This dissertation examines overlooked Soviet and Russian women’s travel practices through life narrative interviews. During Soviet times, citizens had few travel possibilities; the situation differs nowadays. Several theoretical domains—culture, habitus and gender—help examine how women interpret, and the meanings of, their travel life histories within Soviet and Russian society.
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines overlooked Soviet and Russian traveling practices. During Soviet times, citizens had few travel possibilities; the situation differs nowadays. Several theoretical domains—particularly culture, habitus and gender—help examine how Russian women interpret their travel life histories within Soviet and Russian society, and what meanings do they put into their travel practices. The socio-historical patterning of consumption, a Consumer Culture Theory research domain, contextualizes this study. For this study, a qualitative method of life narrative interviews was used to gather the travel life histories of nine Russian women, aged 48-67. Thematic analysis helped identify and analyze the themes of their travel life history narratives. Through their travel life histories, the women defined themselves in relation to others and Russian society.

The study supported that Western cultural frames cannot guide the researcher inside such a specific culture as Russia. The findings suggest that despite Russians today having the freedom to travel, the habitus formed in the Soviet times still structures their travel practices. In addition, the more privileged women thought that everybody in Russia had equal opportunities and possibilities. The findings show that gender and socio-professional issues affect the experience of freedom and the variety of travel choices that individuals possess. Research also showed that even under society’s forceful influence, there is a place for individual will and ideology includes the importance of one’s own interests.

Keywords: traveling, Soviet Union, habitus, Consumer Culture Theory, Russian consumers

Tutkimus tukee näkemystä, jonka mukaan länsimaisen kulttuurin kehykset eivät voi ohjata tutkijaa venäläisen kulttuurin tutkimuksessa, joka on varsin erityinen. Tulosten perusteella esitän, että Neuvostoliiton vallan aikana muodostunut habitus ohjaa yhä matkailun käytänteitä, vaikka venäläisillä onkin nykyään vapaus matkustaa. Tulokset osoittavat, että sukupuoleen liittyvät, sekä sosiaaliset ja ammatilliset tekijät vaikuttavat kokemuksen yksilön vapaudesta sekä matkailun vaihtoehtojen määrään. Tutkimustyö tuo myös ilmi, että yksilön tahdolle on tilaa ja että omien kiinnostuksen kohteiden merkitys on osa ideologiaa jopa yhteiskunnan pakottavan vaikutuksen alla.

Avainsanat: matkustaminen, Neuvostoliitto, habitus, Consumer Culture Theory, venäläiset kuluttajat
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Several years ago when I imagined this particular moment – the moment of writing the acknowledgments – I thought that I will definitely make it personal since the whole writing process and topic of this dissertation is quite selfish-discovering who I am and my roots. Especially now I understand that you must have much interest and passion towards your topic in order to go forward with the research project.

They call it a dissertation journey. And I agree completely, it was quite a journey with ups and downs, with moments of inspiration and complete frustration, with the huge doubts and questioning if I am ever going to achieve this. Candidly, I am glad that when I started this PhD journey I did not know how hard it could be as an additional project to your daily life and work. In good and bad Russians believe in destiny, so I will thank her for bringing me this chance starting my PhD.

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Joensuu, August 2018
Ekaterina Miettinen
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 STUDY BACKGROUND

Every man, knowing to the smallest detail all the complexity of the conditions surrounding him, involuntarily assumes that the complexity of these conditions and the difficulty of comprehending them are only his personal, accidental peculiarity, and never thinks that others are surrounded by the same complexity as he is (Tolstoy, 1974, p. 325).

Russian Federation, population 146 million people, has a rich and long history dating back to the first millennium. The people behind this history lived their small lives surrounded by political and economic circumstances. People share historical background but each person views his/her life in a different unique way. In the citation above, Tolstoy (1974) describes Russians in the novel “Anna Karenina”, people who make mistakes, lack empathy and tend to view others through the prism of their own circumstances. This dissertation is devoted to women’s stories of their travel lives through the prism of their circumstances, from the late Soviet times to today’s Russian times.

Russians made over 30 million trips abroad in 2016 (Rosstat, 2016), in sharp contrast to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union) era when the Soviet government strongly restricted international travel. As Figure 1 shows, the USSR comprised fifteen Soviet Socialist Republics: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belorussia (now Belarus), Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia (now Kyrgyzstan), Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia (now Moldova), Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Petrozavodsk - where this study’s participants reside - is a city in the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Karelian ASSR), in western Russia on the Finnish border.

Russia’s 1917 revolution ended the tsarist regime, when the Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd (now Saint Petersburg) under Lenin. After years of civil war, in 1922 the new country of USSR emerged (Lovell, 2009). The history of USSR leaders began with Lenin followed by Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and ended with Gorbachev (Lovell, 2009). Gorbachev initiated reforms together with perestroika (reconstruction of the economy) and glasnost (openness), that weakened the power of the Communist party. Gorbachev’s goal was not to destroy the Soviet Union but to give it more strength, but the economy was in a weak state before he came to power (Marples, 2004). The Soviet Union was not ready for his “new thinking”. On December 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed, the power changed, Russia’s tri-colored flag replaced the Soviet flag at the Kremlin and Yeltsin came to power (Marples, 2004).

Rather than the historical truth or the chronological order of women’s travel experiences, this dissertation delves into women’s travel lives, issues connected to nine women surrounded by their political and historical circumstances.
As for the tourism context, only after the USSR collapsed in 1991, and Russia re-emerged, did outbound tourism gradually become a common practice. Russia’s outbound tourism developed in tandem with Russian’s purchasing power, though several financial and political crises impeded Russia’s smooth transition to travel freely. The late Soviet times touched the study participant’s lives. They have not experienced how the Soviet Union emerged but they clearly remember the collapse of the USSR.

Throughout these times, before and after the USSR collapsed, women and men played vastly diverse roles in building communism, which affected their employment and travel. Yet few if any studies, particularly qualitative studies, focus on Russian women’s travel practices. Women and men consume tourism differently (Swain, 1995) and twenty-first century research is beginning to examine women’s travel experiences closely (Freyssinger, 2013). However, research on Russian women’s travel experiences, particularly connected to culture and nationality, is limited. Furthermore qualitative and interpretive tourism research needs different approaches, to be dynamic and reflect the central role of an individual as a knowledge creator and to hear the researcher’s voice (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001).

This study connects women’s lives and their travel to the politically and economically different historical stages from the USSR to Russia. Historical and social contexts and habitus were significant for women in the past and continue to be so today, affecting women’s travel practices. This study brings new knowledge about women from a large market, Russia, which has garnered little if any attention in a tourism context.
1.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study depicts Soviet and Russian traveling practices using the former Soviet regime as a contrast arena of cultural and social changes. During Soviet times, USSR citizens had few possibilities to travel. The situation differs nowadays. Russians travel to Europe and other places, and tourism has become a common practice, a part of life (Lysikova, 2012). However, to investigate Russians traveling today, it is necessary to go back to the Soviet epoch and its interpretations. The Soviet regime was the opposite of a consumer society with the freedom of consumer choices and desires for pleasure, beyond basic needs (Bauman, 1994).

The study draws on cultural and historical frameworks to explore women traveling during the times from the late USSR to Russia, 1951–2016, and the construction of travel practices within Soviet and Russian societies. The search for explanations and answers necessitates considering Soviet history and Soviet and Russian travel. The concepts of habitus, culture and gender within the travel life histories of Russian women via the prism of their thoughts and memories are central in this research.

Natalia Kozlova’s book (2005), Soviet people: Scenes from history (Sovetskie ljudi: sceni iz istorii) triggers the research starting point. Kozlova studies Soviet’s everyday lives through archival documents such as memoirs, diaries, photos, letters, and bills. She describes people’s lives from the narrators’ points of view as well as her own scientific prism. As representatives of Soviet society, she ponders on the importance of person’s story in a historical perspective. Kozlova (2005) addresses the importance of remembering the cultural schemes and norms, which exist not behind the events but behind the people’s lives, dreams, desires and possibilities. She attempts to discern if people who lived during the period of Iosif Stalin (1922–1953) could identify themselves outside the values of the political system.

Kozlova (2005) based her study on the works of Bourdieu, Foucault and Giddens, which underline the significance of understanding the reality of today, drawing on the everyday lives of ordinary people and a multidisciplinary approach. Philosophy on power and knowledge, subjectivity and resistance argue that people are not just victims, they can resist if they want to (Foucault, 1980). People themselves are the best source to understand how they construct their lives as their self-identity develops in a reflexive way rather than something given to them (Giddens, 1991). Studying people who experienced Soviet society through their memories helps understand how the past influences their reality today (Bertaux, Rotkirch & Thompson, 2004).

The Second World War, a major Soviet milestone and liminal experience, is essential in examining Russian’s lives. One such method is an oral history, such as studying two generations of Italian workers and their memories of fascism (Passerine, 1988). Surprisingly for Passerini, she heard stories with different paths as historical events. The stories were about everyday lives, not a fascist state. The author explains this outcome through subjectivity; “this subjective dimension does not allow a direct reconstruction of the past but links past and present in a combination which is laden with symbolic significance” (Passerini, 1988, p. 18).

Thus in this study, the lens is the subjective voices of women and their interpretations of traveling during the Soviet and Russian times rather than the historical truth - life experiences modified the women’s stories. Svetlana Aleksieivich (2004), who received the 2015 Nobel Prize in Literature, shared such women’s lives and experiences in the The Unwomanly Face of War (U voini ne zenskoe lico). Alekseevich (2004) gathered women’s oral stories and focused on their experiences in a generally male dominated
discourse. In her book, the women revealed their stories about World War II. The women had their own war, seen and lived through the eyes of female nurses, officers and soldiers (Aleksievich, 2004).

This research focuses on women’s perspectives, the lives of individual women and their travel practices. This approach addresses a different gender order between men and women, as Temkina and Zdravomyslova (2003) note. Wood (1994), for example, describes gender through the cultural life as gender plays a central role in society and upholds a certain social order. She expresses the importance of gender’s role in society through different social practices and norms of behavior. During the Soviet times, equality for women meant full-time work during the day and all the duties at home afterwards.

The female perspective of this study is in a tourism context. In this regard, gender is a system of practices based on difference between men and women (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The study chooses only women as both genders experience and consume tourism differently. Therefore, gender shapes tourism experiences (Pritchard, Morgan, Ateljevic & Harris, 2007; Swain, 1995). Thus this study examines travel practices affected, rather than contrasted, by gender.

The book, Club Red. Vacation travel and the Soviet dream by Diane Koenker (2013), examines Soviet otдых (vacationing) and tourism from 1920 to 1980. Official documents, memoirs, visitors’ books and print brochures provide the book’s research base. According to the author, Soviet vacationing was about rest (at home or a sanatorium), and туризм (tourism) was physically active free time. Hence, this study uses the word “travel” and “travel practices” rather than tourism. In the USSR, people could not choose where to go nor be sure if they would get the trip they wanted. The government controlled their behavior. Section 1.5, later in this dissertation, provides additional details about the study’s definitional choices.

Koenker’s (2013) research on homo sovieticus gathered oral materials, stories that the participants were willing to reveal. Her research shows that the vacation focus was on creating the ideal Soviet citizen, a worker with high morality. “The superior, proud, and patriotic tourist abroad traveled outside familiar borders carrying a portable shell of Soviet identity, under which all observations could be categorized. Their lens of Soviet patriotism allowed them to celebrate Soviet achievements and to take umbrage when they perceived real or imagined slights” (Koenker, 2013, p. 249). Travel was always about pleasure with purpose, not just pleasure (Koenker, 2013). Koenker’s study provides a strong basis for the construction of travel practices’ construction in the Soviet Union, and then in Russia.

All this is Your World. Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin by Anne Gorsuch (2011) focused on the later Soviet period of the Soviet Union, Khrushchev’s era from 1953 to 1964. Gorsuch (2011) note how the government wanted to influence people’s travel behavior, “exposure to foreign lands was supposed to help citizens become more Soviet ... it would help them become more aware of the difference between capitalism and socialism and they would grow to love their country even more” (p.16).

Complementing the Soviet versus Russian context is habitus. Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, created a set of concepts to apply to various disciplines. In this study his concept of habitus, which reflects people’s past experiences and learned practices, helps analyze how culture and society influence women organize their travel practices. Furthermore, Costa and Murphy (2015) identify the main contribution of Bourdieu’s sociology as a set of tools to support the methodological design. Habitus provides
a meaning-making advance for the independent analysis of human experiences and outer world realities, respectively representing objectivity and subjectivity (Costa & Murphy, 2015).

In Distinction, Bourdieu (1984) examines French social classes and how their consumption behaviors and tastes depend on social class habitus. Holt (1998) applies Bourdieu’s theory of taste into an American context and argues that cultural capital, possibly embodied in the form of mind and state, cultural goods and education, affect the consumption patterns. All consumption requires certain tastes and preferences, and, in his study, he distinguishes six dimensions of taste that mirrors people with high and low cultural capital (Holt, 1998). Habitus gives tourism scholars a socio-historical research perspective.

Scholars have used the habitus concept for tourism insights including tourism consumption (Ahmad, 2012), the importance of local culture (Campelo, Aitken, Thyne & Gnoth, 2014), travel patterns and race (Lee & Scott, 2015), and leisure and consumption in the context of power (Rojek, 2006). Habitus brings deep insight into travel choice and travel activity, showing that these processes are not spontaneous rather they emerge as an outcome of socio-historical aspects and the agent position (Lee & Scott, 2015). For example, history and society modified African American’s travel behavior and travel choices; they felt racial discrimination while traveling themselves or through stories of their parents. They planned their trips carefully, avoiding unfamiliar locations (Lee & Scott, 2015). Sections 3.2 and 3.3 provide additional information about habitus as a concept in Soviet and Russian context.

Historical events are a foundation of the social system of people living during the same period (Rogler, 2002). Meaningful events influence the experiences, views, values, and consumer behavior of people in the same generational cohort (Davis, Pawlowski & Houston, 2006). These arguments led to targeting a certain generation in this study, namely Baby Boomers (1943–1963), those who experienced both Soviet times and Russia. For this generation, the place of living, profession and svyazi (network among people) played an essential role in their access to privileged consumption and trips.

These privileged aspects listed above led to gathering travel life history narratives of nine Russian women, with certain common features. They were born in the Soviet Union, aged between 48 and 67 and, lastly and possess higher education degrees. They had travel experiences while living in the same Russian town, Petrozavodsk. As all nine women worked for both the Soviet and Russian governments during Soviet times, women such as these nine had more possibilities to travel for work. In addition, education plays an important role in the consumption context. For example, Bourdieu (1984) considers education as a source of cultural capital that influences leisure consumption choices. In general, better-educated people are more motivated to travel because of self-development and cultural interests (Coathup, 1999).

This qualitative research evaluates the past and current leisure activities of women’s personal travel life histories. I assume based on the above cited research that cultural, social, historical, economic, gender norms and gender values shape their reality. This is an interdisciplinary study, taking the broader context of life into account.

To sum up, the purpose of this study is to understand how Russian women constructed their travel practices within Soviet and Russian society and the meanings they put into their travel practices.
1.3 RESEARCH GAP

Few international studies examine Russian tourists. These studies mostly deal with business oriented or project reports and, bachelor or master level theses. One reason for few studies is the existing statistical and informational system on Russian tourism, which stifles planning and forecasting (Kaurova, Maloletko, Yumanova, Ktyukova & Deryabina, 2014). In addition, the research is often in Russian, and many Russian tourists have weak English language skills. Yuzhanin (2014) notes this shortcoming in his dissertation about the potential of Russian tourists in New Zealand. According to him, academic efforts have been into markets other than Russian despite that Russians today travel often and constantly seek for new destinations. Russian consumer studies are rare (Kaufmann, Vrontis & Manakova, 2012). In addition, Russian consumer behavior research is mostly quantitative and usually ignores the consumer perspective (Ettenson, 1993; Huddleston, Good & Stoel, 2000; Manrai, Lascu, Manrai & Babb, 2001).

This study looks 1) how Russian women interpret their travel life histories and 2) what meanings do they put into their travel practices. The study goes into the travel life histories of Russian women and their travel careers. Pearce (1988) introduced the travel career as a reflection of choices based on how different aspects, such as culture, history, society and individual circumstances of individual’s lives and past travel influenced these choices. This influence aligns with the family life cycle, where a person’s life-stage influences his or her travel behaviors (Lawson, 1991; Oppermann, 1995; Wells & Gubar, 1966). For instance, a young single person is more likely into travel overseas than a single parent.

Another concept that influences this study is habitus. Bourdieu (1984) argues that practices are socially constructed ways of living. Practices could be so deep inside the person’s life that they become invisible and the norm. In tourism, Bourdieu’s concepts mostly explain class distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984). Here I use his concept of habitus in the travel practices of a culture where for decades people had to have the same possibilities, desires and dreams.

To the author's knowledge, little or no research has examined Russian travel behavior through connecting of the above concepts. Yet applying the concepts of culture, habitus and gender to travel behavior are critical to link individuals and their lives to the social reality. This study helps bridge this important research gap of Russians, women in particular, and the insufficient statistical data about their travel, and qualitatively answering the question why these women travel the way they do.

My study links individuals to the socio-historical context; lived experiences are a focus attention in tourist consumer research (Franklin, 2003). Kozlova (2005) suggests studying people who experienced Soviet transition individually, on a micro level. This way it focuses on people’s lives and connects them to the society’s bigger picture.

This study’s historical and cultural nature bring out issues of women traveling during completely different consumer societies in the Soviet Union and Russia, which enriches tourist consumer behavior research. Framing of these perspectives goes deep into the travel practices through the narrators’ lives in social, historical and cultural contexts, with positioning the subject at the center. The micro-level of a women’s lives connected to social, political and historical change is a research gap, which this study helps bridge.
1.4 POSITIONING OF THE STUDY

Consumer behavior covers diverse aspects in the purchase, use and disposal of goods, services, ideas and experiences that satisfy consumer needs and desires. As people in different situations and stages of life play a variety of roles, their consumer behavior depends on their consumer’s role at the moment of purchase (Solomon, Russell-Benett & Previte, 2013). Consumer behavior, a multidisciplinary area, includes Psychology, Marketing, Economics, Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard, 2006). Psychologically, the phenomenon is understanding why and how individuals participate in consumer activities. The cognitive processes and behavior affected by purchasing or using goods or services are particularly important (Jansson-Boyd, 2010).

Consumer behavior related to tourism is in the focus of this study. Travel behavior has personal and environmental determinants (March & Woodside, 2005). Travel behavior depends on a person’s attitudes towards a product and then his or her responses to that product. Personal and external determinants exist in individual tourist behavior. Personal determinants reflect life circumstances, preferences, and experiences. In contrast, external determinants reflect political factors, government, society and media (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). This study investigates both types of determinants, considering that different determinants are important for women in historically and personally different periods.

Tourist consumer behavior is also “discretionary, episodic, future oriented, dynamic, socially influenced and evolving” (Pearce 1993, p. 114). Tourism consumption changes over time, following the path of the tourist’s travel career ladder as the person gains experience (Pearce, 1993). This research follows the whole travel life history of the individual and shows how tourism consumption has changed during the lifetime, intentionally and unintentionally.

The research purpose of the study brought me to the context of culture and society. Slater (1997) describes the individual formation through “consumer goods and activities through which we construct appearances and organize leisure time and social encounters” (p. 85). At the same time, consumption choices are a part of the cultural context (Solomon, 1994). This study operates in the context of Soviet and Russian society. The Western prism of consumer behavior cannot apply here, because in reality Russian individuals had no experience with freedom of choice.

To sum up, this multidisciplinary study examines consumer behavior in the travel context and concentrates on personal and external determinants of the individual tourist, a woman.

1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH

Certain Soviet practices were part of a nation-building foundation to help citizens develop “proper behavior”, such as education and travel. These practices affected their tastes and even their dreams. The Soviet Union and Russia, however, belong to different social realities. To study travel practices from the individuals’ point of view, qualitative research helps to understand and explore a certain phenomenon through interpretive practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Understanding is a central process in this study, and according to Hudson and Özanne (1988), a never-ending process. The aim is to examine subjective experiences and nuances through the eyes of a narrator, with no aim of generalization.
This dissertation operates within the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) paradigm, especially within the socio-historic patterns of consumption: reality is in the meanings developed during consumption processes (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Decrop (2014) identifies this paradigm “as no longer to explain and predict behavior but to understand the how’s and why’s of behavior in a complex world” (p. 253). The focus is on the context and socio-cultural environment, on the consumer who makes the choice. The concept of habitus helps to dive deeply into terms of individual consumer experiences (traveling) in the historical, societal and cultural context of Russian society. The travel practices of these Russian women are examined as individual real-life experiences linked to social and historical circumstances. Section 3 later in this dissertation provides additional details about the study’s theoretical choices.

My personal background, career path and life situations have affected the research choices. To begin, I was born in the USSR and was four years old by the time the country collapsed. My Russian high school had a joint project with a Finnish high school, leading me to study in Finland and Russia (distantly) simultaneously. I moved to Finland at the age of 16 to study in a small and beautiful place in northern Finland. I was unsure of returning to Russia or staying in Finland; my curiosity won. I stayed in Finland, learnt the language and fell in love with the Finnish people and culture. I graduated from both high schools and entered a university in eastern Finland. After graduating from university, my work focus was to Russia and Russian issues. I started my PhD as an additional project to daily work, and the only way to deal with it was the personal interest in self-understanding, understanding my roots and my reality. The interpretations in this study are subjective, influenced by my work experiences and cultural and historical background. The travel life histories of the participants went through my memory and through my heart, usually bringing up more questions.

1.6 KEY CONCEPTS

The key concepts of the study, briefly defined, following alphabetical order.

Culture

The term culture is discourse dependent and cannot apply everywhere with the same meaning; the context comes first and explains a particular meaning (O’Sullivan, 1983). Reisinger and Turner (2003, p. 297) define culture in a tourism context as “a stable and dominant cultural character of a society shared by most of its individuals and remaining constant over long periods of time”. People from different cultures have different cultural values, rules of social behavior, perceptions, and social interactions, which consequently influence their lifestyle, work, leisure, and consumer behavior patterns (Richardson & Crompton, 1988).

Culture is a part of travel practices. Culture, more than an observable behavior, represents society’s ideas and values that people bring to their behavior (Haviland, Prins, Walrath & McBride, 2013). This study assumes that culture influences how people travel. CCT represents variants of meanings of culture and connections between lived culture and social resources (Frochot & Batat, 2013).
Habitus
Habitus relates to travel practices as a conceptual tool. Bourdieu (1990) defines habitus as:

*A system of durable, transportable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring practices and representations which can be objectively “regulated” and “regular” without any way of being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at end or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor (p. 53).*

Habitus reflects a person’s past, the choices individuals make depend on social and historical circumstances (Allen, 2002). Edensor (2001) analyzed tourism behavior as a habituated performance, proposing a common understanding of how tourists act in different situations. Tourists act according to their norms, showing their identity based on their travel habitus. The concept of habitus shows that rules affect behavior and those rules come from the social structures that surround a person (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011). The women in this study lived during two different realities, Soviet and Russian, which formed their habitus.

Tourism and travel practices
The phenomenon of tourism differs across fields. The word comes from the Latin *touree*, to turn, and *turnus*, which means wheel (Mieczkowki, 1990). Tribe (1997) defines term tourism as “problematic” because of its nature and the variety of meanings it contains. Kinnaird, Kothari and Hall (1994) state that the variety of definitions reflects the particular understanding of tourism and suggest two approaches. The first approach quantifies tourism-related issues, and the second draws on sociology and anthropology. The latter focuses on social relations and social aspects of tourism as a phenomenon (Kinnaird, Kothari & Hall, 1994). According to Sharpley (2011), tourism “requires knowledge and understanding the meanings and implications of the multiple motilities of people, capital, culture, information, goods and services more generally” (p. 27).

This study focuses on tourism from a sociological perspective. Tourism is an activity where individual travels with people and places, having their own “culture baggage” and societal norms, the tourist is in the center (Sharpley, 2002). Furthermore, travel could have a transformative effect on a person, and social norms affect the travel decision people make (Lewis, Kerr & Pomerling, 2010). The word travel means “journey”, and has little connection to pleasure (Mieczkowski, 1990, p. 31). Mieczkowski (1990) states that the meaning of travel is broad.

This study examines individual travel practices in a traveling context. According to Bourdieu (1984), actions that individuals take inside the environment represent practice. A person behaves according to the choices he or she believes are available. Following Bourdieu (1984), habitus structures the behavior of social agents, who produce travel practices based on past experiences, social rules and beliefs.
2 RUSSIAN SOCIETY AND TRAVEL AND TOURISM PRACTICES

2.1 WOMEN IN THE USSR AND RUSSIA

Literature (fiction) can “reflect” society and social order (Peterson, 1979). When taking a look at Russian folklore characters, Gray (1989) describes Baga Yaga as an old witch, unmarried and angry, a completely fearless woman. The most popular male image, Ivan the Fool, is a kind male character but an idiot who lives with his mother. In old Russian fiction women were mostly two types: idealized women with more power than men or sensual creature with little intellect (Gray, 1989), empowering Russian female with two functions. Continuing with folklore, a popular Soviet folk song includes the line: “Babi pashut babijnut – mujiki uchet vedut,” which translated into English is “Women plough, women harvest – and men monitor and manage.”

To study gender in a Russian context is challenging. Russian language has no distinction between sex (biological differences) and gender (gender role in society or culture, woman and man) in the Russian language (Roudakova, 1999). It is always a “pol”, which in a straight translation means “sex”. “Femininity” and “femaleness” has just one word in Russian, “zhensstvennost”, and the words “zhenschina”(woman) and “zhena” (wife) have the same Slavic root (Roudakova, 1999). Linguistically, a woman could automatically be considered through the role of wife. Cultural interpretation and femininity stereotypes of words related to women and Russian proverbs and idioms reflect the social order (Doleschal & Schmid, 2001). There is a strong male-dominance with a gender order defining women as unpredictable and emotional, and that women have a certain role limited to the family system (Doleschal & Schmid, 2001).

The lives of women changed during Soviet Union and Russia periods, depending on the country’s leaders and the economic situation. Gender was a central issue in the organization of the Soviet system, as men and women had separate roles in building communism (Ashwin, 2000). Women had to present as superheroes working hard while producing future workers and taking complete care of the household (Ashwin, 2000). There was a dilemma in the USSR: the government needed women as producers and as reproducers (Gray, 1989).

Despite these government restrictions and exact roles, Shlapentokh (1989) separates public and private in the Soviet context: “the distinction between the public and private spheres is crucial for understanding Soviet society” (p. 3). During Soviet times people had to live according to the official public rules and the private ones (Yurchak, 2005). The Khrushchev era (1956–964) touches the lives of my study participants. After the Second World War the Soviet Union’s demographic situation was disproportional: with many more women than men, the Soviet government targeted birth rate growth (Ilič, 2004). Yet in reality, the birth rate during the Khrushchev period decreased a bit.

After 1953, during the Khrushchev period, the lives of women was improving: the Soviet government funded social services and education resulting in better and increased wages (Clements, 2012). Some work sectors were feminized: health care,
trade, public services, education (Ilič, 2004). The “woman question” (usually the position of women in the family and society) was never a priority for leaders, but this era brought changes to the lives of women: abortions were legalized and maternity payments increased (Ilič, 2004). Khrushchev promised all families with and without children a new apartment, but in practice, women depended on their husbands. For example, a single woman with children had no chance of getting an apartment just for her family (Attwood, 2010). Female-dominated work spheres were paid less (Buckley, 1981), and family benefits were only available through the workplace (Jyrkinen-Pakkasvirta, 1996).

After Leonid Brezhnev replaced Khrushchev in 1964, the woman question got additional attention as the leaders understood that the double shift affected the number of children in the family as women wanted to keep families small (Clements, 2012). In reality, this double shift meant full time work with all the household duties. For this reason, the government increased some social services, especially day care for children. A propaganda of family values existed, where being a mother was the most important aspect of women’s lives (Clements, 2012). Statistics of that period show that 90% of all women were at work or studying, but few worked or studied part-time. Most women worked full-time (Kotiliar & Turchaninova, 1975). Generally speaking, women did all the household work.

