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ENN TARVEL'S INTERNATIONAL REACH THROUGH HIS WORKS ON THE POLISH RULE IN LIVONIA

Abstract

Enn Tarvel (1932–2021) is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most erudite Estonian historians. His expertise encompassed a wide range of historical topics, including medieval and early modern history, with a particular focus on the Polish rule in Livonia. This article provides insights into Tarvel's educational background, his self-taught approach to research, and the challenges he faced during his career due to his reluctance to join the party. Despite his significant impact on Estonian scholarship, Tarvel's international reach was somewhat limited due to the constraints of the Soviet academic system. Notably, Poland played a crucial role in his academic career. Tarvel's first dissertation, later published as a book, focused on the management of Polish state manors and the peasantry in southern Estonia during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This research earned him recognition in Estonia and abroad, particularly in the Eastern Bloc. Tarvel was one of the first Estonian historians to submit his contributions to Polish historical journals. He published articles and other pieces in, for example, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* and *Zapiski Historyczne*. The vital role played by his Polish contacts for his academic development is emphasised not only by those articles but also by his research stays in Poland in 1959 and 1969 and his correspondence with Polish scholars in the 1960s and 1970s. Access to Polish archives and libraries facilitated his meticulous research. Tarvel also participated in numerous international conferences. However, he was not always able to attend them due to the constraints imposed by the Soviet regime.

Keywords: Enn Tarvel, Polish rule in Livonia, Soviet academic system, agrarian history, Marxist-Leninist historiography, Polish-Estonian scholarly cooperation

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Enn Tarvel (1932–2021) is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most erudite Estonian historians. He is not only considered a distinguished figure in Estonian historical research, but is also seen as the actual embodiment of a *homo historicus*¹. Tarvel's immersion in history, and the vast scope of his historical knowledge lent significant weight to his works, opinions, and conversations with colleagues. Above all, his omnipresent involvement in the field, even two decades after his retirement, was one of the main reasons why he was so highly regarded by all. His outstanding competence endured until his passing on 22 September 2021 at the age of 89.

Most notably, he was a historian with a remarkably wide amplitude, especially in the topics of Estonian history. He was both a medievalist and historian of the early modern period, particularly regarding the Polish rule in Livonia. After his retirement, he made substantial contributions to projects related to the twentieth-century history. Tarvel embraced the identity of an agrarian historian in the broadest sense. Nevertheless, despite the widespread recognition of Tarvel's competence in Estonia, his international reach remained somewhat limited, especially when compared to Western standards. This was primarily due to the constraints imposed by the Soviet system, particularly on scholars who refused to join the party. Under these circumstances, Poland held great significance in Enn Tarvel's career. This article attempts to outline Enn Tarvel's work and activities on the international stage, which deserve attention but are often overlooked.

THE BACKGROUND

In fact, two Tarvels are known in Estonian historiography. Before the Second World War, Enn Tarvel's uncle, Peeter Tarvel (1894–1953), made a name for himself as one of the pioneers of Estonian national historical studies. He achieved immense popularity as a lecturer and played a crucial role in educating the Estonian people about European history². In 1936, he was appointed as a full professor of general history at the University of Tartu where his primary focus was on the history of early modern Europe – from Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit Order, to the French Revolution and beyond. In Estonia, Peeter Tarvel was regarded as one of the most erudite historians of his time. He was also actively engaged in politics as a committed social democrat and served as the first editor-in-chief of the Estonian main historical journal *Ajalooline Ajakiri* from 1922 to 1931.

¹ [Jüri KIVIMÄE], *Historicus Enn Tarvel* 60, Sirp, 31 July 1992; Marek TAMM, *Enn Tarvel – homo historicus*, Sirp, 28 February 2014; Olev LIIVIK, *In memoriam Enn Tarvel (1932–2021)*, *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, 2021, nr. 3–4 (177–178), pp. 279–282.

² See Jüri KIVIMÄE, *Peeter Tarveli elu ja töö*, Akadeemia, 1989, nr. 9, pp. 1913–1941; idem, *Peeter Tarveli elu ja töö*, Akadeemia, 1990, nr. 1, pp. 89–112.

In 1940, Estonia was occupied by Stalin and after the war, the period of Soviet annexation followed (1944–1991). Between 1944 and 1953, mass political arrests became a grim reality. In 1945, uncle Peeter Tarvel was arrested and sent to the Vorkuta Gulag, from which he was released in 1950. He was later forcibly resettled in Siberia, where he died in 1953. Although Peeter and Enn Tarvel never actually collaborated as colleagues, Peeter certainly left his mark on Enn Tarvel's future academic career. Enn Tarvel himself often recalled that when he entered the University of Tartu in 1950 to study history, his uncle's legacy had no influence on the field of study he chose. Nevertheless, Tarvel's name was widely recognised and it later ensured him an invitation to the Institute of History in Tallinn for degree studies.

Enn Tarvel refrained from joining pioneer and Komsomol organisations, which was rather typical of his youth generation in Estonia before Stalin's death³. During his student days, Enn Tarvel tried to maintain a low profile but graduated *cum laude* in 1955 with a degree in general history. Similar to his uncle, Enn enjoyed studying languages and reading foreign literature. Throughout his academic career, Tarvel demonstrated fluency in Estonian, German, Russian, Polish, English, French, Dutch, Latin, Finnish, Swedish, Lithuanian, and Latvian⁴. However, he regarded his history studies at the State University of Tartu from 1950 to 1955 as being entirely propagandistic in terms of politics, lacking any meaningful preparation for professional research. Therefore, he considered himself to be entirely self-taught for the remainder of his research work.

Despite graduating with honours, Enn Tarvel was still ranked third from the bottom of the list of those who could choose their own post in which to work. This was attributed to his continued low level of social activity. His low position on the list dampened his enthusiasm for embarking on research and commencing degree studies (*aspirantuur*). He had received an invitation from Artur Vassar (1911–1977) from Tallinn to join the Institute of History, but he required a recommendation letter from the university, which they refused to issue.

THE CANDIDATE'S THESIS ON THE POLISH RULE IN LIVONIA

In 1956, Tarvel was granted the opportunity to begin his postgraduate studies at the University of Tartu. He chose the period of the Polish rule in Livonia as his topic, as no one in Soviet Estonia was working on this, and it was not considered as controversial in a political sense. The sixteenth century in particular had always been a period of interest for Tarvel. The second half of this century,

³ Enn TARVEL, *Eesti rahva lugu*, Tallinn 2018, p. 335.

⁴ See Andres PULVER, *Enn Tarvel: "Keeleõppimine iseenesest pole mingi kunst, kunst on selleks aega leida"*, Virumaa Teataja, 6 August 2011.

especially the end, represented a significant gap in Estonian historiography, unlike the period of the fall of the Teutonic Order in Livonia in the first half of the sixteenth century or the Swedish reign during the seventeenth century. In 1957, Tarvel finally managed to overcome the formalities and secure a letter of recommendation, gaining admittance to the candidate degree programme at the Institute of History of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences in Tallinn. To compile the sources for his dissertation, Tarvel began by exploring all relevant archives and libraries within the Soviet Union (Tartu, Tallinn, Moscow, Vilnius, Riga, and elsewhere). Although all this preparatory work was necessary, Tarvel himself felt that the substantive work on his dissertation was delayed for years because he did not have access to Polish archives⁵.

