

## HOME and AWAY: Urban Representations in 1980s Soviet Estonian Cinema

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Eva Näripea

When talking about the ‘golden times’ of the Soviet Estonian feature film, attention is focused, foremost, on the late 1970s, and Kaljo Kiisk’s *Ask the Dead What Death Costs* (*Surma hinda küsi surnutelt*, 1977), Olav Neuland’s *Nest of Winds* (*Tuulte pesa*, 1979), Leida Laius’s *The Landlord of Kõrboja* (*Kõrboja peremees*, 1979) and Peeter Simm’s *Ideal Landscape* (*Ideaalmaastik*, 1980) are listed as the best works of the period (Elmanovitš 1987). The last three discuss historical village life and only the first of them is laid against the background of city life. In the early 1970s, the period that the critics unanimously called the time of crisis in Estonian cinema, the situation was quite the opposite. The Old Town of Tallinn was depicted even in three films – as an historical background to an adventure film (*Stone of Blood* [*Verekivi*], 1972), and as the scenery to camp-like songs and dances of musical films (*Old Toomas Was Stolen* [*Varastati Vana Toomas*], 1970; *Don Juan in Tallinn* [*Don Juan Tallinnas*], 1971); the most modern pearls of Tallinn’s architecture were captured in Kaljo Kiisk’s *The Landing* (*Maaletulek*, 1973). In these films, Tallinn was mostly depicted as a commercial attraction meant to lure tourists and demonstrate the progressiveness of socialist society. The filmmakers did not depart from the levels of picture postcard appearance, retrospect or yearning for history; they did not reveal the prosaic background of city life. This representation of the city was aimed at strangers, not at the city dwellers themselves. Such a situation allows one to assume that the problems of Estonian village life offered the filmmakers, the audience and the critics more opportunities to identify with them, as the rural milieu was taken as more familiar than the city milieu. The fact that several larger Estonian towns and especially Tallinn were strong migration magnets, the population of which largely grew on the account of migrants, seems to support such a statement. In the 1970s and 1980s, the residential districts, mostly built to accommodate imported labour – the architectural features that exerted the strongest influence

on the milieu of our towns during the Soviet period – became the most alienated parts of the city.

In the mid-1980s, the central government's control over the most mass-influencing and thus, the most censored genre of art – the art of cinema – lessened. From that time on, the more or less unembellished modern city environment and the conditions of urbanised people found their way to both the large and small screens. A number of feature films were made, the problems of which were greatly concerned with the 'alien' parts of the town – with the new residential districts and their (Estonian) population.<sup>1</sup> The modernist new town acquired the meaning of a negative influence on the human psyche, symbolising alienation on the societal level as well as on the individual level, or appearing as the background for deviated or broken family relationships.<sup>2</sup> The present article more thoroughly analyses two of the above-mentioned films – *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune* (*Õnnelind flamingo*, 1986) and *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* (*Ma ei ole turist, ma elan siin*, 1988), because these two most clearly and expressively reflect the architectural discussion and vision of cities of the 1970s and 1980s, foremost characterised by deep skepticism about mass housing construction. *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune* portrays the influence of the resulting environment on humans, their psyche and behaviour. *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* is conspicuous for its special vision of the city, which is unprecedented in the context of the whole of film production of Soviet Estonia, discussing the architectural texture of Tallinn, thus presenting the general mentality of the period.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Leida Laius's and Arvo Iho's *Please, Smile* (*Naerata ometi*, 1985), Lembit Ulfsak's *Joys of Middle Age* (*Keskea röömuud*, 1986), Tõnu Virve's *Circular Yard* (*Ringhoov*, 1987), Peeter Urbla's *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here*, and TV films *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune* and *A Key Question* (*Võtmeküsimus*, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> In *Please, Smile*, one of the protagonists, Mari, has been sent to an orphanage, while her alcoholic father lives in a new residential district of Lasnamäe. Now it is relevant to refer to Mati Unt's passage from *Autumn Ball* (*Sügisball*), which characterises the milieu of the new districts, the names of which end with *-mää*: '...the senseless large fields between the dull monsters that were the buildings were neither nature nor street, neither places nor spaces, neither roads nor squares. One could neither relax nor stroll there, neither lie down nor take a breath of fresh air, and the only idea they really seemed to suggest was that of d r i n k i n g [my spacing out – E.N.]' (Unt 1985: 90.) Several sociological studies have indeed come to the conclusion that alcoholism can more often be found at the new residential districts of Tallinn than at the older ones. The bipolar milieu of the territory of the orphanage is also expressive: on the one hand, there is the new main building built after a model project, using international style elements, such as long horizontal sliding windows, rigid rectangular shapes, and light plaster walls; on the other hand, there is

## From words to images

The critique of the modernist city-machine and environmental alienation reached Estonian architectural discourse relatively soon due to the active young architects who graduated from the Estonian State Art Institute in the early 1970s. These young specialists, who belonged to the so-called Tallinn School,<sup>3</sup> established themselves as an 'official' group in 1978. This group was very familiar with the paradigmatic changes occurring in the architecture of the Western countries and with the key texts reflecting the new perception of the environment, which shifted the focus from the collective and universal to the individual and local, from the machine to the human being, and from technology to art, appreciating the architecture based on 'the richness and multiple meanings of experience' (Venturi 1968: 22). Inspired by the writings of Robert Venturi, Charles Jencks, Aldo Rossi, brothers Robert and Leon Krier and others, the young and angry members of the Tallinn School initiated a discussion in the press, first and foremost on the pages devoted to architecture in the cultural newspaper *Sirp ja Vasar*, rising to the pedestal the poetic space, complexity and ambivalence. The phrase 'free planning' became a curse word, the quintessence of a hostile attitude to the context, almost an obscenity. They started to talk about the charged city space, compact street line, and perimeter housing development (Künnapu 1977). They discovered and idealised the original milieu of old wooden city districts which had been left untouched by mass construction; the cult of slum romanticism was developed, and the nostalgia of the past, appreciating the construction traditions

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also an old small derelict house in the depth of the park. Modernist forms become the symbols of the strict regime and inhuman treatment of children at the orphanage, but the dilapidated Traditionalist villa acts as a kind of enclave, where the children demonstrate their resistance to the regime of the institution, where hidden talents and passions emerge. A tragicomical road-movie *Joys of Middle Age* centres on the distresses of five middle-aged inhabitants of Tallinn, who again come from a new residence district. These people try to find relief from boredom, alienated family relations, and a vaguely oppressing routine of life, going to visit natural healer Nigul. They temporarily leave behind the rationality of the city that poisons both body and soul to enjoy summer and idyllic landscapes and to reach their mysterious goal. The short film *Circular Yard*, full of metaphors, skilfully sketches the horrifying milieu and milky-greyish atmosphere of new residential districts, and tells an ironic and sad story of 'modern love (in Mustamäe)'. The film is about a Man and a Woman who live their lonely disconsolate lives in an ordinary overpopulated residential district. Their love story develops only through the glances they make at each other and culminates in the impregnation of the Woman without bodily contact between them.