The government spent money, mostly on the military, and ignored goods that could simplify life. As a result everything took a lot of time. Shopping was an experience itself. Women had to visit different shops for different purposes: butcher, bread, grocery, dairy (Clements, 2012). In addition, there were no open shelves and people had to wait until the sales person gave them a hand-written note to show the cashier and pay. Then, they got a receipt and went back to the salesperson who gave them their products (Clements, 2012). Overall, all the daily routines were on women’s shoulders; by the end of the 1960s, women felt tired and unsatisfied (Clements, 2012).

During Brezhnev’s regime, the same values contained women as hard-working, patriotic, superhero wife and mother. By the age of twenty, Soviet women were better educated than men; however, by the age of thirty, the difference in working conditions between men and women was marked (Bridger, 1992). Women had children and stayed at home, while men continued to go forward with their careers. After going back to work women still mostly took care of all the housework and childcare, while men concentrated on career issues (Bridger, 1992). During Brezhnev’s era the governmental agenda was to help mothers and wives but not women in general (Pilkington, 1996).

During the Gorbachev period (1985–1991) (characterized with glasnost and perestroika), the immense domestic plans and foreign policy changes often failed. Notably, though Gorbachev paid attention to the women question and criticized the double shift (Clements, 2012). More women, in Gorbachev’s opinion, should participate in politics. Yet Gorbachev’s reform was paradoxical: on one hand, he wanted women to participate in politics, and on the other, he underlined the importance of women’s historic “natural” role in the family (Usha, 2005).

The years after the collapse of the Soviet Union was very hard for women’s daily lives as they lacked access to essential goods and services (Marsh, 1998). Gorbachev and Yeltsin, for example, focused their political interests on increasing the population (“babies for the nation”) and not on women as individuals (Marsh, 1998, p. 92). The Putin era, in 2000, brought better income, social identity, education and occupation conditions for families. In 2000 only 10% of families considered themselves as middle class, and by 2007 the number grew to 25% (Avraamova, 2008).
Gray (1989) described society’s influence on the individual through the lives of Soviet women. While organizing her documented Soviet women experiences into categories, she realized that one aspect was missing – love, in its romantic nature. The women in her study talked about marriage in a pragmatic way. The author asked why they got married, and the women’s answers expressed the importance of marriage for the career advancement. Unmarried women were considered “morally unstable” or the staruha “old maid”. There is a common belief of women spoiling Russian men by accepting the role of the one who serves (Rod, Ashill & Gibbs, 2016). Russian folklore is rife with stories about Russian women making unbelievable efforts to fulfill the husband’s and society’s expectations of being just a man’s shadow. All the credit for the hard work went to the men (Rod, Ashill & Gibbs, 2016).

Russia’s transformation in the past twenty years, however, has transformed gender roles in Russian society. “The traditional perception of gender relations in [ethnic] Russian culture linked primarily to the creation of a family and having children” (Lezhnina, 2014, p. 17). Especially youth and people from bigger cities are affected by the slow modernization of the traditional order (Lezhnina, 2014). Despite this critique, Russian women, along with men, have become the family breadwinners.

Feminism has a negative connotation in the Russian context. Many Russian women reject the Western views of feminism (Marsh, 1998). According to Marsh (1998) Russian women think that their lives differ from the Western ones, and that they have completely different problems. She explains Russian women’s viewpoint through four reasons: 1) conservatism coming from Soviet society during the Stalin and Brezhnev times, 2) media presentation of feminism, Russian women lose their femininity and are unattractive to men, 3) “equal rights” are negative because it has always meant the “double burden”, 4) Russian women have too little knowledge about feminism because Soviet and post-Soviet media censored it.

Ashwin (2002) suggests viewing Russian women’s lives more as a choice rather than a sacrifice. Women choose to work, and they choose to be in charge of the household, but the man provides the main living for the family. Similarly, Maria Arbatova (1997), a Russian feminist who became well-known through a Russian TV-show for women, describes her own path of realization: “To be a woman in this world is not honorable, even in that moment that you do the only thing that men are not capable of” (p. 60). During the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, society encouraged women to keep the double role as mothers and workers, and at the same time the main family organizer (Motiejunaite & Kravchenko, 2008). The man’s task was to provide a living for his family. Russian women themselves do not feel that their status is worse than that of men. When they talk about women’s lives, they ignore the dependence on men but they underline the difficulty of combining the two roles of work and home (Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2003).

Russian women’s behavioral practices of today must consider the Soviet reality. The Western context differs from the Russian one in the matter of gender (Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2003). For instance, a housewife’s role could be a step to liberation in Russia’s state gender order, while a step backwards in the Western context. Habitus reflects Soviet and Russian history and reproduces practices. Every person’s habitus forms in society with certain rules and practices (Bourdieu, 1990). Habitus structures the life choices that individuals can make (Olson & Adonyeva, 2013). Such travel life choices are seen in this study through the subjective stories of Russian women that have experienced the Soviet regime, the economically difficult 1990s, and the new Russia. Central and Eastern Europe countries also followed the communist order
of women’s rights, where the worker-mother had a right and responsibility to work (Grapard, 1997). This working place gave women economic and social advantages, and took care of leisure time possibilities (Lavigne, 1999).

2.2 SOVIET AND RUSSIAN TOURISM

2.2.1 Soviet tourism

The literature describes leisure in various ways. Common approach include separating leisure from work (Kelly, 1997; Wagner, Lounsbury & Fitzgerald, 1989) or understanding leisure as a state of mind (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Mannel & Iso-Ahola, 1987). In Bourdieu’s context, societal institutions shape the norms and beliefs of accepted leisure activities among members of a society. The contextual nature of leisure is that social factors influence it (Kelly, 1987). According to Rosenbaum (2015):

Leisure travel is not one of the first things that comes to mind when we think of communist Eastern Europe. In fact, the notions of pleasure, luxury, and mobility seem incompatible with states defined by political suppression, material shortages, and closed borders (p. 158).

In the Soviet Union, holidays were in a special health institution called a kurort (borrowed from German and meaning “spa” or “health resort”) (Koenker, 2013). Turizm (tourism) was some physical activity with sightseeing via bicycle, boat or foot, with leisure as the purpose (Koenker, 2013). Political practices were the base for tourism during those times, politics dictated that there should be a purpose and leisure should have a collective nature. In general, non-productive tourism was an unimportant sphere, and only after the 1960s did the productive character of Soviet tourism go through scientific research (Burns, 1998).
Table 1. Characteristics of national and international tourism during the USSR and Russia, based on Orlov (2010) and Dolzenko and Putrik (2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922–1953</td>
<td>Iosif Vissarionovich Dzugashvili “Stalin”</td>
<td>Intourist company established tourism, both for Soviet citizens and for foreigners, promoted Soviet ideology and provided a vehicle for pro-Soviet propaganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953–1964</td>
<td>Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev</td>
<td>Foreigners could visit and Russians could meet foreigners – only in groups under supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964–1982</td>
<td>Leonid Iljich Brezhnev</td>
<td>Special tourism bureaus organized trips for youth China and Albania excluded from the Soviet tourist routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982–1984</td>
<td>Juri Vladimirovich Andropov</td>
<td>All tourism activities developed with State and trade union support Foreign tourism in the USSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984–1985</td>
<td>Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko</td>
<td>Study of tourism and excursion possibilities of the regions and republics Establishment of the institute for the improvement of professional skills of tourism workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985–1991</td>
<td>Mihail Sergeevich Gorbachev</td>
<td>Tourist organizations provided services to 38 million people and excursion services to 210 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990–1999</td>
<td>Boris Nikolaevich Elcin</td>
<td>Growth of medical and health tourism Building new hotel complexes Spreading family-service tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000–2008</td>
<td>Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin</td>
<td>Transition period (1990) After Soviet Union collapse, Russia opened all borders, and Russians began to discover previously restricted routes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1960-1970 0.4% of USSR population travelled abroad Inbound tourism on weekends and holidays became popular All tourism activities developed with State and trade union support Establishment of the institute for the improvement of professional skills of tourism workers

Tourist organizations provided services to 38 million people and excursion services to 210 million

Growth of medical and health tourism Building new hotel complexes Spreading family-service tourism

Transition period (1990) After Soviet Union collapse, Russia opened all borders, and Russians began to discover previously restricted routes New economic and legal regulations affect tourist resource usage Changing nature of demand due to emergence of new tourism services i.e., adventure tours and language learning Emergence of small and medium-sized

Active exploration of new global travel destinations and demand for better travel services Further tourist market development Improvement of tourism legislation Online reservation system Development of tourism educational and research resources Emergence of monopolistic structures in the Russian tourist market
Outgoing tourism in the USSR has five periods (Orlov, 2014, p. 15):

1) September 1955 – August 1964 (from the new Charter of Intourist becoming part of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade of the USSR to the formation of the USSR Office of Foreign Tourism Council of Ministers);

2) September 1964 – December 1969 (until the creation of the USSR General Directorate of Foreign Tourism Council of Ministers of the USSR);

3) December 1969 – May 1983 (until the formation of the USSR State Committee for Foreign Tourism);

4) May 1983 – April 1991 (until April, when the USSR Council on Foreign Tourism of the USSR was established as Goskominturist).

During the Soviet epoch, international tourism had three main functions: inbound international tourism for foreigners to see the main cities; outbound tourism for promoting purposes the USSR abroad; and lastly, controlling foreigners, trips and contacts with Soviet citizens (Burns, 1998). The meaning of tourism evolved during Soviet and Post-Soviet times (Lysikova, 2012). From a part of the working plan a free time activity available for people after 1990 (Lysikova, 2012).

As a result, Lysikova (2012) suggested three types of tourism mobility during Soviet times. The first was trips inside the 15 USSR republics. People could become acquainted with something new and get away from their daily routines, but still feel ‘at home’. The second kind of traveling mobility connected to visiting socialist countries, which was uncomplicated as everything was organized according to the Soviet ideology. A saying, during those times: “Kurica ne ptica – Bolgarija – ne zagranica”, meant “A chicken is not a bird, and Bulgaria is not abroad”. Finally, the third type of tourism mobility among Soviet people was trips to capitalist countries and were strictly organized by the government.

There there were special rules for people chosen as participants of this third type of journey. Shevirin (2009) described the selection process starting with the local “mestkom” or local trade union committee approving future tourists. The committee accepted the application, which included the person’s characteristics based on the evaluation of their moral life standards, including the information about one’s active lifestyle, self-discipline and if co-workers respected this person. After that, the characteristics were submitted for approval by the City Committee of the Communist Party (CPSU) of the Soviet Union. The last authority issuing the decision was the commission on trips abroad at the CPSU Central Committee (Shevirin, 2009).

During 1985, 4.5 million people from the Soviet Union traveled abroad, about 1.5 % of the population (Gorsuch, 2011). Honkanen (2004) investigated traveling activity of people from 12 European countries during the years 1985–1887. According to him, for example in 1985 only 2.8 % of Portuguese and 3.7 % of Greeks traveled abroad and the most active in 1985 were Luxemburg 51.9 %, Holland 44.1% and Germany 38.2 %. The activity of citizens in these countries could be partly explained with the location and because of that better possibilities to travel. Still, comparing travel abroad activity of the soviet people to those from other countries that traveled little, the USSR was on of several countries where traveling was privileged and the gap between those active travelers was big.

Orlov (2014) adds to this description that a person should have filled in a long questionnaire related to herself and relatives. In addition, before the trip the tourists received the rules about being abroad: people should not walk around the city alone, participation in any destination nightlife was forbidden, and they should not be in
contact with any local person abroad. The government did not want Soviet tourists to receive the “wrong” information about how life could be organized; people could also bring this “poorly oriented” information to the USSR and disorient other citizens (Orlov, 2014). For example, people could see that life conditions abroad are better than in the USSR and authorities were afraid that people would see that communism is not a paradise after all.

2.2.2 Russian tourism

Since 2008, Russian tourism has grown due to the country’s improving economy. According to a European Travel Commission (2014) study, the prospects for Russian tourism development were positive until the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. At this point, the Russian economy started to stagnate. At the start of the economic and political situation and sanctions in 2014, 3.2 million people took winter vacations abroad (Russia Tourism, 2015). This number declined by 40 % to 1.9 million in 2015.

In addition to economic reasons harming tourism, some experts emphasize the growth in patriotism among Russians. The US and EU-sanctions against Russia influenced a strong wave of patriotism, and nationalism, among Russian citizens (Wang, 2015). Due to the Ukrainian crisis, patriotism got a new meaning in Russia: the government promoted “traditional values” to mobilize citizens against “the enemies” (in this context: countries and people criticizing Russian actions) (Bruk, 2014).

Finally, Artal-Tur, Romanova and Vazquez-Mendez (2015) identify several challenges of Russian tourism. The lack of coordinating policies and strategies in communication and distribution of Russian tourism as well as tourism infrastructure that needs development to bring modern solutions for organizing tourism activities. Tourism legislation issues need to be modernized.

Two periods for the Russian market of tourist services are before and after economic sanctions (Ovcharov, Ismagilova, Ziganshin & Rysayeva, 2015). And the Soviet period had three stages. The first stage, between 1992 and 2002, had obscure inbound and outbound strategy and policy, while the situation in the country was chaotic. The years of 2002-2008 were the “demand boom”. People started to live economically better, and recreational services gained more popularity, especially for outbound tourism destinations that fulfilled Russian tourist desires for the right service and infrastructure. The third stage “satisfying the consumer demand” and characterized by positive tourism sector development.

Then, the year 2014 was especially difficult for Russia’s tourism industry (Kozlov & Popov, 2015). Ruble devaluation and sanctions caused a decrease in tourism activity within European countries, which resulted in a decline of about 30 % of Russian outbound tourism. Russian trips to the most popular outbound tourism destinations in 2015, according to Russia Tourism (2015), fell dramatically in comparison to 2013 and 2014 due to economic and political factors. EU sanctions prohibited some categories of people (for example police and governmental workers) from traveling abroad (Kozlov & Popov, 2015). The analysis by Ovcharov et al. (2015) proposed four impacts of the 2013–2015 tourism industry crisis: 1. The previously mentioned national currency crisis and fall in demand for tourism services 2. High competition in the tourism market. Those who used dumping in their strategy suffered the most; several big tour operators went bankrupt 3. Sanctions and the political situation in general: political and economic mistrust, the lack of people’s willingness to go abroad due to negative
TV news 4. Other reasons such as the fingerprinting procedure when applying for a Schengen visa and the trust of tour operators. Overall, Ovcharov et al. (2015) discuss a Russian tourism reorientation from outbound to domestic.

Domestic tourism dominated in Russia until the end of the twentieth century. Domestic tourism has long traditions and is well-developed in Russia; outbound tourism is quite new in Russia (Andrades, Dimanche & Ilkevich, 2015). New to “free” traveling, Russian tourists want to see different parts of the world and are not loyal to the same destination (Kozak & Martin 2012). Egypt and Turkey used to be the most popular outbound destinations for Russian tourism, but the situation changed in 2015 because of a terrorist act on a Russian plane to Egypt. In Turkey, sanctions and the shooting of a Russian war plane damaged the Russian-Turkish tourism relationship (Lepeshkin, Khristov & Gregorič, 2016). The Russian decline in international tourism by Russian tourists may lead to new domestic tourism opportunities and development.

2.3 RUSSIAN CULTURE AND MENTALITY

You cannot understand Russia with logic. You cannot measure Russia with a yardstick. Russia has a special character. You can only believe in Russia… (Tiutchev, Russian poet, 1984)

The literature includes much discussion of the uniqueness of the Russian character. Part of their national character is that Russians do not live in the present, only in the past or future (Likhachev, 2000). Allik et al. (2011) contrast Russian character with the materialistic Western cultures. Russians regard themselves as special, possessing a mysterious Russian soul, which has become a feature of national identity. Historians, novelists and politicians use this Russian soul proposition in explaining Russian history. History, political regimes, geography (Europe and Asia), the Czars and the Soviet era have all formatted a distinctive Russian identity (Allik et al., 2011).

Literature and art play a strong role in the perception of Russian national culture and mentality. The idea of the Russian national character has its roots in fiction; the works of Dostoyevsky are probably the most familiar (Allik et al., 2011). Literature suggests an idea of a national life, societal values, and morality; literature even shapes the perception of people and their understating of good and bad (Goloubkov, 2013). Russian culture is literature-centered and recognizes the role of literature as a creator of national images of cultural characters with whom people can identify.

In Russia, literary characters from books entered the “national consciousness and subconsciousness and became national archetypes” (Goloubkov, 2013, p. 111). Oblomov, the character created by Ivan Goncharov, is one such character who has influenced Russians. The word obломовчина is still part of the Russian lexicon, as it symbolizes procrastination and an idle life (Allik et al., 2000). The value of the life of a “small person” was touched on by Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and other 20th century authors. Literature has always been a part of people’s lives in Russia, and people’s lives have always been involved in literature. In Russian books and in
Russian society, one can always find people unhappy with their present circumstances, searching for a better life.

Diligensky and Chugrov (2000) analyze archetypal features of the Russian mentality and characterize Russia as having a dual society of East and West. Russian identity formation includes the concept of the Russian “self” and the Western “other”, and the whole structure of society is based on this identity formation. The Russian value system rejects opportunities to westernize (here, “westernization” differs from “modernization”). Russia is a country with its own independent cultural and historical heritage, distinct from the West. Kaempf (2010) gives an example via the meaning of the word “equality” through Western and Russian prism. In the West, the meaning centers around an “equality of opportunities” (the starting point), while in the Russian context, the focus is an “equality of material outcomes” (the outcome) (Kaempf, 2010).

According to Russian politicians, traditional Russian values are the basis of society (Curanović, 2012). After the 1990s’ failed attempt to develop in the “Western way”, Russian politicians started considering their own modernization path. As a result, judging the country according to Western standards is inappropriate. Politicians believed that all solutions for Russia should adapt to Russian traditions, national character and mentality (Curanović, 2012). Thus, the Russian soul does not fit Western frames. Ordinary people widely use the expression of the Russian soul. Russians believe that it is impossible for non-Russians to understand their mysterious souls (Apresjan, 2009).

One tool for understanding Russian culture and mentality is linguistics, through key expressions and words native speakers use. Russian words such as 

\textit{dusha} (soul) and \textit{sud’ba} (fate) are good examples of expressions rife with cultural beliefs, values and attitudes (Wierzbicka, 1997, 2002). Key Russian concepts are built on such words as \textit{avos’} (perhaps, with luck), \textit{pust’} (let it be), and \textit{sud’ba} (Apresjan, 2009). These words refer to someone else’s power to organize things in a certain way and indicate the speaker’s passive role.

Wierzbicka’s (2002) analysis of words, exemplify understanding Russia, such as “truth”. Truth has a special place in Russian culture, as Russians have two words for it: 

\textit{pravda} and \textit{istina}. The first means “truth,” while the second denotes “higher truth” and plays an important role in the Russian mentality. For example, \textit{istina}, higher truth or absolute truth does not have an opposite, it is God’s truth that is knowledge. The one, \textit{pravda} refers to true speech, to human truth and has an opposite, the untruth (\textit{nepravda}) (Wierbicka, 2002).

\section{2.4 RUSSIAN CONSUMER AND THE MIDDLE CLASS}

In general and particularly for the Russian mentality, personal tastes play an important role people’s behavior. According to Bourdieu (1984), tastes and practices locate people into classes. As he argues, “taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier” (p. 6). Class is not “something given but as something to be done” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 18), meaning that class comes from people’s actions and their position in the social space. In Russia, small business owners, managers, teachers and engineers represent the middle class (Gurova, 2012).

In Russian scientific literature, defining the Russian middle class has three aspects (Remington, 2011). The first aspect consists of an individual or household position based on income, occupation and education, and self-identification. The second
aspect is treating middle class as an agent of historical change, providing support for modernization. The third aspect reflects personal values and behavior.

Gladarev and Tsinman (2009) researched middle-class preferences based on the first aspect: income, educational level and self-identification. They discuss who exactly represents the Russian middle class. Since the 1990s, Russian society has changed critically. Everyday life and the practices of the 2000s differs, and young people perceive the image of Soviet life mostly from books and their elders’ narratives. Gladarev and Tsinman (2009) studying the Saint Petersburg middle class and how their consumer habits have changed over years. The middle class of the Soviet times comprised people with higher education. The right workplace was based on a specific education; they owned a flat, datcha (summer cottage), sometimes a car and some technical home equipment. As times were changing, the rules and style of the “wild” nineties were left behind, and a new segment far away from the “old Russians” and “new Russians” (group of wealthy and rich people) emerged (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009).

Income, educational level and self-identification are the criteria upon which Gladarev and Tsinman (2009) described Russian middle class representatives. On a general level, the middle class strata do not have to “survive”; they have a stable or growing income. Middle class representatives have the possibility to buy more than necessities and consumption patterns become more flexible and hedonistic. The authors continue that the post-Soviet middle class attained higher education and the opportunity to spend money on their own education and good education for their children. The next self-identification criteria of the middle class are economic (income and consumption) and cultural (intelligence level) (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009). The answer to the question of who represents the Russian middle class depends how it is asked, what are the alternatives and scales: income, social status or something else (Remington, 2011).

Despite the former Soviet Union’s slow transition from a centrally-planned to a market economy there was no such word as “consumer preferences” for decades (Ennew, Filatotchev & Buck, 1993). The process of purchasing was not obvious because most Soviet consumers spent almost their entire salary on food and searched for everything; many goods were unavailable (Ennew et al., 1993). At that time, Russians did not use the verb “to buy” rather the verb “dostat” (to acquire with great difficulty) (Griffin, Babin & Modianos, 2000). They underline that the verb “dostat” well describes the Russian primitive shopping reality at that time; consumers had little brand choice. The Khruschev and Breznev eras were full of queues and long lines to get low quality products (Bogdanova, 2015). During the communist times expectations were low and completely met this reality (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009).

The times of stagnation, the slower than usual economic growth in 1960-1970 in the USSR, brought the so called thing-ism (vec’izm, too high of an interest in buying and owning things one can use). Soviet planners attempted to fight thing-ism by developing “rational consumption norms” (Bigulov, Kryshtanovskii & Michurin, 1984). In the Soviet context, personal consumption had a negative meaning because politically it focused on a desire to be rich, to own things apart from daily needs (Bogdanova, 2015).

For deep understanding about Russian societal changes in the 1980s, one has to know what happened in “a small life of small people”, why everybody wanted change so much (Kozlova, 2005). Nobody was suffering from hunger, but they could not buy what they wanted nor make their own choices. As a result, the system of blat...
as an economy of favors existed (Ledeneva, 1998). Chinese use a somewhat similar term, *guanxi*, which also means using personal networks, exchanging gifts and favors (Ledeneva, 2008). People had connections and relations (in the Soviet times it meant especially those who worked in trade, services and medicine) and exchanged them with each other.

Even having connections, during the 1990 post-communist times consumption “expectations were high but reality worsened” (Money & Colton, 2000, p. 191). Consumption of Western products then was almost impossible because of system restrictions (Quelch, Joachimsthaler & Nueno, 1991). It is difficult to get relevant consumption data, and information gaps from those times remain (Burns, 1998).

People viewed consumption from different perspectives. Oushakine (2000), in a sociological study on the post-Soviet consumption of young students, shows how they imagined the life of “New Russians”. The students put “quantity” as the main characteristic of the post-Soviet consumption style: empty shops and cheap prices during the Soviet period and the possibility to buy everything while lacking money afterwards. His study illustrates that political and economic factors affected everyday personal practices. Consumption is a framework for understanding society through the choices people make, Russian has two consumption styles, global trends and local cultural choices (Shevchenko, 2009). Russians represent a mixture of global elements and local culture.

In the post-Soviet society, consumption plays an important role in people’s identity formation, whereby Russians went through extremes, from buying only necessities to over-consumption and buying everything, they wanted (Gurova, 2012). Middle class representatives of Post-Soviet times had their own apartments in buildings with European standard flat renovations (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009). The possibility of living apart from their parents was an important factor. Yet Russians who positioned themselves as middle class made thoughtful consumer choices. They compared different options and tried to find the things that looked different, that helped them be closer to people living with higher standards. As for clothing consumption among the Russian middle-class research found that clothing stands for Russian middle class identity, who purchased fewer clothes but with better quality (Gurova, 2012).

Gladarev and Tsinman (2009) consider middle class Russians as those with higher education (one degree or several), who invested money and effort into their studies. In addition, middle-class Russians do not save on health, and private sector medical services are better and of a higher quality than governmental health services (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009). Recreational services comes right after accommodating expenses, education and health services. The way one spends his or her free time is a good opportunity to show social status. Accordingly, fitness possibilities during vacations are popular among middle-class Russians: healthy food, gym and sport activities. Culture and cultural values affect the consumption of Russian tourists during their trips: visiting museums, theater, and historical monuments for adults and children are a part of a middle class lifestyle (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009). Russians think that Russian goods are of low quality, while “Western” ones while more expensive are better (Patico, 2005).

Even understanding the factor of quality, Russian consumers are strongly price sensitive and sometimes have unrealistic preferences (Huddleston et al., 2000). In tourism consumption, Russians value prestige destinations and unusual experiences (Lysikova, 2012). Therefore, traveling is a matter of the individual’s status and financial situation.
Another factor that identifies the Russian middle class and their cultural capital is culture and “culturedness”, which is a key Russian material and moral value (Patico, 2005). “Culturedness” (kulturnost) in the Soviet context is a proper way of life, having the right relationships, polite manners and high culture, being intelligent, and speaking the right language (Patico, 2005). In the twentieth century being cultured combined several meanings: to consume tastefully, to have good knowledge and to behave well. In general, consumer behavior in developing and Eastern Europe countries varies and cannot be examined through Western perceptions (Raju, 1995). Social, political, and economic factors strongly influenced those countries (Raju, 1995). Thus, a common mistake made by marketing professionals is attempting to sell trips and traveling services the same way to all Russian customers. Russian people accept a mixture of Asian and European values. Nowadays, Russian customers search for uniqueness and individualism (Reisenger, 2009).

Russian society used to be and still is hierarchical, which tend to make people act passively (Reisinger, 2009). Russians rarely make compromise between work and personal life, as family, friends, and social connections are highly significant. Russians prefer to act formally in public and in contrast Russians prefer emotional ways of expressing their feelings in private. Russians are a people of the past and present. Prediction of the future is completely impossible and uncontrollable: corruption, government, and emigration – all of these make Russians fatalists (Knutson, 1997).

2.5 RUSSIAN TOURISTS

Russian culture and mentality influence how Russians travel. Emerging research examines different markets where Russian tourists travel today. To begin with the Turkish market, compared to German and Turkish tourists in Turkey, Russians seem unaware about environmental issues and these issues do not influence their travel choices (Baysan, 2001). Turkish hosts judged Russian tourists according to single cases and their stereotypes, not taking into account Russian culture (Reisinger, Kozak & Visser, 2013). Another study showed that accommodation services play the most important role for Russian tourists’ satisfaction in Turkey. In addition, Russians consider nightlife as an important factor during their holiday (Akaş, Çevirgen & Toker, 2009). Destination loyalty by Russians increases when they stay longer periods in Turkey (Kozak & Martin, 2012). Russian tourists shopping behavior in Alanya differs from the behavior of tourists of other nationalities. Russian tourists find Turkish shops clean and, more than other studied nationalities, trust sellers (Barutçu, Doğan & Üngüren, 2011). Russians were also more satisfied with seller’s knowledge of foreign language and behaviour.

Interest in Russian tourists is growing also in Asian countries. Russian tourist’s destination image of Korea is positive but Russians perceive it as an expensive destination. The authors of the study suggest paying attention to historical and cultural attractions while promoting Korea among potential Russian tourists (Choi, Tkachenko & Sil, 2011). In Thailand, Russian tourists value beach resorts and Thai food the most (Lertpattarak, Lobo & Yingyong, 2014). Travel motivations of Chinese and Russians have been compared with Russians more keen on physical activities and cultural learning while Chinese appreciate shopping (Whang, Yong & Ko, 2016).

In the Jewish market, Russian tourists have been described as disappointed with the asceticism of Jerusalem’s sacred places (Epstein & Kheimets, 2001). Russian’s
holiday planning through social media in general showed that Russians used social media the most during the post-trip stage to share their emotions and photos, the second most popular social media use was during the holidays to stay in touch. The study showed that Russians consider relatives and friends as the most reliable source of information when planning their holidays (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2012). In addition, Russians actively use the internet for their holiday planning, especially hotel reviews and consumer generated feedback.