In the 1950s, there was little prospect of a young scholar gaining permission to go on a research trip abroad. Even the President of the Academy of Sciences, Johan Eichfeld, questioned the idea of entrusting an aspirant with a topic that required a trip abroad. Nevertheless, the opportunity to travel to Poland did arise, and in October/November 1959 Tarvel was granted a three-week visit to the Polish People's Republic. During this time, he was able to work intensively in Warsaw in the Central Archives of Historical Records (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, AGAD) and spent four days in Kraków, conducting research at the Manuscripts Department of the Czartoryski Museum, the Manuscripts Department of the General Library of the Jagellonian University, and the Manuscripts Department of the Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences. All of these institutions provided highly valuable additions to the source material for his thesis. Most of the collected primary sources on Livonia had not previously been utilised by anyone and therefore were completely unknown⁶. Notably, a collection of land surveys conducted by the Polish authorities became an important source material for Tarvel's conclusions. Whilst these were later published by Oleg Roslavlev⁷, Tarvel had to work through them using only microfilms ordered from the archives.

Nevertheless, Enn Tarvel managed to complete a voluminous thesis within only three years, which he submitted in September 1960 (the thesis was defended in April 1961) at the age of 28 years old. The primary focus of the dissertation was on the agrarian policy of the Polish authorities, the management

⁵ Marten SEPPEL, *Enn Tarveli sammust ja rammust*, [in:] *Sõnasse püütud minevik, in honorem Enn Tarvel*, koost. Priit RAUDKIVI, Marten SEPPEL, Tallinn 2009, p. 15.

⁶ Tarvel gave an overview of the results of this research trip in his article on new and unknown primary sources concerning the history of Estonia that can be found in Warsaw, see Enn TARVEL, *Estica Vanade Aktide Peaarhiivis Varssavis*, Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateaduste seeria, 1960, nr. 3, pp. 292–304.

⁷ *Hefte zur Landeskunde Estlands*, H. 5–7, hrsg. v. Oleg ROSLAVLEV, München 1970–1973.

of the Polish state manors, and the situation of the peasantry (stratification, dues and burdens, and legal status) in the territory of southern Estonia (the Estonian settlement area). More broadly, his thesis addressed the political, administrative, social, and economic order of Polish Livonia in the second half of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century. In some respects, we can even see an attempt by Tarvel to portray Poland's agrarian policy in a deliberately positive light, which was already being criticised when the thesis was presented for discussion⁸. Later, however, Tarvel expressed regret that he did not include the Latvian part of Livonia in his research, which at that time would have required 'only a little extra effort'. A striking norm in the Soviet period was to study Livonian history in strict correspondence with the borders of the then Soviet republics of Estonia and Latvia. As a result, the Latvian districts were excluded from Tarvel's subsequent articles and books on the Polish rule in Livonia.

Enn Tarvel's academic supervisor, Artur Vassar, had an archaeological background, but circumstances prevented him from pursuing his core research. Consequently, at the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences, he primarily oversaw the research area of agricultural history. In the early 1970s, he planned and initiated the publication of the multi-volume *History of the Estonian Peasantry*, of which only the first volume was published under Juhan Kahk's and Enn Tarvel's editorship in 1992⁹. Tarvel himself regarded Vassar as one of the pioneers of Marxist historiography in Estonia, particularly through his debates on the periodisation of Estonian history¹⁰. Although Tarvel himself was always interested in issues of periodisation, he never consciously discussed this topic with Vassar because, despite their excellent working relationship, their views on Marxist premises diverged significantly. In 1983, Juhan Kahk and Enn Tarvel edited an international collection of essays dedicated to the memory of Artur Vassar, to which only foreign authors were invited to contribute (Rudolf Berthold, Eino Jutikkala, Aleksander Loit, Andrzej Wyczański,

⁸ Marten SEPPEL, *Enn Tarvel Poola aja ajaloolasena*, [in:] Enn TARVEL, *Valge kotka tiiva all. Poola võim eestlaste maal 16.–17. sajandil*, koost. Marten SEPPEL, Tallinn 2024 [forthcoming].

⁹ *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, kd. 1, peatoim. Juhan KAHK, tegevtoim. Enn TARVEL, Tallinn 1992.

¹⁰ ЭНН ТАРВЕЛ, *Жизнь и деятельность Артура Вассара* [Enn TARVEL, *Zhizn' i deyatel'nost' Artura Vassara*], [in:] *Artur Vassar. Personaalnimestik*, peatoim. Juhan KAHK, Tallinn 1987, pp. XVIII–XXIII. See also Ea JANSEN, *Artur Vassar ajaloolasena*, [in:] *Eesti ajaloo probleeme. ENSV TA korrespondentliikme Artur Vassara 70. sünniaastapäevale pühendatud teaduskonverentsi ettekannete teesid (18. november 1981)*, koost. Enn TARVEL, Tallinn 1981, pp. 5–16; Hain REBAS, *Dependence and opposition: Problems in Soviet Estonian historiography in the late 1940s and early 1950s*, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 36: 2005, no. 4, pp. 423–448.

and others)¹¹. These individuals were good colleagues of the editors, but not friends of Vassar.

In any case, Enn Tarvel's mentor, Artur Vassar, was unable to help him with the interpretation of sixteenth-seventeenth century Polish sources. It was only during his visit to Poland in 1959 that Tarvel had the opportunity to consult Polish colleagues in more detail about the administrative and agrarian history of Poland. He developed a particularly close relationship with Andrzej Wyczański (1924–2008). Tarvel was considerably impressed by Wyczański's studies on the Polish grain trade, peasant households, and manorial economy¹². Clearly influenced by this, Tarvel published an article in 1991 opposing Immanuel Wallerstein's famous belief in the interregional division of the world system, demonstrating that in the fourteenth–sixteenth centuries, the export of grain from Eastern Europe to Western Europe did not play as significant a role in the development of the estate economy as had been assumed¹³.

In 1961, the Dissertation Defence Committee decided that Enn Tarvel's Estonian-language thesis should be reworked into a book, but only on the condition that the manuscript would be reduced by a third and that it would be published in a Russian translation to appeal to a wider audience, including Polish historians. The translation into Russian was completed in 1962, with close collaboration between the three translators and the author. The initial hope was to see the book published as early as 1963, but it ultimately appeared only in early 1965 (although the title page bears the date 1964) with the Polish White Eagle on the cover. The book received an excellent reception and was reviewed in journals such as *Kwartalnik Historyczny*¹⁴, *Zapiski Histo-*

¹¹ Феодальный крестьянин в восточной и северной Европе: Сборник статей, сост. Юхан КАХК, Энн ТАРВЕЛ, Таллин 1983 [*Feodal'nyu krest'yanin v vostochnoy i severnoy Yevrope: Sbornik statey*, sost. Yukhan КАХК, Энн ТАРВЕЛ, Tallin 1983].