<sup>3</sup> The core of the group consisted of Veljo Kaasik, Tiit Kaljundi, Vilen Künnapu, Leonhard Lapin, Avo-Himm Looveer, Ignar Fjuk, Jüri Okas, Jaan Ollik, Ain Padrik and Toomas Rein.

of the pre-war Republic of Estonia, was opposed to the fashionable old city, which had been devalued into tasteless advertising (see Kodres 1993). The group set their aim at humanising this milieu (Volkov 1979).

The problems of modernist mass construction moved from the architectural circles to the attention of film art comparably later than in the West. The Western cinema grabbed the idea of mass housing construction, which was only a vision at that time, even in the 1920s, the most remarkable example being Fritz Lang's dystopia *Metropolis* (1926).<sup>4</sup> Criticism of the international style that threatened to turn the world into a unified global village was most powerfully expressed on the screen simultaneously with the similar views articulated in the architectural circles in the context of the post-WWII construction boom (e.g. Jacques Tati's *Mon oncle*, 1958) and *Playtime* (1969), Jean-Luc Godard's *Alphaville* (1965), as well as the works of Italian neorealists and Michelangelo Antonioni, to name only a few), and continued parallel to the postmodernist discourse (Heathcote 2000: 24–25).

There are several reasons for such late emergence, one of them being the already mentioned lessening of censorship, without which it would have been impossible to move from the depiction of the ideal to the reflection of reality. We must also not forget that the modernist form was the pillar of the official architectural policy of the Soviet regime. Second, in spite of the discussions of the intellectuals in *Sirp ja Vasar*, which sometimes overdramatised the situation, the majority of people, who had no private lodgings and had to live in the miserable conditions of so-called communal flats, had nothing against an apartment with modern conveniences in a new residential district. Discontent was voiced only when the infrastructure was not properly developed even many years after the completion of the housing districts. Mass residential districts acquired the dimension of a social problem only in the situation of alienation during the stagnation period, when even the wide public understood that the morally and technically obsolete masses of dirty grey buildings, which steadfastly encircled Tallinn and were already crawling into the centre of the town, foremost served the interests of migration, not the local population. Only then was the time ripe

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<sup>4</sup> True enough, between the two world wars, the avant-gardist architects used the film medium mostly to promote their innovative ideas, but paradoxically, *Neues Bauen*, carrying the idea of social responsibility and attempting to cultivate equality, or even more precisely, its form, became a sign of elitism and often a symbol of evil on the silver screen (especially in Hollywood production; Albrecht 1987: xii–xiii).

to discuss the problems of mass construction in the medium of popular culture – the film.

It is logical from all aspects that at the beginning, the subject found reflection in documentary films, since this format allowed reacting to social processes in a much more rapid way than the awkward and time-consuming production cycle of feature films of the time. In 1985, *Tallinnfilm*, *Eesti Reklaamfilm* and *Eesti Telefilm* produced at least five documentary films discussing environmental problems. They were *Lasnamäe*, ironically revealing the duplicity of the construction officials and bureaucratic architects (director and cinematographer Mark Soosaar, Tallinnfilm; see Elmanovič 1986); *Exegi monumentum*, telling about the dreamy and active modes of life as two opposing attitudes to life (screenplay Hando Runnel, director and cinematographer Andres Sööt, Eesti Reklaamfilm); *Life in an Old Town*, yearning for a cosy home (*Elu vanas linnas*; screenplay Vello Kallaste, director Heini Drui, cinematographer Edvard Oja, Tallinnfilm); *Small-Town Landscapes*, discussing the problems of country architecture (*Alevimaastikud*; screenplay Ike Volkov, director Indrek Kangur, cinematographer Kristjan Svirgden, Eesti Telefilm); and *Väike-Õismäe – a Circular City*, a hollow and showy and intrusively mercantile film (*Väike-Õismäe – rõngaslinn*; screenplay Mart Port, director and cinematographer Mati Põldre, Eesti Telefilm; Lindepuu 1986: 59–61).

Estonian feature film was characterised by its close relations with Estonian literature:<sup>5</sup> screen versions were produced of many books, and the majority of films appreciated by the public and acknowledged by critics were based on works of literature. Indeed, literature was the crutch that repeatedly helped Tallinnfilm to limp on despite the persistent lack of screenplays. Therefore, the flourishing of city themes in the literature of the 1970s should be taken as the precondition for the depiction of the modern city environment on screen in the 1980s. Architecture rose above its former role of background and acquired a social role in the works of Arvo Valton, Mati Unt, Teet Kallas and others<sup>6</sup> (Kurg 1999). For

<sup>5</sup> However, these relations were not always reliable and many writers considered cooperation with Tallinnfilm an unpleasant and exhausting waste of time (see Kallas 1985).

<sup>6</sup> In addition to their prose works, many writers actively participated in newspaper discussions on the quality of the environment. The 'anti-urbanism that opposed panel construction' was promoted in the press among others by Mats Traat, Arvo Valton, Jaan Kaplinski, Mihkel Mutt, Mati Unt and Jaak Jõerüüt (e.g. Kaplinski 1978), who protested the 'soulless industrialisation and anti-art utilitarianism', which had started to dominate in construction (Mirov 1979). The

example, *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune* based on Raimond Kaugver's extremely popular novel *We Are Not Guilty* (*Meie pole süüdi*), and a short film *The Circular Yard*, based on Arvo Valton's short story *Love at Mustamäe* (*Mustamäe armastus*) were directly influenced by literature, being the screen versions of literary works. The latter was the directing debut of Tõnu Virve, who had previously won renown as an excellent film designer (*Ask the Dead What Death Costs*, *The Lost Alpinist Hotel* [*Hukkunud alpinisti hotell*], *Wild Violets* [*Metskannikesed*], *The Hard Sea* [*Karge meri*], *Nipernaadi* and *Please, Smile*). Unfortunately, Mati Unt's novel *Autumn Ball*, one of the best Estonian works depicting city life, which has been considered to be of notably filmic structure, was not adapted to the screen. The book discusses wittily and precisely the life and spirituality of the inhabitants of a new residential district, at the same time presenting Mustamäe not simply as a concrete space-time, but as a powerful symbol (Kurg 1999). Peeter Urbla thought about producing it, but did not get further with the idea. However, the fragmentary and mosaic structure of his *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* shows some essential parallels to *Autumn Ball*.

