s family, consisting of mother and father, sister(s) and brother(s). I would interpret this as a persistent indication of *Familism* – collectivism focused on relations with family. This pattern, however, is juxtaposed with a continuous individualistic feature of the discourse on home, a *Sense of Ownership*: most of the primers (except the 1955 Estonian ABC-book and the 1996 Russian ABC-book) present a farm or a private house as a typical home with which the reader is to identify. An intertextual piece of discourse, the poem titled “Juss was a small master” (by Ernst Enno), values both independence and a sense of ownership, and is found in the 1927 primer (the first independence period) as well as in the 1965 ABC-book (the Soviet “thaw” period).

## 6. Discussion

Generalising all the findings, one has to conclude that the ABC-books published in Estonia in 1900–1997 convey collectivist rather than individualistic values. In the primers of the 1990s, however, individualistic values are somewhat more central than in the previous decades. I would interpret these findings as follows. It is probable that the dominance of collectivist values in Estonian ABC-books is mostly due to a long-preserved cultural syndrome on the macro-level – these are collectivist values Estonians assume to be *socially approved*. In other words, Estonian people believe that they are supposed to hold these values. (This interpretation seems to be supported by incidental findings from the study of meta-level collectivism referred to above (Kants and Realo 1999) – the tendency of all respondents, including Estonians, to place their own nation higher on collectivism

than judges from other nations did, probably due to social desirability.) To take one step further, Estonians also presume that they are expected to socialise the young generation into collectivist values. As a result, collectivist rather than individualistic values prevail in Estonian ABC-books. (To be sure, the very specificity of the medium also plays a role here. Primers as pupils' first textbooks serve a pedagogic objective to socialise children into a collective in its broadest meaning.) I would say that the dominance of collectivist values in Estonian ABC-books can be seen as a function of the "cultural *Super-Ego*": educators take it for granted that collectivist values are socially ordained in the given culture.

Logically, then, I would interpret weak but persistent individualistic features in the primers' discourse as a function of the "cultural *Ego*". *A Sense of Ownership* – respect for private property and desire for a household of one's own – has long been honoured among Estonians, at least on the individual level. I would say that individualistic values often serve as the true guiding principles in individual Estonians' lives, influencing the "selection or evaluation of behaviour, people, and events" (Smith and Schwartz 1997:80). The primers of the 1990s reveal that certain individually held individualistic motivational goals (such as *self-direction*, *stimulation* and *power*) begin to obtain some overt recognition and manifestation on the macro-level. In other words, some individualistic values are assumed to be socially approved to the extent that they have been included in the "hidden curriculum" of ABC-books – parts of the hitherto "cultural *Ego*" become sanctioned by the "cultural *Super-Ego*" as well. Obviously, this process can be linked with societal transformations of the 1990s – the transition to a free-market economy, the withering away of the Soviet collectivist mentality and the cooling down of strong national feelings among Estonians.

The apparent similarity between the primers in Russian and their temporal counterparts in Estonian does not coincide with a common notion, or cultural stereotype, about Russians being more collectivist than Estonians. Neither does it harmonise with the results of some recent studies showing that Russian students were significantly more collectivist than Estonian students (Kants and Realo 1999, Realo and Allik 1999). This paradox may be due to the shared cultural notions among Estonian and Russian-Estonian educators, and/or a mutual example-setting agency and intertextuality of Estonian and Russian teaching media.

This analysis of Estonian ABC-books may have shed some new light on the complicated issue of Estonia's position on the map of individualism-collectivism, "collectivism in an individualist culture". I have tried to show that a solution to this equation most probably lies in the layers of consciousness – individual vs. collective ("*Ego*" vs. "*Super-Ego*") – and thus, in the levels of analysis. Also, my analysis lends full support to the suggestion by Triandis and his colleagues (1988) to abandon the simplistic concept of individualism-collectivism as opposite poles of a single dimension. The findings provided by two different methods reveal that collectivism always involves the existence of a certain amount and particular type of individualism. In other words, no culture can be really collectivist without being somewhat individualistic at the same time (cf. Realo 1998). A reasonable question

is: What types of values are *dominant* in the given culture and/or media, and whether their dominance is threatened by *residual* or *emergent* values in Williams' (1995 [1972]) terms? These categories intermingle with the cultural and personal levels of analysis in a complicated manner. Collectivist values, so dominant in Estonian ABC-books (the cultural level), are becoming more and more residual on the personal level (see the discussion in 2.3., above). Individualistic values, on the other hand, are becoming more dominant on the personal level, and emerge on the cultural level (in the primers of the 1990s). To some extent, individualistic values are also residual on both levels (*Sense of Ownership* and some other individualistic traits are retained since the first independence period).