¹² Tarvel used to refer to Wyczański's publications, such as Andrzej WYCZAŃSKI, *Tentative Estimate of Polish Rye Trade in the Sixteenth Century*, *Acta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 4: 1961, pp. 119–131; idem, *La base intérieure de l'exportation polonaise des céréales dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle*, [in:] *Der Aussenhandel Ostmitteleuropas 1450–1650. Die ostmitteleuropäischen Volkswirtschaften in ihren Beziehungen zu Mitteleuropa*, hrsg. v. Ingomar BOG, Köln–Wien 1971, pp. 260–270; idem, *Studia nad folwarkiem szlacheckim w Polsce w latach 1500–1580*, Warszawa 1960; idem, *Polska w Europie XVI stulecia*, Warszawa 1973; idem, *Czy chłopu było źle w Polsce XVI wieku?*, *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, R. 85: 1978, nr 3, pp. 627–641; idem, *Le paysan, la tenture et le bail en Pologne au XVIe siècle*, *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, an. 33: 1978, no. 4, pp. 772–779.

¹³ Enn TARVEL, *The influence of the Western grain market on the agrarian economy in the North-Eastern Europe in the 15th–16th centuries*, [in:] *The role of feudal peasantry in history*, ed. Enn TARVEL, Tallinn 1991, pp. 190–202.

¹⁴ Jerzy OCHMAŃSKI, [rev.] Enn TARVEL, *Folwark, pan i poddanyj*, *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, R. 73: 1966, nr 3, pp. 713–715.

*ryczne*¹⁵, *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*¹⁶, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*¹⁷, *История СССР*¹⁸, and *Eesti NSV TA toimetised*¹⁹. Reviews in Polish journals confirmed the interest of the Polish readers. Jerzy Ochmański acknowledged that Tarvel's monograph also made an important contribution to the history of Poland²⁰. In 1967, Tarvel's 'Folwark' monograph was nominated for the All-Union Lenin Prize (in the field of science and technology, in the history section). At Moscow State University, Enn Tarvel's book was included in the list of recommended sample works for history research students. There is no doubt that this monograph, which became known through its first word 'Folwark'²¹, together with numerous articles on Polish agrarian policy in Livonia published during that period, brought Enn Tarvel scholarly recognition not only in Estonia, but also internationally, at least in the countries of the Eastern Bloc.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLISH HISTORICAL JOURNALS

Enn Tarvel realised that the part of his thesis that dealt with the agricultural policy of the Polish authorities in southern Estonia at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries would be ideal for his first article in a foreign journal. His choice was the leading Polish historical journal *Kwartalnik Historyczny* in 1963 (the text was written in 1962)²².

¹⁵ Leonid ŻYTKOWICZ, [rev.] Enn TARVEL, *Fol'vark, pan i poddanyj. Agrarnye otnošenija v pol'skikh vladenijach na territorii Južnoj Estonii v konce XVI – načale XVII v.*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 31: 1966, z. 4, pp. 124–129.

¹⁶ Arnold SOOM, [rev.] Enn TARVEL, *Fol'vark, pan i poddanyj. Agrarnye otnošenija v pol'skikh vladenijach na territorii južnoj Ėstonii v konce XIV – načale XVII veka*, *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, Bd. 16: 1967, H. 1, pp. 177–180.

¹⁷ Arved VON TAUBE, [rev.] Enn V. TARVEL, *Fol'vark, pan i poddanyj. Agrarnye otnošenija v pol'skikh vladenijach na territorii južnoj Ėstonii v konce XVI – načale XVII veka*, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Bd. 21: 1973, H. 1, pp. 113–114.

¹⁸ Юхан КАХК, [rev.] ЭНН ТАРВЕЛ, *Фольварк, пан и подданный: Аграрные отношения в польских владениях на территории Южной Эстонии в конце XVI – начале XVII века*, *История СССР*, 1967, № 1 [Enn TARVEL, *Fol'vark, pan i poddannyj: Agrarnyye otnošenija v pol'skikh vladeniyakh na territorii Yuzhnoy Estonii v kontse XVI – nachale XVII veka*, *Istoriya SSSR*, 1967, no. 1], pp. 182–185.

¹⁹ Herbert LIGI, *Väljapaisteve uurimus Poola aja agraarprobleemidest*, *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused*, kd. 16: 1967, nr. 4, pp. 426–430.

²⁰ J. OCHMAŃSKI, *op.cit.*, p. 714.

²¹ In the Polish language and with regard to Polish territories, the word *folwark* typically means a manor that produced goods to be sold on the market. However, in Estonian and Latvian historical writings, this Polish word was given a narrower meaning as early as the 1920s and 1930s and has been most often used to refer to a Polish state manor. In this sense it was also used by Tarvel, who appropriated it from Livonian primary sources from the period of the Polish rule, see Enn TARVEL, *Stosunek prawnopaństwa Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej oraz ich urząd administracyjny w latach 1561–1621*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 34: 1969, z. 1, p. 66, footnote 74.

²² Enn TARVEL, *Polska polityka agrarna w południowej Estonii na przełomie XVI/XVII wieku*, *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, R. 70: 1963, nr 4, pp. 823–848.

Although Enn Tarvel corresponded with Polish colleagues and reviewed proofs in Polish, he did not write his articles directly in Polish; he first had them translated into Russian or German. In Toruń, Marian Biskup had already heard about Tarvel's thesis in the spring of 1962²³. In 1966, he commissioned Tarvel to contribute to the journal *Zapiski Historyczne*. His proposed article on the legal status of Livonia in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1561–1625 aligned perfectly with the editorial team's interests. The manuscript was reviewed and translated into Polish by Professor Leonid Żytkowicz, a member of the journal's editorial board, who had previously written an opinion on Tarvel's 'Folwark' monograph²⁴. This first article in *Zapiski Historyczne*, which was finally published in 1969²⁵, paved the way for Tarvel to receive further invitations to contribute to the journal. Tarvel later recalled that a Polish colleague at the time sharply reproached him for having published his article in a 'local journal' such as *Zapiski* from Toruń. Yet *Zapiski Historyczne* had already become a sought-after foreign journal among Enn Tarvel's colleagues. Tarvel's good friend, Vasily Doroszenko from Riga, had published several of his works there as the first Baltic historian before 1966²⁶. His primary concern was also the history of the Polish rule in Latvia.

In January 1968, Marian Biskup informed Enn Tarvel that if he had any further suggestions for publication in *Zapiski Historyczne*, the journal would certainly be interested, and potential contributions on Estonian or Baltic topics from Tarvel's colleagues were also welcome²⁷. Tarvel's next piece for *Zapiski Historyczne* was a review of a thin Estonian-language brochure (presented as a textbook for history students) titled *Agriculture and agricultural relations in Estonia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries* written by Sulev Vahtre (1926–2007), a senior lecturer at the University of Tartu. Biskup commissioned Tarvel to write this eight-page review in the spring of 1968²⁸, which Tarvel was pleased

²³ M. Biskup to S. Herbst, 9 April 1962, Archiwum Państwowe w Toruniu (hereafter cited as AP Toruń), Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1056.

