

# Ģimenes atmiņa par izdzīvošanu padomju un nacistu represiju periodā: Latvijas "kara bērnu" mutvārdu liecību analīze

Oskars Gruziņš  
University of Latvia



LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTES  
SOCIĀLO ZINĀTŅU FAKULTĀTE

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science,  
project "Dezinformācijas un savvērestību radītie riski  
demokrātijai: Latvijas pieredzes pārlūkošana," project  
No. lzp-2019/ 1-0278



**FLPP**

FUNDAMENTĀLIE UN  
LIETIŠĶIE PĒTĪJUMU  
PROJEKTI

# CBOW and the Study of Memory

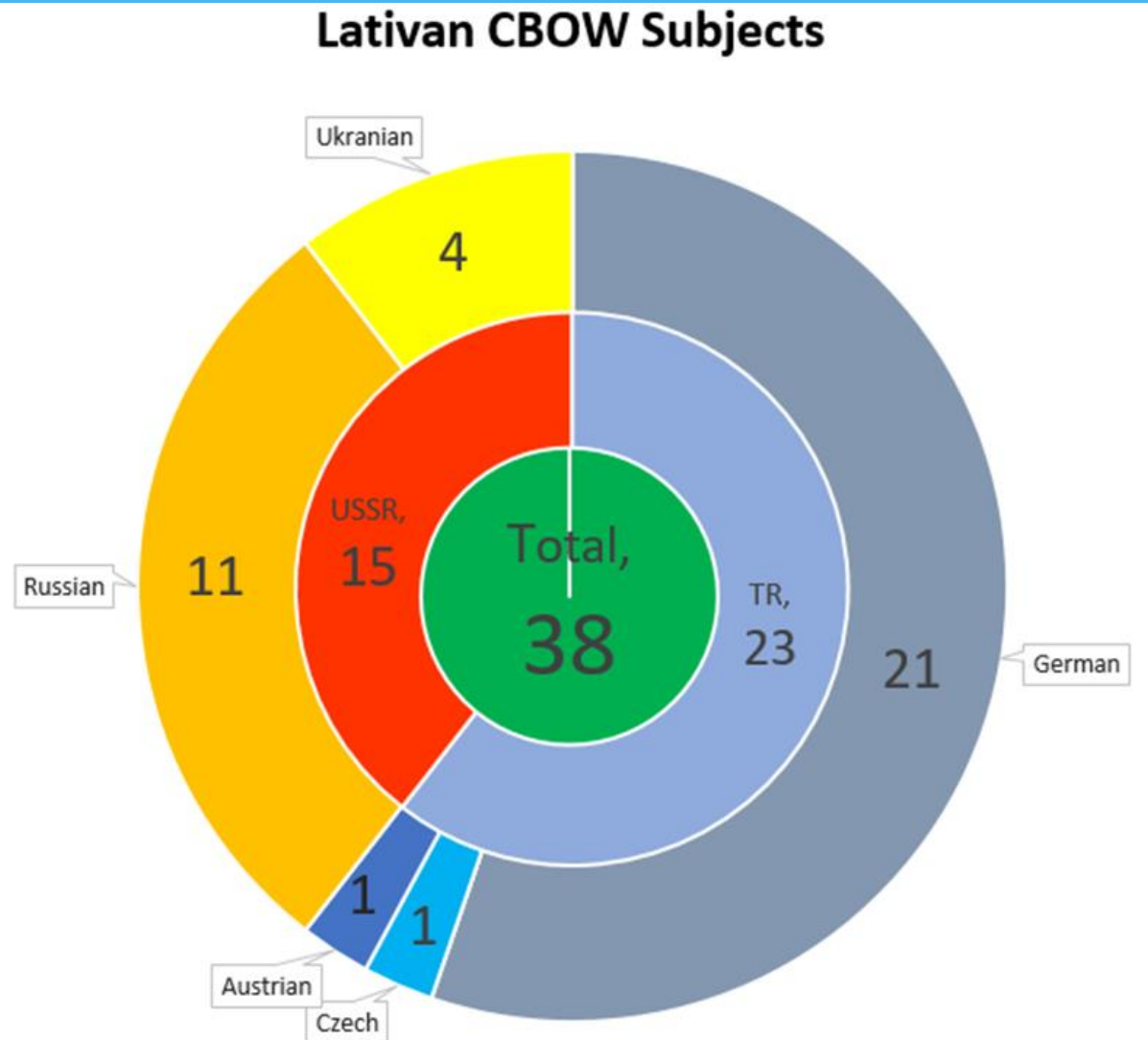
- \* **CBOW definition:** a child born to a local parent and a member of a foreign military force.
- \* This is a phenomenon, and also now a field of study, that spans continents as well as contexts.
- \* CBOW may experience **stigmas** related to their ethnic or racial origins, stigmas related to their mothers 'loose morals,' and, crucially, for many a stigma of having been born of an 'enemy' soldier and a 'collaborator.'
- \* Stigma is a conflict of **identity**, which in turn is based on **collective (group) memory**



Wedding day, 1946 (M10, Riga, 26  
February 2018)

# Subjects of Latvian CBOW study

- \* 38 subjects total
- \* 23 'Third Reich' CBOW
- \* 15 'Soviet' CBOW
- \* 33 CBOW interviews
- \* 5 w/ direct relatives



# Memory as a Source

- \* **Memory** is intrinsically linked to **identity**
- \* As an identity construction, memory is an abridged version of the past motivated by the needs of the present.
- \* For this goal, memory is **selective** and runs the risk of distortions, even ignoring facts for the **stability of identity**
- \* Oral history sources contain not just facts of history, but also tell us how individuals and groups relate to those facts.