### ***Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*: environmental psychological views of Väike-Õismäe**

The television film *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*, which had its TV premiere on Christmas Eve of 1986, had been based on Raimond Kaugver's novel *We Are Not Guilty* (1984). For several reasons, Kaugver's work suited the repertoire of one of the few remaining television film studios of the Soviet Union,<sup>7</sup> which had been working since 1965. First, Kaugver, who had been called a professional best-selling author (Kesküla 2001), knew how to react to the sore points of society with a journalist's speed. A publicity element was considered especially necessary for television films, since this format mostly competed with TV broadcasts, not with the films of the big screen (Haasmaa 1984b). This feature was accompanied by

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writers also voiced their opinion in many presentations (e.g. Lennart Meri's presentation given at the Tallinn Seminar of the Young Architects' Section of the Architects' Union of the ESSR, held in Tallinn in 1980; Meri 1981: 261–269), and in essays published in architecture journals (Mihkel Mutt wrote about Gaston Bachelard in *Kunst ja Kodu* – Mutt 1986: 158–168; and Mati Unt published a short essay 'Abroad' in the opening issue of *Ehituskunst*; Unt 1983: 31).

<sup>7</sup> Eesti Telefilm was one of the eight television film studios of the Soviet Union that still made feature films (Haasmaa 1984a).

Kaugver's excellent plotting skills and fluent and easy style, which granted him wide popularity and allowed the same to be expected from a screen adaptation of his novel. Although during the discussion of the screenplay, the Editorial Board voiced more or less critical opinions<sup>8</sup> concerning the literary standards of the material, their deep trust in the professionalism of director Tõnis Kask was well-justified. As a result, the film was naïve in some respect, but still rather stylishly executed and full of certain tension. The *mise-en-scène* of the film, showing the designer's touch, was created by Joosep Remme, who graduated from the department of industrial design of the Estonian State Art Institute in 1978; the costumes of the film were designed by Liivia Leškin, who graduated from the department of fashion design at the Estonian State Art Institute in 1980.

The plot was laid in the deepest period of the stagnation from the second half of the 1970s until *perestroika*, which started with Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power. In everyday life, this was the period of increasing scarcity of consumer goods and the crisis of foodstuffs. The black market became the constant companion of everyday life: when there is a shortage of everything, one can live comfortably only when having the right connections (see Ledeneva 1998). The high ideals, which were presented as the greatest benefits of socialist society, primarily, the idea of equality can, against these developments, clearly be seen only as hollow propaganda, which has finally lost its connection with reality. It is considered no sin to use this deteriorated system in one's private interest; actually, this means stealing from the state at every opportunity, which is even not a public secret any more, but natural behaviour.

The parents of the protagonist, Vahur Puustak, born on April 12, 1965 (Martin Nurm, Erno Kaasik and Allan Noormets), are seemingly respected and proper people in every way. His father Justus (Evald Hermaküla) is a construction manager; his mother Leanika (Kaie Mihkelson) has a successful career in commerce. Their position in society, where the right connections, not the amount of income are of the most appreciated value, allows the family to live a seemingly enviable life. They possess all the status symbols of a deficient society: a stylish four-room flat, luxuriously furnished and equipped with imported furniture and goods<sup>9</sup> in a high-rise building in the best new residential district

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<sup>8</sup> *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*, film file, Vol. 1. Archive of ETV, f. 1, n. 7, s. 903, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> The film itself only gives an overview of all this. The aim of the director is fully revealed in the list of props in the file of *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*. The list shows that in order to indicate

of the town, the newest car, fashionable clothes acquired from the back rooms of the shops, and they travel abroad. Vahur's room practically does not differ in the slightest from those of his peers on the other side of the Iron Curtain. It is furnished with comfortable and practical children's furniture, the walls are adorned with posters of cars and animals, the shelves are full of textbooks and toys, and the dream of all teenagers – a Japanese stereo tape recorder – has been set on a place of honour.

Against this background of glossy everyday life, the rowdy behaviour of eighteen-year-old Vahur and his three slightly older friends that began as a small joke and ended in a brutal murder seems to be especially grotesque. Who is guilty of this painful metamorphosis? The easiest way would be to lay all responsibility on the shoulders of his parents, who had forgotten that besides acquiring desirable objects one should also pay attention to the creation of a harmonious home atmosphere and trustful human relations. Seemingly, the author of the book had followed this path, also adding some hints to school organisation and to the duplicity of the organisation of young communists, to the excessive rationality and pragmatism featured as the dominating mentality, etc. The interpretation offered by director Tõnis Kask, however, is much more varied, the treatment of the problem is more pluralistic and the range of possible influencing factors hinted at in the film much wider. Although, again, the accusations of consumerism, selfishness and being uncaring comprise the main theme of the film, but the object of accusations has not been so clearly and unambiguously specified. Tõnis Kask has said, 'We even did not strive to expose a concrete culprit, because it is collective guilt and, therefore, anonymous guilt' (quoted in Kalmet 1987). The mentioning of collectivity and anonymity allows one to believe that among other factors, the director has also considered the influence of the physical environment on the human psyche and on the development of individuals. More

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the status of the Puustaks, their living room had to contain objects of crystal tableware, an adjustable ceiling lamp made in Poland or Yugoslavia, a wall of cupboards and bookshelves made in Romania, furniture made in Finland, a Persian carpet, a TV set and stereo of the Sharp or Sony brands, foreign magazines (*Elegance, Beauty, L'Officiel, Vogue* and *Burda*), presentable books, foreign LPs and cassette tapes, whiskey bottles, oranges and bananas. Their chic kitchen was full of foreign packages and wrappings, small kitchen appliances of short supply (toaster, coffee machine, universal mixer), a nice set of enamel kitchenware, an English tea set and Dutch cleaning products. Justus is drinking beer from foreign cans and a collection of empty beer cans is proudly exhibited on kitchen shelves. (*Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*, film file, Vol. 1. Archive of ETV, f. 1, n. 7, s. 903, pp. 82–84.)

strength has been added to this statement by the fact that precisely at that time – in the end of the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s – a discussion about the influence of the environment on a human being as a biological entity<sup>10</sup> was held in the press against the background of the emergence of, on the one hand, the postmodernist paradigm and, on the other hand, the mindless growth of new residential districts. A number of articles based on environmental psychological research reached the conclusion that the negative atmosphere of new residential districts causes self-enclosure and alienation, reveals the darkest sides of human nature, and deepens greed, thoughtlessness and selfishness. Psychologist Tõnu Ots, who had under the pseudonym of Doctor Noormann acquired scandalous publicity on the pages of a youth magazine, *Noorus*, was incorporated into the production team of *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*. As a psychologist, he was undoubtedly familiar with the developments in his speciality, including the discourse of environmental psychology.