²⁴ M. Biskup to E. Tarvel, 16 January 1967 and 18 October 1967, AP Toruń, Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1056. I would like to thank Professor Bogusław Dybaś for copying the correspondence between Marian Biskup and Enn Tarvel from the period between 1967 and 1970 for me.

²⁵ E. TARVEL, *Stosunek prawnopaństwowy Inflant*, pp. 49–77.

²⁶ Wasilij W. DOROSZENKO, *Badania historiografii radzieckiej z lat 1945–1961 nad dziejami Łotwy i Estonii w okresie feudalizmu*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 28: 1963, z. 3, pp. 343–378; idem, *Eksport Rygi na Zachód w okresie przynależności do Rzeczypospolitej 1562–1620*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 31: 1966, z. 1, pp. 7–44.

²⁷ M. Biskup to E. Tarvel, 5 January 1968, AP Toruń, Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1056.

²⁸ M. Biskup to E. Tarvel, 18 May 1968, AP Toruń, Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1056; Enn TARVEL, [rev.] Sulev VAHTRE, *Põllumajandus ja agrarsuhted Eestis XIII–XIV sajandil. Õppevahend ajaloo-osakonna üliõpilastele*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 35: 1970, z. 2, pp. 191–194.

to prepare, as he found Vahtre's booklet exceptionally well written. However, his friend Herbert Ligi (1928–1990) reproached Tarvel for having spent more time on the review than Vahtre had on the entire booklet. Tarvel's review of the brochure was the only one that appeared. Tarvel's closer association with Sulev Vahtre had begun in October 1955 when Vahtre invited him to join the dissertation defence party for his candidate thesis. It was also the first academic social event of that kind that Tarvel had attended. Moreover, it is striking that in the second half of the 1960s and during the 1970s, Enn Tarvel published most of his reviews of the works of his colleagues in the journal *Zapiski Historyczne*. Indeed, from 1972 onwards, all the contributions Tarvel submitted to *Zapiski Historyczne* were reviews only²⁹.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ON A NEW TOPIC

In the Soviet academic system, there were two doctoral-level scientific degrees. The thesis of a candidate of sciences already required original research of doctoral level. However, in order to attain full professorship, the second dissertation was mandatory. In 1962, with the approval of the authorities at the Institute of History, Enn Tarvel began to address the problem of Estonian land use and taxation units. He drafted an initial outline of chapters for his doctoral thesis as early as April 1964, which he subsequently followed with surprising purposefulness. This led Tarvel to become seriously involved in the history of the Middle Ages and, in particular, the thirteenth century³⁰. In 1971, he defended his doctoral dissertation *Adramaa* which showcased his extensive knowledge of historical sources spanning from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century in Estonia and Latvia³¹.

In March 1968, Enn Tarvel applied once again for a research trip to the Polish People's Republic, this time for a year, with the aim of studying the archival

²⁹ Enn TARVEL, [rev.] Herbert LIGI, *Talupoegade koormised Eestis 13. sajandist 19. sajandi alguseni*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 36: 1971, z. 1, pp. 154–157; idem, [rev.] Raimo PULLAT, *Tallinnast ja tallinlastest. Nihked elanikkonna sotsiaalses koosseisus 1871–1917*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 36: 1971, z. 1, pp. 166–168; idem, [rev.] Juhan KAHK, *Die Krise der feudalen Landwirtschaft in Estland (das zweite Viertel des 19. Jahrhunderts)*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 37: 1972, z. 4, pp. 201–205; idem, *Problematyka fińskiego czasopisma historycznego „Historiallinen Aikakauskirja” w latach 1970–1974*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 41: 1976, z. 3, pp. 143–148; idem, [rev.] *Turun Historiallinen Arkisto*, t. 31: 1976, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 44: 1979, z. 3, pp. 173–175.

³⁰ Enn TARVEL, *Adramaa XIII sajandil*, Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateaduste seeria, 1966, nr. 1, pp. 27–43. The article manuscript was written in 1964.

³¹ The manuscript of the thesis was finished in 1970 and published in a shortened form as a monograph in 1972, see Enn TARVEL, *Adramaa. Eesti talurahva maakasutuse ja maksustuse alused 13.–19. sajandil*, Tallinn 1972. The shortened version was later translated and published in German, see idem, *Der Haken. Die Grundlagen der Landnutzung und der Besteuerung in Estland im 13.–19. Jahrhundert*, Tallinn 1983.

materials of the Livonian peasantry in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. He intended to spend nine to ten months in Warsaw, working in the Central Archives of Historical Records and in the libraries, and one to two months in Kraków. However, he did not obtain a one-year permit and was only able to spend the first six months of 1969 (from January to June) in Poland for the second time. It was also the first time since 1959 that Tarvel had been able to leave the borders of the Soviet Union. During this visit he set a goal for himself to become fluent in Polish and use only this language for communication. In his first visit Tarvel had not yet dared to communicate actively in Polish and had used either German or Russian. He spent most of his time in Warsaw, but also made trips to Kraków, Wrocław, Toruń, Poznań, and Zakopane. This time, however, the archives and libraries did not reveal as much new material as they had 10 years earlier³². Perhaps the newest source material he found concerned the Jesuit gymnasium in Tartu between 1583 and 1625, a subject beyond the scope of his candidate thesis³³. Nevertheless, reading secondary literature in the libraries was highly educational and enabled him to expand his contacts with Polish colleagues.

The travel allowance granted by the Estonian Academy of Sciences allowed him to stay at the Metropol Hotel in the city centre of Warsaw (room 917), dine daily in restaurants (with a daily allowance of 100 PLN, that is, 6.5 RUB), and enjoy the theatre and cinema (watching films like *Cleopatra*, *Winnetou* and other American blockbusters of the time). As Poland was notably freer and more developed, Enn Tarvel also became acquainted with several other elements of Western culture in Poland – this was the first time he encountered beer cans, sugar gum, and bought quality shoes from a private entrepreneur, among other things.

Enn Tarvel later admitted in one of his interviews that ‘if I had not written *Adramaa* in Poland, I believe it would have remained unwritten, at least in this form’³⁴. Tarvel was particularly impressed by the presence of French literature in Warsaw and appreciated the small reference library of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw which he later referred to as a ‘window to world historiography’³⁵. He also partially participated in the work

³² Enn TARVEL, *Estonica't Poola arhiivides ja raamatukogudes*, Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused, 1972, nr. 2, pp. 152–162.

³³ Enn TARVEL, *Gymnasium Derpatense 1583–1625*, Keel ja Kirjandus, 1971, nr. 11, pp. 673–677. A direct Polish translation of this article was published years later, see idem, *Gymnasium Dorpatense 1583–1625*, *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty*, t. 33: 1990, pp. 17–26.

³⁴ Piret LOTMAN, *Mõned küsimused ajaloodoktor Enn Tarvelile*, Tuna: Ajalookultuuri ajakiri, 2001, nr. 1, p. 90.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

at the Department of the History of the Noble Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita szlachecka*) of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences and delivered several presentations (e.g., at the conference of the Commission for Rural History of the National Committee of Polish Historians). It was Marian Biskup who invited Tarvel to deliver a lecture in Toruń where, at his request, he addressed the main trends and achievements of Estonian Soviet historiography after 1945³⁶.