It seems justifiable to conclude that the individualism-collectivism construct can be used in textbook studies with the understanding that individualism and collectivism are thought of as two relatively independent factors both at the cultural and personal levels. Still, one has to retain circumspection in drawing conclusions inasmuch as the institutional character of the teaching media most probably induces textbooks toward "excessive" collectivism rather than individualism. For the same reason, two other Schwartzian value axes (Conservation vs. Openness to Change, and Self-Transcendence vs. Self-Enhancement) did not prove to be instrumental in my analysis of Estonian ABC-books. To be sure, the utility of Schwartz's value dimensions for textbook analysis ought to be reassessed through comparative studies of primers and other textbooks from different countries, especially from cultures usually characterised as most individualistic (British, German, North American, etc.).

This study has documented the values that *are* represented in a specific sample of textbooks. Now, one may wonder what types of values are most *desirable* in moral education. Triandis (1993) argues very clearly that the extremes of either collectivism or individualism are undesirable. He is convinced that severe conflicts between in-groups (such as ethnic cleansing, wars, etc.) result from extreme collectivism. On the other hand, Triandis argues, high rates of delinquency, crime, homelessness, and heart attacks, as well as the weakening of the family with increasingly many examples of child neglect or abuse must have some relationship to the extreme, narcissistic forms of individualism that have emerged in welfare states such as Britain and the United States. To portray the situation, Triandis uses a nice metaphor. He suggests thinking of collectivism as water and individualism as molecules of ice. As the temperature changes, the ice crystals either form or crack. At all times we have some water and some ice, that is, both collectivist and individualistic elements. The subtext of this metaphor is frightening: as a shift from collectivism toward individualism accelerates in many countries, the earth is entering a new ice age!

For small nation states like Estonia, the individualism-collectivism issue is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, certain elements of collectivism (values such as a sense of belonging, respect for tradition, etc.) are essential for a small nation to survive (currently, just about one million ethnic Estonians live in Estonia). On the other hand, in the globalising world, often also as a heritage of

the colonial past, many nation states, including Estonia, face the task of political and cultural integration of ethnic minorities. Some psychological experiments (for example, Earley 1989) have shown that the distinction between in-groups and out-groups is much less important for individualists than it is for collectivists. It follows that the integration process in a multicultural society will probably be more successful if individualistic values are socially approved in the society as a whole.

These two arguments taken together can only lead to one conclusion: the overall outcome will probably be best if such cultural forms are promoted that select the finest elements of both individualism and collectivism. To my understanding, *self-direction* and *stimulation* for individualism, and *benevolence* for collectivism are good examples of desirable motivational goals. Most of the values in those clusters are fairly remote from potentially harmful extremes. Still, the promotion of *universal* values is probably most important in this respect. Values such as wisdom, broadmindedness, inner harmony, and a world of beauty may serve personal and group (both in-group and out-group) interests at the same time, whereas values such as equality for all, social justice, protecting the environment, and a world at peace serve primarily the interests of a larger collectivity beyond the in-group (Schwartz 1990). I am able to note, with satisfaction, that *universalism*, at least, is represented very frequently in all except one of the Estonian ABC-books in the sample.

## 7. Conclusion

The empirical and theoretical conclusions of the article can be summarised as follows:

1. Estonian ABC-books convey collectivist rather than individualistic values. In the ABC-books of the 1990s, individualistic values deserve slightly more attention. The latter finding, the emergence of individualistic values on the cultural level, echoes the same values becoming more dominant on the personal level (according to the recent survey data).
2. The value patterns of the ABC-books in Russian resemble their temporal counterparts in the primers in Estonian.
3. With some circumspection, the individualism-collectivism construct can be used in textbook research.
4. Elements of both individualism and collectivism, as well as universal values, should be represented in textbooks and other educational media.

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## APPENDIX

Table 1A

## Estonian ABC-books investigated in this study

| Title  | Year of publication | Place of publication |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Pre-independence ABC-books</b>  |                     |                      |
| <b>Kuke-aabits</b>   | 1907                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Eesti laste Aabits ja esimese aasta Lugemise raamat kodu ja kooli jaoks</i> | 1914                | Tallinn              |
| <b>ABC-books of the first independence period</b>                              |                     |                      |
| <i>Russkaja azbuka</i> (in Russian)  | 1922                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Huvitaja. I.</i>  | 1927                | Tartu                |
| <i>Elav Sõna. I.</i>   | 1935                | Tartu                |
| <i>Bukvar</i> (in Russian)   | 1938                | Tallinn              |
| <b>ABC-books of the Soviet occupation period</b>                               |                     |                      |
| <i>Esimesed vaod</i>   | 1944                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Aabits</i>  | 1955                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Aabits</i>  | 1965                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Aabits</i>  | 1974                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Aabits</i>  | 1985                | Tallinn              |
| <b>ABC-books of the second independence period</b>                             |                     |                      |
| <i>Hubert teeb aabitsat ehk Hiirepöegade seiklused laias ilmas</i>             | 1995                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Azbuka</i> (in Russian)   | 1996                | Tallinn              |
| <i>Aabits</i>  | 1997                | Tallinn              |