First of all we should clarify that the theory pursued by the local environmental psychologists was only partly a serious scientific discourse. Largely, it was the expression of the resistance to another wave of Russification, or rather, Sovietisation, which began in 1978 with the replacement of the Chairman of the Estonian Communist Party Johannes Käbin, who moderately steered a middle course between the local conditions and Party lines with Karl Vaino, who spoke no Estonian and whose ideology was firmly based on instructions from Moscow (Laur, Pajur, Tannberg 1995: 124, 130). The borderline between a purely scientific approach and the subjective protest against the unification efforts of the Soviet empire and uncontrollably growing forced migration, carried by the striving for certain self-determination was often hazy. A number of arguments

<sup>10</sup> In relation with the emergence of environmental psychology as a separate field of science in the Soviet Union in the 1970s, and with the establishment of a special research group in the field at the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute in 1977, psychologists (Mati Heidmets, Jüri Kruusvall, Toomas Niit and others) also joined the newspaper discussion on the architectural and environmental issues of new districts, adding the social psychological dimension to the problems of architectural form. In the second half of the 1970s, a study throughout the Soviet Union titled *The Family and the Flat* was carried out to discover the influence of the milieu of new districts on their residents. In the early 1980s, the Estonian Department of the Psychologists' Society of the Soviet Union organised two conferences at Lohusalu. The first conference under the heading *Man and Environment: Psychological Problems* was held in January 1981; the second conference *Psychology and Architecture* took place in January 1983. The materials of the latter were published in a two-volume collection of abstracts *Психология и архитектура. Тезисы конференции под редакцией Т. Нийта, М. Хейдметса, Ю. Круусвалла. Таллин, ЭООП, СССР, ТПЕДИ, 1983.*

were associated with the general problems of all types of urbanisation and with living in an artificial environment, not necessarily specific to open-plan residential districts. Among these were the speculations that when transforming from one type of dwelling to another (from the country to the city), essential changes occur in the structure and nature of human activities (the country dwelling reserves much of human activities, but the city dwelling channels these activities to TV or places of entertainment). Interpersonal relations both inside and outside the family also change (in the country, several generations live in close contact, but in the city different generations are separated from each other) (Kruusvall, Heidmets 1981: 44). Alienation from nature<sup>11</sup> and the constant state of stress were connected rather with the general process of urbanisation than with the concrete milieu of new open-plan residential areas, whereas the statements based on the local architectural and construction policy were more relevant to actual local circumstances.

According to the central thesis of the environmental psychological theory, city construction in the Soviet manner made impossible both individual and group personalisation and identification with physical environment, which are essential for human beings for self-identification and for finding an existential hold. The complex system of institutions shaping the environment had become totally detached from individuals, resulting, as claimed by environmental psychologists, in the loss of the opportunity to realise the will to create and develop the self through the surrounding world, which had been a part of human nature even from the beginning of time (Heidmets 1981: 42). Standardised flats, houses and districts right off the construction line were given to people as free products; in reality, they were actually half-finished goods of poor quality and questionable consumer value. People had a minimum say in changing the bleak no-man's-land outside their flat door. All this led to the loss of the feeling of ownership and home and care for the environment, which further led to vandal-

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<sup>11</sup> One has to admit that in case of the residential districts of Tallinn, alienation from nature was solely caused by the inconsiderate Soviet-type attitude towards architectural and environmental matters, clearly proving that the quantity of construction was more important than the well-being of the population. The builders of these residential districts seemed to overlook the fact that one of the main reasons for adopting open-plan city construction in the first place had been bringing people closer to nature. Greenery and fresh air were supposed to guarantee better quality of life. In reality, however, the planned landscape development was often left undone or it was carried out inconsistently and in poor quality; the natural landscape was destroyed in the course of construction.

ism and the continuous deterioration of maintenance. Mati Unt has very pointedly described the vicious circle that had thus formed, 'Something is wrong with the cities and they corrupt people, but something is wrong with the people as well, and therefore, they corrupt cities' (Unt 1983: 31).

Eager to surpass the planned amount of construction work and in order to raise the quantity of construction, the whole system of mass construction headed by the Tallinn Construction Plant orientated their work solely on the physiological needs of an average statistical person. But the sociological research showed that 'the way people live at home does not get unified, but on the contrary – it gets more and more varied. Therefore, the needs concerning the immediate environment become more and more specific. As a result, the requirements on the environment become more specific as well – it must be essentially varying regarding the location, size, equipment, privacy and other indicators. There is no average person; a standard house meant for standard people does not satisfy anybody today.'<sup>12</sup> (Heidmets, Kruusvall 1987: 12.)

The principle of constructing more cheaply and quickly conditioned, among other factors, a constant rise in the standards of population density and the construction of taller and taller buildings, eventually, as put by environmental psychologists, exceeding all bounds of normality. The population concentration in the new residential districts, resembling a tin of sprats, caused withdrawal and passivity and led to the loss of neighbourly relations among people. There was a joke, saying that above the treetops, meaning living higher than the fourth or fifth floor, people's behaviour and relations to each other also tend to shift 'back to the trees' (Kruusvall 1986: 1).

The consequences of the planning mistakes and shortcomings of the new residential districts were considered to be the most dangerous to the psyche of the still developing children's personality (Heidmets 1983). The opinion that the panel housing did not support the emergence of the feeling of home, essentially necessary for their development, is somewhat hazy and questionable, as well as the view that the lack of one's own yard and street, caused by the open planning of the districts, hindered the development of the child's self-image and conditioned passivity – the so-called acquired helplessness (Niit 1987: 15). The facts that such neighbourhoods offered few opportunities for open-air activities,

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<sup>12</sup> Partially, this argument is true, but partially, it certainly hints at the wish to differ from other peoples of the Soviet Union.

and that although the extremely limited playgrounds were sufficient for young children, that no thought had been given about how teenagers could spend their free time, were of more serious weight.

Although *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune* does not touch deeply upon the concrete problems of the frustrating and alienated new residential districts, the aspect has not been entirely forgotten. This is very emphatically and poetically expressed by the opening panorama, accompanied by the threatening and uneasy music written by Lepo Sumera: large grey masses of housing rise on the edge of a wasteland full of debris and rubble, a smoking factory chimney can be seen in the background, the greenery of the one-time meadow is ruthlessly interrupted by giant blocks of houses. The next sequence is shown as grey masses of people with mask-like indifferent faces, who jostle in overcrowded public transport and rush into the department store the minute it opens its doors to find something worth buying on its half-empty counters. It is followed by a more idyllic, but still deceptive image: a small boy is sailing his toy boat in a pond. The camera moves away and we see that this pond is the notorious artificial lake in the heart of the circular town of Õismäe, in the middle of an emerging greenery of the new park, the building of which the city planners attempted to justify arguing for its economy and recreational value (e.g. Meelak 1969: 26), but nevertheless, the idea was sharply criticised as another example of the formalism of Soviet city construction. This disconsolate city is shown once more in the end of the film. Again, the camera moves over the wasteland and stops to show a gang of teenagers expertly rushing across the road just in front of an oncoming lorry. These are rather brief shots, but they well represent the process called becoming a *Mus-tamäe*, named after the first one among such large residential districts (see, e.g. Heidmets 1978), and characterise the main points of the discussion examining the social psychological changes caused by such processes mentioned above.