In connection with his doctoral thesis and the research trip to Poland, Tarvel completed his second full-length article for *Zapiski Historyczne* in 1969. The article focused on common features of the oldest land measurement units in Eastern Europe, providing a comparative analysis of their development, which were named after several agricultural tools in Livonia, Poland, and other parts of Eastern Europe³⁷. It served as an extension to the concluding chapter of his doctoral thesis³⁸. Furthermore, Tarvel openly acknowledged that such an analysis was only possible because he had the opportunity to read the relevant literature in Warsaw, as the Lenin Library in Moscow had only selective resources. Both the dissertation and this article in particular demonstrated that Tarvel was addressing a central and global issue in agricultural history – the basis of land use and taxation. Enn Tarvel's entire body of research can be characterised by a notably skilful and extensive use of the comparative-historical method, an approach that involves understanding Livonian history in a broad comparative context, which inevitably presupposes extensive reading.

It is evident from the correspondence between Marian Biskup and Enn Tarvel that there was no secrecy regarding the reviewers of articles submitted for the journal at that time. Tarvel's article on land measurement units was reviewed by Henryk Łowmiański³⁹. At the end of August 1969, Tarvel sent his extensive additions, revisions, and corrections to the article in Russian, although he regretted that it had not been possible to obtain all the literature suggested by

³⁶ M. Biskup to E. Tarvel, 23 February 1969, AP Toruń, Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1056.

³⁷ Enn TARVEL, *Wspólne cechy najstarszych jednostek pomiaru ziemi w Europie Wschodniej*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 36: 1971, z. 2, pp. 27–55.

³⁸ Enn TARVEL, *Adramaa. Eesti talurahva maakasutuse ja maksustuse alused 13.–19. sajandil* (doctoral diss., Institute of History of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences), Tallinn 1970, pp. 656–692; idem, *Adramaa*, pp. 205–219. However, this chapter was not included in the German translation of the book.

³⁹ E. Tarvel to M. Biskup, 26 August 1969, M. Biskup to E. Tarvel, 3 September 1969, AP Toruń, Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1055. See also Bogusław DYBAŚ, *Marian Biskup i „Zapiski Historyczne”. Wokół początków umiędzynarodowienia czasopisma*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, t. 87: 2022, z. 4, p. 21.

Łowmiański in Tallinn (he had, however, bought Łowmiański's *Początki Polski* prior to leaving Warsaw)⁴⁰. Ultimately, the article was translated into Polish and published in 1971. When, in 2012, the publishing house 'Ilmamaa' commissioned a volume of Enn Tarvel's collected works and decided to include this *Zapiski Historyczne* article on land measurement units, Tarvel no longer possessed the original Estonian or Russian manuscript of the article so he translated it from Polish back into Estonian⁴¹. He also recalled that he had been very flattered by his encounter with one of Poland's greatest agricultural historians, Henryk Łowmiański and appreciated his kind assessment. This was all the more admirable given that Tarvel had, in fact, criticised some of Łowmiański's views, but Łowmiański considered this necessary to advance the discussion.

The research problems of his doctoral thesis also brought Enn Tarvel into contact with mathematical methods, which had gained popularity since the 1960s and on which Enn Tarvel worked for approximately eight years. He eagerly tried to keep pace with the trends in historical methods, believing that agricultural history could be studied through computers by inputting as much data as possible into a machine. The impetus came from his friend Juhan Kahk (1928–1998), who, in 1962, was the first to use computers to analyse the economic situation of the Estonian peasantry in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Institute of History of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences gained a reputation as one of the leading research centres in history using mathematical methods in the Soviet Union⁴². Juhan Kahk even wrote about it in the French *Annales* journal⁴³ and travelled across half of Europe giving presentations on the subject⁴⁴. Together with Kahk and Herbert Ligi, Enn Tarvel published the German-language collective monograph *Contributions to the Marxist agricultural history of Estonia in the feudal period* in 1974, which offered perspectives on studying agricultural history through mathematical methods⁴⁵. Its key parts were also published in the form of an article in the

⁴⁰ E. Tarvel to M. Biskup, 26 August 1969, AP Toruń, Akta TNT (dopływ), temporary archival ref. no. 1055.

⁴¹ Enn TARVEL, *Vanimata maamööduühikute ühisjooni Ida-Euroopas*, [in:] idem, *Ajalookimbatused*, koost. Marten SEPPel (Eesti mõttelugu, kd. 109), Tartu 2013, pp. 235–254.

⁴² Enn TARVEL, *Preface*, [in:] *The role of feudal peasantry in history*, ed. Enn TARVEL, Tallinn 1991, p. 7.

⁴³ Juhan KAHK, *À propos de la politique agraire dans les régions baltes au cours des années 1840. Essai d'analyse du développement politique*, *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, an. 28: 1973, no. 3, pp. 817–837.

⁴⁴ Enn TARVEL, *Juhan Kahki mälestuseks*, *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*, kd. 2: 1998, pp. 118–119.

⁴⁵ Juhan KAHK, Herbert LIGI, Enn TARVEL, *Beiträge zu marxistischen Agrargeschichte Estlands der Feudalzeit. Neue Ergebnisse, neue Probleme, neue Methoden*, Tallinn 1974.

German Democratic Republic⁴⁶ and Poland⁴⁷. In fact, Tarvel had presented the same research results already in Warsaw in November 1973 where the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences had organised an international colloquium on quantitative methods in historical studies⁴⁸. Tarvel's strength in research had always been his skilful use of the statistical method. Now, however, he had to spend a substantial amount of time on calculations and logarithms, which he admitted he had not studied at school and had forgotten later in his career. But such was the trend in the 1960s and early 1970s. Eventually, Tarvel became frustrated, realising that quantitative methods and mathematical calculations failed to produce a colourful and insightful historical narrative, and he, who had always appreciated the beauty of words, saw increasingly less charm in the presentation of dry figures and tables.

Following his doctoral thesis, Tarvel's rather rapid shift from mathematical methods became most apparent in his growing interest in medieval chronicles⁴⁹ and his voluminous manuscript on settlement history, *Lahemaa*, which he completed in 1975. The settlement history of the Estonian region of Lahemaa was published as a monograph in Estonian in 1983 with significant cuts⁵⁰. In this book, Enn Tarvel demonstrated his keen interest in local history and toponymy, defining this work as a micro-historical study. Local history studies became one of Enn Tarvel's favourite hobbies, as expressed in numerous smaller articles and contributions to volumes on the history of Tartu and numerous other Estonian districts (Virumaa, Järvamaa, Saaremaa).

⁴⁶ Juhan KAHK, Enn TARVEL, *Zwei Versuche zur Anwendung mathematischer Methoden in der agrargeschichtlichen Forschung*, Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Bd. 15: 1974, H. 2, pp. 133–158.