A few studies have examined Russian tourists in Finland (Jakosuo, 2011; Kosonen, Pajanen & Reittu, 2005; Malankin, 2012). For example, Russians are just learning about the sustainable local and regional Finnish food. They perceive such food differently in Russia and Finland, but Russians do value the freshness and healthiness of local food products. In her dissertation, Hannonen (2016) studied Russians as second homeowners in Finland. She found different mobility patterns that second home owners from Russia represent in Finland. Some articles examine Russian tourism development and future tourism forecasting (Furmanov, Balaeva & Predvoditeleva, 2012; Miloradov & Eidliina, 2016). According to these studies, the role of Russian domestic tourism increases but the decrease of outbound tourism does not automatically affect the grow of domestic tourism (Miloradov & Eidliina, 2016). The tourism is the current and future trend for Russians, considered that Russians are now familiar with tourism, as only in the 2000s did they start to travel in general (Lysikova, 2012).

Few academic articles focus on the psychological aspects and the character of Russian tourists. The general preferences of Russian tourists fall into two main groups, those who prefer mass tourism, who visit Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey and luxury travelers visiting the French Rivera and London (Andrades, Dimanche & Ilkevich, 2015). There are a lot of stereotypes about Russian tourists and through Western eyes Russians have annoying behavior, which is partly true yet Russians are welcomed guests because they know how to relax and spend money (Ageenko, Papazyan & Apukhtin, 2013).

Unfriendly, demanding, bad habits, suspicious… is how a German travel website, and 40 % of Europeans who traveled to Turkey or Egypt, the most popular Russian destinations, described Russians at the same hotel (Ageenko, Papazyan & Apukhtin, 2013). Another study explains this view, that while traveling Russians do not speak English (incapable or unwilling), and even if they do, do not want to communicate with other people, which make others perceive Russians as rude (Reisinger, Kozak & Visser, 2013). The authors continue that Russian tourists are loud, have bad manners and always want to act freely. Finally, Russian tourists appreciate culture, nature, shopping possibilities, sightseeing and gastronomy and are especially interested in health tourism and visiting spas (Andrades, Dimanche & Ilkevich, 2015). At the same time, Russians complain western hosts do not understand and are uninterested in their culture.

Travel can be good medicine for cultural conflicts, increasing awareness and international understanding (Raymond & Hall, 2008). The lack of cultural awareness can lead to stereotypes, or a generalization of the common characteristics of group members (Albu, 2013). Stereotypes drive people’s thinking, influence feelings and reflect national image. Tourist stereotypes are common and usually based on first generation mass tourists, those who recently gained economic and political possibilities to travel (McKercher, 2008). It takes time to learn how to travel, and international travel practices are new to Russians. Consumer behavior literature recognize those whom traveling is a new activity are the innovators in their country yet latecomers in the context of international tourism. This conflict creates stereotypes: “Pioneering tourists have not yet had that chance to learn, and therefore apply the same social
norms they would use at home to the exotic, without appreciating they may be seen as inappropriate elsewhere” (McKercher 2008, p. 346).

After rarely having opportunities to travel during the Soviet times, Russians now consider traveling fashionable (Lysikova, 2012). Russia’s modern tourism consumer appreciates new and unusual travel experiences, while paying attention to travel’s prestige (social status). In Soviet times, Russians usually could take only tour trips, but now they plan individual trips and discover the world in their own way (Lysikova, 2012).

2.6 TRAVEL PRACTICES DURING THE LIFETIME

Tourism is a form of consumption behavior (Sharpley, 2014). In the European context, until the nineteenth century, there was a clear distinction among those who could travel for their own purposes, the elite. Now the travel context is much more complex.

Tourism is often seen too narrowly, as a type of a business (Aitchison, 2001). However, tourism is additionally a cultural platform that influences and is influenced by assumptions regarding social roles, characteristics, places and culture. Tourists shape both local people and places (Urry, 1995). Urry (1995) underlines people’s right to travel and consume: the accessibility of goods, and travel between countries and societies should be available for everyone. That was not the reality for Soviet people and that is why this research focuses on travel practices. “Practice” should connect the physical side of human actions and the meanings of practice (Holt, 1995). Practice is “the embodied skills that people bring to bear in their everyday activities” (Holt 1995, p. 1). Tourism practices are a complex phenomenon and more than the satisfaction of needs (Sharpley, 2014).

Western tourism practices connect with self-realization and self-actualization (Gnoth, 1997). The tourist’s self-realization is a path from the real self to the ideal self, based on a set of behaviors. Self-actualization is a motive that together with time, money and opportunity starts the process of motivation (Gnoth, 1997). Belk (1988) identifies “self” and “sense of self” as a person’s subjective understanding of who he or she is. Identity is at the center of consumption, while the term “self” is subjective and often changes over time. The concept of “self” constructed through tourism practices depends on how those practices are produced and imagined (Desforges, 2000).

Travel patterns are part of travel practices. Various factors affect travel patterns, such as period, life cycle, and cohort effects (Zimmerman, 1982). In addition, the timeline of a person’s life, the life-course matters. The life-course has four eras – childhood and adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood and late adulthood and three perspectives that help understand a person’s life structure: the sociocultural world, the participation of a person in the external world, and the self (Levinson & Levinson, 1996).

2.6.1 Travel career

Maslow’s (1970) hierarchy of needs applies to tourism through two conceptual frameworks – the travel career ladder and travel career pattern. The travel history of a person, their travel career pattern, leads to the Travel Career Ladder (TCL), a travel motivation theory based on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Moscardo & Pearce, 1986;
Pearce, 1988; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). The TCL has five need levels: relaxation, safety/security, relationship, self-esteem/development and self-actualization/fulfillment (the highest level). Travel career is a concept that describes tourists’ phases while traveling, similar to experience’s importance in a work career, previous travel experience matters in a travel career (Pearce & Lee, 2005).

During the travel career, individuals move from a lower to higher level of need satisfaction (Pearce, 1988). Lower levels of the ladder should be fulfilled before the individual moves to higher levels. Accordingly, inexperienced tourists want to fill the lower-order needs first. For example, health and food matters to them more than to experienced tourists (Pearce, 1988). Individuals going abroad for the first time value security and organized packaged tours, but after gaining experience, they start to travel independently. Lastly, tourists do not necessarily follow the travel career ladder linearly but may move up and down (Ryan, 1998). The latest travel career model (Pearce, 2005; Pearce & Lee, 2005) comprises fourteen motivational factors: novelty, escape/relax, self-actualization, nature, kinship, self-enhancement, romance, kinship-belonging, autonomy, self-development, nostalgia, stimulation, isolation and recognition.

### 2.6.2 Cohorts and generations

The idea of a generation comes from the generational theory developed in America by Strauss and Howe (1991). Representatives of different generations should act differently in the context of traveling (Pearce & Lee, 2005). Cohorts are “proposed groups of individuals who are born during the same time period and who experienced similar external events during their formative or coming-of-age years” (Noble & Schewe, 2003, p. 979). And a generation “consists of a birth cohort (or of adjacent birth cohorts) internally homogeneous in some important respect and distinctly different from persons born earlier or later” (Glenn, 1997, p. 9). According to Kupperschmidt’s (2000) definition, a generation is a group of people born during the same years with shared experiences during their time. The definitions of generations indicate that people share historical experiences that distinguish them from younger and older groups of individuals. People who belong to different generations have distinct values and beliefs (Gardiner, King & Grace, 2012) and the era in which individuals are born affects their beliefs and attitudes and how they communicate with the world around them (Wolf, Carpenter & Qenani-Petrela, 2005).

The behavior of the individual depends on his or her lifespan. Certain historical background influence cohorts and life cycle patterns may influence the travel behavior across the generations (Oppermann, 1995). Thus, generational destination choices and experiences today differ from the travel patterns of previous generations. The family life cycle may also explain differences in travel patterns.

Tourism generational research builds around the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, people from 19–67 years old (Gardiner, King & Grace, 2012). The cultural aged tourists want more individualized experiences (Gardiner, King & Grace, 2012). Thus, tourist segmentation based on a generational approach makes sense. Historical time could be based on cohort effects, whereby historical and economical events of a specific time period affect the whole social group (Alwin, Hofer & McCammon, 2006).
A Western context suggests four generations, the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Strauss & Howe, 1991). For example, the differences in travel of the silent Generation and Baby Boomers are the following: Baby Boomers appreciate time with family, romance and adventure, while the Silent Generation is into gambling and visiting casinos (Lehto, Jang, Achana & O’Leary, 2008). Similar to the U.S.A, Russian Baby Boomers (1943-1963) got their name because of this period of high birth rates (Shamis & Antipov, 2007).

Several authors touch upon Russian generational differences, attitudes and preferences (Smith, 2007; Pilkington, 1996; Yurchak, 2005). A generation theory adapted for Russia incorporates the main issues that happened in Russian history and society and identified generational structures (Shamis & Antipov, 2007). I base my definition of Baby Boomers on the generation theory adapted for Russia (Shamis & Antipov, 2007) that contains the same names as the western one but different historical events behind those names. The original Western generation research represented the middle class, people with high incomes who can afford expenses on education, food, and culture. In the Russian reality, the middle class consists of two groups, those with high salaries and those who are highly educated but have low incomes (Shamis & Antipov, 2007). The second group is particularly distinct from the Western one.

Table 2. Russian generations and their values, based on Shamis and Antipov (2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>Silent</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFFECTED BY</td>
<td>Revolutions, collectivization</td>
<td>Stalin’s terror, World War II</td>
<td>High birth rates, the greatness of USSR</td>
<td>Perestroika</td>
<td>Collapse of the USSR, war conflicts, internet</td>
<td>Putin, Crimea crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUES</td>
<td>Work, responsibility, ideology, family</td>
<td>Instructions and laws, respect for status, patience</td>
<td>Optimism, collectivism</td>
<td>Change, possibilities, individuality, pragmatism</td>
<td>Quick rewards, optimism, internet skills</td>
<td>Values forming, freedom and individual rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 2, Shamis and Antipov (2007) divided generations according to when people were born, and adapted it to the Russian context. Generation G, people born in 1900–1923, was affected by revolutions in 1905 and 1917 and collectivization. Their values draw on work and responsibility. They believe in a bright future, ideology and family. The silent generation (1923–1943) was affected by Stalin’s Great Terror and World War II. The silent generation rebuilt the destroyed country. Their values consisted of living according to instructions and laws, respect for status, and patience. They lived during the strong times of the USSR, the Cold War, standard school education, and health services. Baby Boomers (1943–1963) inherited the psychology of winners, valuing optimism and collectivism. Generation X (1963–1982), the lost generation, grew up during the perestroika and had to adapt to the new reality. These people had to make life choices independently and based their values on change, the possibility to choose, individuality and pragmatism. Generation Y (1983–2003) experienced the end of the USSR, war conflicts, cell phones and the internet. Their values are still forming. For now, Generation Y values quick rewards, morality,
responsibility, naivety. Generation Z (2003-2023), people who have lived under the power of one president, Putin, and their values are affected by uncertain situation in the world. They appreciate freedom and individual rights.

This study highlights into the lives of female Baby Boomers. During their childhood and youth Baby Boomers experienced government control without terror or consumerism (Raleigh, 2012). They saw how the country step by step opened to the outside world. Baby Boomers are also called the generation of personalization because they grew up in a different, more liberal climate after the death of Stalin in 1953 (Rotkirch, 2000).
3 CULTURAL APPROACH TO CONSUMPTION

This chapter contains the theoretical framework (Figure 1) of the study.

3.1 CONSUMER CULTURE

Products of their culture, people behave how they do because of their sociocultural environments (Triandis, 1995). Culture, a part of the individual and their historical context, comprises common values, norms, roles, and beliefs among individuals living during the same historical period in the same region (Triandis, 1995). From a marketing perspective, culture mirrors our everyday lives with our everyday cultural practices (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). Culture is changeable, a living parallel process between people and society. Nowadays, consumer society has a vast influence on the production of culture and an ongoing dialog between marketers and consumers (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006).

Culture has a strong influence on consumer behavior (Craig & Douglas, 2006). According to McCracken (1988), a person’s behavior depends on the cultural value system and context. Consuming is an act of using a certain kind of identity (Sassatelli, 2009) and culture is a “lens” shaping reality and a blueprint for people’s actions (McCracken, 1988). As culture influences how people see the world, culture provides the world with meaning (McCracken, 1988). Nowadays, consumers from the Western and Eastern parts of the world can afford the same brands and watch the same films, but their consumption reasons could differ markedly because consumers depend on society (De Mooij, 2004). Many scholars see consumption as a cultural phenomenon and consumers as producers of cultural meanings (Luna & Gupta, 2001; Manrai & Manrai, 1996; McCracken, 1988). I apply this view in this study and assume that culture influences all aspects of consumer behavior.

One can compare culture from two field research perspectives, emic and etic, which share a long history in social science (Pike, 1967). The emic approach is to understand how culture is systemized through the individual actors, attitudes, motives, interests, responses and conflicts (Morris, Leung, Ames & Lickel, 1999). These actors develop from cultural and historical issues. In contrast, the etic approach draws on external system criteria and can apply to other cultures (Morris, Leung, Ames & Lickel, 1999). The use of emic and etic approaches combined to defining culture whereby societal culture, subculture and familiar values influence the formation of a cultural value system (Luna & Gupta, 2001). In cross-cultural research, the emic approach stays behind the view that one cannot compare cultures with each other, and people behave in a unique way in each culture (Chan, 2009). Whereas with the etic approach, researchers follow the variable that is unique for all cultures (Luna & Gupta, 2001).

Part of the cultural value system is consumer culture. An important part of everyday life, consumer culture is an interaction between everyday culture and social resources (Slater, 1997). People consume making individual choices (Slater, 1997). Social practices define the nature of consumption, along with people implementing their desires through consumption practices (Warde, 2005).
Consumer culture began in the West in the early 18th century, as an expression of uniqueness and freedom (Slater, 1997). For example, people began talking about a western way of life. Holt (2002, p. 71) calls consumer culture “the dominant mode of consumption”, highlighting capitalistic society and its need for relationships between markets and cultural frameworks to understand and interact with the market. Consumer culture, which emphasizes that “the world of goods and their principles of structuration are central to the understanding of contemporary society”, has three perspectives (Featherstone, 2007, p. 82). The first perspective views consumer culture as a part of a market society, and a capitalist culture. In the second perspective, consumers buy products for the purpose of distinction. The choices people make depend on their educational level and social-economic class. The third perspective connects consumers to the emotional and symbolic value that they get from buying and using a product (Featherstone, 2007).

Consumer culture has different scopes including consumption, a market society, a universal and impersonal matter; a freedom with private choice and private life, and a negotiation between identity and status (Slater, 1997). Materialistic issues provide the base for the culture of consumption, with people concerned about “having” instead of “being” (Featherstone, 2007). Consumption practice is a consumption of signs, framing people’s way of life and the nature of their social relationships (Featherstone, 2007).

McCracken (1988) highlighted the meaning of culture for consumer research in his book Culture and Consumption. In the late 1980s, new themes and critical perspectives became part of consumer research such as symbolism, political aspects of consumption, rituals, and subcultures (Sassatelli, 2009). A Cultural perspective means that the world people live in is culturally shaped, through the market (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). In this framework, consumers are active players that put meanings and symbols into practices. Actions or texts possess a meaning only inside the system of meanings, and not separately (Moisander and Valtonen, 2006). It is impossible to separate people from their environment; practices and patterns are context dependent as well. “A pattern is a segregated whole that emerges from a context. While being perceptually distinguishable, a pattern does not exist as a complete and separate entity from its surrounding context” (Thompson, Locander & Polio, 1989, p.135).

### 3.2 CULTURE AND CONSUMPTION

Bourdieu (1984) investigated social patterning of consumption through the theory of cultural capital and taste. Different social classes have distinct tastes and consumption patterns. According to him, the life of an individual is a status game (symbolic capital) where he or she uses different kinds of capital (economic, cultural or social). Bourdieu (1984) applied the concept of field, a social place that forms the habitus and becomes a place where people attempt to acquire needed resources, as a research tool in his studies.

Cultural capital activates in a given field and includes different characteristics, cultural resources and in a leisure context is personal cultural knowledge that people show through consumption (Lee, Dunlap & Edwards, 2014). People express their status through cultural capital as well by consuming objects that are not available for everybody, such as a collection of paintings or a doctoral degree. Using the Bourdieuan (1984) view, individuals consume to develop material, symbolic and social capital
through different fields with a firm confidence of no implied obligations (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011).

Many authors examine the consumption of tourism (Hall, 2005; Sharpley, 2014; Urry, 2002). Although tourism is a contemporary form of consumerism (Hall, 2011), tourism as a form of consumption lacks proper consideration. Researchers often view tourism as a rational process and explain tourism with a behavioral model without cultural frames (Sharpley, 2014). How people consume tourism, not why they do it, needs attention (Sharpley, 2014). Furthermore, tourism has a changing nature with social, cultural and historical events of the last quarter century altering the lives of ordinary people and their travel (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). Meaningful historical events such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and social changes in China and Vietnam brought the new possibilities for inbound and outbound tourism for the middle-classes and made tourism an international phenomenon. These events impacted “sociological thinking about tourism, the paradigmatic and theoretical approaches to it” (Cohen & Cohen 2012, pp. 2178–2179).

Gluhova (2011) studied Russian consumption ideology through the formation of “Western habitus” in Russian society. According to her, the turning point in the Russian national character started after the collapse of the USSR with the implementation of Western values, style and ideas into Russian everyday life practices. Traveling abroad brought a wind of change to the intellectual life of Russian society. From trips abroad, Russians adopted new influences, emotions about different cultures and lifestyles, and material things that reminded them of their trips abroad (Gluhova, 2011).

3.3 CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY

This study focuses on Russian consumption in the tourism context through the multidiscipline research perspective. As alternative consumer research perspectives became visible in the 1980s, when specialists from non-business fields such as anthropology and sociology joined marketing departments; a “new consumer behavior” emerged (Belk 1995, p. 55). This culturally oriented and non-positivist approach opened new perspectives in consumption studies. Arnould and Thompson (2005) labelled this “new” research Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). A multidisciplinary sub-discipline of consumer behavior, CCT adds new consumer behavior insights and understanding (MacInnes & Folkes, 2010).

CCT represents variant meanings of culture, connections between lived culture and social resources, relations among significant ways of life, and the symbolic and material resources as mediated through markets (Frochot & Batat, 2013). CCT focuses on the cultural and symbolic issues of consumption practices; complex behaviors, social aspects and cultural practices (Frochot & Batat, 2013). The CCT approach in tourism touches the emotional and sensitive aspects of consumer behavior and sees “the experience as a subjective episode in the construction and the transformation of the individual” (Frochot & Batat 2013, p. 9).

Rather than consumption contexts, CCT theorists study the inside issues of consumption contexts to create new formulations and theoretical insights, to broaden theoretical constructs (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). A qualitative methodology serves the aims of CCT with surveys or database modeling less useful. Rather than divide CCT methodology into qualitative or quantitative, CCT researchers follow methodological pluralism (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). This pluralism allows the
consumer researcher to not follow just one dominant approach but to be free in his or her choices (Cova & Elliot, 2008).

CCT includes such theoretical concepts as the consumers’ identities, experiences, processes, structures and sociological categories’ characteristics and dynamics. Apart from that, Arnould and Thompson (2005, pp. 871–875) suggest four interrelated CCT research domains: 1) consumer identity projects 2) marketplace cultures 3) the socio-historic patterning of consumption 4) mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers’ interpretive strategies. The authors add that the framework is useful for research orientation but not as direct instructions. CCT is more of a united label for the researchers, rather than a strict system of perspectives.

My study evaluates the third CCT research domain, the significance of the socio-historic environment. This research explores travel practices from a CCT standpoint, especially the socio-historic patterning of consumption. This broad approach means that gender, class, community, and ethnicity influence consumption (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Different authors have used Bourdieuian concepts as a research tool to examine the socio-historic patterning of consumption. Holt (1998), for instance, brought Bourdieu’s theory of taste into an American context. He discussed cultural capital’s role in the formation of taste and viewed society as an organization of different fields. Üstüner and Holt (2010) examined social hierarchies, whereby taste distinguished among Turkish status consumers. Another work examined consumer choices in the sphere of secondary education (Allen, 2002). There, background and class affected preferences and vice versa; education distinguishes in the class system and political issues affect personal issues.

In summary, CCT research examines the contexts in which a consumer is an agent and a member of social units building his or her own identity. Historical and cultural factors influence the consumption practices and human reality exists in the meanings (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011).

### 3.4 DEFINING HABITUS

The socio-historical context of Soviet times had their own reality, which required a certain way of living and thinking. Government restrictions affected the representation of the world. However when individuals enter a new environment, they unconsciously avoid situations that challenge familiar ways of seeing the world (Hilgers, 2009). In such situation individual freedom plays an important role. The degree of individual freedom depends on knowing the constraints placed on them. The social theory of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1990) deals with the issue of freedom and through two dualisms: objectivism and subjectivism, structure and action. Following Bourdieu, social action is neither fully determined, nor completely separated (Wacquant, 2005).

The central concept to understanding behavior in such specific historical reality is habitus, which refers to a system of durable, transposable dispositions that mediate an individual’s actions (Bourdieu, 1990). Habitus – how people think, feel and act (Maton, 2008) – bring personal history into the present and affects personal choices. Habitus can change, but this change process requires a huge effort (Hilgers, 2009). People can make choices and decisions, but their decision-making happens inside a certain field, so habitus mediates between structure and practices (Bourdieu, 1990). For example, Reay (2004) points that habitus can change along with the person’s response to the issues happening around them.
Habitus helps fill the gap between social world objectivity and people’s practices (Lahire, 2003). It characterizes groups and individuals. From the feminist point, scholars connect habitus to gender dimensions and individual identity. Habitus is a channel for the gender classifications implemented in practices and worldviews (Krais, 2006). In this study, I assume that social reality influenced the habitus of each woman.

A person’s past, his or her family circumstances, and education form the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). Following this, habitus formats present and future practices. People symbolize meanings that are familiar to them through their life’s experiences (Ostrow, 1979). For example emotions about a situation that do not surface completely in the moment, are formed from personal history and socio-historical phenomena (Östrow, 1979). Habitus is history converted into nature or “second nature” (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). Despite that people have different experiences, it is possible to predict habitus among the members of the same class (Bourdieu, 1990).

Russians from higher classes still demonstrate their societal standing compared to lower classes (Kaufmann, Vrontis & Manakova, 2012). As Bourdieu based his analyses on French society, mainly Parisians in the 1960s, this analysis does not fit Russian society due to socio-historical circumstances. When examining the Russian habitus in the context of traveling, freedom is an important issue. Russian society, especially during Soviet times, dictated the rules of living and behaving in a certain way. Freedom is an essential part of habitus (Hilgers, 2009).

In addition to freedom, individual histories are important for habitus, as histories reflect the past and present of people (Reay, 2004). Habitus gives a variety of choices people can make but frames these choices. Bourdieu (1990) writes about the habitus unconscious nature, but Reay (2004) concludes that this is an “unconscious” change into being “conscious”. People face new situations when they have to question their lives and themselves. That happened to Soviet people when they became Russia citizens. The USSR limited personal liberties, but many Russians still miss the country they grew up in. What is behind this Soviet nostalgia? Russian nostalgia for the Soviet Union is a social phenomenon (Pourtova, 2013). People have experienced two different countries: the Soviet Union and Russia. In 1990, people suddenly lost their country and got Russian passports. At the same time, they lost their Soviet-time identities (Pourtova, 2013). For many, Soviet-times were about the territory and also about relations. For many Russians the Soviet Union retrospectively means a certain workplace, a place to live, a guaranteed wage, good education, and an overall a safe life (Fitzpatrick, 2007). Nostalgia, a dissatisfaction with the present circumstances, nurtures fertile grounds to miss a “perfect past” (Velikonja, 2009).

Russian’s social identification illustrates this nostalgia. It posits that 20 years of reforms did not bring a new social identity to Russians, as one-quarter of respondents still identified themselves as “Soviet” (Levada, 2005). Recent research by the Public Opinion Research Center in Russia (2011) found that every fifth person in Russia would like to live in a new Soviet Union. Thus, many Russians miss their Soviet life.

3.5 RUSSIAN AND SOVIET HABITUS

This study illustrates the historical and social context of Soviet and Russian reality through the travel life histories of women. Seventy years of communist regime and Soviet identity building could not just disappear without leaving any scars
on Russians’ habitus today. While building the “New Russia” the possibilities and potential of capitals and the features of individual and collective habitus were ignored (Kravchenko, 2002). The formation of a new society radically objected to structural constructivism’s rules (Kravchenko, 2002). At first people form and adapt habitus, and after that, steps towards a new society formation happens.

Another issue of Soviet habitus is nation-building (Beissinger, 1995). In the USSR, the authorities tried to forge a sense of shared identity and common values. As a result, personal experience during the collapse of the Soviet Union was a constant crisis. The post-Soviet person’s habitus was a survival tool in the social environment (Beissinger, 1995). People needed a feeling of control over their reality (Shevchenko, 2009).

The specific features of Russian habitus and its mental dynamic development develops along with the individual’s national mentality; analyzing the structure of habitus helps understand mentality (Rozov, 2010). The author identifies four features of Russian mentality. The first is “own and unfamiliar”, as Russians often do not accept or they even ignore something unfamiliar or strange to them. The second feature is “high ideals and benefit/profit”, meaning that Russians separate the “high ideals” and “low economic” benefit strictly. The third Russian national character is “close circle and government”, respectively strong association with, family/friends’ warmness and support, and a distant government of force and control. Interestingly, during some critical Russian periods the government could enter the close circle as a symbol of overarching spirit. The last feature is “Russia and the West”. Russians represent extremity and a high level of dissatisfaction embodied in a complete rejection of important national features or the excessive glorification of them. The West is always the reference point of evaluation despite the acceptance or rejection of the Western point of view (Rozov, 2010).

“We became citizens of a different country without leaving it”, these are the thoughts of ex-Soviet people (Pourtova, 2013, p. 36) that could be a defense mechanism. She suggests that Jung’s (1961) view could explain the feeling of nostalgia: in order to move forward, go back! This could explain the thoughts of those Russians who miss USSR: people need to return to the past to deal with it. Thereafter, they can move on and can start acquiring a new identity (Pourtova, 2013).

3.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The socio-historical context is a part of culture itself. This study touches external context, that is devoted to the connections among phenomena, social issues, and processes (Dilley, 1999). The study includes social and cultural context, historical changes and internal context, and the interviewee travel life histories.

A temporal/historical perspective forms through the culture in which individuals are living and is not linear (Hyatt, 2005). The lifetime moves back and forth in different contexts. This study seeks to understand women’s travel practices during the times of Soviet and Russian society.

This study applies the concept of habitus to demonstrate how culture, history and society influence the travel practices during women’s lives through participant narratives. Individual history shapes a person’s habitus and includes the history of the family and class (Bourdieu, 1990b). The particular historical context, combining the Soviet Union and Russia, shaped habitus of the study participants. These participants had to understand how to adapt to new circumstances and how to deal with the
old circumstances, in life and in traveling. Russian history and culture affected how people used to travel and travel now. As Bourdieu (1990b) puts it “the subject is not the instantaneous ego of a sort of singular cogito, but the individual trace of an entire collective history” (p.91).

Bourdieu’s view uses the philosophy of subjectivism and objectivism (Throop & Murphy, 2002). Separately they are insufficient for explaining social action (Bourdieu, 1990). Subjectivism focuses on the person’s immediate experience and their own views. Objectivism, in contrast, explains everything in a social framework and ignores the individual actions. Bourdieu’s (1990) habitus combines both views by considering individual experience and the social structures. Habitus gives individuals a sense of what is possible or appropriate in a specific situation, representing people’s choices inside their shared cultures and social groups (Widick, 2003). Like habitus, gender is also a part of this study. Gender influences institutions, ideologies, and identities. Despite that all women’s life histories of women are gendered, no two experiences are exactly the same (Reinharz & Chase, 2006).