The self-centred and inconsiderate attitude towards the environment and fellow human beings which was caused, in the opinion of environmental psychologists, by the monotonous and mechanical milieu of residential districts can be seen in many sequences of the film. For example, the shallowness of human relations (concurring with the new environment), and deep indifference towards everything that is not directly related to oneself are presented by the sequences where Vahur beats up a classmate of his in the schoolhouse during recess; at the same time, other pupils are not the slightest bit distracted, but rather thrilled,

and wait for the solution, meaning, for the teacher to intervene. Indifference towards the vicinity of one's home is shown in a part where Vahur refuses to pick up rubbish lying on the ground beside the bin and his father, following 'realistic principles', finds it necessary to justify his behaviour. Just as telling are the shots of people watching from the windows of box-like houses how an old man, who had gone to scold a gang of boys for harassing a girl, is pushed into a pond with his bike by the same laughing and joking gang. When the spectacle is over, the bored faces disappear from the windows.

The main idea of the film is to expose the illusoriness perfectly characterising the alienated mentality of the society of the stagnation period, which is inevitably accompanied by double standards and deceitfulness. Hypocrisy characterises the relations between spouses Justus and Leaanika – it is revealed in their unfaithfulness and careerism, but also in Justus's pragmatic philosophy and his superior attitude towards young good-for-nothings, as well as in the stance of the Young Communists' organisation towards their former activist and now confined Vahur. It can even be seen in how the *mise-en-scène* is structured and constructed. The surroundings of the Puustaks' home are filmed in Õismäe, shown as a dismal and grey hostile environment. But under the crust of the standard production of a construction plant there is a luxurious flat of unique features hidden, designed by a professional interior architect. The interiors were filmed in a ground floor atrium flat of a terraced house, *Kuldne kodu* ('Golden Home'), in Pärnu, designed in 1970 by architect Toomas Rein, who belonged to the Tallinn architectural school. The house, which was originally planned to extend to 750 metres of length, was an example of top architecture of the day and was remarkable for its warm and comfortable atmosphere. The film combines two diametric paradigms: faceless products of mass construction, which had already gained the status of colonial architecture (Kodres 1999: 56) and the building art of young architects, already having anti-Soviet connotations.

*Kuldne kodu* formed but a part of a mammoth complex, initiated by an enthusiast of architecture Andres Ringo, who was an engineer by profession. According to the project the complex also included buildings for enterprises, sports facilities, service facilities and schools and kindergartens. The project aimed to achieve an absolute antithesis to the prevalent mass construction of residential areas of spiritual and physical sparseness (Künnapu 1977), and the disorientating expanse that ignored consumers' interests. These characteristics

were opposed by a healthy living environment of a compact structure that would encourage communication.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the fact that transitions from the outside views to the interiors do not keep perfect visual continuity (at the very beginning of the film we can see Justus standing pensively at a standard three-pane window of a panel house; the scene is continued inside his flat, where the window seems to be much larger, almost reaching to the floor), such mixing of two environments might seem to be amateurish from the architecture's point of view. The size of rooms in a flat in a residential house much depended on the circumstance that the houses were built of standard room-size concrete panels, limiting the size of the rooms (even when the sizes of other rooms normalised later, the living rooms remained very small). The houses had many supporting walls, which made it almost impossible to redo the existing closed and inflexible projects. *Kuldne kodu* was, however, built of monolith concrete, which was quite an extraordinary material at that time and allowed great variety in floor plans of the flats and the creation of the so-called flowing inner spaces. The latter is also very exposed in *Flamingo – the Bird of Fortune*. The film also shows the main design element of the ground floor flats – the atrium, around which the other rooms are grouped. No such luxury could be found in panel houses. The scene where Vahur's parents, returning from a restaurant on the evening of their son's 18th birthday, stumble upon a piquant love scene between him and his girlfriend is also filmed in the atrium.

Although the dialogue between the two antagonistic environments is eloquent and strongly related to the message of the film, manifesting the general hypocrisy and alienation, the antagonism between two architectural ideologies was not realised during the making of the film. The interior of *Kuldne kodu* does not represent the cosy and friendly living space, which would make people happier and healthier and improve them morally; neither does it carry the connotations of anti-sovietism. Contrasting the monotonous milieu of residential districts and the dingy standard consumer goods accessible for ordinary people (cf., for instance, with the flat of the married teacher couple), it only represents the fact that the Puustaks belong to the class of careerist cynics and the winners

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<sup>13</sup> Statistics was used to prove this claim: in 1971–1976, the number of workers leaving their jobs was reported to have dropped more than half, and the number of days on sick leave was reduced by 20% at the Pärnu Collective Farm Construction Plant in 1976–1977 (Tšerkassov 1979).

among the society of chronic shortages of everything. This is also manifested by the alternating scenes of their exemplary life and of the streets and shop fronts with endless queues and people examining their lottery tickets, hoping for a chance to find a fortune. Although the filmmakers have seen the relations between the shortcomings of the physical environment and the cultivation of inconsideration and the suppressing of the feeling of belonging and the emergence of the feeling of homelessness, they do not form a stance regarding the essence of better and more proper living environment.

### I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here

In the summer of 1986 Tallinnfilm, constantly lacking new film scripts, after nine years again initiated an open competition for scripts. The results of the competition were pretty good. Totally unknown newcomers sent in remarkable works, yet at the same time, the jury did not approve of the scripts submitted by several well-known writers. The four scripts that were picked out among the rest were distinguished by their film-like vision, where the conflict and the characters are shaped primarily through the visual world and the special atmosphere (Siimer 1987: 89). Two of them were made into films: Sulev Keedus directed *A Single Sunday* (*Ainus pühapäev*; script by Veiko Jürisson), and Peeter Urbla was from the start fascinated by the special urban vision of the script titled *The Guests of the Stone City* (*Kivilinna külalised*) by Kalle Käsper and Andres Paling,<sup>14</sup> which he made into the film *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* (Vihalemm 1988).<sup>15</sup> Surprisingly, the work on this rather openly anti-Soviet film was difficult mostly due to the opposition of local film bureaucrats, not because of resistance by Moscow's central film committee as one would expect.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The credits, though, list Benno Kiis, Andres Paling and Peeter Urbla as the scriptwriters. This was caused by a serious conflict developed between the director and original scriptwriters because of Urbla's suggestions for numerous changes in the script. Consequently, Käsper abandoned further cooperation altogether. (A talk with Peeter Urbla on April 25, 2002. The author's notes.)

<sup>15</sup> Urbla changed the title since he considered the original *The Guests of the Stone City* more fitting to an animated cartoon. (A talk with Peeter Urbla.) Indeed, the title *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* captures the point of the work more precisely.