⁴⁷ Enn TARVEL, *Doświadczenie w zakresie budowy modelu matematycznego gospodarstwa chłopskiego w okresie późnego feudalizmu*, [in:] *Historia i nowoczesność. Problemy unowocześnienia metodologii i warsztatu badawczego historyka*, red. Janina LESKIEWICZOWA, Stefania KOWALSKA-GLIKMAN, Wrocław 1974, pp. 257–276.

⁴⁸ Enn TARVEL, *Rahvusvaheline kollokvium "Kvantitatiivsed meetodid ajaloo teaduses"*, Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused, kd. 23: 1974, nr. 2, pp. 220–221.

⁴⁹ Энн ТАРВЕЛ, *Проблемы публикации нового эстонского издания «Хроники Ливонии» Генриха*, [in:] *Материалы межреспубликанской научной конференции по источниковедению и историографии народов прибалтийских республик Союза ССР. Источниковедение (Прибалтийская секция научного совета по проблеме «История исторические науки»)*, Вильнюс 1978 [Enn TARVEL, *Problemy publikatsii novogo estonskogo izdaniya "Khroniki Livonii" Genriha*, [in:] *Materialy mezhrеспубликанской nauchnoy konferentsii po istochnikovedeniyu i istoriografii narodov pribaltiyskikh respublik Soyuzs SSR. Istochnikovedeniye (Pribaltiyskaya sektsiya nauchnogo soveta po probleme "Istoriya istoricheskiye nauki")*, Vil'nyus 1978], pp. 15–19; Enn TARVEL, *Livländische Chroniken des 13. Jahrhunderts als Quelle für die Geschichte des Schwertbrüderordens und Livlands*, [in:] *Werkstatt des Historikers der mittelalterlichen Ritterorden. Quellenkundliche Probleme und Forschungsmethoden*, hrsg. v. Zenon H. NOWAK (Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica, Bd. 4), Toruń 1987, pp. 175–184.

⁵⁰ Enn TARVEL, *Lahemaa ajalugu*, Tallinn 1983.

ATTENDING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Enn Tarvel's participation in international conferences began with his candidate thesis, although during the 1960s, this was confined to conferences within the Soviet Union. Immediately after the final submission of his candidate thesis in September 1960, Tarvel, accompanied by Herbert Ligi and Juhan Kahk, travelled to Kyiv for his first major conference, which gathered leading agricultural historians from the Soviet Union. This was the third session of the Eastern European symposium on agricultural history, a series of conferences that had started in Tallinn on the initiative of Hans Kruus and Juhan Kahk in 1958. Tarvel had attended the first symposium in Tallinn as a young postgraduate student, but was not yet registered as a participant. He could not attend the second session which was held in Moscow in 1959. In Kyiv, Tarvel presented the results of his recent dissertation manuscript, focusing on the Polish state manor economy in southern Estonia, a paper that was later published in Russian in the symposium's proceedings⁵¹. From that point on, Enn Tarvel became a regular participant in this major conference series in the agricultural history of Eastern Europe and also served as an organiser of the ninth session of the symposium held in Tallinn from 24 to 28 October 1966⁵².

Enn Tarvel's first foreign conference in a non-socialist country was a ten-day Finnish symposium on 'The Development and Agricultural History of Estonian and Finnish Cities' in April 1971. During the 1970s and 1980s, he actively sought to attend the prestigious International Economic History Congresses organised by the International Economic History Association (IEHA) which were held every four years (1970 – Leningrad, 1974 – Copenhagen, 1978 – Edinburgh, 1982 – Budapest, 1990 – Leuven, etc.). However, unlike Juhan Kahk, Enn Tarvel was not allowed to attend every event. In 1974, Tarvel with Kahk and Helmut Piirimäe were admitted to the sixth congress in Copenhagen, where they met participants such as Jerzy Topolski, Andrzej Wyczański, Carlo Cipolla, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Pierre Goubert, and others⁵³. But then, Enn Tarvel was unable to obtain permission to attend subsequent congresses in Edinburgh (1978) and Budapest (1982). With regard to Edinburgh, he initially thought

⁵¹ ЭНН ТАРВЕЛЬ, *Фольварочное хозяйство в государственных имениях южной Эстонии в конце XVI и начале XVII в.*, [in:] *Ежегодник по аграрной истории Восточной Европы 1960 г.*, Киев 1962 [Enn TARVEL, *Fol'varochnoye khozyaystvo v gosudarstvennykh imeniyakh yuzhnoy Estonii v kontse XVI i nachale XVII v.*, [in:] *Yezhegodnik po agrarnoy istorii Vostochnoy Yevropy 1960 g.*, Kiyev 1962], pp. 82–94.

⁵² ЭНН ТАРВЕЛЬ, *Девятая сессия симпозиума по аграрной истории Восточной Европы*, Советское славяноведение, 1967, № 2 [Enn TARVEL, *Devyataya sessiya simpoziuma po agrarnoy istorii Vostochnoy Yevropy*, Sovetskoye slavyanovedeniye, 1967, no. 2], pp. 112–113.

⁵³ Juhan KAHK, Enn TARVEL, *VI rahvusvaheline majandusajaloo kongress*, Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused, kd. 24: 1975, nr. 1, pp. 99–101.

that someone in Tallinn had complained about him, but later, when he obtained access to his travel file kept by the KGB, he discovered that the actual reason was his contacts with the well-known Tallinn-born amateur historian in Germany, Oleg Roslavlev (1921–1978), who was considered by the security services to be an intelligence agent with the code-name 'Istorik'. In Budapest in 1982, he had to stay away because he was taken off the delegation list at the last minute. Apparently, the order had come to include someone 'more important' among the Soviet delegates in his place. However, Juhan Kahk was able to attend both congresses, and Enn Tarvel's contributions still appeared in the collections of these congresses, co-authored with Kahk⁵⁴. In 1990, Enn Tarvel participated in the Leuven congress as part of the Soviet delegation for the last time⁵⁵.

In 1980, he managed to attend the famous Economic History Conference in Prato, Italy organised by the Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini', the papers of which were published only ten years later⁵⁶. In his presentation at a seminar of Soviet-Danish historians in Copenhagen in November 1986, Enn Tarvel pointed out for the first time that the name 'qlwry' on the 1154 map of al-Idrisi must not be associated with Tallinn⁵⁷. Until then,

⁵⁴ Juhan KAHK, Herbert LIGI, Enn TARVEL, *A parallel study of agricultural production and feudal duties of the peasantry in Estonia, 16th–19th centuries*, [in:] *Prestations paysannes, dîmes, rente foncière et mouvement de la production agricole à l'époque préindustrielle. Actes du Colloque préparatoire (30 juin – 1er et 2 juillet 1977) au VIIe Congrès international d'Histoire économique Section A3. Édimbourg 13–19 août 1978*, éd. Joseph GOY, Emmanuel LE ROY LADURIE (Cahiers des études rurales, vol. 4), Paris 1982, pp. 121–128; Juhan KAHK, Enn TARVEL, *Large estates and small holdings in Estonia from the 16th to the 19th centuries*, [in:] *Grand domaine et petites exploitations en Europe au Moyen Age et dans les temps modernes. Rapports nationaux*, éd. Péter GUNST, Tamás HOFFMANN, Budapest 1982, pp. 361–377.