As Figure 2 shows, this study views travel practices are viewed through conceptual linkage among social, cultural, historical and individual aspects, all of which matter for studying Soviet and Russians in the context of traveling.

Figure 2. Travel practices in the life of an individual (own illustration).
4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 THE INTERPRETIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

This study seeks to understand how Russian women construct their travel life histories and what meanings they put in them within Soviet and Russian society. To study travel practices from the viewpoint of individuals I chose a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research gives the possibility to understand and explore a certain phenomenon through interpretive practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Understanding is a never-ending process (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988).

In order to understand, the researcher must choose the research philosophy, which influences the choices made before and during the research process (Carson, Gilmore, Perry & Gronhaug, 2001). These choices, seen through beliefs and principles, influence how a “researcher sees the world and acts in it” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 13), and are based on the ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (the nature of knowledge) and methodology (the way knowledge is gained) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Two dominant approaches to gain knowledge are interpretive and positivist research (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). Tourism studies have been historically dominated by a positivist approach, but qualitative approaches and paradigms from social sciences are becoming more popular in tourism research (Jennings, 2010). Tribe (2005; 2007) ponders the need for a different and new type of tourism research.

In answering this need, the philosophical perspective of interpretivism guided the choices of my qualitative study, where a life is understood through the eyes of people themselves. Interpretivist research is about bringing out the voice of participants, the process of understanding and finding a meaning (Tribe, 2008). An interpretive approach provides the possibility to focus on to certain context within changing nature of knowledge; it is the researcher who interprets the data (Carson et al., 2001). The interpretive paradigm gives the possibility to understand the world via individual’s subjective level (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

When conducting interpretive research in tourism researchers apply qualitative methods to analyze meanings, using for example participants’ narratives and socio-historical contexts (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001). In the tourism field, academic literature has addressed the importance of a different, reflexive approach to the creation of knowledge (Ateljevic et. al, 2005; Dupuis, 1999; Everett, 2010; Feighery, 2006; Hall, 2004). Tourism research is interdisciplinary in nature (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001).

Interpretive research in marketing is often associated with the Consumer Behavior Odyssey, which encouraged scholars towards interpretive research methods (Belk, 1987; Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry, 1989). The Consumer Behavior Odyssey was a 1986 trip in a van by a group of consumer researchers who wanted to widen the borders of consumer concepts and deepen the meanings associated with consumption (Joy, Sherry, Troilo & Deschenes, 2006). Interpretivism is a widely used paradigm in the Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), which conceptually frames this study.

Insufficient tourism studies focus on the individual experience, but attention has been paid to the research approaches that include the subjective experiences of people (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004). The philosophical basis of interpretative research comes
from hermeneutics and phenomenology (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). There is no one unique interpretive method because it is the opposite of positivistic ontology, with only one reality (Shankar & Goulding, 2001). Interpretivism takes into account the various ways of seeing the world. The truth is not what really matters rather the understanding or verstehen (Shankar & Goulding, 2001).

As for epistemology, it frames the possible types of scientific knowledge and could be based on an objectivist or a subjectivist view (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The interpretive approach of this study relies on subjectivism, which epistemologically means that the subjective lived experience of the individuals produces knowledge (Arndt, 1985). Subjectivists pay attention to the meaning attached to phenomena, where people themselves give meanings to their experiences (Krauss, 2005). In the frames of a subjectivist’s view, knowledge is created through the interaction between the researcher and the research participants. Furthermore, knowledge depends on the context and time frame (Krauss, 2005).

Subjectivists understand that individuals apply different meanings even when talking about the same issues (Crotty, 1998). While objectivists view reality as a structure or process, the ontological assumptions of subjectivists consider the reality as constructed by humans and in the form of human imagination (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Instead of subjectivism some researchers use the term constructionism to identify the nature of reality, which means that reality is socially produced through interaction (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

Two basic logics in social science guide how knowledge about the world is produced, induction and deduction (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In inductive reasoning a researcher moves from empirical results to theory. Deductive logic works the other way, from theory to specific hypotheses (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In addition, a research logic called abduction combines inductive and deductive reasoning at different phases during the research. The abductive approach helps see and explain the unexpected, and to contextualize phenomena within the framework (Kovács & Spens, 2005). This research follows abduction logic. I gathered travel life histories from the selected group of women. With the empirical data in hand, I did not leave the theoretical idea to generate understanding. I went back and forth between the stories to formulate the theoretical framework.

This study focuses on how individuals’ socio-historic environments influence their travel practices. This study assumes that Russian women from the same social group and place of residence share common features that influenced their traveling practices due to the circumstances that formed their habitus. Each woman in this study had her own unique experience because of broad social/historical themes, which impacted her life. These factors together affect these women’s habitus and their travel practices. For this purpose, a qualitative method of life narrative interviews was used for this study. As Hatch and Wisniewski (1995) state, “The element that distinguishes narrative and life history work from other kinds of qualitative research is its dialogical, discursive nature. Narrator and researcher achieve mutual understanding or inter-subjectivity” (p.17).

To answer research questions, this study takes a cultural approach that considers cultural meanings that matters to consumers (Thompson & Troester, 2002). This study’s participants’ cultural meanings are connected to the USSR, which brought people a sense of organized life and security, as well as shared cultural meanings and values. Society shaped their worldview and still does. Society’s role provides a base to assume that the cultural and historical perspective in this research helps
delve into women’s travel practices in the USSR and Russia. In the culturally oriented interpretation, a researcher has a pre-understanding as a basis to make interpretations (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). Meanings are flexible, and it is necessary to understand that the meaning could differ in different discourse (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006).

Culturally oriented research focuses on how people interpret their actions themselves, what meanings they put into those actions (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). Researchers must analyze how people report their experiences, what meanings he or she puts into the story (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). Also this multidisciplinary approach supports the socio-cultural and experiential turn in consumer behavior (Frochot & Batat, 2013). Language bridges the past and present, through which people share their experience and traditions (Arnold & Fischer, 1994).

The habitus of this study’s participants influenced their travel practices. Logically, it supports of Bourdieu’s (1984) argument that habitus is not created independently but unconsciously in a dialog between current practices and past events and structures. Bourdieu’s concepts are useful when analyzing consumption, as they help understand the meaning behind the consumer’s reasons (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011).

4.2 NARRATIVE RESEARCH AND LIFE HISTORY

The only way to describe lived experiences is in the form of narrative (Bruner, 2004). Narratives represent of the realities of individuals (Bryant & Lasky, 2007). In using language, individuals show how they see the world around them. Narrative research has no starting or finishing point, nor does it have general rules on relevant materials or ways of investigation (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou, 2008). Human reality is historical in nature, and to get into meanings requires looking back (Freeman, 2015). Narrativists do not separate living and narrating. The understanding always comes retrospectively (Freeman, 2015). At the center of a narrative is the story of real life (Freeman, 2015; Polkinghorne, 2007).

Narratives, cross disciplinary in nature, support using various theories and methods (Reissman & Quinney, 2005). Narrative has been used in a variety of social sciences fields: psychology (e.g Bruner, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1995), sociology (Ezzy, 1998; Somers, 1994), and consumer research (e.g. Grayson, 1997; Thompson, 1997). Researchers across disciplines recognize the narrative as a suitable method to examine the lived experience in a specific context Craig (2007). As for the tourism context, research flexibility and subjectivity are important (Ryan, 1995; 2000). In narratives, people should have the possibility to express themselves, as they want, freely. Through narratives, tourists can express their understanding of certain experiences and themselves. Narratives give a clear picture of how people understand their past and what meanings they give it (Riessman, 1993). Hendry (2010) as well points out that a narrative is not a method itself, rather during the narrative people come to the meanings. A narrative is the essential part of one’s identity formation, and through the narration, tourists understand their travel practices (Desforges, 2000; Noy, 2004).

Squire (2013) writes how narratives could be studied as people’s experiences rather than just as a representation of events. An experience-centered approach means that narratives are sequential and meaningful (Squire, 2013). Narratives are presented as human sense-making, reconstructing an experience, and are transformative (Squire, 2013). Key phrases that research participants use to identify the relation between the self, the society, and key patterns are represented through models of societal behavior.
(Chanfrault-Duchet, 1991). Chanfrault-Duchet (1991) states that the narrative, a system of meanings, brings two myths into play through which people express the views of their experiences. The first myth is about the collective history that refers to the socio-symbolic issues of femininity. The second myth, the individual’s history, is the core of the subject central narratives (Chanfrault-Duchet, 1991).

Sometimes a narrator, while telling his or her story, offers only one interpretation, the “narrative seduction”, as if no other interpretation is needed (Bruner, 1990). Bruner (1990) identifies another one, “narrative banalization”. This happens when the narrative is so socially well-known that the interpretation happens automatically. So, the narration could be in different ways (Reissman, 2011). Different genres for narration include farce, tragedy and travel saga. The analyst must understand why the narrative was developed in a certain way and why a person did it in this specific manner (Reissman, 2011). A narrator can take on different roles depending on how he or she would like others to see him/her in a specific situation: a victim of circumstances that has no power or the one that has control over actions (Reissman, 2011). People can shift between positions.

In this study, the participants’ travel life histories of the participants help deepen understandings of travel practices within a large historical and social field. Understanding through storytelling is natural for people (McCabe & Foster, 2006). Storytelling is the instrument for interacting with others in society. In the tourism context, experiences shape people’s life-world when they travel to different places, getting to know other peoples and cultures, and their memories (McCabe & Foster, 2006). All this together is a part of lived experiences, which people tell in their stories, the stories that show “the type of person ‘we like to think we are’” (McCabe & Foster, 2006, p. 194).

The stories people tell may not necessarily happen but represent interpretations of their experiences (Bruner, 2004). Individuals use their imagination when telling a story (Riessman, 1993). They choose the order of the events and the meaning they put into them. A story told in the form of a life story provides the researcher with several possibilities (Adams, 2006). First, there is a chance to see the path of the person becoming who she or he is. “Memory is reconstructive and fallible”, so a life story is not the source of what really happened in the past but a mirror of what is happening now (Adams, 2006, p. 85).

Quite often the terms life story and life history are used interchangeably (Atkinson, 2002). The life history approach concentrates on how people tell about their lives (Goodson, 2001). There is no unique way of narrating one’s story. Two layers are in this process: the first one is interpreting the lived experience into a life story, and the second is placing the story into the historical context (Goodson, 2001). In this research the story itself and the historical circumstances matter. That is why I use the term life history instead of story.

The travel life histories gathered for this study helped connect the life and stories of people to the larger issues, such as social phenomena (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). Hatch and Wisniewski (1995) studied life history and narrative, asking scholars about different aspects in life history and narrative research. Pauline Chinn (cited in Hatch and Wisniewski, 1995) identifies life history as “composed of self-referential stories through which the author-narrator constructs the identity and point(s) of view of a unique individual historically situated in culture, time and place” (p.115). Life history, often used in sociological studies (Ladkin, 2004), is a method of collecting biographical data concentrating on the individual’s past.
When people tell about themselves they are not the same as when the particular story happened (Järvinen, 2000). Present moment is the prism for understanding the past. In this study, I am not searching for the historical truth but investigating the meanings that participants give to the circumstances that happened in their lives. The context of the research is traveling. Traveling is a line that goes through the whole life of the individual. It is not possible to put traveling into a specific box, especially in the complex Soviet and Russian context.

4.3 DATA COLLECTION

The study is based on the travel life histories of nine Russian women, ages 55–67. Women were chosen according to their age, residence and former or present occupation. During Soviet times, only a select few women could travel abroad. This study includes only the travel life histories of governmental workers, women.

Women only are the participants of this research. The undeniable belief is that the lives of women and men, especially during Soviet times, differed in gender role inequality. Being in line with the CCT approach, this study aims to go deep into the travel practices of a certain group and their shared meanings (Nairn, Griffin, C. & Gaya Wicks, 2008; Üstüner & Holt, 2007). The study’s rather homogeneous group of nine research participants allows me to focus on a variety of meanings they produce inside their sociohistoric context. This approach follows the path of CCT research (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). In addition representatives of certain generation share common values and focusing on Baby Boomers gives an advantage to explore this particular group.

This study’s historical perspective leads to habitus, which in Bourdieu’s works (1990) is not identified apart from the social context, and gender. All women were from Petrozavodsk, the capital of the Republic of Karelia in Northwest of Russia. According to Figure 3, Karelia borders Finland in the West, the Leningrad and Vologda regions in the South, the Murmansk region in the north, and the Archangelsk region in the east (Figure 3). In such a big country as Russia, life differed markedly by region. To get a better and clearer picture, this study includes interviews of women from the same region.
Culture frames the non-linear temporal/historical perspective in which individuals live (Hyatt, 2005). Thus, a qualitative method of life narrative interviews was used for this study. These travel life narratives describe traveling aspects of nine women’s lives during and after Soviet times. It is assumed that the lives of these interviewees were affected by the historical and economic events of their times. These interviews took the form of travel life history, when participants talked freely about their traveling during the life course. This process allowed me to join the travel practices of the individuals.

I collected the data mostly at the participants’ homes or another place where they could talk freely. The women chose where we met. In this way, they felt comfortable. After asking for permission, I used a digital voice recorder and took only a few notes, paying complete attention to the participant, including making eye contact. Each interview was about two hours. In the beginning of the interview I asked the participant fly back in time through her childhood memories and her very first trips. Following the narrative method, I tried to avoid interrupting the story and the women could choose what they wanted to share. When necessary, I encouraged the women to reflect more on their experiences to help me understand which issues shaped their habitus. It was unimportant to get all the individual’s travel life details, just those that mattered to the narrator. Going deeply into the meanings is more important than getting the facts (Riessman, 2008). So, in this study I was not searching for the complete details but for meanings that the participants put into words when telling about specific issues.

The interviews opened with question connected to their first travel experiences (usually childhood), which offered the context for further discussions. After that an informal conversation started, and the researcher role diminished. The focus was on context and eliciting rich descriptions of experiences. Participants revealed their own
subjective narrative, when presenting common themes that emerged from the data I went through each story to keep the individual’s voice.

In order to work with the participants’ travel life histories, each story was put in chronological order and constructed into a narrative form. At this stage, I translated the Russian text into English. I structured each travel life history according to a life timeline: childhood, youth, adulthood during the Soviet times and adulthood during Russian times. In line with the main life cycle stages and historical order, the stories offered the possibility to analyze how historical circumstances affected these women’s lives. These travel life histories are in the Appendix.

4.4 THE INTERVIEWEES

Table 3 is a summary of the narrators’ travel life-histories. Pseudonyms refer to each narrator. Except one, all other participants work in the sphere of education. In the USSR, for example teachers were expected to behave in a certain way according to political, moral, cultural and social expectations. There was a clear role of the Soviet teacher in society (Zajda, 1980). The word “role model” has two main tasks: education (obrazovanie) and Soviet upbringing (vospitanie). Therefore, government should raise educated and ideologically correct people to serve the country: young people with patriotic, honest and disciplined character (Zajda, 1980).

Except Marina, all other participants have university level of education. The language and feelings of educated people is more constructed and influenced over time (Aleksievic, 2004). Women who represent “simple” professions take their words and stories from their heart, not from books and newspapers.

The society, which the study participants of my study came from is hierarchical and unequal. From a socio-cultural perspective, gender is a society-based and learned behavior (Henderson, 1994). Gender roles and expectations come from our families, societies and cultures (Khan, 2011). Travel practices are strongly connected to the social and political context of the country where women come from (Green, Hebron & Woodward, 1990). Gender is a part of the framework of the present study based on the idea that women’s tourism practices of women differ from those of men.
Table 3. Description of narrators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna, 55</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Finances</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Father an engineer and mother an economist</td>
<td>Husband and one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizaveta, 67</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Management</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Father a service worker and mother a housewife</td>
<td>Husband and one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svetlana, 53</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Literature</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Father worked as a policeman, mother was a housewife</td>
<td>Husband and one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria, 48</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Medicine</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Father a military man, mother an economist</td>
<td>Not married, no children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentina, 66</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Economics</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Mother a teacher and grandmother chief accountant and teacher in the college belonged to the ministry</td>
<td>Husband, one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina, 66</td>
<td>College of Agriculture</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Mother a worker in the forest</td>
<td>Husband, two children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anastasia, 66</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Engineering</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Father mechanic, mother housewife</td>
<td>Widow, two children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olga, 67</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Both parents teachers</td>
<td>Divorced, two children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena, 57</td>
<td>Higher university degree, Information Science</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Both parents factory workers</td>
<td>Husband, two children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3 shows, almost all women are university level educated and work for the government. What differs is their family background. During the USSR times, people who worked for the government had better possibilities to travel; they had privileges and blat, referring to more opportunities. “May you only live by your salary”, a famous threat from the Soviet movie Brilliant Arm (Brilliantovaya ruka) (Cutler & Gaidai, 1968), describes the USSR situation with the low salaries and people trying to do several jobs. Despite Soviet propaganda about a society without class differences, the reality was the opposite (Wegren, Patsiorkovski & O’Brien, 2006).

Zickel (1991) divided Soviet society into strata based on occupation, education, wage, residence, nationality and membership in the political party. According to him, ownership was insignificant matter because the state owned everything. He continues that based on socio-occupational characteristics, Soviet elite were involved in the leading positions in the party, military, security, and high level of cultural intelligentsia. The white-collar workers were highly educated, for example scientists, military and police officers and the blue-collar works were in manual labor, for example in transport of construction. The last group were the agricultural workers, the least well paid and the least educated people.

Focusing on Bourdieu’s habitus, this study prioritizes social class issues and goes deeper into the lives of certain social class. During Soviet times, the middle class consisted of people with higher education and certain workplace (Gladarev & Tsinman, 2009). The Bourdieu’s distinction could be applied in the Soviet context to the cultural capital rather than economic (ownership). The narrators in this study were mostly in education, the teacher profession (primary and secondary school level)
was one of the lowest paid in the USSR. One possible influence of the low payment is gender, as the three-fourths were women (Zickel, 1991).

In the case of Valentina, she had no father but her grandmother worked at the college, which belonged to the ministry. Back those days such colleges or universities were created in order to educate certain specialists that were needed according to the economic and social strategy of the country. Teachers’ salary in such institution were three times higher than the usual teacher salary at another college or university. Maria’s father was a military servant, which meant many trips and privileges for him and his family. As described above, his profession belonged to the white-collar worker group. As for the other narrators, family financial possibilities were similar, mostly represented by blue-collar workers.

Later the family status affected the way women traveled, Table 3 shows that all the narrators except Maria are or were married with children. The next chapter discusses this topic in details, especially in the section devoted to gender.

4.5 THEMATIC ANALYSES: THEMES AND MEANINGS

The theoretical framework of this study includes culture, habitus and gender, through the life phases of subjective individual histories. To apply this framework to the study I chose thematic analysis to identify and analyze narrative themes. This method served my research purpose, allowing me to connect the results to the theoretical framework and find new insights. It enabled me to analyze each woman individually, to find similarities and differences among the interviewees.

Thematic analyses provide the opportunity to organize and describe the data detail and to interpret different issues within the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as a systematic method to group data is under categories and codes. Thematic analyses give the possibility to understand data through categories and themes (Bryman, 2008). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest a step-by-step guide for thematic analysis. The stages in this research run according to their guide.

Phase 1: Familiarization with data and transcription

I collected the data interactively during trips to Petrozavodsk. After collecting all the travel life histories, the data was transcribed into Russian. Having a Master degree in Russian language and culture I consider myself qualified for this task. Each story was about 12–15 single-spaced pages in Russian. Braun and Clarke (2006) strongly recommend rereading all data before starting to work with it. Before starting to analyze I went through all the texts once again to be sure I noted all the issues. The data consisted of exactly the same words, expressions and in some cases mistakes as told.

In order to work with the participants’ travel life histories, each interview in the Russian language was put in chronological order and constructed into the narrative form. Levinson and Levinson (1996) characterize the life-course with four eras: childhood and adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood and late adulthood. I structured each travel life history according to the life timeline: childhood, youth, adulthood during the Soviet times and adulthood during the times of Russia. It was necessary to divide adulthood into the parts before and after as these are two different realities the women lived through.
After chronological and narrative structuring, I translated the Russian text into English. None of the interviewers spoke English as a native language, and the dissertation is in English, so the translation was necessary. Language is important; through language people express meanings and influence how a meaning is constructed (Van Nes, Abma, Jonsson & Deeg, 2010). The story of a narrator is strongly affected by the language he or she uses (Bruner, 1990). Reissman (2001) talks about the philosophy of language when the language is seen as holding of meanings. The Russian language has sayings that are incomparable to English sayings (Wierzbicka, 2002). Keeping this in mind, I translated the participants' texts as closely to the Russian language as possible, albeit some needed minor cultural interpretations. I paid special attention to the sayings and metaphors that participants used, as they are especially challenging to translate while keeping the meanings. Summaries of each story are presented in Chapter 5.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes
After re-reading the data constructed according to the life timeline (childhood, youth, adulthood during the Soviet times and adulthood during Russian times), I created the initial codes. The codes were data-driven and found inductively. These codes involved key quotes (having the research aim in mind) and were grouped together under common headings and then into common themes. I did this manually, highlighting each sentence of the narrative with different colors. For example, when narrators mentioned, “we went there by ourselves” or “we traveled by ourselves”, these quotes went under the category “independent trips”. As well, phrases such as “if I had a chance I would go traveling now” or “I am dreaming of going abroad” went under the category of “travel dreams”. Later I compared these categories during the timeline of the women’s lives.

Phase 3 and 4: Searching for themes and reviewing themes
After reviewing the common headings, I grouped the data into potential common themes that arose from the data. An inductive approach identified meanings that came from the themes that emerged from the data. I went through each interview, and analyses, listed phrases under potential themes. These themes were clearly the topics that matter to the narrators to understand the construction of travel practices and the issues of being Russian.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
Braun and Clarke (2006) advise at this stage to analyze the themes, to think what each theme is about, and what aspect a theme represents. For example, the following codes “others do not understand Russians” and “no bad nations, only politicians” fell into one main category “Habitus”.

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As Table 4 shows, all together five categories emerged per each person’s life-stage. The life-stages “childhood”, “youth”, “adulthood during Soviet times” were in the Soviet period, and “adulthood during the times of Russia” went in the time after the USSR collapse. The first category, “traveling”, contains special features that characterized Soviet and Russian traveling. The second category “traveling and society” built around the norms and rules of Soviet society. The third, “gender”, contains the gender issues that affected the participants’ lives. The fourth, “Russianness and Sovietness”, is about participants’ self-identification of the participants as Russians (or Soviets) while traveling. The last category, “habitus”, includes individual sociological aspects, dreams, and the Russia and Soviet nation dependent meanings of the study participants.

**Phase 6: Producing the report**
In line with the main life cycle stages and historical order, the stories helped analyze how the historical circumstances affected the lives of these women. Thematic analyses were undertaken for each travel life history, linking the main categories and themes to the research aims.

I also started to connect the themes to a broader context. At this stage of interpretation, I was aware that different researchers can have different meanings for the same issues, affected by my subjective understanding (Bishop & Shepherd, 2011).

### 4.6 REFLEXIVITY AND LOCATING MYSELF
In such an interpretive study as this it is important to acknowledge myself and my impact on the research. Reflexivity is researcher’s ability to let him or herself into the research process of empirical material and writing stage (Feighery, 2006). Researchers often avoid the issue of subjectivity despite that everyone lives in a social world and are affected by the knowledge-production influencing them (Feighery, 2006). Qualitative researchers should define their role, the researcher’s reflexivity (Malterud, 2001) or positionality (Rose, 2001). Reflexivity is the difficult practice of writing from the first person or involving the researcher in the research process. Ateljevich et al. (2005) underline paying attention to the macro and micro forces that affect tourism knowledge-production. They continue that in the frame of reflexivity, researchers can identify themselves as human beings with past experiences that affect their projects and interpretations.

In consumer research reflexivity is a type of introspection (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993). Tourism researchers often ignore personal choices (Hall, 2004). Reflexivity is an important part in this study, starting from study topic, the research implementation,
analysis and writing process. Dupuis (1999) argues the researchers separate themselves from the texts while the stories that participants retell are still not only the participants’ stories. Dupuis (1999) outlines emotional aspects, usually attached to female researchers, which help understand others’ experiences more deeply while not disturbing the research process. A part of emotional issues is empathy, which is the ability to understand others and emotions as an advantage in cases when people study people (Eisner, 1991).

Participants’ voices are always heard through the researcher’s voice (Feighery, 2006). Along with that, Kozlova (2005) discusses the researcher from the position of cultural background. According to Kozlova (2005), there is a difference between the researcher who studies his or her own culture and the researcher who studies a culture, that is not a part of their cultural background. She continues that when the researcher studies his or her own culture there are positive and negative issues. In her opinion, experience about the study is a great advantage. The information a researcher is working with goes through his or her body and memory. There is a danger to interpret the information from just a personal point of view, as it would be the only right one (Kozlova, 2005). Tourism research is about human beings with their own thinking and feelings, who want to enjoy and make decisions (Decrop, 2014).

The role of the researcher is an important issue. When the researcher has an insider role, participants are more open and provide deeper insights (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). The insider position of the researcher gives an advantage in choosing the right research questions and having a deeper understanding due to the background knowledge (Hodkinson, 2005). Yet the insider position also has challenges. A researcher’s experience with a topic can influence his or her interest and motivation positively but could affect prior biasis, especially if it is not acknowledged (Holloway & Biley, 2011). The researcher’s role in the research process has three categories: research-based selves, brought selves (personal, social and historical background) and situation created selves (Reinharz, 1997). These selves should be considered as they affect how the researcher views social reality and understands knowledge-production (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

Having described the above background, I consider myself as a combination of an insider and an outsider. Together with theoretical choices and data resources, it is an advantage and strength of my study. I have the ability to get close to the participants and let assumptions to come into play during research planning, analysis and findings. To investigate tourism phenomena a researcher needs to mind the multiple realities, not just one particular “truth” (Jennings, 2010). Researchers can be somewhere in-between, to find a way to be both, inside and outside (Acker, 2000; Hellawell, 2006).

My situation with the research participants is mixed. I differ in age and current country of residence, but I share the same cultural background, native language, and gender. Nast (1994) brings the issue of this betweenness, which helps the researcher to be inside and outside at the same time.

I interviewed women. To understand women, one should be familiar with her social circumstances, the society she lives in, cultural issues and the aspects that shapes her everyday practices (Tannen, 1993). Generally, a woman interviewer has positive impact on the women she interviews (Reinharz & Chase, 2006).

I appear to represent of the last generation that has some Soviet Union experience, mostly the economically hard epoch of post-Soviet Russia and the freewheeling 1990s. I did not live in the USSR as an adult and the only issues I can reminisce from that time.
are memories and stories. My generation, born just before 1990, “the lost generation”, were ideologically disoriented, with no interest in political life and an absolute lack of patriotism (Pilkington, 1996). In public discussions some people compare life right after the collapse of Soviet Union to “being thrown to the forest”. Those who could survive did. The USSR and post-Soviet times are part of my past and as a result a part of me. Moreover, Soviet times are the part of each of the lives of the narrators as reflected in the context of traveling.

In this study it was important that the women I interviewed felt that I understood the meaning of the reality they talked about. While listening to a story, I learned more about my own perceptions on my experiences, on the reasons of thinking a certain way. The process affected me personally and was emotionally intense. Woods (1996) mentions thinking about the issue of being a researcher, the path that a researcher goes through, sometimes it is a way to discover something about oneself.

Subjectivity is present in both tourist experiences and the research process (Ryan, 2000). My age, background and gender impacted the research process. Scholars argue about the situation when a research topic is personal or has an emotional nature. Many scholars see this closeness to the topic as an advantage when the researcher can go deep into the experiences, as the topic is personally relevant (Dunbar, Rodriguez & Parker, 2002; Lofland & Lofland, 1995). I share this point of view.
5 ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL LIFE HISTORIES

This chapter consists of my own analyses of participants’ travel life histories based on subjective understanding, culture and background. This analysis goes through the following topics: Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times; norms and rules, gender aspects, Russianness and habitus.

Chapter 6 follows the theoretical discussion of these histories and follows thematic analyses. Translated and constructed narratives of the life histories of the informants are presented in the appendix.