<sup>16</sup> According to the decisions of the V Congress of the Cinema Union of the USSR in May 1986, the production of the local film studios of the Soviet republics was not much supervised any more, and the scripts approved by evaluation committees were not rejected any more by central authorities, although they retained the right to do so (Siimer 1988).

*I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* is an artistic analysis of a moment (Torop 1989: 28). Therefore, one can understand and excuse the certain heavy pathos which can be explained by the sense of instability and uncertainty prior to the Singing Revolution and the need to express the existential anguish that had accumulated into the Estonians' soul and existence (Urbla 1988: 10). The attributes of the national liberation movement (national Estonian tricolours, the picket of students clad in yellow T-shirts protesting against phosphorite mines, etc.) that may later be seen as an artistic exaggeration, were indeed used lavishly and with gesture.

The action of the film is set up in Tallinn, covering 12 months beginning from the spring of 1987, and centring around the lives and self-reflections of the two main characters – an illegal broker of flat exchanges, Mart Kangur (Madis Kalmet), and a failed actor, Felix Kramvolt, who works as an operator of the central heating facility at the Viru Hotel. They meet accidentally, but not without reason. Felix, a friendly middle-aged bohemian and a former flower child, has been registered to live in a tiny one-room apartment along with his brother's family and even keeps his bed there, but still, he has nowhere to live. He spends his nights in the hotel cellar. Because of this, each morning he routinely examines the flat exchange ads in the fresh newspaper and then proceeds, carrying his meagre belongings in a backpack with him like a snail, to check out the opportunities for exchange. He never succeeds, because the exchange of flats has become a science in itself, a sequence of complex combinations the logic of which is incomprehensible for amateurs. His next fruitless excursion brings him into contact with Mart, the specialist in flat exchange and speculator. Behind the coldly calculating token smile of a speculator Felix finds a kindred spirit in Mart, who hides a soul engulfed by similar illusions and homesickness. Mart has stepped on this exhausting roundabout rather by the pressure of circumstances than by his own free will. His wife Merike (Gita Ränk) is pretty as a picture, he has a lovely son Martin (Juhan Raudam), and they live in a two-bedroom apartment in Mustamäe. Nevertheless, he lacks both a true home and family life. Being a country boy, he is still trying to find the truncheon, as Merike puts it. He is not content with his dwelling in a lousy mass-production house, but dreams of 'a real flat in a real house'. To fulfil this dream, he has traded in flats for six years, using his Mustamäe apartment only as business headquarters. Merike has grown weary of six years of living out of suitcases; she has taken her son and moved to her childhood home with her parents, who live in a prestigious pre-war house

in Kadriorg. She had promised to return to her husband only after he has ceased his speculations and throw away his files on all kinds of flats.

Besides Felix and Mart, the third protagonist of the film in its full rights is the city of Tallinn. But the city is by all means not shown following the hypocritical and rhetorical Soviet tradition familiar from films and photo albums, which operated with only a couple of glamorous motifs of the picturesque medieval Old Town often used as the set for historical films.<sup>17</sup> Some other motifs that were used included the new *Soviet-Western*-style streets and showy aéroscenes of geometrical configurations of new residential areas *à la* the Väike-Õismäe circular city. The latter two environments were without exception represented in sunshine, creating a bright and happy mood. Instead, Peeter Urbla's film crew went to the slums of wooden houses, the neglected milieu of which had not been allowed to be presented in films before. He reveals in both the sun and rain the grey and bleak everyday life of the new residential areas and ugly wastelands that yawn between the progressive districts instead of friendly greenery. The traditional silhouettes and other stereotyped views of the old town can only be found on picture postcards pinned to the walls of bleak dwellings. The poetry of limestone walls is abandoned and insight is offered into the dirty yards behind the renovated façades. The bird's eye views display no stereotypes; the city is represented as an irregular and spontaneously emerged conglomeration, not as a well-considered and planned structure. 'We want to give Tallinn back its real and singular face, to free it from the worn-out historical and romantic mask,' says Peeter Urbla (Urbla 1988: 10).

The method used to map the city space of Tallinn can be called situative (Laanemets 2002: 293). Urbla's strivings in restoring the real essence of Tallinn do, indeed, fit well into the matrix of the situationist and anti-tourist experience of the city, which attempts to break the abstract (ideological) constructions and move forward from the glittering ersatz surface to the authentic swarming city life beneath (Sadler 1999:15). Such moves are made in the outskirts of the city (Sadler 1999: 56), where Urbla, as well, has set up the camera. When analysing the film, the situationist theory can best be applied, foremost, on the visual level, where it is suitable for describing the relations of the filmmakers with the previous Soviet tradition of representing Tallinn on the screen. Urbla's criticism

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<sup>17</sup> Actually, due to the Gothic logo of Tallinnfilm, the Middle Ages had become the trademark of the whole of the local film production.

has a common starting point with the situationist movement – dissatisfaction with the previous (social) situation and the sensing of oppression. The object of criticism is also partly the same – the one-sidedly rational modernist paradigm that is hostile to history and memory. Despite the similarities, some substantial differences emerge, mostly depending on specific social contexts.

The most important strategy of situationists in experiencing city space was drifting (*derivé*) – aimless walking, the direction of which depends on spontaneous and unstructured reactions to accidental lures. This was a rebellious and essentially voluntary practice, liberating from the repressive and regulative perception of space and trajectories. Felix and Mart also drift casually, directed only by a number of random addresses from the newspaper ads. But they do not drift of their own free will, or thirst for pleasure or rebellion, but under the pressure of circumstances. They are not trying to be lost, like a situationist drifter even hoped to be (Laanemets 2002: 294); on the contrary, they are searching for a stable, final point, a ‘home port and anchorage’. The unpopularity of nomadism is well understandable under the circumstances where migration and rootlessness are officially favoured and even encouraged. At the same time, one still has to remember that the category of memory occupied an important place in the mental mapping of the city, created by the situationists (Vidler 1999: 211). Similarly, different layers of meanings of the city are valued in the film, opposing them to the loss of memory caused by Sovietisation and the demand for *tabula rasa*.

The perception of the city, practised by the situationists, joined the impartiality that originated from the tradition of *flâneurie*, the look of a bystander that had to secure a certain perspicacity and a social, critical and demystificational analytical position (Jenks 1995: 146–150) with the role of an active intervener, who injects surprising and playful scenes into the tame texture of rational space-time. Insubordination to the conventional criteria of normality and lawfulness was expressed by provocative slogans, the most notorious of which was undoubtedly ‘Never work!’ (*Ne travaillez jamais!*). According to the norms of Soviet society, both Felix (who still was to some extent rehabilitated by his semi-fictional job as a boiler operator) and Mart (who was imprisoned for his unlawful brokering) had a strong asocial inclination. Felix performs a *mise-en-scène* that breaks the stale routine of everyday life and would allow situationist interpretation, when he picnics with a small blue, black and white flag at the crossing of Kingissepa Street and Tartu Road. But while the situationists aimed at the evocation of

social revolution, neither Felix nor Mart belong to the avant-garde of revolutionary forces. The forbidden tricolour on Felix's picnic table is only one of many attributes slipped into the film that carry a patriotic sentiment and testify about the flickers in social and political situation. In the context of the film, the whole scene does not initiate any dramatic rupture of routine (it does not even hinder traffic!). Mart's illegal trafficking is, on the one hand, the sign of the time (the film also fleetingly shows traffickers at the Viru Hotel), but on the other hand, it is only an emergency measure to fulfil a long-time dream – finding a real home – and to normalise his family relations; all in all, it is rather a means to achieve stability than to shake it.