⁵⁵ Juhan KAHK, Enn TARVEL, *Structure and dynamics of agrarian production in the Baltics: 10th International Economic History Congress, Leuven, 1990, Moscow 1990*.

⁵⁶ Enn TARVEL, *The stability of social hierarchies in the economic development of the Baltic region in the period of feudalism*, [in:] *Gerarchie economica e gerarchie sociali secoli XII–XVIII. Atti della "Dodicesima Settimana di Studi" 18–23 aprile 1980*, cur. Annalisa GUARDUCCI (Serie II – Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini", vol. 12), Prato 1990, pp. 53–71.

⁵⁷ The papers presented at the seminar in Copenhagen were published only in 2007, see Enn TARVEL, *Genesis of the Livonian town in the 13th century*, [in:] *Medieval towns in Northeastern Europe*, ed. Imke HAMANN-BOCK, Mareike HANSEN, Alexandre KARWASKI, Sina KUHR, Thomas RIIS, Tønning 2007, pp. 133–147. However, Tarvel used the same argumentation to publish another piece already in 1999, see idem, *Genesis of the Livonian town in the 13th century*, [in:] *Prusy – Polska – Europa. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza i czasów wczesnonowożytnych. Prace ofiarowane Profesorowi Zenonowi Hubertowi Nowakowi w sześćdziesiątą piątą rocznicę urodzin i czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej*, red. Andrzej RADZIMIŃSKI, Janusz TANDECKI, Toruń 1999, pp. 287–301. See also idem, *Idrisi und Reval*, [in:] *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands. Festschrift für Heinz von zur Mühlen zum 90. Geburtstag*, hrsg. v. Bernhart JÄHNIG, Klaus MILITZER, Münster 2004, pp. 1–9.

Tallinn had widely advertised that it had been a city since 1154, a year which had also been prominently featured on Tallinn souvenirs.

Seeking access to conferences abroad was a significant endeavour. During the 1970s and 1980s, a positive outcome meant that about a third of travel requests were granted, and Tarvel, at best, received permission for half of his requests. In private conversations, he mentioned that the KGB contacted him on several occasions and made attempts to recruit him as a collaborator, although not in an overly coercive manner. The main reason for refusing these requests remained his expressed wish not to spy on his colleagues⁵⁸. On the other hand, while abroad, he never seriously considered staying away due to family obligations back home. In a casual conversation, Aleksander Loit (1925–2021) once informed him that there was no hope of a professorship if he stayed in Sweden, but that he could potentially secure a lectureship or a job in the archives.

Participating in these international conferences offered an invaluable opportunity to become acquainted with the eminent European historians of the time. Tarvel, for example, had the opportunity to converse with renowned French historians such as Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Jacques Le Goff, and Fernand Braudel. His knowledge of French facilitated his communication with them. Braudel, however, displayed his linguistic versatility by conversing with Enn Tarvel in German (there were few French historians who spoke German). It was only on very rare occasions that famous historians visited Tallinn. One such visit took place in 1972 when Peter Laslett from Cambridge visited the Institute of History and gave a series of lectures on the work of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure⁵⁹.

ENN TARVEL'S SUBSEQUENT CAREER

Enn Tarvel was at last promoted to the position of a senior research fellow at the Institute of History in Tallinn in 1968. This appointment should have coincided with obtaining a candidate degree, but Tarvel was denied this degree due to his refusal to join the party. Despite numerous strong recommendations to do so, he steadfastly resisted party membership. Under the Soviet totalitarian regime, party membership was considered a prerequisite for professional advancement, and during the 1960s, it became increasingly commonplace. By 1989, more than ten per cent of the Estonian population had joined the party, often driven by practical motives to enjoy various privileges and career opportunities. Party membership facilitated access to housing, telephone lines, car-buying permits, foreign travels, an access to special shops, cafeterias,

⁵⁸ M. SEPPEL, *Enn Tarveli*, p. 20. Cf. Valdur OHMANN, *Mai Levin. KGB operatiivses tuvastuses*, Tuna: Ajalookultuuri ajakiri, 2022, nr. 3, pp. 111–117.

⁵⁹ Heldur PALLI, *Professor Peter Laslett ENSV TA Ajaloo Instituudis*, Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused, kd. 22: 1973, nr. 2, pp. 196–199.

healthcare, etc.⁶⁰ However, Enn Tarvel chose a different path, one that inevitably limited his career prospects and travel opportunities.

At the end of the 1970s, Tarvel was invited to Moscow to head a department at the USSR Institute of History where two new departments were planned. Accepting this position would have required party membership, and he ultimately declined, opting to stay in Tallinn despite the well-meaning career advice from his friend Juhan Kahk in Moscow. In fact, Tarvel's career at the Institute of History of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences reached its peak in 1978 when he was appointed head of the Feudal History Department. In the spring semester of 1983, he was invited to teach economic history at the Tallinn Polytechnic Institute (TPI), and in 1988 he was granted the title of professor there. His association with TPI, which later became Tallinn Technical University, continued on a part-time basis until 1993. In 1992, the position of professor and director of the Baltic Research Centre at Stockholm University became available, a position that had been held by Aleksander Loit since the early 1980s. Tarvel was chosen from among the total of twelve applicants, which prompted his move to Stockholm in 1993.

Enn Tarvel's interest in the history of the Scandinavian countries had clearly grown since the late 1960s. This was partly due to Juhan Kahk's plan to establish a Scandinavian studies section at the Institute of History. Although a separate section was not created, research in this field commenced in 1969. The Institute of History, in collaboration with Tartu State University, became part of a larger Scandinavian studies research programme throughout the USSR. From 1969 to 1972, Enn Tarvel led the project titled 'The contemporary sociopolitical development of the Scandinavian countries and their historical contacts with Estonia'. In 1972 and 1973, he was one of the main organisers of the Sixth All-Union Conference of Scandinavian Studies and sustained his association with this recurring conference. Between 1972 and 1977 Enn Tarvel was a member of the editorial board of the series of Scandinavian studies published under the auspices of the University of Tartu. It is worth mentioning that he regularly attended seminars delivered by Soviet Union-Finnish (economic) historians.

Tarvel's Stockholm period also saw the publication of his only monograph in English with Juhan Kahk, which offered an overview of the economic history of the Baltic states⁶¹. The two shared a close friendship and did their best to avoid the divisive issue of party membership, even though Kahk had joined the party in 1962. At one point he ashamedly asked Enn Tarvel: 'Do you still

⁶⁰ E. TARVEL, *Eesti rahva lugu*, pp. 336–337.

⁶¹ Juhan KAHK, Enn TARVEL, *An Economic History of the Baltic Countries* (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, vol. 20), Stockholm 1997.

want to shake hands with me?'. In 1988 (published in 1991) Enn Tarvel compiled an international collection of essays on the occasion of Juhan Kahk's sixtieth birthday, to which, once again, only foreign contributors were invited (Rudolf Berthold, Hartmut Harnisch, Friedrich-Wilhelm Henning, Eino Jutikkala, Jerzy Topolski, and others)⁶². It is essential to note that Tarvel was deeply unsettled when Juhan Kahk, who had adhered to the official Marxist line, radically shifted his stance in the 1990s, expressing conclusions that contradicted his earlier works. However, in the form and vocabulary of his own works, Tarvel also remained committed to the requirements of Marxist-Leninist style until the early 1990s.