Raw and relative frequencies (in percentages) for Schwartz's motivational types of values in Estonian ABC-books

| Schwartz's Value Types |   | ABC-Books (Year of publication) |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |      |      |      |      |        |      |
|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|
|                        |   | 1907                            | 1914 | 1922 R | 1927 | 1935 | 1938 R | 1944 | 1955 | 1965 | 1974 | 1985 | 1995 | 1996 R | 1997 |
| SELF-DIRECTION         | n | –                               | 2    | 1      | 3    | 1    | 2      | –    | –    | 1    | 1    | –    | –    | 4      | 4    |
|                        | % | –                               | 1.6  | 5.5    | 2.4  | 0.9  | 2.4    | –    | –    | 1.6  | 0.8  | –    | –    | 7.8    | 5.7  |
| STIMULATION            | n | –                               | –    | –      | 7    | –    | 2      | 1    | 4    | 2    | 7    | 1    | 1    | 1      | 2    |
|                        | % | –                               | –    | –      | 5.5  | –    | 2.4    | 3.7  | 4.5  | 3.3  | 5.4  | 3.6  | 6.3  | 2.0    | 2.9  |
| HEDONISM               | n | 1                               | 10   | 1      | 21   | 8    | 13     | 5    | 6    | 6    | 19   | 3    | 4    | 2      | 11   |
|                        | % | 3.3                             | 7.8  | 5.5    | 16.7 | 7.6  | 15.5   | 18.5 | 6.7  | 9.8  | 14.6 | 10.7 | 25.0 | 3.9    | 15.7 |
| ACHIEVEMENT            | n | 1                               | 1    | –      | 6    | 3    | 1      | –    | 2    | 1    | 3    | 1    | –    | 5      | 2    |
|                        | % | 3.3                             | 0.8  | –      | 4.8  | 2.9  | 1.2    | –    | 2.2  | 1.6  | 2.3  | 3.6  | –    | 9.8    | 2.9  |
| POWER                  | n | 1                               | 3    | –      | 5    | –    | 1      | –    | 3    | –    | –    | –    | 4    | –      | –    |
|                        | % | 3.3                             | 2.3  | –      | 4.0  | –    | 1.2    | –    | 3.4  | –    | –    | –    | 25.0 | –      | –    |
| SECURITY               | n | –                               | 9    | 2      | 4    | 3    | 6      | 3    | 13   | 8    | 7    | 2    | 1    | 3      | 1    |
|                        | % | –                               | 7.0  | 11.1   | 3.2  | 2.9  | 7.1    | 11.1 | 14.6 | 13.1 | 5.4  | 7.1  | 6.3  | 5.9    | 1.4  |
| CONFORMITY             | n | 4                               | 22   | 3      | 19   | 17   | 15     | 5    | 20   | 12   | 28   | 8    | 4    | 8      | 17   |
|                        | % | 13.3                            | 17.2 | 16.7   | 15.1 | 16.2 | 17.9   | 18.5 | 22.5 | 19.7 | 21.5 | 28.6 | 25.0 | 15.7   | 24.3 |
| TRADITION              | n | 4                               | 8    | 3      | 3    | 4    | 7      | 1    | 2    | 1    | 8    | –    | –    | 3      | 1    |
|                        | % | 13.3                            | 6.3  | 16.7   | 2.4  | 3.8  | 8.3    | 3.7  | 2.2  | 1.6  | 6.2  | –    | –    | 5.9    | 1.4  |
| BENEVOLENCE            | n | 8                               | 27   | 4      | 26   | 34   | 18     | 5    | 12   | 13   | 26   | 5    | –    | 9      | 11   |
|                        | % | 26.7                            | 21.1 | 22.2   | 20.6 | 32.4 | 21.4   | 18.5 | 13.5 | 21.3 | 20.0 | 17.9 | –    | 17.6   | 15.7 |
| UNIVERSALISM           | n | 11                              | 46   | 4      | 32   | 35   | 19     | 7    | 27   | 17   | 31   | 8    | 2    | 16     | 21   |
|                        | % | 36.7                            | 35.9 | 22.2   | 25.4 | 33.3 | 22.6   | 25.9 | 30.3 | 27.9 | 23.8 | 28.6 | 12.5 | 31.4   | 30.0 |
| Total                  | n | 30                              | 128  | 18     | 126  | 105  | 84     | 27   | 89   | 61   | 130  | 28   | 16   | 51     | 70   |
|                        | % | 100                             | 100  | 100    | 100  | 100  | 100    | 100  | 100  | 100  | 100  | 100  | 100  | 100    | 100  |