Peeter Urbla's commentary briefly and precisely sums up the intuitive perception of the city given by the film, saying that the city is not a milieu, but rather a partner (quoted in Vihalemm 1988). Mati Unt once cited a poet and declared that 'space is our mother and we are her children' (Unt 1983: 31). These opinions well express the neo-humanist views on life of the time that had resulted from the postmodernist cultural theory and the belief that the city is a living organism. Along with humans it forms an organic unity, the uninterrupted functioning of which depends on the health of both of the partners. In the film the protagonists repeatedly turn to the city in their inner monologues, just as if they were talking to a living being. They feel the inevitable relationship of their joys and worries, successes and failures with the city. But if there is something wrong with the city, humans cannot identify with it any more and fall prey to alienation and spiritual chaos. Tallinn is sick, and therefore, its inhabitants are also sick. Such a realisation forms the basis for the main topics of the film – the problem of homelessness and the feelings of rootlessness and spiritual void. On the one hand, such feelings were related to concrete local problems, but on the other hand, they were also related to the paradigmatic change in the worldview and cultural situation of the Western world that had occurred even since the 1950s.

Despite the forced construction of housing and promises written in the Party program, there was still a lack of housing in Tallinn in 1978. The reason was a simple one: the growth in construction was nullified by the migration, the extent of which had crossed every critical line of tolerance. As the result of the migration, the share of Estonians had dropped to less than 65% in Estonia by the 1980s, causing much tension between the locals and the migrants. The official housing policy that clearly favoured the migrants made the situation even

more serious. The nomadic attitude of the newcomers and their deep disregard for everything outside the door of their flat did not make things easier. The latter factor, along with the economic and technological backwardness and the decrease in aesthetic quality of the environment caused by this created an atmosphere where neither the Estonians nor the couple of hundred thousand migrants felt at home (Üprus 1989: 59). In the material form, but also on the metaphysical plane, these attitudes found the most genuine expression in the latest, greatest and ugliest residential district of Lasnamäe that was monstrously erected on the picturesque limestone cliff. Lasnamäe was seen only as a storage area of the low-quality production of housing plants, as a quintessence of technocratic and hostile attitude. Nobody wanted to live there, at least not Estonians, whose joy of getting a new flat was poisoned by the area's becoming a ghetto and the noisy and sloppy Slavic way of living (Kodres 1999: 18). In numerous articles, the inhabitants of the district (Tammer 1987: 12–13; Kuurme 1988), writers (Jõerüüt 1989) and even the architects who had made the projects (Meelak 1989; Raud 1987) expressed deep dissatisfaction with the living environment of the next residential district. The distress was powerfully expressed even in popular music, when Ivo Linna shouted the opinion of all Estonians, 'Stop Lasnamäe!' In the film, this circle of problems is summed up in the monologue of Felix who rides a bus to Lasnamäe: 'Only ten years ago, birds were singing here and everything was blossoming. It smelt of hay. The sky was full of stars at night. But now, 150,000 apathetic and nervous human-like beings ride here at night to sleep in concrete boxes. Who are they even? Who invited them here and why? Do they even know where they are?'

It is said that in architecture, Estonians expressed their resistance to Sovietisation in the style and typology of the buildings. Instead of the official international style and the cornice architecture influenced by Finnish style, the rebellious Tallinn School produced buildings in neofunctionalist style, which had been rediscovered from the heritage of the pre-war Republic of Estonia (see Kodres 1993). Wealthier Estonians attempted to escape from the panel houses as the ideologically forced model of city life (Kodres 2000–2001: 54) and the symbol of the socialist way of life (Kodres 1999: 56) by building private residences with projects ordered from architects,<sup>18</sup> or by buying cooperative flats,

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<sup>18</sup> Leonhard Lapin has written how the Soviet power, also represented by industrially produced residential areas, was undermined architecturally: 'Whereas the Poles and Hungarians fought

which were, as a rule, also built by special projects. The attitudes of the so-called building revolution (Lapin 1997a: 162) are expressed in the film *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* first, in the wish of Felix's brother to get a 'one-room, special-project' flat, and second, in Mart's dream about a 'real home', which would be in a 'real house. In a pre-war stone house, where the builders thought about people, not about concrete building blocks'. The architectural environment was politicised and certain districts and buildings carried clearly positive or negative meanings. All architecture of the pre-war Estonia was positive; in the film it is represented by a set of functionalist houses No 25–35 on Raua Street (general project by Anton Soans). Also the shots of the home of the parents of Merike, Mart's wife, in a villa in Kadriorg and the house of Mart's father in Nõmme belong to the paradigm of the proper architecture. The 'real and human-friendly' art of building of the pre-war Estonia is opposed to the 'alien' architecture of the Soviet time that bears negative connotations – the showy Stalinist buildings and ensembles (the house with a tower at the crossing of Tartu Road and Liivalaia Street and the house with an inner court on Tööstuse Street near the Volta Factory, which Merike describes as 'dirty and alien'), as well as the modernist mechanical architecture of new districts.

While here the fight against the concrete housing districts erected on the modern principles of city building also represented the resistance to Sovietisation, the (architectural) protest, initiated in the Western countries even in the 1950s, was directed against Americanisation and against the international corporate style which had emerged in America. The criticism towards boring and unified architectural environment created by the two outwardly diametrically opposed economic and political systems operated with the same categories on both sides of the Iron Curtain – the striving for continuity, opposed to modernist disruptions in history, along with nostalgia for the past and the search for roots and security. In 1951, Martin Heidegger gave a presentation titled *Bauen Wohnen Denken* (Heidegger 1999) at the Darmstadt symposium *Man and Space (Mensch und Raum)*, where, while questioning the essence of architecture or construction, the Being of humans is also under scrutiny. This presentation is of special importance for post-WWII environmental and architectural theo-

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against the occupation on barricades, at meetings and strikes, shouting and shedding blood, the always practical Estonians protested on scaffoldings and built houses.' (Lapin 1997b: 159; see also Lapin 1998: 20–24.)