After returning from Stockholm in 1998, Enn Tarvel was invited to curate and contribute to research projects focused on Estonian twentieth-century history. Most notably, he assumed the role of editor-in-chief for a ten-volume collection titled *Between War and Peace* on Estonian history during the tragic years between 1939 and 1956. Unfortunately, this book project was never completed after the publication of the second volume⁶³. In his final decades, Tarvel was actively involved in the work of the Occupation Museum and Estonian Institute of Historical Memory, as well as other initiatives that examined the tragedies of the twentieth century. He also wrote numerous articles addressing the periodisation of Estonian contemporary history and the methodology of twentieth-century historical research.

Throughout his career, Enn Tarvel displayed a deep interest in the philosophical and theoretical aspects of history. The central philosophical problem of history which he put into consideration numerous times was the concern about the subjectivity and objectivity of historical research⁶⁴. Unlike many historians, however, he did not wish to regard historical studies as a kind of science. The fact that history is sometimes studied using elementary logical apparatus could not be an argument. Moreover, Tarvel did not understand historians who experimented with scientific (for example, mathematical) methods in order to deliberately create the illusion of academic rigour. As he declared: 'To be or not to be a scientist is not something to be fretted over in complexes'⁶⁵. For Tarvel, the most important principles in historical writing were source criticism, verifiability, and the author's unselfish pursuit of the closest approxima-

⁶² *The role of feudal peasantry in history*, ed. Enn TARVEL, Tallinn 1991.

⁶³ *Sõja ja rahu vahel*, kd. 1: *Eesti julgeolekupoliitika 1940. aastani*, peatoim. Enn TARVEL, Tallinn 2004; *Sõja ja rahu vahel*, kd. 2: *Esimene punane aasta: Okupeeritud Eesti julgeolekupoliitiline olukord sõja alguses*, toim. Enn TARVEL, Meelis MARIPUU, Tallinn 2010.

⁶⁴ Enn TARVEL, *Kas ajalugu saab kirjutada objektiivselt?*, Tuna: Ajalookultuuri ajakiri, 2005, nr. 3, pp. 4–9.

⁶⁵ Marten SEPPEL, *Teadlane olemise või mitteametuse pärast ei maksa kompleksides põdeda*. *Intervjuu Enn Tarveliga*, Sirp, 31 July 2009.

tion to the truth, even if this conflicted with the author's own subjective attitude or previous mistakes. This is why Tarvel considered all kinds of 'revelations' and borrowings to be extremely dangerous and misleading, such as when a scholar suddenly arrives at a splendid idea or concept which thereafter he or she wishes to promote in order to attract attention without any authentic self-criticism or source verification. Enn Tarvel dedicated himself to debunking myths in Estonian historical literature, guided by the principle *amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas* ('Plato is my friend, but truth is a better friend'). Many scholars found this difficult to accept, not realising that Tarvel held verification and self-critical analysis in the highest regard.

In the last four years of his life, Tarvel authored two books and continued to write several articles. His final book, *The Story of the Estonian People* (2018), was published during his lifetime and received widespread acclaim. In many ways, it can be seen as Tarvel's historiographical testament of Estonian history, addressing topics ranging from the Viking Age to the interpretation of Konstantin Päts, Estonia's first and most controversial president, and the Soviet period. Tarvel's immense amplitude was emphasised by all the reviewers of this book. For his good friends, reading this book was a warm recognition, as most of the historical problems and historiographical issues raised had been repeatedly discussed by Tarvel in their private conversations over the years.

CONCLUSION

Throughout his career, Enn Tarvel published nine monographs and hundreds of articles. His contributions extended beyond individual works, encompassing over a dozen collections of essays and source editions that he meticulously edited. Enn Tarvel's writings were always extremely enjoyable to read. As he himself said, the aim must be 'to write in a slightly more interesting way'⁶⁶. However, his candidate dissertation on the Polish rule in Livonia from 1960 remains his most notable work. Written in the late 1950s when he was still a budding scholar, it was the work that laid the foundations for his three monographs and numerous articles. Notably, one of these three monographs is a manuscript that he was unable to finish before his passing, but it is now being published under the title *Under the Wing of the White Eagle: Polish Rule on Estonian Land in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*⁶⁷. It has been enriched with later readings and findings, but it reflects Tarvel's enduring belief in the value of his early research after a long career of over 60 years. Yet it was the intimidating comprehensiveness of Tarvel's research which meant that, despite

⁶⁶ E. Tarvel to H. Ligi, 27 December 1964, Tartu University Library, F. 146, p. 131.

⁶⁷ Enn TARVEL, *Valge kotka tiiva all. Poola võim eestlaste maal 16.–17. sajandil*, koost. Marten SEPPEL, Tallinn 2024 [forthcoming].

such activity in studies of the Polish period, his work did not give rise to a successor or a distinct school in Estonia. Tarvel remained a lone contributor to the field. However, recent scholarship has emphasised the continued potential for more in-depth exploration of the Polish era in Livonia⁶⁸.

The pursuit of Polish history and Enn Tarvel's contacts with Polish scholars became the first important gateway to his international recognition. Although his doctoral thesis was no longer directly related to Polish history, Tarvel always considered his Polish contacts as vital, imbuing his work an international dimension. On the other hand, if we consider Enn Tarvel's entire academic career, then his international reach remained somewhat limited, even within Poland. Of course, before 1991 the isolation of Estonia under the Soviet totalitarian regime and behind the Iron Curtain placed significant constraints on scholars' ability to publish their works with major leading publishers and in top-tier journals, not to mention access to prestigious fellowships and prizes. In essence, Tarvel's international recognition remained restricted to the countries of the Eastern Bloc, and had a limited reach beyond the Baltic Sea region. The fact is that aside from the contributions to Polish sixteenth-century history with regard to Livonia, Enn Tarvel's main ambition was to study Estonian history in the regional context.

Despite establishing numerous personal connections with Polish historians, including Antoni Maćzak, Marian Biskup, Stanisław Kuraś, Jerzy Topolski, Janusz Małek, etc., Tarvel had minimal official or institutional relations with Polish universities and research institutions. In 1995, he became a foreign member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences. Over the years, Tarvel delivered lectures at various institutions, including the University of Helsinki (1989), the University of Toronto (1991), the University of Turku (1992), and the University of Latvia (1994). He reviewed doctoral theses at the universities of Tartu, Uppsala, Vilnius, Latvia, and Turku. Yet despite these extensive contributions, he was never invited to deliver guest lecture courses or review doctoral dissertations at Polish universities. In 2009, however, the president of the Republic of Poland awarded him the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

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⁶⁸ Most recently *Briefe, Recht und Gericht im polnischen Livland am Beispiel von David Hilchen*, hrsg. v. Kristi VIIDING, Hesi SIMETS-GROSS, Thomas HOFFMANN, Martin KLÖKER, Münster 2022.

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