5.1 ELIZAVETA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

Elizaveta started her story mentioning the financial difficulties after the war with only one possible to go on a trip for a child – an organized pioneer camps. Elizaveta remembered, “Parents got travel vouchers (putevka) and paid only 50% of the sum, you could not choose the destination where to send your child”. With admiration and a smile on her face she told about two nightlong trips by train to the Ukrainian camp. The associations that came to her mind about the childhood period were “the sun, the sea, fruits and the South”.

Elizaveta did not talk much about her childhood, and I gave her the right to do so. While talking about youth, Elizaveta said that the only way to travel was organized university trips. A good student, she got a chance to go to Chechoslovakia: “I got free vouchers from the student organization. Those who were successful in their studies or active in student life had the possibility to receive the vouchers. I did not get only excellent marks but I studied well, so I got a voucher twice”.

Even with a voucher people needed a permit to leave the country, one had “to get it officially allowed”. By her voice Elizaveta judged this Soviet practice. She used the phrase “officially allowed” also when remembering her first trip to Finland and said that, “everything felt different”. She used too little emotion, her story at this point was dry and fact-oriented. Only once did she express emotions during youth, describing her surprise when she noticed that people really cared: “I still recall that time when my classmate and I were walking and we saw how they were redecorating the building sides while the footing was covered with newspapers”.

Coming into Soviet adulthood times, Elizaveta mentioned her family for the first time: “As we didn’t have children and were more or less financially stable we got a trip from a tourist company ‘Intourist’ to Bulgaria”. Here she explained the possibility to travel with the fact that they did not have children yet, so Bulgaria was an option. Elizaveta identified her trip as “an amazing experience” that included the sun, the air and participating in “every organized excursion possible”, an ideal type of rest for her and her husband. She mentioned Bulgaria as a family destination also after the children got older, so they traveled all together.

From today’s point of view, the travel conditions were “normal” but extraordinary back then: “I remember we could receive a room with two single beds and a bed for a child. Along with that the room was spacious, the hotel was at the beach, they served free drinks for the customers, ice cream was free. We were simply astonished by such conditions”. Elizaveta especially paid attention to the word “free”, free drinks and ice cream, these issues certainly left an impression on her. She talked about the service during the trips in
the context of her middle-class life, with which she identified herself and compared it to the Soviet reality: “I am talking about the service opportunities we were given there, which we certainly couldn’t receive in the Soviet Union being middle class”, and one more time: “When my son turned four we went to Bulgaria one more time, and the service there seemed to be very appealing”.

Elizaveta said that Intourist took care of all the travel issues: “We didn’t get a foreign passport. Intourist had a specific document on us, which was shown at the border on the way in and out”.

The Soviet government regulated not only the destinations where people could travel but also the places people could visit. For example Roman Baths in Bulgaria were not a proper place to visit for Soviet citizens. The “Russian guide explained to us that it was simply not allowed to take Russians so as not to ruin the wall-paintings or something else”. The Soviet government implemented control everywhere, and of course travel, strictly regulating sphere that connected to relations with foreign countries.

Elizaveta accepted how the past was: “Certainly, there was one in the group who was watching because it was all in the system controlling everything”. Obviously, we were not told about such a person, but somehow we knew.” As Elizaveta puts it: “I cannot say that only civil servants could afford going abroad, anyone could apply for a trip - nobody knew who would get a pass”. Koenker (2003) writes about the nation-building effect of traveling and Elizaveta mentioned that, “but what actually existed was the focus of tourism planned for Soviet people, they all were patriotic”.

Elizaveta did not question her identity being proud of it: “I definitely can say I am a Soviet person to the core”. I almost did not interrupt her, but this time I asked what it meant to her personally. The first issue she mentioned was family upbringing: “In my family there was not any ‘want’ or ‘can’t’, we only had ‘have to’ and ‘must’, which is so different from the upbringing of people today”. When telling about getting a workplace at some point of her life, Elizaveta touched on the Soviet identity issue again: “There are few people who truly understand this ‘must’ or ‘have to’, they tend to know more of ‘I want, I will or I won’t’. This is how I was, this is why they took me, and I knew all of that. To say more, our mentality was different, which is still quite distinctive nowadays”. It seemed the main quality she associated with Soviet identity was doing the right things (in somebody’s opinion), not the things one really wanted. Elizaveta described the Soviet nature as passive and law abiding.

Elizaveta always tended to do what is right even at the expense of her family: “I got a child when I studied at the university. He grew up, I saw him at 9 in the evening when I came back from work. He opened the door and asked if I was ok, then he went to bed. When I left to work at 6.30 in the morning I gave him a key from the flat, checked his alarm clock, prepared food for him to eat before he left to school. My husband made a career in the government but said one day that I took care about other kids not my own. I could say that my child spent more time with his father back then than with me”. I was truly thankful to Elizaveta for this honesty and thought that to make decisions like this during Soviet times was far more difficult than now. The tone of Elizaveta’s voice changed, and I felt clearly she still remembered her choices; she was unhappy about each of them. Gender issues were far stricter during Soviet times.

After Soviet Union collapsed Elizaveta got more opportunities to travel. Due to the educational character of her work and her personal interest, she was always interested in tourism: “On our end people know that tourism had not existed officially until 1998, as it was a part of economics, a separate field. Therefore, there were not any qualified educational programs and materials connected to tourism.”
Politically times changed a lot, but people did not travel as much as they could. “People wanted to invest money into something they will need every day, not just for going somewhere and enjoying the time by spending money on traveling.”

A woman’s certain role in the Soviet society was built around the roles of a wife and mother. Having had a long career, Elizaveta mentioned it as if it is something women should be judged upon. I suddenly noticed that Elizaveta did not say anything about her own family trips during the Russian times and asked if she had any trips with her husband: “Unfortunately, my life was dedicated to work and I hardly ever had any holidays. Once we bought a family tour but my director told me I had to stay at work and I joined my family one week later”.

5.1.1 Analyses of Elizaveta’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times; norms and rules
From her childhood times, Elizaveta was influenced by the trips to the pioneer camps for children. Soviet children started to shape their traveling habitus within the system of pioneer camps. It was a normal Soviet practice to send the kids for several weeks to the camp to rest, play and do sports.

Back then, the main reason for the travel choice was affordability. In practice, there was no choice because one had to accept the voucher from the labor union and go with it. All the trips were organized and again no actual choice could be made. By being a good student one got the possibility to go on a trip.

The government and society shaped traveling possibilities. Elizaveta underlined the difficulty getting a permit for traveling. Thus when she eventually went on a work trip abroad, everything felt so different. Characteristics for the trip were important, and one never knew if they would get permission. Government control did not at the preparation stage for the trip, a KGB representative went with the group during the trip. Places that groups could visit were regulated according to the Soviet Union patriotic purposes. She told about this control in a calm manner, just explaining facts and defending how things were. After the opening of the borders Elizaveta traveled a lot for work and little with her family. She admitted that tourism itself was so new for Russia that there were no educational programs in this sphere. Expenses on tourism did not get priority. In her opinion, people wanted to invest money into something stable such as an apartment or datcha. It was not the time for buying an experience.

Gender aspects
Elizaveta presented herself as an atypical wife and mother, and even told that she could not devote time to her son. The narrator told about her husband’s critique about working too much. Elizaveta put working interests before her own. The only family trips she mentioned happened before she had a child and one they made when the child was small.

Russianness and habitus
Organized group trips were a part of the Soviet habitus. Elizaveta told about the restrictions before and during the trips and at the same time defended herself as a good person who anyway could not break any rule. She admitted that she is a Soviet person “to the core”, and that is why she does things as expected. Elizaveta misses the Soviet mentality and criticizes the mentality of people today.
Clearly, traveling was hard to organize during Soviet times and after. In addition to economic difficulties, people saw no value in travel. Buying something stable was better.

Elizaveta narrated her story from the position of a responsible person that put work first. Traveling during her life was more about work than about pleasure. She took a passive role when talking about Soviet times and the society in general. She did not criticize government much, I could feel that she just accepted it how it was.

Elizaveta mostly tried to talk about her adulthood during Soviet Times. The words “must” and “should” and her actions that she wanted to share identified her as a down-to-earth person with strong working values.

It was Elizaveta’s choice not to go into details about her personal life during her youth. She based her story more on facts and the society regime. She accepted things as they were. Only through some key words did I feel that her attitude towards traveling her youth was more negative than positive.

### 5.2 Svetlana’s Travel Life History

Svetlana had not traveled anywhere before she turned ten years old and got the chance to go to a pioneer camp: her school time was not filled with any remarkable trips, apart from going to camps for pioneers. In Soviet school, trips were used for boosting the study motivation: “Sometimes those who succeeded in studies or sports were chosen for holidays in Artek and they deserved that, no envy over that”. As Svetlana said, a pioneer camp trip was a normal practice, and those who were not rewarded knew that they did not deserve the prize this time. As for camp life, Svetlana did not feel that it was hard to live according to the camp schedule. Everybody knew how to behave: “People were used to be obedient, for example, woke up early, went to bed early as well, never escaped from adults.”

Children did not discuss the trips at school, not because of equality but because of different possibilities. In her childhood Svetlana did not want to travel: “I cannot say I was dreaming about traveling to some other interesting places as we all had close bonds with our homes and it seemed to have been scary to stay far away from home.” She always missed home.

Svetlana identified her late youth with a growing interest towards traveling: “Having graduated from school I started working and realized I wanted to explore some new places in the world”. The destination itself was not so important. The narrator underlined the desire for traveling.

She remembered particularly trips to the south of the USSR: “The traveling in the South of the Soviet Union started in the Caucasus. There were a number of such republics as Georgia, Armenia, Baku...”. Not all the trips were so easy to arrange, to get to the youth camp one had to make special arrangements: “You should have collected the recommendation letter and characteristics of yours”. Svetlana could not remember any other trips during her youth times and actually finished the story on this period with an explanation of the reason for the lack of traveling: “After the southern travels I got married and had children”.

Trips during the Soviet adulthood were mainly family trips for Svetlana, and in choosing the destination friends’ recommendations influenced the decision. The narrator remembered that it was challenging to get a voucher to the holiday destinations, so they traveled by themselves. According to Svetlana it was possible to buy a voucher, but vouchers to popular destinations were allocated to the enterprises.
There was a competition for the vouchers among workers: “While choosing the candidate they considered the working experience, the family status, whether you had children or not, their age and illnesses of both a parent and a child”. Once Svetlana was lucky enough to get a voucher, there was no destination choice: “It was not something I wanted but that was the place I got a voucher for”. When a person got a chance to go on a trip through the workplace there was no specific instruction how to behave. Svetlana remembered certain gender differences when traveling to the south of the USSR that made an impression on her: “While we were traveling in the southern areas of the Soviet Union we had things that struck me most. Once I remember getting off the train and seeing no women in the streets, just men, lounging away and goggling at us”.

The Soviet adulthood times of Svetlana finished when the USSR felt apart. She associated those times and her own state with “lead” and “blackness”. In addition to that, the feeling of uncertainty scared people: “Nobody knew what was coming. Life became harder. From the economical point of view, the denomination of ruble had started, the financial resources got more loosely”. Svetlana remembered the economically hard times of the 1990s: “In the 1990s, we had coupons for food. Meanwhile, the country was running out of provision and clothes. Those who had financial resources had not suffered that much, but there were times when one did know how to feed the kids. There was no money at all. We survived. That time has passed”.

She also recounted that this time affected people differently: “Some people were gaining in the process, someone was losing a lot. Everything they had saved up simply crumbled. Those who purchased cooperatives in time were obliged to pay off less due to denomination of currency. She describes her family as one, that did not lose and did not win, in her opinion a good thing.

Svetlana admitted that her attitude towards traveling has changed. She mentioned here the family situation as one reason: “I gained more freedom after the children had grown up”. The narrator described that now the times are better for traveling, which motivates her to go somewhere: “Nowadays we have more opportunities, thus I have relatives who are used to traveling to different places every two years. They tell us interesting stuff about countries so that my interest grew, like traveling to China, for instance”, “If I had a chance I would go traveling now. I would fly to Greece or India, which looks very appealing”. The only trip she mentioned was Finland, and in her opinion it was nothing special.

Svetlana’s story massive part devoted to Russia’s image abroad and Russia’s place in her heart through the political and national prism: “Thinking about all those countries and foreigners, I start thinking about Russians. I feel strongly proud of our history, our tsars like Peter the Great and Alexander, and Nikolai, extraordinary scientists, all those people of art, we are one glorious nation”.

She identified Russia as a country that is difficult to understand: “From time to time Russians are a mystery difficult to figure out even for themselves. To say more, we are unbreakable, as what does not kill us makes us stronger”, “Maybe they could be afraid of us because they cannot understand us. Maybe this is the reason”.

She even compared the country to the story of Cinderella: “There is a tale about a stepmother and a stepdaughter. The mother wanted to pester the life out of the stepdaughter. She made her stepdaughter work and had a bad attitude towards her. She nourished and cherished her real daughter. It all resulted in a strong stepdaughter and a weak real daughter.”

At the same time, the narrator put the responsibility for the attitude towards Russians on the shoulder of politicians and separated them from others: “I suppose there are no bad nations, only politicians who try to affect ordinary people”. She went even further in defending her home country, as everything she told about traveling practices
during Soviet times does not exist: “When thinking about trips abroad I think about how sprawling our country has always been and we had enough freedom”. Svetlana continued with her defending line: “Whatever people might think about us we are a great nation. We have always been open, generous, merciful and responsive”.

Despite that in her earlier speech the narrator talked about her motivation to travel, now she is concerned if Russians are welcomed abroad: "Why are we supposed to aspire to go there? So what if those people abroad live better? That is their own country. Outcasts are seldom welcomed. Russian people are not that welcomed either, so I would not want to experience that”.

5.2.1 Analyses of Svetlana’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times; norms and rules
As a starting point for traveling, Svetlana mentioned pioneer camps as the only way to travel during her childhood. In the camps, there were certain rules, and children had to live according to them. She admitted that she did not want to stay far away from home, so the lack of traveling was fine with her. Svetlana note people’s different opportunities of people to travel and put this as a reason for not discussing the trips at school. Soviet schools had a practice of giving trip awards to some pupils who succeeded in studies. Svetlana thought these pupils basically deserved the awards.

Her motivation to travel came after she started to work, and this desire was based on escaping home. The destination was not so important. The narrator talked about the practices of travel vouchers, recommendation letters and characteristics from her work place, but she did not present it as a difficulty. This process was just a part of travel activity.

Svetlana travelled to the south of Russia several times, then got married and started to travel with her husband. Getting a voucher to an exact place was difficult. She talked about the competition among workers and the choosing criteria. She admitted that the voucher system was not something she wanted because one had no right in choosing the destination.

After the fall of the USSR, Svetlana just wanted to survive those hard times, so her thoughts were far from travel activities. She described this time as hard, with coupons for food and a complete lack of financial resources. Something weird happened when Svetlana started to talk about traveling in the times of Russia. First, she said that now she has more opportunities to travel, she has gained more freedom and her attitude towards tourism has changed.

Then, her thoughts and intonation became serious and defensive. Svetlana remembered Russian national history and literature and the unbreakable character of Russians thorough historically different times. Instead of traveling, she talked about the great Russian nation and that Russians are not welcome everywhere because maybe others could be afraid of Russians. She accepted how things were during the Soviet Union with its rules and regime, but the relationships and acceptance of other countries made her defend Russians when the whole world is against them.

Gender aspects
As a young woman, Svetlana travelled to the southern areas of the USSR and was terrified to see no women on the streets, just men. Probably then she realized that gender roles could differ in different countries. The narrator described the hard times
right after the collapse of the USSR, for example, she did not know how to feed her children. In the context of traveling Svetlana admitted that she feels more freedom now that her children have grown up.

**Russianness and habitus**

Svetlana identified herself as a person who used to miss home a lot. She did not suffer from her lack of traveling. During her studies at school she was not the one who received any trip as an award for the studies or activity; she accepted this and thought that those who deserved trips got trips. There was no envy, just acceptance. The first time she felt like she wanted to discover new places was after her school graduation. Her personality started to change and it did not matter where to go, just somewhere else. Not having a choice where to go was a part of Svetlana’s traveling practice. People knew that they had to have the right characteristics to go on a trip, to go through a certain competition. When Svetlana did not get the voucher, she went on a trip with her husband independently, which was more expensive.

Through the whole story Svetlana underlined that her life was average. She did not win nor lose. The narrator chose to talk about patriotism and the relationships with the West, as it is clearly a part of her. She compared Russia with Cinderella and the West with the ugly stepmother. Even admitting that she could not choose where to go during the USSR, at the beginning of her story she said that she had enough freedom at the end. Some destinations appealed to Svetlana, but others’ acceptance of her as a Russian and the acceptance of Russia as a country was crucial for her.

5.3 **MARIA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY**

Traveling was always a part of Maria’s life because of her father’s work: “I was born in a family of a military servant. For this reason I had been traveling since my birth”. The southern destinations stay in her memory. A part of her childhood memories included the trips the whole family took together: “More than that, I certainly remember my parents and I went to the south to stay at a holiday center for around three weeks every summer since I was three”. They also used to visit relatives. Maria still did not like long car trips but appreciated the pleasant things such as the weather and the sea: “Funny enough I still can’t stand all these road trips, but the best memories relate back to palms, warmth, good weather, and, of course, the sea”. The weather was not the only difference between her home in the Republic of Karelia and the southern destinations: “people were not as reserved as they were in Karelia”.

According to the narrator, traveling did not bring any special financial difficulties. Her family got used to traveling: “All this traveling could have caused some worries and concerns, but not for us. That time was different, and we were used to moving around so much”. Maria was satisfied with her childhood regarding traveling.

Maria continued regarding her first university trip to Yugoslavia right before the collapse of the USSR: “I got a holiday package as a student”. The narrator mentioned she felt very intrigued about the trip: “All the excitement was about the fact that it was the very first group trip abroad”. She remembered how she spent her time during the stay: “We spent time staying in a hotel at night and having outings in the day time”. Maria told about this trip with sentiment: “I liked everything either because it was my first time abroad or the fact it was a group trip”.

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Participants could take only a certain amount of money: “I still remember I had 50 rubles exchanged into foreign currency as we were allowed to exchange a fixed sum of money at that time. So 50 rubles was the money I had on me”. Maria told about other restrictions during the trip: “The leader of our group was responsible for this part. He was in charge of all the formal aspects, and we were not supposed to walk by ourselves”. According to the narrator, members of the travel group knew there was someone observing the behavior of the group but they did not know exactly who the person was. Despite that the group was under observation, Maria did not feel any discomfort: “Frankly speaking, if you were traveling anywhere you were hanging out with the other people of the trip. For example, I went with a friend of mine. We were together all the time and never felt pressured in terms of behavior or anything else. In fact, we didn’t feel like we were being followed”. Another thing that Maria admitted the lack of product availability in the USSR and remembered the things she bought during the trip: cosmetics and clothes.

Maria did not tell much about the destinations she visited and just mentioned some of them: “After the abroad experience I would travel to Sevastopol, Yalta, Minsk, and Riga with my sister or friends”. Cyprus impressed her: “What struck me most was the fact that nobody followed the traffic rules. I had noticed that as I am a driver myself”.

Maria expressed her opinion on traveling in general during the Soviet Union times: “Back in those days people didn’t use to travel abroad that much. It was more about going to the south of Russia, and everybody went there at more or less the same frequency”. A weekend trip made by her friend during the university times impressed her a lot: “However, I remember one girl from the final year at the university who went to Yalta or Sochi with a boyfriend for a weekend, just for a couple of days, and that was astonishing. It was amazing because she could come from a chilly spring and go into the warm seaside”. She underlined two issues, that a girl went on a trip with her boyfriend (not yet a husband) and experiencing the summer just for a few days. Maria explained the girl’s behavior right away: “It was not about being brave or something, she went there with a fiancée she was going to marry one day”.

There was a period in Maria’s life when she did not travel: “Starting from 2000 I resumed traveling after a significant break”. She explained the lack of traveling in light of financial difficulties after the collapse of the USSR.

The first trip she remembered after starting to travel again was to Finland: “About 10 or 15 years ago I took a trip to Finland as I was meeting a good friend of mine in Turku”. Visa issues were organized differently back then: “During those days they issued visas based only on invitations”. The country made a good impression, as she mentioned the peacefulness and people living according to the rules. Trips to Finland are a part of Maria’s travel life now. She appreciates the easiness of travel organizational issues: “Currently I am used to driving to Joensuu, for example, which is not difficult. The visa is issued for a year and they simplified all the paperwork”. Travel to Finland enabled her to manage the trip without speaking foreign languages. The narrator appreciated service in Russian: “Another important aspect is language. When I travel to Finland I can make all the arrangements by myself. On the contrary, if you go further you’d better speak English. For example, I just came from Greece. No one spoke Russian there. All in all, service in Russian is very important”.

Maria’s travel dreams are now connected to exotic destinations: “If I had a chance to go anywhere I would probably choose Vietnam”. The narrator thought that four or five hours is enough to get to Thailand: “I have always dreamed to see something exotic, Thailand, for example. It is not that far in terms of a distance because I don’t really like long flights. Three or five hours is my limit”. Maria underlined that she does not like
long journeys by car either: “Moreover, I can’t stand long road trips, which spoils all the impressions a journey can bring.

At the end of the story Maria expressed her opinion on Russian tourists in general and compared them to others: “In my way of thinking, Russians are more emotional. Surprisingly, judging from my recent experience in Greece, Russian tourists were more well-behaved than others”. For her personally it is important to see different people and try new cuisine: “While traveling you are in the mixture of nationalities”; “I am not a huge fan of exotic foods, but I would like a change in meals for sure. I am always up for something new, so to speak”.

5.3.1 Analyses of Maria’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times: norms and rules
Maria, a child of a military servant, changed her place of residence several times during her childhood; travel itself was not a new practice in her life. She remembered her parents traveling regularly every summer. She described her childhood as a happy one with good financial possibilities to travel. The first time the narrator came to the issue of Soviet travel rules, was her first trip abroad. She could not walk alone without a group or decide how she would spend her time. Maria also mentioned a person watching them, but her attitude towards this was calm and seemed not to bother her.

According to the narrator, it was typical to travel to the south of the country during Soviet times, and everybody had the same possibilities to do it. She explained her break in travel with the general financial difficulties of these Soviet times and did not touch on the topic of travel restrictions.

Maria paid attention to trips to Finland. She compared the visa regimes and underlined that she appreciates the ease of travel: the visa for one year and the location nearby. Service in Russian during the trips is an important issue.

Gender aspects
Maria touched on the topic of gender when she talked about the deficit of goods in the Soviet Union and her willingness to buy different clothes and cosmetics. The second time Maria underlined the role of women in society and appropriate behavior was when she talked about her university friend going on a vacation with her boyfriend (not yet a husband) for a several-day trip. She explained that the woman’s behavior was according to the norms as they were going to get married soon.

Russianness and habitus
Family trips influenced Maria’s travel habits in different ways. During the whole story, Maria repeated that traveling was a usual practice in her family, and the family used to change the place of residence often and additionally traveled regularly. Due to the long journeys with the family, she admitted that she could not stand trips that require long traveling to the destination, by car or by plane. At the same time, she dreamed about such exotic destinations as Vietnam or Thailand. Maria identified Russians as a positive and special kind of tourist, adequate, relaxed and emotional.
5.4 VALENTINA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

The first trips that Valentina remembered were with her mother to the south of the USSR: “I remember when I was a child my family used to travel a lot, starting from Crimea and finishing in Batumi, Georgia, to the south of Russia every summer and only there, no foreign countries for holidays or vacation”. Her father died when she was a little girl, so she lived with her mother and grandmother. It was difficult financially to go on a trip for her mother, who worked all her life as a teacher. Her grandmother was an accountant and could help them: “It took some certain money to go on a vacation there, we went there only thanks to the above average income of my grandmother, which distinguished her from a typical Soviet Union worker’s income”.

It was a normal practice at school to tell how one spent the summer in front of the class, and, in Valentina’s opinion, although it was nice to have something to tell about the summer vacation at school, it was not about the status. “You could speak in front of the class, the teacher praised such attempts. There wasn’t a single idea about your social status enhancement because of spending your summer somewhere”. In addition to the oral stories, children had to write essays about their summer vacations. In general Valentina admits that she thought about visiting other countries abroad: “I guess going abroad has always seemed to be desirable either now or back then when the border was closed”.

During the university studies, Valentina went to different cities inside her home country: “After school I went to the university and continued going to different cities of Russia either with my grandmother or with the university”. It was not easy to go where she wanted, so her grandmother took care of the trip beforehand.

According to the Soviet practice there were mostly group trips: “Most commonly, there were organized trips where you were supposed to buy a voucher and go on a journey with a group of people”. In the narrator’s opinion, the number of people who wanted to travel was bigger that the trips offered: “There was not a chance they didn’t collect groups. They could always find some travelers wishing to buy the trips”. The practice of trip rewards, for good grades and an active social life, also continued at the university: “I remember us traveling to Lazarevskoye like holiday-makers without any booking in advance. At one point my two girlfriends and I were granted a trip by the university for the good studies and proactive attitude”. Valentina remembered one more Soviet practice that she did not know about (or did not pay attention to): “Some people strongly believed that only the right people were given an opportunity to go abroad. They even said there had been some KGB agents in those groups of tourists who went abroad. I didn’t even know about that”.

Even when a person got the possibility to go on a trip, he could only take a certain amount of money: “One had to go to the state bank with a passport, including a visa, and get a limited amount of exchanged money, I remember a dollar was worth 60 Russian kopek and fin mark was in accordance with the international exchange rate”. In addition the narrator could not go where she really wanted.

Valentina could not travel abroad much but she could see if others did so: “When I was studying at the university in the second or third year somewhere in 1980 or 1981 people started having imported clothes, and I remember my friend’s father was working as a professor who took work trips abroad. So he used to bring her skirts, chewing gum, and these shopping bags you get in foreign shops”.

Those people who could travel were different, in Valentina’s opinion. They, for example, had goods from abroad: “Those who could buy jeans were trendy. That I remember
even from my university times. Those people were thought to have connections which were not true in real life”. Connections (svyazi) or blat, which could be translated as bribery, in the Soviet context is not illegal and based on trust and good relationships. During USSR times people knew that “the others”, the West, had better life and possibilities: “Obviously, there were different living standards. Foreigners seemed to get big money”.

The narrator compared traveling before and after the fall of the Soviet Union and admitted that the process became easier: “After the fall of the Soviet Union, most importantly, you did not need any holiday voucher, any official invitation, nothing because earlier you had to submit your family or relatives’ proof for financial support of your stay abroad”. Her first trip abroad happened after the collapse of the USSR.

She remembered her first trip and the unusual silence that she could hardly experience in a city in Russia: “The very first time I went abroad was to Berlin. My first, greatest memory of Berlin was absolutely nobody in the streets after 9 pm, which looked like a cemetery to me”. She also remembered the silence and cleanliness from another trip to Germany: “However, when I went on a work trip to Hachenburg we used to walk in the evening on the paved alleyways, and again nothing or no one to hear apart from your heels over these streets. What also struck me the most in Berlin was clean streets and shops”.

One more destination abroad that Valentina remembered was Finland and visas were a challenge: “We also started going to Finland, but it was a whole another story with visas that time. You had to go to Saint-Petersburg because you could only get a visa for 10–15 days, there were not any multi visas at that time”. Then Valentina explained that she came to Finland several times and not only for tourism purposes: “I kept coming back to Finland, for example, to work at a strawberry farm, also work trips to Germany, and, of course, Turkey and Egypt”. The narrator said that she could afford trips to Finland because of her good salary. She even bought a car on one of her trips: “Moreover, I even bought the first model of Zhiguli for 40 rubles. Meanwhile it cost four thousand rubles back at home”.

Turkey and Egypt were for many years the most affordable and therefore popular destinations. For Russians it was important to have entertainment services: “Since 2000 I kept traveling with my family, mostly to Egypt and Turkey, and we tried all the attractions for tourists possible”. Valentina remembered the variety of goods from her trips abroad and compared it to the USSR: “In the Soviet Union we didn’t have any variety of clothes at all. Everything was dull and plain, the same plaid coats for children. And everything was different there, so many colors, different styles and cuts. I even remember buying Salamandra trainers for my husband.