retical thought, having been a fruitful source of inspiration. Along with Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* (Bachelard 1964), published in 1957, this text formed the basis for phenomenological treatment of architecture, the central notion of which was *genius loci* and the central author was Christian Norberg-Schulz, who revived, based on Heidegger's conception of place, the Classical Roman idea of *genius loci*, a certain type of a spirit of place. According to the beliefs of Ancient Rome, each free being had its own *genius*, a guardian spirit. This spirit gave life to people and places, accompanied them from birth to death and determined their character or essence. Norberg-Schulz claimed that a fundamental need to understand the meaning of life has been encoded in human nature. The genuine existence of human beings is directly related to the (architectural) conditions of their surrounding environment; the experiencing of meaningfulness will be possible in case the architectural design of the place offers opportunities for orientating and identifying; the identity of human beings depends on their belonging to certain places. When identification is impossible, existential security is lost and the feeling of homelessness emerges. Therefore, space must be organised in such a way that concrete places characterised by specific *genius loci* are created. The task of architecture is to make *genius loci* visible (Norberg-Schulz 1984: 5). The existential purpose of a building is, thus, to make a location into a place, to reveal the meanings potentially present in the given environment and to express the function of the place. At the same time, the places are mostly multifunctional, and their *genius loci* survive the functional changes occurring in the course of time, because they also contain *stabilitas loci*. The protection and preservation of *genius loci* actually means the recrystallisation of the essence of a place into the ever-changing historical context. One could also say that the history of a place has to be the self-realisation of the place. That what existed there as potential is revealed through human activities, is transfigured and preserved in the works of architecture, which are simultaneously old and new (Norberg-Schulz 1984: 18).

Although in Estonian architectural discussions, authors more often cited Gaston Bachelard's writings and were strongly influenced by his concept of poetic space (Mutt 1986; Künnapu 1988), the texts of Norberg-Schulz and, most of all, his idea of *genius loci* were undoubtedly familiar to the members of the Tallinn School (Künnapu 1986: 508–510). The members of the group readily used the potential embedded in it to fight for the preservation of the local

environmental traditions and to attack the mass construction that served the (demographic) interests of the alien powers.

Belief in the power of the spirit of place is expressed in the film *I'm Not a Tourist, I Live Here* in the general anguish of the feeling of homelessness and in concrete scenes. For instance, in Merike's words, 'I am a girl from Kadriorg. I have what I have. I don't need anything more or anything less,' and in her discontentedness with life in any other part of Tallinn. The scene where Mart offers Felix the chance for exchanging his flat for one in the house of his childhood also bears testimony of the need to perceive the meaning of existence and its relation to the feeling of certain continuity. Answering his offer, Felix sadly explains that that lovely wooden house had been demolished in 1968. Feeling nostalgia, he later has his picnic on the safety island at the crossing of Kingissepa Street and Tartu Road, at the site of his former home, and thinks to himself: 'Goddamn it! Did anybody ask at all whether I want to leave my home? At nights, I fly off my bed in the cellar before I fall asleep and float over this beautiful city. I see the towers, lights and inlets when the land is already in the dark, but the sea is still glowing. But in the morning, I feel sick as if from falling down a skyscraper and nothing remains of the nightly vision. Who am I even, and what am I doing here in this small land of Estonia? The more I pain myself in trying to find the answer, the less I can find it. The fog is all around me and inside of me as well. And in this fog, there is a ship that blindly floats somewhere. And in this ship there is me, this small lost me, whom I am looking for like a sailor from the *Flying Dutchman*. And I am this ship, and Tallinn, my home city, is this ship, and Estonia, my homeland, is this ship without a destination or home port, drifting in winds and storms over alien seas.'

The ship of the *Flying Dutchman*, without a home port or a captain, aimlessly drifting over the seas forever, is the metaphor that is the leitmotif of the whole film, including its music, and excellently presents the main idea of the film, that of aimless spiritual and physical drifting. This accurately characterises the state of mind and fate of the protagonists, Felix Kramvolt and Mart Kangur, as well as the history of Tallinn and its constructional genesis, which had come about in the culture of disruptions, and the processes that were going on in the cultural paradigm and social life of the time, in 1987 AD.

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## Kodus ja võõrsil: linnafilm 1980. aastail

### Kokkuvõte

1970. aastatel Nõukogude Eesti filmides esines (Tal)linn enamasti kommertsliku klantspildina, millega turiste peibutada ja sotsialistliku ühiskonna progressiivsust demonstreerida. Ajaloolise hõllanduse, retromoe või piltpostkaardiliku näivuse tasandil ei lahkutud, linnaelu “köögipoolt” ei avatud. Tundub, et linna võõrastati, ja mitte põhjusega: masselamurajoonid, nn “mäed”, mis kujunesid nõukogude perioodil siinsete linnade elukeskkonda kõige enam mõjutanud arhitektuuriilminguks, olid ju ennekõike sissesõitnute, võõrtööjõu pärusmaa. Kui 1980. aastate keskpaiku lõdvenes keskvalitsuse kontroll massilisima ja järelikult kõige tugevama tsensuuri alla kuuluva kunstiliigi – filmikunsti – üle, leidis tee nii suurele kui väiksele ekraanile ka enam-vähem ilustamata kaasaegne linnakeskkond ja urbaniseerunud inimese olukord. Tallinnfilmis ja Eesti Telefilmis valmis rida mängufilme, mille probleemistik pöörleb paljuski just linna “võõraste” osade – uuslinnajagude ja nende (eestlastest) elanike ümber: Leida Laiuse ja Arvo Iho *Naerata ometi* (1985), Lembit Ulfsaki *Keskea röömud* (1986), Tõnu Virve *Ringhoov* (1987), Peeter Urbla *Ma pole turist, ma elan siin* (1988) ning telefilmid *Õnnelind flamingo* (rež. Tõnis Kask) ja *Võtmeküsimus* (rež. Ago-Endrik Kerge, mõlemad 1986). Modernistlik uuslinn sai neis inimpsüühika negatiivse mõjutaja tähenduse, sümboliseerides võõrandumist nii ühiskonna kui indiviidi tasandil või terendades taustana hälbinud või sootuks purunenud peresuhetele.

Käesolevas artiklis analüüsitakse põhjalikumalt kahte nimetatut: filme *Õnnelind flamingo* ja *Ma pole turist, ma elan siin*, sest just neis kajastub reljeefsemalt 1970.–1980. aastate arhitektuurialane diskussioon ja linnanägemus, mida eelkõige iseloomustab sügav skepsis masselamuehituse suhtes. *Õnnelind flamingos* portreeteritakse sellise ehitusmeetodi tulemusena tekkinud elukeskkonna mõju inimesele, tema psüühikale ja käitumisele. *Ma pole turist, ma elan siin* paistab silma erilise, kogu ENSV aegse filmiloomingu kontekstis pretsedenditu linnakaemusega, mis ulatub uuselamurajoonidest kaugemalegi, käsitledes kogu Tallinna arhitektuurset kudet ning tuues selle kaudu esile ajastu üldist mentaalseid.