# Identity and Oral History Sources

- \* *Surviving Memory: Truth and Inaccuracy in Holocaust Testimony* (Roseman 2010)
- \* *Grandpa wasn't a Nazi: The Holocaust in German family remembrance* (Welzer 2005)
- \* For the sake of identity, memory can be unconsciously and even consciously be altered

# Crisis Situations and Survival Stories

- \* *Conspiracy Theories as Part of History* (Van Prooijen & Douglas 2017)
- \* **Crisis situations:** impactful and rapid societal change that calls established power structures, norms of conduct, or even the existence of specific people or groups into question.
- \* In a similar way, family crisis require logical explanation, even in spite of no such logic or facts.
- \* Gaps in knowledge or understanding, tend to be filled in ways that confirm and reinforce identity.

# Terror and Trauma in Latvian CBOW Testimonies

- \* In post-war Latvia **fear and terror was all-encompassing**: of all subjects, TR and USSR CBOW, TR and USSR CBOW, 71% reported Soviet state-led repressions in their families, including 66,6% of the USSR CBOW testimonies.
- \* While I have not found any definitive proof that the regime conducted repressions against TR CBOW or families for this sole fact, rationalizations for survival often revolve around the family having been able to hide the origins of the child.

# Works cited

- \* Aarelaid-Tart, A. (2016). The Soviet past through the lenses of different memory communities. In: Nugin, R., Kannike, A., Raudsepp, M., (eds). *Generations in Estonia: Contemporary Perspectives on Turbulent Times*. Series. Approaches to Culture Theory, 5. Tartu: University of Tartu Press. P. 106-127.
- \* Assmann, A. (2011). *Cultural memory and Western civilization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \* Aarelaid, A. (2006). *Cultural trauma and life stories*. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute.
- \* Alexander, J. C. (2013). *Trauma: A social theory*. Cambridge, U.K: Polity.
- \* Alexander, J. C. (2010). *Cultural trauma and collective identity*. Berkeley, Calif. [u.a.: Univ. of California Press.
- \* Alexander, J. C. (2010). Toward a Theory of Collective Trauma. In J. Alexander, R. Eyerman, B. Giesen, N. J. Smelser & P. Sztompka (Eds.), *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (pp. 1-30). Berkeley, California: Univ. of California Press.
- \* Bertaux, D., Thompson, P. R., & Rotkirch, A. (2004). *On Living Through Soviet Russia*. London: Routledge.
- \* Children Born of War (2016). CHIBOW.org. *European Union's Horizon 2020*. Available online: [http://www.chibow.org/?page\\_id=7](http://www.chibow.org/?page_id=7) (Accessed 08.11.2016)
- \* Dag Ellingsen, En registerbasert undersøkelse, Statistics Norway, Rapport Nr. 2004/19, 2004.
- \* Danutė, G. (2015). *Lithuanian Faces After Transition: Psychological Consequences of Cultural Trauma*. Vilnius: Eugrimas.



# Works cited

- \* Duprat-Kushtanina, V. (2013). “Remembering the repression of the Stalin era in Russia: on the non-transmission of family memory,” *Nationalities Papers*, 41:2, 225-239, DOI: [10.1080/00905992.2012.752804](https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2012.752804)
- \* Ericsson, Kjersti, and Eva Simonsen (2005). *Children of World War II: The Hidden Enemy Legacy*. Oxford, UK: Berg.
- \* Figes, O. (2007). *The Whisperers: Private life in Stalin's Russia*. New York: Picador.
- \* Glaesmer, Heide and Sabine Lee, eds (2015). *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Children Born of War - from World War II to current conflict settings*. N.p.: U of Leipzig
- \* Goffman, E. (1963) *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall
- \* Karpova A., Kraukle I., Rutka L., & Vidnere, M. (2001). “Represēto Ģimeņu Pārdzīvojumu Pieredze,” *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis* Vol. 55, 1./2. (612./613.), pp. 10-16.
- \* Mochmann, Ingvill C., and Stein Ugelvik Larsen (2008). “Children Born of War: The Life Course of Children Fathered by German Soldiers in Norway and Denmark During WWII — Some Empirical Results”, *Historical Social Research*, Vol. 33 (1), pp. 347–363.

# Works cited

- \* Mochmann, Ingvill C. ; Lee, Sabine ; Stelzl-Marx, Barbara: The children of occupations born during the Second World War and beyond : an overview. In: *Historical Social Research* 34 (2009), 3, pp. 263-282. URN: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-287285>
- \* Personal interviews
- \* Roseman, M. (2010). *Surviving Memory: Truth and Inaccuracy in Holocaust Testimony*. In Perks, R. (Ed.). *The oral history reader* (pp. 230-243). London [u.a.: Routledge.
- \* Skultans, V. (2001). Oral Interviews: Theory and Practice. In: Zirnīte, M. *Spogulis: Latvijas Mutvārdu Vēsture* (pp. 46-58). Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes, Filozofijas un Socioloģijas Institūts, Nacionālās Mutvārdu Vēstures Projekts
- \* van Prooijen, J.-W., & Douglas, K. M. (2017). *Conspiracy theories as part of history: The role of societal crisis situations*. *Memory Studies*, 10(3), 323–333.

# Thank you for your attention and I appreciate your comments!



[www.CHIBOW.org](http://www.CHIBOW.org)

[O.Gruzins@gmail.com](mailto:O.Gruzins@gmail.com)

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science,  
project “Dezinformācijas un sazvērestību radītie riski  
demokrātijai: Latvijas pieredzes pārlūkošana,” project  
No. lzp-2019/ 1-0278