In Valentina’s opinion the matter of social status in the context of traveling came to her life only after the collapse of the USSR: “Still, when the iron curtain was opened then you could start talking about your social status and your traveling achievements”. And even then, she underlined it was more about the feeling than about a real life situation: “Back in those days there was the feeling you could go abroad easily, but very few actually could”. This narrator talked about her traveling dreams for the first time during the whole story: “I never wanted to go to America. I cannot say why exactly, just some aversion or sort of. Many people went there in search of the American dream, but I never wanted and do not want to now. I wish I could go to Sweden or Norway, or Argentina, which is surprising. The only barrier is a financial one now. Otherwise, I would go right away”.

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5.4.1 Analyses of Valentina’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times; norms and rules
The destinations in the south of the USSR are the ones that Valentina remembered. She identified herself as one who could travel even while being raised by a single mother, with her grandmother’s income above the average. Valentina identified several practices that were a part of the Soviet school, like a compulsory essay about your summer. The narrator underlined that it was necessary to buy a voucher in advance, and that the number of people who wanted to travel was bigger than the trips offered. Valentina remembered that one was allowed to exchange only a certain amount of money before the trip and she always thought that people abroad had much better lives.

The narrator did not talk at all about the instructions during her Soviet trips of norms of behavior. She admitted that mostly it was not possible to choose where to go but she did not feel negative about this. Still she compared the standard of life of her family and life abroad and criticized the lack of goods and hard economic situation.

Gender aspects
Several times during the story Valentina talked about clothes and how she felt not having the wardrobe she wanted for her, and then for her daughter. She felt sad and dissatisfied because everybody wore the same type of clothes, the same colors with poor quality. She also remembered the trendy jeans that somebody who traveled had. The narrator associated the possibility to travel with the opportunity to look better.

Russianness and habitus
In her childhood Valentina had the possibility to travel. Thanks to her grandmother. She admitted that her grandmother’s salary was above average, and this was the reason she could travel. At the same time, she talked about equal opportunities among pupils at school, and that nobody discussed where they went. In practice the Soviet school forced students to think and tell about the trips, whether in an essay or via a presentation in front of the class. Valentina identified people who could travel as more interesting than others and stated that she wanted to travel more even when the border was closed. In my opinion, there was a silent conflict between the story she wanted to tell and how things actually were.

The narrator expressed her opinion about people who could travel during Soviet times and said that others thought that those people had connections. In reality, they did not. She slightly criticized people who could have something else while others could not, here in the context of traveling. For the first time Valentina mentioned the aspect of status when talking about traveling after the USSR fell. Also here she said that it was more about the feeling and not about real life. People thought they could travel but mostly they could not.

Valentina compared herself also when she told about her travel dreams. She does not want to go to America. She had Norway and Sweden in her dreams. The narrator hardly ever mentioned her nationality and did not associate herself with a home country. She did not talk much about the political environment.
5.5 MARINA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

Marina said that in her early childhood, her family had no possibility to travel. In her family she had a mother, a factory worker, and grandmother, who worked as a school teacher. Being a teenager, she had her first trip to Leningrad where she went alone:

“The first trip I remember was a trip to Leningrad. I was 14 and was studying in the 8th grade, and as we didn’t have much money I was brave enough to go there by myself to visit my uncle”. The second trip was to visit her relatives and to work: “After a year when I completed the ninth grade I traveled to Arkhangelsk to visit my relatives and work in a sovkhoz, where the students of agricultural college used to collect herbs, cut hay, etc.” In Soviet times, students were recruited for work in a sovkhoz (usually translated as a state farm). According to Marina, it was not difficult to go on a trip like that: “The coach tickets cost 35 kopek, and one could buy it easily at the railway station”.

Being a young woman, Marina, went on a trip with her friend: “In 1974–1975 we took a trip to Abkhazia, as I had a friend who originally was from the area”. The narrator planned the trip beforehand and then, according to her, it was not a problem to go where she wanted: “We used to plan trips to places like Tuapse or Gelendzhik in April or May and then in the summer all these trips usually came true”. She mostly traveled independently.

In general the narrator just wanted to get somewhere outside her home city. It was enough: “I guess I didn’t want to visit a precise place, I was quite satisfied by taking a week or two in the summer somewhere in Krasnodar or Abkhazia”. In her opinion, it was a usual desire not to have a precise destination in mind: “Some people were dreaming about traveling to the sea, to lay in the sun to get some warmth”.

Marina remembered organized trips as in a group with certain behavioral rules: “We took a number of organized trips to Nalchik, Pyatigorsk and Zheleznogorsk, which means we were in a group of people who were supposed to follow some rules, for example, never come late and be on time, not to cause scandals or misbehave, always to inform when leaving somewhere, etc.” She expressed her opinion on Soviet traveling and her own attitude towards it. She would have liked more freedom and more possibilities to choose the places to visit: “Probably, we felt kind of limited when hearing all these rules because coming from a village, I wished I could have visited more places of interests”.

Marina did not feel that somebody was watching them during the trip but noted the leader who was responsible for organizational issues: “There was not anyone who watched and followed us completely everywhere, but we had a leader of the group responsible only for organizational aspects”.

Sometimes she got trip vouchers through the labor union at work: “As for my work I could apply for a holiday package, which simply required filling in some applications and buying tickets”. In addition to those trips were independent trips. Independent traveling during Soviet times meant that a person could be without a travel group and he or she could live according to her or his own schedule. That is what Marina talked about: “We had to find and rent a flat and choose whether to cook or to eat out, to spend time on the beach or stay at home”.

Marina remembered that before the 1990s life became very difficult, but her family still traveled: “We continued traveling like that even through Black Monday, when the meltdown occurred”. Here the narrator probably was referring to the Black Monday of 1987, when stock markets all over the world crashed. She thought that this was the beginning of economic difficulties which impacted traveling: “To my thinking, it became more complicated to go on with the traveling, the extra nulls in the currency, the delay of salary payments, etc.”
She also remembered the collapse of the USSR well: "When the Soviet Union fell we all were watching TV, the displacement of government, the live coverage of all of that. Life was very uncertain during this period, and Marina said it was not about travel dreams: “I cannot say we were dreaming of something more at that point, I had a family and all the issues related to that. Moreover, the living standards were not motivating”. The narrator focused on her work and did not think about visiting other places.

Ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Marina made her next trip: “The first trip after the Soviet Union fell was after 2000. We took a self-drive trip to Anapa”. Anapa is a town in Krasnodar Krai, Russia, on the Black Sea. After the trip the narrator wanted to share her thoughts and feelings about it with her friends and relatives: “Having come back from a trip to Anapa I showed the pictures, told stories of how wonderful and beautiful it was there, how good it was to have a vacation there. In fact, we used to travel to the South of Russia every year when the children were little”.

She talked about the main reasons for traveling: “The first reason was, certainly, the sea. Another one was the escapism from all everyday problems when you didn’t have to clean, wash and cook. We enjoyed spending the time by relaxing and going to amusement parks as we hadn’t had any of those here”. As for the other trips, the narrator mentioned Joensuu, Finland, located near her home city, Petrozavodsk. She was unimpressed by this trip and clearly needed something more: “Thus, I recently visited Joensuu because my friends invited me. I can’t say I was impressed because it was more like a shopping marathon; we rushed around stopping by some shops and drug stores”.

Marina came back to travel dreams and admitted that she was interested in traveling. The destination is still not so important: “In the future, I am thinking of traveling somewhere abroad. I have nothing in particular in mind. The only thing that matters is the duration of the journey, I would not want to spend half a day flying to Thailand, for instance. She compared the ability and desire of dreaming now and during the Soviet period: “People liked that (traveling) but did not dream about going abroad. It was not like that. To a certain extent, it was a bit more expensive and complicated”.

Marina does not speak any language but Russian. This does not stop her travel motivation. She relies on the idea that Russians are everywhere. At the end of the story, this narrator came back to her travel goals: “Currently, in 2014, I am dreaming of going abroad. It appears to be not the deepest dream of mine because of some ‘buts’, although I wish I could go and see what happens in different places”.

5.5.1 Analyses of Marina’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times; norms and rules
A single parent raised Marina, and she mentioned that she had almost no possibilities to travel during her childhood. There were a few trips when she visited some relatives. Once she made a trip to Leningrad and then to Archangelsk. She said it was not a problem to buy a train ticket. One just had to have money. Being a responsible child in the ninth grade she combined her trip to her uncle with the work in a sovhoz. She did not touch on the topic of traveling during her youth at all.

After getting married Marina got a travel voucher through the labor union to the Mineralnye vody, a town in the central Caucasus with sanatoriums and healthy mineral healthy water springs, they did not have to pay for a trip at all. She went there by train, and the group was already waiting. Marina remembered that the group leader gathered them together and gave the instructions on how to behave.
One could not come back too late, there was no drinking, no scandals, and only proper behavior.

I asked Marina several times about her attitudes towards those rules. She answered that during those times people just felt much shyer. Nowadays, people have much more freedom inside. Only once, she admitted that she would have liked to go to see a concert but there was another organized program. It was a norm, the Soviet practice. Marina had the same calm attitude towards everybody knowing that there was a representative from the KGB on a trip without knowing who it was.

Independent trips were also a part of Marina’s travel life history during the Soviet times. She appreciated no rules during trips of this type. They could come and go according to their own schedule.

Traveling in the times of Russia started for Marina after a break of ten years, in 2000. The times were so hard that she had not been on holiday for six or seven years. First, they made a car trip with the family and then visited Crimea, as it was Marina’s dream. Several trips to Finland did not make an impression, just some shopping and nothing special. Finnish cleanliness and silence were surprising for her.

Gender aspects
Marina talked about travel dreams during the Soviet times; there were no dreams because she put family financial needs first.

Russianness and habitus
The narrator made an impression as a practical, down to earth person. She came from a family who could not afford to travel, so for a long time travel was not a part of her life, no her dreams. Several times during her story Marina said that she could not even dream about traveling or specific destinations. At the same time “just to go somewhere to the seaside” was a typical expression for her. She underlined that there were no dreams, just plan. Going abroad was absolutely out of the question because in Marina’s opinion travel abroad was impossible.

Marina compared Soviet and Russian travel behavior. In her opinion Soviet behavior was not just the rules of the government according to which people should live and behave during their trips but that people were much less “free” inside. She said that people felt limited. Surprisingly, she did not connect the regime as the influencer of people’s behavior. When telling about the independent trips the narrator remembered that they could do what they wanted to do, and she enjoyed those trips.

The transition period from the USSR to Russia was a hard one for the narrator. The number of details she remembered show this fact: the TV program with the tank, people participating in this programme. At the same time, she distanced herself from those events. She identified herself as an “ordinary person” and distinguished herself from the people in power. The Russian cultural and mental frames supported Marina’s view. The rejection of issues outside of a close circle of people’s lives is typical for Russians.

While telling about the hard period after the Soviet times, Marina shared her feeling during those periods. During the same story, after actually saying that she could not travel during her childhood, youth and Soviet adulthood, she noted that the Soviet period was much easier in terms of traveling. She did not have a feeling of getting more freedom. Conversely, things became harder. It was easier to live in the Soviet Union.
As for the Russian period, Marina said that she would like to go somewhere. She is motivated and the destination is not so important. She would like to know how people live abroad. She does not connect status with the possibilities to travel.

5.6 ANNA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

Anna associated her first childhood trips with pioneer camps and Kherson, Ukraine: “I have flashbacks from my childhood when apart from pioneer camps my family of four, and I used to travel to Kherson.” After they purchased a summer house (datcha) they started to spend summers there. Anna described her summer house time as “voluntary-compulsory” (dobrovol’no-prinuditelno). In Russia, people used this ironic expression when something is voluntary in theory but compulsory in practice: “We purchased a summer house and spent summer time there voluntarily-compulsorily”.

Pioneer camps were an important part of Anna’s childhood. She underlined that the camps were an affordable and available activity for everybody. It was a normal practice usually implemented through a parent’s workplace: “A child could get a trip to a camp through a labor union at a father’s or mother’s work”. Anna said that at school everybody was equal, and there was no need to show off after the trip to camp.

Very few could travel abroad during the times of Anna’s childhood, so when she remembered a relative who could afford traveling it came with an explanation: “My aunt was working as a dentist that time and had no children, so she could afford traveling abroad”. Furthermore, Anna mentioned her aunt’s trips in the context of bad habits, especially for Soviet women. “She used to tell me stories about the trip; however, from what I can recall she took on some bad habits. She started to smoke.” Certainly the aunt had an important role in Anna’s life in the traveling context. She even conceded that her aunt and the goods she brought from abroad (it was a time of deficit in the USSR), started Anna’s interest in visiting other countries: “She (the aunt) came back and she brought a flower printed pack full of beautiful souvenirs like chewing gum, pens, etc. That probably arose my interest, and I started thinking about traveling”. One could say that Anna devoted her childhood life history mostly to her aunt.

Her youth started with a trip to Tallinn with her sister: “I went to Estonia. It was not abroad, but it was like a different world”. In those days Estonia was a part of the USSR. Anna described that the culture in general was different. When asked what exactly she meant by this, surprisingly the first thing she mentioned about culture was customer service. She did not go into detail, probably thinking the reason was clear to anyone asking. The Soviet reality with the lack of goods and long queues to get low quality products affected how people were served. People who worked “in trade” had many connections and more possibilities than others and often acted in a rude manner.

Anna also involved history and politics into the language issue, as speaking Russian was not enough or it could even have a negative effect. “I also remember times when you could be refused service if you were speaking Russian in Estonia”. According to the narrator, she felt uncomfortable because of the lack of language knowledge: “I wish I could know the language, not to have any communication barriers”.

As for herself, Anna felt good during the trips. It was easy to behave well for her, but she mentioned that not everybody had the same behavioral norms. “I felt ashamed of some of our fellow Russians from the countryside. provincials let themselves speak loudly on a bus”. Anna went deeper into this topic, in this case the Soviet upbringing: “I personally think everything depends on the upbringing, which is why they were behaving a certain way”.

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After saying this Anna started to search for something or someone responsible for a person’s behavior. First she named family as the most important organ: “I would say the scale of Soviet upbringing depends on the family wholly.” Then suggested that governmental organizations were the ones that were in charge of this matter: “Komsomols, Little Octobrists, school, etc. but at the same time institutions framed and disciplined us”. Anna started to defend her views through the prism of Western values and norms: “For people living abroad it might seem weird because freedom is what is good for them, like it is a norm if I just put my legs up on this table”. Clearly Anna distinguished the “right behavior” of people with good upbringing and the “wrong”, maybe even Western behavior. She continued on this topic with patriotism and Soviet identity: “Wherever I have traveled to I have always felt strong about my home country and had a strong feeling of belonging to the Soviet Union.”

Anna started to tell about the trips during her Soviet adulthood through her working trips. She underlined that before one could leave, he or she should be considered “reliable”: “Before starting the journey your application and characteristic were processed when they were looking for such significances as good qualities, membership in the Communist party.” At the same time Anna identified herself as good person with the right behavior and values: “I don’t remember any instructing involved in the process, probably, I was brought up properly and had it all in my character”. After that she touched on behavior during the trip and still remembered the instructions, even if she did not need them: “It is important to listen to the instructions of your guide”. When asked if she had the feeling that she “should” do something in a certain way, she replied, “Me personally, yes, I felt that I represent my home country everywhere, so I should not let it down.”

Anna stated that all the trips she remembered from the Soviet times were group trips, not only while traveling from one place to another but also while being in the city: “We tried to stay in a group because it was a new place. People were scared to be lost”. Travel activity itself was a new thing for Russians. When asked about her own desire to travel, she admitted that even though the time was hard she still wanted to see other places: “We tried to live in the real life without illusions; however, one could never stop dreaming about traveling”. According to Anna, the role of mother and wife influenced her travel dreams: “I have always wanted to travel but then I got married”. Her child was born in the 1990s. The narrator admitted that the time was different but defended it right away: “The 90s? My child was born. It was a hard time. Ministers changed all the time, the money reform, Kashpirovskij, Brasilian soap operas… But I knew that after the maternity leave I would have my job back, not like now.” She talked about her feeling of certainty back then, which she misses now. Anna expressed regret over the breakup of the Soviet Union, and that the uncertainty about tomorrow is worse than everything that happened during the Soviet times.

Memories about the journeys during the Soviet times after the collapse of the Soviet Union came with a story about a working trip to Saint-Petersburg: “Once we spent quality time in Saint Petersburg for a cultural program. We left the hotel at 7 in the morning and came back around 11 in the evening. This is the holiday I crave.” Here Anna pictured her ideal trip, cultural attractions and no time to rest. After this her voice got more serious, and she started to explain her attitude towards traveling now: “I do not want to travel now because I am a patriot. Why should I bring my money to a foreign country?” She explained her current unwillingness to travel with patriotism and with the feeling that the whole world is against Russia: “My money should stay in Russia. If they (the West) do not want us, everybody should suffer.” It is important for Anna to feel welcomed and she put this psychological aspect first: “Every time you travel somewhere
you should believe you are going to be a welcomed guest. Nobody would like to come across with negativity like at a restaurant in Poland. They say there is a sign ‘Russians not served here.’”

At the same time Anna was more positive about the future than about the present. She would like to travel but puts family first: “More than that, if I can definitely state I am aspired for traveling in the future, my husband does not. So this along with the financial part makes Karelia [Russia] the only perspective I see for my future tourism.”

5.6.1 Analyses of Anna's travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet times; norms and rules
Anna paid attention to children camps as her travel activity during the childhood. Mostly organized by labor unions at the parents’ working places, these destinations were remarkable to her. Equally remarkable was the feature that Anna underlined through her whole story; there was no boasting about traveling because of equal opportunities, and she appreciated it.

Her own motivation to travel awoke with the stories and presents of her aunt who could travel. Anna identified her aunt as different from others because she had the possibility and could afford traveling. It was not a norm back then, neither socially nor individually.

Anna was mostly proud of the Soviet times, except when she compared Soviet customer service to the other countries she visited. She admitted that the service in her home country is quite poor. During the trips, people from the Soviet Union stayed in groups and listened their guide’s instructions due to the lack of language knowledge. To go on a trip in the first place, one had to be accepted by the workplace through an application process. Certain characteristics were important for the trip. Anna considered herself as right and reliable.

Through the whole story, it was clear that the acceptance of Russians matters to Anna. She remembered from her trips negative service or reaction because she spoke Russian. This interpretation can be counted as a feature of her own personal character, but also as something that was fostered among Soviet people.

Gender aspects
Anna presented herself as a reliable woman and a good wife who put her family’s interests first. She described the travel life of her aunt as something Anna wanted but explained smoking (definitely a bad habit for Soviet woman) as something her aunt could only have “brought” from her trips abroad. The narrator said that in general she wanted to travel in the past but could not because of the marriage. Nowadays, she would like to travel as well but probably cannot, due to her husband’s lack of interest in travel.

Russianness and habitus
Cultural context surrounds Russian datcha. The summerhouse is more than just a place to visit for Russians. At least during the Soviet times, the datcha was far from a place of rest and associated with hard work. This is what Anna talked about when mentioning the “voluntary-compulsory” nature of her childhood datcha trips. In a way datcha experience started to form her travel character of doing what is right.
Anna paid great attention to doing what should be done and the assumption that someone else knows better. According to her, travel behavior and the behavior in general depends on a person’s upbringing. Such behavior could be influenced by family or a governmental organization, but not the person him or herself. Born and raised in the city, she mentioned that city people behave in a better way in general. Basically she wanted to present herself in this specific way. According to her people should show discipline. “Wrong behavior” comes from the family, the place a person lives, or even from trips. According to Anna, she did not need any instructions because of her proper upbringing.

The narrator identified herself as patriot and explained her unwillingness to travel abroad due to patriotic values and behavior. She is proud of being Russian, as during trips she represents the country. The interview took place during the Ukrainian crisis, with political and economic sanctions against Russia. Anna expressed her opinion that she wanted her money to stay in Russia if the West is against her home country. She wanted the West “to suffer” as well because she is a patriot. When traveling, she stated she needs to feel that she is welcomed and she paid attention to the welcoming issue during her whole travel life history.

Anna accepted and defended the Soviet regime, identifying Russians as “different” and “hard to understand”. She felt nostalgia for the Soviet Union, when everything worked and was predictable. She wanted to travel but is far from a dreamer. Living a real life is closer to her values.

5.7 ANASTASIA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

The first travel destinations of Anastasia’s childhood were when she visited relatives in Leningrad, and then in the Republic of Karelia: “I remember myself being a child who took regular trips to Leningrad due to the fact we had relatives and a grandmother living there. After my granny died I used to travel to the village Salmi, which is in the Pitkaranta area (in the Republic of Karelia), which was, of course, so much different from Leningrad”. The summer after her first year at school she went to a pioneer camp. According to Anastasia this trip was only possible because her father got a voucher through the labor union: “Having completed my first year at school I started going to the pioneer’s camp in Lososinnoye which was available thanks to some holiday packages father could get at work in the Onega tractor factory”. Despite that Anastasia’s parents divorced and the times became financially hard, she still was able to go to the pioneer camp: “When I was in the eighth grade my parents got divorced. Therefore, the finances became worse”.

Anastasia explained the financially hard times: “Speaking about other places, we simply didn’t have money for going anywhere. There were three children in my family while my father was the only one who was working”. The narrator underlined that traveling was not a priority and explained that they could not even buy necessary things such as clothes: “At that time we didn’t spend much trying to earn money for traveling or buying things like clothes”. In her opinion the financial situation was like that in other families, too, and traveling was above the basic things: “People seemed to be decent and humble. Moreover, they were more concerned about basic needs. I remember sewing some clothes for myself and I felt just fine among other peers”.

Anastasia talked about her youth and her experience as a worker in the construction brigade, and underlining that she did the right things: “After graduation from school I had worked for a year when the chief engineer helped me to apply for a study place at a university.
in Saint-Petersburg in 1967. I was studying at the university, which meant we were supposed to join a construction brigade because that was the right thing to do”. She mentioned the feeling of belonging to a core value of a Soviet person: “In addition, it was all about a feeling of belonging to a community, because it was what a Soviet person would do at that time”.

Anastasia’s life changed when she met her husband and got married: “During my third year of university I got married and had a child the next year. There was no way for traveling at that point”. When it became financially easier and the child got older, the narrator, along with her family, went to the south of the USSR: “What we had at that time was summer holidays in Feodosia, which is a part of Ukraine nowadays, and a part of the Soviet Union previously”. Anastasia strictly divided her life into two periods in the traveling context: “All my traveling experience can be divided into two periods: trips I took within the country called the Soviet Union and traveling abroad”. When some people started to talk about traveling this motivated Anastasia: “Anyway, people started talking and thinking about going abroad more, so did I”.

Anastasia started her trips abroad before the collapse of the USSR: “Since 1980 the trips abroad of mine have started”. In 1980 Anastasia went on a multiple destinations trip to the capitalist countries, and to get there she had to fill in the application and have good characteristics: “It was quite difficult to go to capitalist countries at that time. Therefore, before going you were supposed to apply and get your application and characteristics approved by Party Committee”. I interrupted and asked if she could tell more about the characteristics: “They were responsible for making a decision about the moral fiber of mine”. The narrator could not tell exactly what the moral fiber meant but did connect moral fiber to behavior and communicating with foreigners: “Before going somewhere we were told what to do and not to do on the trip, what people to contact and not. For example, we were told not to be late because it was simply not polite”. According to Anastasia it was easy for her to follow the rules and confirmed it with her role as a mother: “I was known to be a good mother, my son studied well at school”. In addition, she identified with her profession: “I was disciplined and worked as a teacher at some point, so it was not a problem”.

During this trip, Anastasia experienced customer service in a new way: “I remember when we arrived at the hotel in Czechoslovakia the bellman took our luggage and was on his way to bring it to the rooms. It was a bit overwhelming because we were not used to that kind of attitude and service”. Another thing she clearly remembered was the availability of soda: “We had Fanta at breakfast and lunch, which was also unusual”.

Another destination Anastasia wanted to talk about was Romania: “When my group and I were on a trip in Romania, on Tisa, people paid attention to us. We paid attention to shops and availability of goods we saw”. The narrator did not feel that her freedom was somehow restricted. She took the rules for granted: “We got some free time in between some scheduled activities when we could go shopping. We didn’t question all the rules and scheduled activities”.

Anastasia has her roots in Finland, so it was possible for her to move to Finland at some point: “In 1989 I registered for the waiting list to move to Finland due to the Ingrian origins of my mother”. She got the invitation to move but did not have enough courage to do it: “When we got closer and it was time for moving I just didn’t go because I was afraid of the effect it might have on my son’s studying due to the fact it was considered as a part of military education to a certain extent”.

After the collapse of the USSR, Anastasia visited Finland. By accident, she had the chance due to her connections: “I joined the deputy group accidentally thanks to a mother
of my child’s classmate, and it appeared to be so much different from the socialist countries I had visited before”. The narrator appreciated the possibility to visit different places and took part in the activities: “It wasn’t just because of the variety of goods but the beauty and cleanliness. This trip to Finland was much more eventful and richer when we looked around, visited governmental institutions, libraries and kindergartens and, of course, all those aqua parks”. The trip made such a big impression on Anastasia it as the one and affected her motivation to travel abroad: “Having returned from the trip to Finland I decided that if I ever traveled somewhere again it would be traveling abroad only”. The next trip to Finland was for working purposes: “This is why what I did was to go to Finland one more time to work on a strawberry farm”.

Russia had a waiting list system. A person could book a trip through the labor union representative: “When my younger child got older we went to Yevpatoriya in 1997 as we had been on a waiting list for a holiday package of a health resort”. In the 2000s Anastasia discovered new sea destinations abroad: “I started going to Hungary, Croatia, Turkey and Egypt. I never loved sea that much but having enjoyed it once, you can never stop wanting to come back”.

After telling the story about the destination she wanted, Anastasia expressed her opinion on traveling in general and what motivated her to visit places: “On the one hand, all these pictures and stories look and sound so appealing. On the other, the depreciation of the ruble provides worries and a lack of confidence from financial and political points of view. She touched on the political viewpoint of traveling and on the situation inside the country in general: “My husband and I watch news every day and follow all the current affairs happening around us. It is all a bit tense, all these military supplies we have in the air and on the sea. People are scared of a war possibility. During the presidential elections in 2012 people did not have such sincere beliefs in Putin. However, nowadays, his rating has increased among Russian people due to his actions, Crimea, for instance. Respect and authority are in the air”.

Anastasia supported the Russian president and at the same time missed some parts from Soviet times, the Soviet ideology: “The only thing that is completely lost in this process is the ideology which we had in the Soviet Union. Frankly speaking, it’s all about the lack of education and influence on our youth. I am not against globalization, broadening our horizons as long as the youth is brought up based on true ideals”. She did not explain her viewpoint more than that, but felt that the political situation is coming partly back: “To compare things now with what had been during the Soviet period, probably, some of the things are coming back”.

Anastasia compared her travel life and possibilities to her children’s lives and admitted that her life was very different: “Nowadays, when my children are adults I see how they travel to Europe, rent cars and take road trips in Spain or Portugal”. She defined the lack of language knowledge as one of her reasons for not traveling so much: “I think if only I could have spoken foreign languages, probably, I would have wanted to travel further, like my children do nowadays”.

For the first time the narrator talked about her travel dreams: “When I think about traveling in the future I can definitely say that if I have a chance I would gladly travel to Europe, to such countries as France and Italy. I wish I could visit such places of interest as the Coliseum and the Eiffel Tower”.
5.7.1 Analyses of Anastasia’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times; norms and rules
Anastasia described her childhood as financially hard: the only person who worked in the family with three children was her father. At the age of 12 her parents divorced, meaning even less travel possibilities. Despite this the childhood brought some travel possibilities: she visited relatives and went to pioneer camps. The norm for this narrator was that traveling was far from the basic childhood needs during this time. There were many more essential issues.

Anastasia considered working in the Student Construction Brigade (SCBs) as one of her travel experiences. SCBs were part of the system of voluntary activity for young people. The narrator explained her working in the brigade as a socially good activity and the possibility for travel during the summer.

As an adult, Anastasia started to travel and going on a trip was difficult: the Party Committee had to approve application and characteristics. She explained the norms and rules of the USSR, travelled calmly, and underlined that a person should know how to behave abroad and whom to contact. She did not feel restricted; some free time for shopping between the scheduled activities was enough for her.

After the USSR collapsed the nature of her traveling changed, she started to choose the destinations. The narrator identified the first trip to Finland as an important for her motivation to travel abroad. She talked about Finland’s peacefulness and cleanliness. Visits to the southern destinations made her fall in love with the sea. Anastasia expressed the desire to travel more, but the financial and political situation in Russia had worried her.

Gender aspects
Anastasia touched on the topic of gender few times, only in the context of the right travel behavior during the Soviet times. She underlined her strong moral identity through the role of a good mother and her son’s successful studies.

Russianness and habitus
During the story, Anastasia repeated the words “it was the right thing to do” several times. Living according to the rules and society norms was important for her. Anastasia identified herself as an average person. She started to think about travel when other people started to talk about it. She talked proudly about her roles, teacher and mother, as they signify person’s moral character. She did not question the rules and scheduled activities and she did not give the impression that she regretted her lack of travel possibilities. The only thing she regretted was the language barrier. She thought language stopped her from traveling as much as she would like to.

The narrator chose to talk often about the Russia’s political situation now, the popularity of the president and the lack of ideology of the youth. She continuously compared her travel life to her children’s travel behavior and accepted that they live in different realities.

The first time Anastasia mentioned travel dreams was at the end of her story. She thought about the destinations she would like to visit, and different tourist attractions such Coliseum and Eiffel Tower.
5.8 OLGA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

Olga grew up in the countryside near Petrozavodsk, where both her mother and father taught in a local school. In Olga’s opinion, her parents’ occupation influenced their ability to travel: “My parents were both working as teachers. This is why it was quite difficult for them to travel anywhere”. She explained this fact with their low income and mentioned the possible trips that they could get through the labor union: “Due to the fact that my parents were teachers with a below average income, they could only get the holiday tours from work”. She explained that her childhood period in general was financially hard.

Olga stated that if a pupil wanted to go on a school trip, he or she should have positive social behavior: “If you wanted to be chosen for school trips your active position was highly appreciated.” Olga was chosen for several trips: “This way I went to Pryazha and to some other school trips mostly”. Pryaza - located in 50 km from Petrozavodsk, Russia - is the countryside of the Republic of Karelia. Olga mentioned Finland as a travel destination of those pupils who could travel: “When we were studying at school people used to go to Finland and people got some excitement from that.”

According to this narrator, pupils who had the possibility to travel were recognized by the goods they owned, which could not be purchased in the Soviet shops: “You could say instantly that people had come from Finland as they put those lovely dolls, which were impossible to buy anywhere here, in the windows. Olga talked about the lack of goods and her willingness to possess in a trip to Saint Petersburg: “Once I remember I went to Saint Petersburg to buy a dress instead of visiting any places of interest”.

The pioneer system was part of Olga’s childhood and school times. She was proud of her belonging to pioneers and the whole Soviet Union. She even cited the poem of Vladimir Mayakovski’s “My Soviet passport”, “I definitely recall the time when I recited the “I pull out of my wide trouser-pockets duplicate of a priceless cargo…” I had shivers with this … and envy, I’m a citizen of the Soviet Socialist Union!’ It felt like… I was a pioneer”.

The narrator visited the southern part of Russia. She did not mention the destination but remembered how it felt in the context of her own appearance: “I had a good looking body and nothing to wear like all those good-looking people. The reason was probably a deficit of clothes in the country”. Olga mentioned that they were told how to behave during the trip, but it was not too hard for her: “We used to be given some instructions about what to do and not to do during the stay. I don’t remember that well but it was not that harsh, I suppose”.

Olga described the moment when she got the motivation to travel, when she studied at the university. In her opinion she lived with a moral curtain: “I can detect exactly the moment when this passion for traveling was born. I guess, it was not connected to when the iron curtain opened but more with my moral curtain from the rest of the world”.

During her Soviet adulthood Olga could not travel abroad, which was hard financially - year to save enough money for traveling: “During the Soviet period one had to save up during a year to travel to the south. People did not make that much money. Speaking about going abroad, well, I did not have money”. Still she remembered some trips, one to Bulgaria, and the behavior of her and her friend when they did something unscheduled and met a foreign person: “I remember the horror we felt when we arrived late in Bulgaria because we decided to stop by the cafe to meet my husband’s uncle”.

The narrator connected the feeling of not behaving a certain way to a lack of patriotism: “When I was on a journey I never felt to behave in a certain way probably because I was not a patriot”. At the same time she stated that she used to be more attached to her country than she was at the time of the interview, but still she cared: “It involved all the love a person can have for their country. With time this love disappeared. I still hurt for Russia”.

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She mentioned another trip to Georgia and its memorable places: “When we were in Batumi I was amazed by the dancing fountains there, I still sometimes think that was something I will never see in my life”. She felt like everything was different but could not identify what the feeling was about: “It was so much different from the Soviet life. However, I cannot say what I felt at that moment. I could not detect whether it was a good or a bad feeling”.

Olga identified the collapse of the Soviet Union as a “time of uncertainty”: “When the Soviet Union fell there was some uncertainty. People were scared. I don’t exactly remember where I was and what I was doing”. The first trip she remembered in the 1990s was to Finland with her daughter: “When my daughter was 17 or 18 we went to Finland. The very first time there was a trip to Huhmari (in North Karelia, Finland) from a labor union”. Olga was impressed by the big swimming pool and shopping possibilities: “We were impressed by the big pool we saw there; there was nothing like that in Petrozavodsk back in those days”.

This trip made such a big impression that Olga understood once again that she needed to travel more. She mentioned European countries and cultural activity as a part of her dream during those times: “After Finland I understood I have been dreaming to go to Italy or France, to go to the theater in Milan, for example”. The trip to Finland reminded her that people have limited time, with still so much to be done even for a dreamer like her: “People did not live forever, and there were so many things to see and learn. I appear to be a romantic or a daydreamer here living in fantasies.

Finally, during the trip to Finland Olga observed people and made a conclusion about their behavior: “When we were in the pool I noticed something interesting about how foreigners (and also Russians) behave in a new environment. When they find themselves abroad among strangers they tend to shout and behave wildly. Maybe it relates only to uneducated people”.

Olga underlined that traveling is important, even without visiting cultural attractions. A trip to France made an impression on her: “Any trip broadens your horizon even without a visit to a museum. I remember all these beauty and impressions I was experiencing when I was in Paris in 2010. Of course, it was so much different from more plain cities like Helsinki or Joensuu”. She thought that her inner feeling while traveling has changed with the time: “Nowadays I don’t experience any low self-esteem. All people are just very different”.

The narrator talked about Russian identity and admitted that the strong feeling of belonging has disappeared. She still thought that those people who do not live in Russia cannot talk badly about the country: “That patriotic feeling I felt while reciting Mayakovski has vanished. I still can’t stand when people speak negatively about Russia. We do have some disadvantages but I do not let anyone who does not live here speak badly about the country. And that is a lot”. She defended Russia and thought that sometimes Russians are not always treated the right way: “Probably there are some who don’t treat Russians well, on the other hand, there are many who really do.

5.8.1 Analyses of Olga’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times: norms and rules
During her childhood, Olga travelled little because her parents lacked the financial possibility. She felt that she could improve the situation with active participation in the school life. Socially involved children were awarded trips. As her parent’s salary was below average, they could get some trips through the labor union. She did not tell about any trip she made together with her parents. The narrator separated herself from the people who could travel; she noticed the items that others brought from their trips to Finland.
The narrator underlined Soviet period’s financial difficulties in the phrase about saving a whole year for a summer trip. This was the only way to go on a trip in her opinion. Only once did Olga mention that maybe there were some restrictions during the trip, but she did not remember them, and these restrictions had little influence on her. At the same time, she was scared when she talked to her relative abroad in the café, and thereby did something against the group instructions and schedule. Olga said that everything felt different during the trip but she did not go into detail. According to her, she could not describe the feeling.

A trip to Finland made a big impression on Olga: the big pool and shopping, the fact that they had nothing like that in Petrozavodsk. After the trip Olga understood that she would like to travel more, she mentioned destinations such as Paris and Milan.

**Gender aspects**

Olga did not feel confident about her clothes. She mentioned the lack of possibilities to buy proper clothes. Once she even replaced the cultural program in Saint Petersburg to go shopping there. She also remembered how she looked during the trips to south Russia, regretting that her good-looking body could not be dressed in good clothes. She compared herself to the better-looking people. Later she admitted that she probably had a low self-esteem, but her esteem improved with the time.

**Russianness and habitus**

Through the story Olga talked about the feeling of belonging. Being 67, she still remembered feeling proud to be one of the pioneers. She expressed this feeling through Mayakovski’s “The Soviet Passport” poem. In the Soviet system children were raised in the atmosphere of social activity. Active participation in the school life was the right thing to do and rewarded, also with trips. In Olga’s opinion she had no need to travel before she went to university. She named it as a “moral curtain”, referring to the “iron curtain”, the imaginary border that divided Europe in the West and the Soviet Union.

Olga considered herself as a person who loves her home country, Russia. Nowadays she did not feel the same as she used to but she felt offended if anyone who does not live in Russia said negative things about the country. She did not give a right to other people but Russians to do so. During the trips Olga had no need to behave in a certain way and she connected this to a lack of patriotism. Here she gave an opposite argument of her own opinion.

Olga had no travel dream during the financially hard times after the USSR collapse. Then later she identified herself as a daydreamer living in fantasies.

### 5.9 ELENA’S TRAVEL LIFE HISTORY

Besides one trip to the sea, traveling was not a part of Elena’s childhood. She spent her summer time in the datcha: “All these traveling habits have not been typical for my family. My father was a family man, apart from that we were occupied with a country house in summer but once we took a trip to the sea”.

She remembered a family trip to Riga, including the accommodation and activities. The cultural program connected to the times of war impressed little Elena: “I remember us on an outing which was interesting due to the visit to a church and a place of convicts. It
was interesting because it represented the war and they showed us how the prisoners were kept”. She did not remember any instructions on how to behave or what to do during the trip: “While we were on a journey no one told us about the restrictions of things we could or could not do”. Afterwards, she noted that Russians were probably unwelcome in Riga: “Later I heard people did not like Russians that much there”.

Elena stated that during her school studies her classmates represented different nationalities and social groups, but this mix bothered nobody: “At school I was studying with different nationalities like Georgian and Belorussian, people of different incomes, affluent and ordinary. We never thought of differences between people”.

The narrator explained the lack of traveling due to her home-loving personality and family needs: “I have always been a family woman because I feel comfortable and safe at home, which could have been a possible reason for not traveling that much”.

Even though Elena described the Soviet times with equal possibilities for all people, in reality it was hard to organize any travel: “During the Soviet period people had more or less the same financial resources, and it was quite challenging for people to go abroad on a vacation”. She had no desire to go anywhere. She spent time with her kids, and that was what really mattered: “I was at home, my kids were with me. That was all I needed”. The times were financially difficult and her focus was on basic needs: “The main concern was to feed and to buy clothes for my children, and it was just enough”.

The narrator did not remember any special feelings about the collapse of the USSR. She talked about acceptance: “When the Soviet Union fell I did not feel like panicking or something, probably because I was ready to let things go as they went”. She felt positive about the USSR: “only good memories”. Elena explained that she appreciated the USSR safety and cultural equality: “There was no discrimination among people. It did not matter whether you were a Russian or not. People lived a safe life”.

The narrator explained the lack of traveling with the family duties: “Nowadays I have two daughters and a granddaughter, too. Probably these are also the reasons we are not so active in terms of tourism”. She added other family members as an explanation: “One more thing, if I had not had responsibilities like my husband, my cat, fish, a summer house and work in the garden - all of these responsibilities surpasses the desire to go”.

Elena thought that traveling became more available to people psychologically and through information: “I believe nowadays it is easier to go traveling because people possess more information and are more used to trains, for example. There are fewer concerns about the whole idea”. In Elena’s opinion she needs someone to motivate her for a trip: “Nowadays, I would probably go somewhere if I had a motivator who would go with me or ask me to go with them”. She could accompany her daughter, not just leave for a trip for herself: “For example, if my daughter had invited me to stop by the grand Opera in Paris … Until I am not pushed by someone I don’t feel the need to go anywhere”. The interest for a travel exists in Elena’s life, especially when supported by stories about different countries: “But sometimes I have a feeling… like to see all these TV programs about different countries. But nobody ever pushes me”.

Elena remembered that during any trip she did not feel anything special: “When you are there it does not feel that different, especially when you walk around the city, stop by the theaters, museums, etc.” There were possibilities to meet different people: “From a tourist perspective, some people are hospitable and welcoming, some are not”. She showed that there are nice people in her hometown as well.

Although the narrator considers traveling a good reason to save money: “In terms of the financial aspect I could definitely spare some money on a good trip”. Elena pondered if personal reasons are strong enough reasons for her traveling: “Maybe it would be useful
to change the surrounding environment and go somewhere just for yourself, for inner peace and relax but, on the other hand, it feels the same good at home”. She doubted if traveling was worth it all: “Apart from that, it feels so sad because in your heart you want to come back home, the place where someone is waiting for you”.

In the end Elena judged the Soviet rules from today’s perspective: “I personally think if a person wants to go somewhere they should be given a right to. However, some people were banned from outbound tourism in the past, and some are still not permitted”.

5.9.1 Analyses of Elena’s travel life history

Travel patterns during Soviet and Russian times: norms and rules
At the beginning of the story Elena stated that traveling was not a part of her parent’s practice, and she could not form travel habits during her childhood. She remembered the cultural program oriented around the war in Riga. The narrator underlined that there were no instructions on how to behave during the trip. During Soviet times Elena did not travel, and she identified herself as “average”, and according to her, nobody could travel in this period. Besides the only trip to Riga, Elena did not travel at all.

The narrator stated that times differ now in terms of traveling. Much more information available, and people have stimuli to travel and people doubt the whole idea much less. Traveling is more the norm now. Without giving any example, Elena explained that for her there was nothing special about the trips, just some new places to see. She even defended her hometown, where one could find welcoming people.

Gender aspects
Elena presented herself as a woman for whom family is first place, which explained for her lack of traveling. The narrator appreciated the feeling of safety and comfort at home. During the USSR collapse times Elena concentrated on her motherhood. Everything was fine with the kids and that was enough. The narrator had additional reasons for not traveling – her husband, home and grandchildren duties. She connected these duties straight to traveling.

Russianness and habitus
According to Elena’s words, she was among children of different nationalities and from different social groups during her school studies. Nobody thought about nationality factor as an inequality, nobody was interested.

Elena told about her first childhood trip to Riga, what she liked about and adding that she heard that Russians were unwelcome. She had no personal experience, but others’ opinions matter to her.

She did not describe the collapse of the USSR as a dramatic experience and accepted the political events that happened during this time. She identified her feeling towards the Soviet life as positive. She missed the financial and social equality, and safety. The narrator did not have only warm feelings to traveling in Soviet times. She thought that people should always have the right to travel.

Then she came to her own travel motivation and used many different reasons to explain why she did not travel: her duties as a mother, grandmother, wife, and the owner of cat, fish and a summer house.
6  DISCUSSION

6.1  GENERAL ISSUES

This research seeks to enhance the understanding of Russian women’s travel practices, before and after the collapse of the USSR. Chapter 7 describes the theoretical conclusions of the study analysis, while this chapter discusses the main research questions that connect two sub-questions:

1) How Russian women interpret their travel life histories?
2) What meanings do they put into travel practices?

In qualitative research, theory only provides perspectives and acts as a “source of inspiration” (Moisander & Valltonen, 2006). Scholars criticize tourism research for its lack of focus on how tourists construct their travel practices within the social context (McCabe, 2005). I aimed to help bridge this gap and to explore the subjective experiences of women in a tourism context. The study draws on the stories of nine Russian women and their travel practices. All the interviewees lived both during the Soviet era and in post-Soviet Russia, so their stories touched on politically and socially different times before and after the collapse of the USSR. The central issue of this study is these women’s subjective constructions of travel practices within Soviet and Russian society. The analysis revealed that the socio-historic context, culture, habitus and gender play important roles in the lives of the interviewees.

I focused on the female representatives of a certain generation, Baby Boomers, people who lived through the fall of communism and then were part of a new society. Certain practices became a norm for these women; these practices became a part of their habitus. Bourdieu’s concept of habitus gave me the possibility to go deep into the Soviet and Russian reality, inside the travel context through the lives of the individuals. This study sees travel consumption as a matter of culture that forms and shapes the behavior of the individuals. Based on this, the socio-historical patterning of consumption, a research domain of consumer culture theory provided a contextual approach to this study, where meaning is socially constructed.

Having focused only on travel practices in the beginning, I did not know all the topics that would relate to and influence the interest of this study. While the interviewees were telling stories related to travel, they were sharing other details of what was happening in their lives. The examination of travel life histories provided the opportunity to demonstrate how culture and society affect women’s travels, and which aspects matter to them personally. Clearly, the narratives operate on two interrelated contexts, the individual and society.

The historical discussion in Chapter 2 revealed that political and historical reasons constrained travel practices during the Soviet times. The changes in era, from USSR and Russia, opened doors, but different restrictions still existed. For the nine women in this study, the dominant themes connected to: 1) travel practices, 2) traveling and society, 3) gender, 4) Russianness and Sovietness and 5) habitus. These themes are personal, socio-historical and cultural in nature.
Personal issues reflect the life, family circumstances, and personality. The socio-historical and cultural themes include the topics that come from the social and political contexts, and the women’s roles. As in real life, here it is also difficult to separate between the personal and social. All of the themes interrelate and depend on each other. Nobody lives in a vacuum, so relations with others matter also in a traveling context. This lack of a vacuum is evident directly from women’s travel life histories in that several important people or groups of people influenced their travel life: parents, friends, partners and family. These people were involved during each person’s general life stages.

The analyses revealed that the main differences among the narrators connect to individual circumstances, personality and personal freedom. Although they lived through the same ideology and had the same possibilities, the women had different feelings when talking about traveling. The external side of travel behavior, such as political factors and government issues, was similar in all the stories, but their attitudes towards external issues varied.

6.2 TRAVEL PRACTICES

6.2.1 Childhood

Childhood represents the person’s formative years, and the years between 9 and 13 (basically preadolescence) are when the experiences shape the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial sides of a child’s mind and personality; these values and behaviors will follow into their subsequent life periods (Doswell, 2002). Insufficient research has examined children’s memories of travel experiences and the importance of these experiences for adult holidays (Schänzel, 2010; Small, 2008). The study participants especially mentioned summer camps, visiting relatives and time spent at the datcha during their childhoods.

Summer camps
Children’s camps greatly impacted interviewees’ travel lives during childhood. Children’s summer camps were their first independent travel experiences apart from their parents. Anna, Elizaveta, Svetlana and Anastasia talked about the camps with a positive attitude, mentioning the sun, sea and warmth. The daily camp activities were strictly scheduled, and the nature of the camp was a sporty and patriotic upbringing. The narrators talked about childhood travel practices as adults and through the prism of their memory, so it is hard to know how the camps felt from the child’s viewpoint decades earlier.

None of the narrators talked about summer camps with a sad attitude. Nor did any narrator mention not having their parents with them during the holidays; they only felt excited about being in the camp. The system of the voucher, or putevka (paid vacation by a labor union), did not offer the possibility for parents to spend a holiday with their children (Koenker, 2013). Koenker (2013) noted two reasons for not including parents: the first reason was the belief of officials that for adults it is better to spend their holidays apart from children. The second reason was the structure of the union vacation system that had to be renewed because of the lack of places available for vacations (Koenker, 2013).
Soviet children camps, available to children from the age of seven until 15, consisted of entertaining and educational activities built around Soviet patriotism (Comai, 2012). Research shows that children’s perspectives on vacations differ from those of adults (Hilbrecht, Shaw, Delamere & Havitz, 2008; Small, 2008). The authors state that during their holidays, children need physical activity and the feeling of fun and involvement, while adults often expect relaxation and peace. Based on this, Soviet children camps offered the core issues that children needed. The educational part of these camps served the country’s interests back in those days.

**Visiting relatives**
Maria, Marina and Anastasia visited relatives when possible. All of them visited relatives in Leningrad, which is about 400 km from their hometown, Petrozavodsk. If the participants chose to tell about visiting relatives, I considered it as an important travel life experience. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) was recognized as a form of tourism by Jackson (1990), the first one to question if this form of tourism was underestimated. Backer (2011) suggested naming it VFR travel, to include groups of travelers who were not tourists according to the traditional definitions. She continues noting two ways of identifying VFR travel, one by trip purpose and the other by accommodation. The Soviet and Russian context of this study forces paying attention to the participants’ cultural background. In such collectivistic cultures like Russian, relatives belong to the close family and family members are loyal and look after each other. I assume that is why narrators took this travel possibility for granted.

**Summer house (datcha)**
Elena described summerhouse issues with a neutral attitude. Koenker (2013) calls datcha a tourism form, not the Western tourism focusing on pleasure but the Soviet one, spending leisure time for self-improvement, such as physical or intellectual activity. Anna and Elena mentioned summerhouse breaks as a travel experience with a different attitude. Anna described her summerhouse time as “voluntary-compulsory” (dobrovol’no-prinuditelno). In Russia, people used this ironic expression when something is voluntary in theory but compulsory in practice. Thus, family and personal attitudes influenced how the way narrators viewed their experiences.

Doing what was socially accepted was the part of Soviet childhood. I assumed that in Soviet times families did not have a rest in a Western summer cottage way but took care of their summer houses, gardens and surroundings. This ‘summer holiday’ was a learned cultural value children got through their parents. The travel factor of inertia (Butler, 1994) may affect repeat behaviors in adult times when people repeat their vacation pattern when they do not have to anymore.

6.2.2 Youth
The participants described their youth through group travel practices, people who influenced their motivation to travel and certain possible and popular USSR destinations.

**Group travel and collectivism**
Elizaveta, Maria and Valentina mentioned planned group travel. Group travel existed in Soviet tourism because of two factors: easy organization and collectivism’s
importance as a Soviet ideology (Koenker, 2013). Individuals from collective societies put the group interests before their own needs and wants (Wagner, 1995).

Lauring (2013) compared individualism and collectivism in the context of consumption, finding that charter tourism offers safety. Charter tourism gives a tourist the possibility to be passive, with no need to organize. During the Soviet times, people were learning how to travel through an organized way. Group tourism was easier for them and served the country’s interests. The participants who mentioned this talked about group tourism with a neutral attitude and as a normal travel practice. Middle classes as “new cultural intermediaries” (Bourdieu, 1984) identify themselves through consumption patterns, and travel practices are part of this consumption. Even valuing individuality more than during Soviet times and not needing “permission” to travel, Russians still often want others to plan and organize their trips.

The reference group
A person is not isolated from his or her family in the context of traveling. Valentina and Maria mentioned trips with the family in their narratives. In their cases, the presence of a relative who could travel helped form their travel career and travel possibilities. The reference group of a person, their social environment, may influence the individual’s experiences and circumstances. I assumed that the narrators’ reference groups, which included people important to them and whom they probably compared themselves to (Escalas & Bettman, 2003) influenced their travel desire.

Destination and planning
Youth tourism is politically dependent (Orlov, 2014) and only “safe” destinations were open to visit. Svetlana and Marina mentioned Southern destinations. A Soviet trip to the South usually meant leisure along the Black Sea: Odessa, Crimea, Anapa, or Georgia (Koenker, 2013).

Svetlana and Marina told about self-organized travel, such as planning trip-related issues, as a lack of travel vouchers forced people to travel independently (Noack, 2006). Independent tourism in the USSR involved two types of tourists. The first one is closer to my narrators, ordinary tourists who organized their trip themselves because they had to. Another type was those who wanted freedom and to escape from the system, young and romantic people (Koenker, 2013). None of my narrators talked about “the system”, they talked about their lives and experiences. I assume that they did not view it as a strict system even in the memories that they shared. They organized their trips when they had to, when group travel was unavailable.

6.2.3 Soviet adulthood

Participants described travel practices during the Soviet adulthood through three connected topics: to the process of being chosen for the trip, the importance of safety and cultural programs.

To be chosen
The theme connected to the application process came up during the Soviet adulthood stage of four women: Anna, Svetlana, Marina and Anastasia. As mentioned earlier, the selection process relied upon certain translucent criteria, such as self-discipline at
work and at home and his or her moral life standards (Orlov, 2014; Shevirin, 2009). These women again underlined the importance of being chosen.

Safety
Anastasia and Anna mentioned the travel rules and admitted that it was better to stay in a group for safety. People chosen and permitted to travel also got instructions on how to behave during the trips (Orloc, 2014). Inexperienced tourists typically are concerned with the lower order needs, such as safety (Lepp & Gibson, 2003).

Cultural programs
Elizaveta mentioned little free time during the trip, and Anastasia mentioned a busy program as well. The trip usually included excursions and cultural programs. Culturedness (kul’turnost’) in the Soviet times meant general and cultural knowledge. The knowledge about the country and a patriotic upbringing were part of the government organized tourism activities (Koenker, 2013). Soviet tourists in reality could not freely choose what to do during the organized trips, but a cultural program was usually part of the trip.

Soviet people fell under the definition of cultural tourists, as defined by McKercher (2002) – those who visit cultural tourism attractions and participate in other culture related activities. The tourists’ cultural capital in the forms of knowledge and education grew (Bourdieu, 1984). Thus, some of the narrators valued the importance of organized programs, educational parts of the trip as well as the factor of culturedness, meaning the trip behavior of others. Soviets may value what they do and how others behave during the trip.

Destinations and demand for the rest
Elizaveta recalled Bulgaria as an important destination that she remembered. Anna, Maria and Anastasia remembered different places in Ukraine and Georgia. Together with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany, Bulgaria was among the most popular places to travel to during Soviet times (Koenker, 2013). As a reason for that, Koenker (2013) suggested the similarity of Bulgaria with the Soviet southern destinations. Everything was familiar, albeit familiarity was only one reason for Bulgaria’s popularity.

Only certain travel options were available for Soviet citizens. Orlov (2014) identifies three variants of foreign experiences for Soviet people: “almost abroad” – youth camps organized by Sputnik, “not quite abroad” – trips to the socialist countries, and “real abroad” – trips to capitalist countries. The narrators mentioned destinations belonging to the category of “not quite abroad” or “the small abroad” as it was also called. The Soviet phrase “A chicken is not a bird; Bulgaria is not abroad” comes from those times.

I paid more attention to the travel practices inside the USSR because these were more relevant to the travel experiences of my narrators. Despite this, Soviet outbound tourism did exist; and the women in this study remembered their practices connected to destinations abroad. Possibilities to travel abroad during the Soviet times are discussed in the work of Orlov (2014). Based on different archival documents and other sources, he questions the Soviet foreign tourism statistics and advises to keep in mind the specific nature of the tourism during the Soviet times. Numbers provided include trips with tourism purposes, work trips, festivals, and delegation exchanges. The relevant statistical data is hard to get, but various authors identified the middle of
the 1950s as the beginning of the development of Soviet international tourism (Orlov, 2014; Zhizhanova, 2011).

Dolzhenko (1988) compared the years 1956, when 561,000 people went abroad, 1970, with over 1.8 million travelled abroad, and 1985 when the number increased to 4.5 million. Not focusing on historical truth, the narrators’ travel life histories still confirm the research literature described above. The only trips they mentioned were organized for specific working purpose. The teacher exchange for carefully selected individuals was an available travel practice, but none of the narrators mentioned it (Orlov, 2014).

6.2.4 Adulthood during the time of Russia

The transition from Soviet to Russian times affected the participants’ possible destinations. As for how people traveled, travel was still often a group packaged tour with an organized program.

Old travel modes and new environment

When telling about the time after the collapse of the USSR, women still mentioned packaged tours and group travel. The trip program, during which people learned something, mirrored the Soviet travel aim – pleasure with purpose (Koenker, 2013). Individuality was not part of the Soviet ideology, which affected people’s travel practices during the Soviet times.

Only Marina mentioned relaxation as an important thing while traveling. Different nationalities have different travel motivations. Kozak (2002) studied nationalities differences in tourist motivation. He found four dimensions of motives: cultural, pleasure-seeking/fantasy, relaxation-based and physical. According to him, the importance of different motives varies among nationalities. Russians started to travel in a Western manner recently. Only after 1980 did the world start to be available to Russian tourists (Lysikova, 2012). Based on that, I assume that Russians may still be affected by old learnt behaviors and at the same time gain new travel habits.

The fundamental change that happened with the collapse of the USSR was the possibility to travel. People started to explore new destinations and started to demand more and better services. Individuals with little experience wanted to participate in organized package tours. Only after gaining some experience did those individuals start travel independently (Ryan, 1998).

Destinations

The destinations mentioned by Svetlana, Maria, Marina and Anastasia included Finland, because of its close location to the Republic of Karelia. Finland was an easy trip that people could organize themselves. Russian tourism to Finland started to increase in 1990. Russians have become the most important tourist group for Finland’s economy (Jakosuo, 2011).

As a family destination, Valentina named Egypt and Turkey. These two places were popular among middle-class Russians for beach vacations. After starting to travel to the countries of the former USSR, Russians then discovered Turkey, Europe and Egypt. Destinations like Egypt and Turkey were attractive for the climate and prices (Kozlov & Popov, 2015).

The situation changed in 2015 (Rostourism, 2015), when due to economic and political factors, Egypt and Turkey were no longer popular. In 2014, a combination
of political and economic factors affected the travel choices of Russian tourists. When Russia annexed Crimea as the territory of the Russian Federation and Russia’s domestic economy went down together with the ruble value, Russians could not travel abroad the same way as before (Kozlov & Popov, 2015). This crisis affected the tourism industry in general and travel to Finland in particular.

6.3 TRAVELING AND SOCIETY

Travel role models
Parents, relatives or friends who could travel affected the travel motivation of Anna, Maria and Valentina. These travel role models affected the narrators’ thinking. Also because of relatives and friends, they started to think about traveling.

Nowadays, traveling is a common activity in Russia, but in the Soviet times it was not available for everyone. That is why travel role models, stories and presents brought from the trips (even by others) were valued. Research literature shows that recommendations and world-of-mouth influence travel decisions and motivation (Murphy, Mascardo & Benckendorff, 2007; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Travel role models and the stories they told awoke feelings and instincts in these women, their internal motives to travel (Gnoth, 1997). When a person tells his or her travel story, they want to be a certain person through this particular story. This way, the narration connects to the imagination (Desforges, 2000). In the case of these nine participants, the stories also fed the narrators’ imagination.

Traveling is (not) possible
Anna, Maria and Valentina thought that traveling was an affordable activity in their childhood and youth. The families and family members of Maria and Valentina were privileged in the financial sense. When making conclusions about their own family perspective, these women thought that, in general, traveling was a part of their and other children’s lives in the USSR. Based on this, I can assume that family background affects the formation of habitus in the matter of possibilities. Habitus that is unconsciously developed through the dialog with different social groups gives a person a feeling of what is possible (Bourdieu, 1990). Women with financially good situations in their families talked about generally equal opportunities in the Soviet Union.

Soviet times usually associate with equal opportunities, but Anastasia and Olga underlined that their parents could not afford traveling. According to them, traveling was just not a priority expense. A family has an influence on the different kinds of human capital of a child (Reay, 2004). Another study showed that even cultural tastes, consumption and other choices depend on the families’ preferences (Tomanović, 2004). Narrators’ both families these had difficult financial situations. In one family both parents were school teachers (as discussed previously, a low paid job) and in the other the mother was a housewife. Conclusions made by Tomanović (2004) and Reay (2004) suggest that the lack of possibilities to travel in the childhood could affect the choices in the future.

Travel as a reward
The Soviet system supported competition among children, which Svetlana, Valentina and Olga noted. Those who behaved well and right got advantages. Trips were also a reason for the competition. The Soviet ideology in education was based on special ideas
and values about communism (Zajda & Zajda, 2003). The school competitions showed the achievement of a pupil, and he or she was an example to the other pupils. Equal opportunities are strongly associated with the Soviet times, but in these narratives, I can see inequalities in the everyday lives of these women.

The language
Anna felt isolated because of her possible lack of language knowledge during trips. Pavlenko (2003) points out that foreign language education in the Soviet Union was very challenging. Soviet children started to learn German, English or French in the 4th or 5th grade and then continued in high school. However, the lack of qualified professionals and the teaching methods of reading and translating affected the students’ poor level of language knowledge (Pavlenko, 2003).

Russian tourists have weak English language skills (Yuzhanin, 2014). The feeling of isolation could also connect to the personality of the individual. Anna told about possible trips and possible feelings of isolation. Marina had a completely different attitude towards the lack of language skills. She was sure that during her travels there would always be someone who spoke Russian. Anna’s personality seems to have traits affecting her openness to new experiences. Individual differences are in the core of people’s personalities and individuals with a high level of openness to experiences (a personality dimension trait) are more intellectually curious and flexible (Costa & McCrae, 1992). I assume that in the context of travel those people who are less open to experiences in general may consider poor language skills as a negative factor in their travel lives.

Obliko morale (morals)
Anna, Elizaveta, Svetlana and Anastasia remembered the personal characteristics they had to gather for Soviet trips. Here, I paid attention more to the moral aspect of Soviet life, before and during the trip. People who went on the trips represented the Soviet Union and thus they were fully checked. As the traveling was always in groups, it was much easier to arrange discipline when people travelled (Koenker, 2013).

The process of trip selection was multi-staged: approval by the local trade union committee, then the City Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and finally the Commission on trips abroad at the CPSU Central Committee (Shevirin, 2009). The stage that participants remembered was gathering their information for the local trade union, which included the evaluation of self-discipline, family situation and lifestyle in general. Elizaveta and Svetlana found this process difficult.

Valentina told that “the reliability” of the person sometimes meant good connections, svyazi or blat. This Soviet economy of favors or blat (Ledeneva, 1998) was a mixture of formal and informal networks that people used in order to gain advantages. These exchanges of goods or services helped people get desirable commodities that were difficult to receive or purchase (Rehn & Taalas, 2004). That is why people in trade often had those connections to exchange.

Participants mentioned certain rules during the trips. They mentioned “obliko morale”. This phrase from the title of a famous Russian movie The Diamond Arm, became legendary: “Russo turisto, obliko morale” (Cutler & Gaidai, 1968). The film is the story of an ordinary Soviet man traveling abroad. A prostitute tries to get the man to go to her apartment but fails. The man’s friend explains the situation to her by saying that Russians are highly moral. He tells the woman: “Russo turisto, obliko morale, verstehen?” This multi-language phrase represented the moral side of Soviet
tourism, meaning that as USSR tourists were fully vetted, they were supposed to have high moral standards and right behavior.

Trip instructions were also a part of the experience. Such instructions included not walking alone, no participation in nightlife and no contact with locals (Orlov, 2014). Travel activities were under state control, and people had no choice but to accept the rules.

**Abroad is different**

Elizaveta and Anna paid attention to customer service differences during the trips. Elizaveta mentioned Bulgaria as one of her destinations, and Anna traveled to Estonia and Ukraine. Both countries belonged to the Soviet bloc and as Orlov (2014) put it, are “not quite abroad”. Based on the narrator comments, customer service differences still existed. The common problem with the service in the Soviet bloc countries came from salespeople “dividing” goods instead of providing service. During the times of deficit people in trade did not have to think about people’s needs and expectations, rather just had to divide the products among their clients (Vadi & Suuroja, 2003). Soviet consumers had to search for the consumer goods and they bought things that were available (Ennew et al., 1993). That shortage made service providers act in a rude manner. People basically were forced to buy what was available. This rude manner was true also for the travel related services.

Cleanliness, silence and law-abiding residents surprised four women the most while traveling to the other countries. These comments go well with conclusions about Russian tourists by Ageenko, Papazyan and Apukhtin (2013). According to them, Russians are loud and they act in a too free manner. Seeing the opposite behavior during the trips surprised the narrators. The reason for this Russian kind of behavior might be that travel activity is new to Russians, who are still learning the norms. By seeing new places and meeting new people, travel practices lead to cultural enrichment; and that means that people gain cultural capital and adapt their travel behavior to the new travel practices (McKercher, 2008).

### 6.4 GENDER

**Soviet mother**

Anna, Elizaveta, Marina and Elena mentioned women’s roles and responsibilities and social expectations as constraining their travel. Elizaveta admitted that she started to travel only in the company of her husband after they got married. Gender had a central place in the Soviet system (Ashwin, 2000), with a women’s natural role in the family and a responsible person at work. Among the participants of this study, a woman’s role is a reference point for explaining the lack of travel activities. Wilson and Little’s (2005) research of Western women and their constraints in solo travel found that especially older women were influenced by sociocultural constraints traveling.

Tourism is a process “constructed out of gendered societies and therefore all aspects of tourism-related development and activity embody gender relations” (Kinnaird & Hall, 1994, p. 5). The participants in this study came from a hierarchical and unequal society. From a socio-cultural perspective, gender is a society-based and learned behavior (Henderson, 1994). Gender roles and expectations stem from families, societies and cultures (Khan, 2011). Based on the narratives, I assume that it was socially accepted to put the family first, before one’s own interests.
Wilson and Little (2005) identified four constraints that influence the travel life of women: sociocultural, personal, practical, and spatial. This study suggested sociocultural and personal constraints. The working mother – at the center of Soviet gender politics – takes care of her household, husband and children and at the same time is a good responsible worker (Kravchenko, 2008; Temkina & Rotkirch, 1997).

Marina had a different view on travel, a freedom from domestic responsibilities. Elsrud (1998) supports this view. In her study, the independent form of women’s travel affected the feeling of freedom in women’s lives. Probably what Marina thought were duties connected to the family could constrain the travel activity of woman, for example responsibilities connected to children (Wilson & Little, 2005).

**Clothes**
Maria, Olga and Elena mentioned the importance of buying clothes during the trips, complaining that in the USSR they all had to wear the same looking clothes. In the Soviet times, women mainly could not choose clothes. In Soviet times, differentiation in general, and through clothes in particular, was unacceptable (Gurova, 2012). The situation started change in the 50’s and 60’s, when fashion magazines (a limited number) and international movies entered the world of Soviet women and showed Western fashion styles (Gurova, 2012). Today’s consumers know that their choices and preferences speak for their personal style and taste (Featherstone, 2007). In contrast during the Soviet times, women had little choice for three groups of clothes: for house, work and holidays (Gurova, 2012).

The term “conspicuous consumption”, first introduced by Veblen (1967), refers to the practice of using one’s possessions to display one’s status in society. Such “conspicuous” consumption works unconsciously and is acquired through socialization (Bourdieu, 1984). For Russian people, the roots of this behavior came from the new post-Soviet context; people exhibited their status through their financial resources (Schimpfossl, 2014).

**The family life-cycle**
Anna and Elena admitted that even during the Russian times, their grandchildren and a husband who did not want to travel constrained their travel practices. Their marital status and duties with grandchildren affected their possibilities and desire to travel. The family lifecycle helps explain the travel patterns of the individuals through different stages of their lives (Lawson, 1991; Oppermann, 1995). Today’s age group of the narrators parallels Wells and Gubar’s (1966) empty nest of the family life cycle, when children live their own lives but the women still work. Generally, except from work, empty nest women have fewer duties at home and can travel more freely.

### 6.5 RUSSIANNESS AND SOVIETNESS

**Behavioral issues**
When mentioning such issues as wrong behavior during trips, the importance of telling about the trips in front of the whole class and pride in being a Soviet pioneer, the narrators described the right behavior of a Soviet person. This behavior is the core of Soviet ideology with its own rules of living and a type of habitus. Habitus is more than the individual and includes the social system. Habitus reflects individual personalities created by the social system (Pickel, 2005). Based on that, family, social
institutions and the government form people’s habitus and how they think. Anna’s idea of bad habits from the West could come from the Russian “self” and the Western “other” (Kaempf, 2010; Rozov, 2012). In people’s minds, unfamiliar issues such as the Western other were often rejected and had a negative connotation.

**Patriotism**

One quality of the Russian mentality, is the “own and unfamiliar” (Rozov, 2010). Rozov (2010) describes as typical that Russians refuse to accept or even ignore the unfamiliar. Anna, who had a suspicious attitude towards foreigners during the whole story, mentioned the lack of service for Russians. She pondered that Russians are weird in the eyes of foreigners. Her feeling of patriotism also strongly stood out during the trips. Mentioned by just one narrator, I assume that this reaction also related to personal issues connected to previous travel life experiences, or in Anna’s case the lack of experience. The purpose of Soviet travel practices was constructed through the prism of patriotism and pleasure with purpose (Koenker, 2013).

**Feeling of belonging**

Anastasia described her compulsory travel with a university construction brigade as a trip for the sake of belonging to a community. Belonging always involves other people, the relationship between a person and society (May, 2011). As in the case of Anastasia, the sense of belonging included the right to participate into certain practices important to the person.

**Soviet nostalgia**

All the narrators stated that they could not travel freely during the Soviet times, yet simultaneously, they believed it was a time when everybody was offered equal opportunities. Perhaps the equal opportunities aspect prompted some to defend the former regime. The women talked about how hard and restricted their lives were, yet they admitted that they miss that era.

The collapse of the USSR was a politically and mentally difficult period for people. During this time, the level of fear and dissatisfaction was very high. People got “freedom”; however they did not know what to do with freedom or how to behave. Some hoped that the Soviets would come back. As Levada’s (2005) study shows, many people still identify themselves nostalgically as Soviet. These women stated that back then there was no discrimination, people had the same financial resources, and a workplace was sure. They miss these things. The same issues came up in Fitzpatrick’s analysis (2007), who found that Soviet people appreciated that the life was safe.

Pourtova (2013) studied the social phenomena of Soviet nostalgia. According to her, people miss those times and both themselves then and the relations that they had. Nostalgia as an emotion influences the desire to return to a place, often idealized at some time in the past (Boym, 2001). Svetlana and Elena admitted that Russia had more opportunities to travel than in the USSR. At the same time, they criticized the uncertainty in their lives nowadays.

**Soviet identity**

When women touched upon the topic of being Soviet, Elizaveta presented herself as a Soviet person to the core. Elizaveta’s opinion goes well with Levada’s (2005) research on social identification, where one-quarter of respondents still identified themselves as “Soviet”. Research by the Public Opinion Research Center in Russia (2011) confirms
this identification. Every fifth person in Russia misses the Soviet Union. This nostalgia comes from dissatisfaction with the present life (Velikonja, 2009). Olga described her identity in an opposite way to Elizaveta, Olga’s direct comment was that she is not proud of being Soviet. There is no easy way to describe identity, a result of external factors and individual circumstances. People’s sense of self is socially shaped. The aspects taken for granted are the result of social interaction (Jamieson, 2002). It may be that Olga’s life circumstances affected her opinions and feelings about Soviet times.

People do not have a single identity, rather multiple identities (Jenkins, 2004). During different times in their life a person chooses the identity that serves their purpose. In this research, women constructed their travel practices on individual and collective levels. The collapse of the USSR affected some women personally, and some women admitted that the collapse was a big issue socially, while personally they lived their lives.

The issue of desirable identity also came out in the narrative analysis. Anastasia told about herself as about a disciplined person and also mentioned her profession (teacher) as proof of this fact. Identity is “recognition as a certain kind of person in a given context” (Gee, 2000, p. 99). Anastasia use the teaching profession as a reference point for certain accepted behavior.

**Russia vs. West**

Olga and Elena expressed their willingness to travel despite the political situation or the potential negativity towards Russians. This willingness is a straight separation between an intimate inner circle and the government, which is distant from the life of an ordinary person (Rozov, 2012).

When the travel life histories of this study were gathered, Russia’s political situation and relations with the outside world were in a deep crisis. In addition to the political changes, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine increased the rise of patriotism and gave patriotism a new meaning (Bruk, 2014). The government presented the Western world as enemies who criticize Russia. I compare this situation with the important frame of the Russian mentality “intimate circle and government” that separates the warmth of a person’s intimate close circle and the controlling power of the government (Rozov, 2012). Despite a crisis, the government enters this intimate circle and gathers people together (Rozov, 2012). This part of Russian mentality could be seen now. Olga and Elena felt that outside Russia people are negative towards them.

Habitus is shaped also by external environments (Reay, 2004). People’s actions reflect society’s happenings (Bourdieu, 1990). At the time of this research, there was external political and economic mistrust towards Russia. The TV news was full of negativity, telling Russians that the world was against them (Ovcharov et al., 2015).

**National character**

National character is another issue present in narratives comparing Russian and the West. Svetlana, Maria and Olga stressed that they belong to a unique nation that is incomparable to any other. In the popular Russian movie Brother 2 (Selianov & Balabanov, 2000), the dialogue includes the lines: “Are you gangsters?” “No, we are Russians.” This expression has become extremely popular and well explains the Russian personal identity. Russians often think that they are a different kind of people, and it is hard to understand the “mystical Russian soul”.

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6.6 HABITUS

Personality and travel
Government controls of different forms goes through the women’s narratives: the group travel, KGB representatives, only patriotic trips and personal characteristics. Women talked about the same topics but with different attitudes. Women with better possibilities to travel did not feel as restricted as those who talked about control. The biggest differences in the travel life histories lies in the personal determinants. Personal determinants consist of life circumstances, preferences and experiences. The external side of travel behavior, such as political factors and government issues, was similar in all the stories but the attitudes towards such factors varied (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007).

Anna’s answers were dominated by her unwillingness to travel in general. After analyzing her whole travel life history, I paid attention to personality features that could influence a person’s travel behavior. Psychological traits influence a person’s environment and actions (Larsen & Buss, 2002). One feature of Goldberg’s (1990) Big Five Factor personality model consists of the openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Openness to experiences might be most relevant in Anna’s case, whose personal characteristics seemed to influence her general desire to travel.

People open to experiences are those who enjoy new things and are curious (Wang & Yang, 2007). As Marina saw traveling during Soviet times negatively and Anastasia with interest, this difference could signal different personalities. Society certainly influences a person, but personality also has an important role. Pearce and Lee (2005) offer another explanation, linking travel motivation to previous travel experience and life stage. They suggest that personal constraints in the form of doubt and fear that person might have at the beginning or their travel career explains the behavior.

Four other women were more open to new experiences. Svetlana, Maria, Anastasia and Valentina traveled more than others did. Their attitudes towards traveling were more positive. These women started to study at the university; their social life was richer and they probably saw more possibilities. The country also became slightly more open for travel practices. Personal and social domains influenced the desire to travel. Habitus implements in a sociological outcome that tourists make in the available space (Ahmad, 2014). Through these choices people distinguish themselves from certain groups and show where they want to belong.

Habitus includes a set of dispositions that affect motivation, perceptions, and direct action (Hilgers, 2009). Choice and habitus are interrelated: habitus simultaneously structures choices and limits them. Travel patterns – I would even say “travel dreams” – in the USSR were built on the basis of what is right and wrong in society. According to Olga, her desire to travel abroad started after the first few trips. During their travels, people gain experience and their needs and wants to travel grow (Pearce, 1988). Olga started to dream about going somewhere when she gained traveling experience.

Behavior and desirable identity
Behavior and upbringing dominated the narrative of Anna, who was reluctant to travel in general. She transferred all the responsibility to the “right” family upbringing or to different organizations. This way, someone else was always responsible, not individuals themselves. This mirrors one feature of the Russian mentality, where the lack of independence and poor ability to organize one’s own life is at the core (Rozov,
Anna presented herself as a person who has lived according to the rules and behaved well. She compared people raised in the city and in the village, where people raised in the city are more educated and behave better. Important experiences in the narrative are sometimes used to present the desirable identity (Desforges, 2000).

Habitus structures people’s choices inside certain fields, and societies (Bourdieu, 1990). The Soviet society, with its clear separation between right or wrong, dictated the rules of living to people (Bourdieu, 1990). Family, society upbringing, and education are the base for habitus, which guide the actions of individuals (Bourdieu, 1990). At the same time, habitus is not deterministic (Hilgers, 2009). People act according to principles, but the number of contexts is infinite.

Attitude towards rules
The narrators viewed the rules connected to traveling in different ways. Marina felt limited because of the travel behavior rules, and Anastasia took the rules for granted. Habitus, influenced by cultural context, is performed without thought (Adams, 2006). Reflexivity of people’s actions is important; without it, people would act in the same way (Archer, 2007). In reality, people reflect on the social and cultural context, and on their personal and collective history. This reflection could explain the women’s different attitudes.

Status
Valentina and Marina talked about status and connections. According to Bourdieu (1984), people show their status in the field by implementing economic, social and cultural capital. For the narrators, status started to matter only after the USSR collapsed, when people actually had the possibility to show off, including travel practices. Status consumption shapes people’s tastes and affects their desire to travel. Taste, shaped by social and historical frames, positions an individual into the hierarchy of society (Saatcioglu & Ozanne, 2013). Saatcioglu’s and Ozanne’s conclusion that habitus is unconsciously adopted but can change, could apply in this study, even on an unconscious level and starting to form in childhood with the certain type of society. In the times of Russia habitus had to change in order to adapt to the new circumstances.

Having focused only on travel practices in the beginning, I did not know all the topics that would relate to and influence the interest of this study. While the interviewees were telling stories related to travel, they were sharing other details of what was happening in their lives. The examination of travel life histories provided the opportunity to demonstrate how culture and society affect women’s travels, and which aspects matter to them personally. Clearly, the narratives operate on two interrelated contexts, the individual and society.
7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

In his article, Warde (2005, p. 140) ponders two key questions concerning people’s practices: “Why do people do what they do?” and “how do they do those things in the way that they do?”. According to him, the answers always come from history. My study linked the historical environment to the individual’s actions and vice versa. The main idea is that throughout their lives, the environment structures people’s actions, which in turn depend on individual actors (Bourdieu, 1984).

Drawing on Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), this study connects to consumption’s socio-historical patterning (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Consumption, viewed here through travel practices, is a matter of relations between society and the individual. Consumer behavior in this study’s travel context combines social, economic and cultural factors. These factors in the Soviet and Russian reality offered people only certain available consumption (travel) choices. I explored issues that influenced travel practices in order to discover the meanings attached to these practices. This study shows that during Soviet times, despite having different types of economic, social and cultural desires and possibilities, people could not use them all for traveling as they wanted to.

This study explores travel practices from a CCT standpoint. Society, gender, class, community, and ethnicity influence consumption (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Practices generate wants and guide consumption choices. A CCT approach gives a subjective view, with the individual and his or her own construction of life events in the center (Warde, 2005).

CCT gives a voice to this study’s contextual approach, going inside the travel context. The analyses showed that women construct their life histories through a combination of lived life issues and travel practices. This study contributes to individual consumer research, with the idea that the individual consumer and their tourism practices are an entity, not separate parts (Holbrook, 1995). With this study, I proposed to understand travel practices through three theoretical components: culture and its social-historical context, habitus and gender. Based on the analyses, I found that women in my data interpret their travel histories through public and private realities, habitus, travel careers and personal freedom. These issues all mattered to the narrators and their travel practices.

The anthropologist Grant (2011) contends that Soviet culture is the same as pokazuha (dissimulation). The whole nation grew up with the ideology of representing the country. The nine women in this study narrated their traveling experiences as part of their life timeline. It would be impossible to understand their present circumstances and decisions without studying and combining both the socio-historical context of Soviet and Russian reality and individual experiences. The socio-historical context shapes individual consumer behavior.

Travel practices
This research shows that Western cultural frames cannot guide the researcher inside such a specific culture as Russia. Urry (1995, 2002) called the desire to travel a
universal need and right for every person but based on the narrators’ travel life histories and relevant literature, this universal right was not a part of the Soviet reality (Gorsuch, 2011; Koenker, 2013). Nor traveling was a guaranteed human right in other countries.

In addition, status and lifestyle differences reflect class distinction (Bourdieu, 1984). This study in hand shows that some travel tastes related to social class cannot directly apply in the Soviet context. Soviet and Russian contexts are politically specific, and as research shows, consumption patterns are culturally dependent. Researchers discussed these issues for example in an American (Holt 1995, 1998) and Turkish context (Üstüner & Holt, 2007). Soviet people could not express their individuality through their consumption practices. In contrast to Western studies, this study’s narrators could not perform many travel practices even with the economic capital.

The idea that society mirrors people’s everyday lives (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006) is only partly true in the Soviet and Russian context. The narrators’ stories consisted of such cultural frames as “Russia and the West” and “intimate circle and the government”. These frames underscore that women’s subjective understanding of who they are takes two parallel paths, public and private, and these paths could differ. The surroundings and societal interests shape these paths according to what is right for the ordinary life of an ordinary person. The private path includes a person’s individual freedom. Women separated the Soviet regime’s travel rules from the real life. This finding supports the separation of Soviet’s official and private life, the official one was outside home and the private one with the family (Shlapentokh, 1989; Yurchak, 2005). The socio-historical context is part of individual consumer behavior.

Soviet people were “kept under close scrutiny and their behavior monitored” (Gorsuch, 2011, p. 117). The Soviet tourism background mattered for the women in this study. This background included ways of being and behaving, and even nostalgia. People had a strong Soviet spirit that affected their habitus. People during those times had to represent the country in a good way, in a manner chosen by the government. This “representation” issue is seen though the narrator’s gender and occupation. These women paid attention to certain behavioral and travel norms acceptable for government workers and women. Women in this study accepted the rules of traveling and mostly did not question these rules. And even a retrospective perspective did not affect this aspect.

**The distinction and habitus**

This study in hand applies Bourdieu’s habitus concept as a research tool for the socio-historic patterning of consumption. This tool helps go deep into the individuals’ Soviet and Russian lives. History, culture, governmental restrictions and societal rules affected the travel practices of people in the Soviet era. It is evident from the narratives that most people accepted the rules of traveling and did not consider them special. In some ways, the women defended the regime. In Soviet times, choices were limited, and habitus was conditioned. As Bourdieu (1977, p. 78) puts it: “history turned into nature.”

It became clear that, to understand the travel practices in a non-Western context, I had to combine theoretical considerations arising from or pertaining to habitus, culture and gender. Habitus is the basis for people’s actions, but these actions are context dependent. My study showed that even an unconsciously adopted habitus could transform during a person’s life. This transformation appears from behavioral issues that were inappropriate and unavailable to women during the Soviet times,
and that changed over time. For example, putting the family needs before traveling was the right behavior of a wife and mother.

The study findings suggest that women with privileged backgrounds saw their lives through different prisms than those whose financial situation was poor. Women who had economically better situations thought that everybody had equal opportunities and possibilities. Their habitus, coming from the better family backgrounds, gave these women more choices. Seeing this Soviet unequal access to travel through Bourdieu’s concept helps link travel to the larger social reality through different historical times. Habitus can change over time but the past still affects the women’s travel practices and memories.

Inexperienced tourists
A travel career reflects individuals’ travel choices (Pearce, 1988). This study supports the idea that these travel choices depend on culture, history, society and individual circumstances. In the Soviet context, even experienced travelers could not influence their travel lives. The narratives showed that government and societal ideology played and still plays an important role in women’s lives. These aspects reflect women’s lives and their country. For example, the women were worried about others’ acceptance of Russians. In addition, the narrators’ stories support the acknowledgement that during the first travel experiences, people value security and organized travel but with experience, they get the courage to travel independently (Ryan, 1998).

As an individual’s travel career develops, he or she matures, gains travel experience and their travel motives change (Pearce, 2005). This study mirrors that argument. In the case of the Russian women, the findings show that the person’s life-stage and age influenced her travel behavior. Travel career influenced the narrators’ travel life choices and on the individual level, travel experience is a component of general experience (Filep & Greenacre, 2007).

This study assumes that nationality affected the travel practices of these women. Some women explained the lack of motivation and unwillingness to travel with a poor acceptance of Russians; they thought that people outside Russia did not want to see them. Through their travel life histories, the women defined themselves in relation to others and Russian society, which described their self-identity. The connection between identity and travel was central to the studies of Desforges (2000) and Elsrud (2001).

Personal freedom
As seen in the narrators’ stories, people can share similar origins, living conditions, and problems. However, their experiences are personal, and the influence of habitus is partly indeterminate. Individuals have their own sense of what is happening, so “habitus determines practice but is also determined by it” (Hilgers, 2009, p. 731). As shown in the findings, income and socio-professional issues affect the degree of freedom and the variety of choices that individuals possess, which Hilgers (2009) also notes.

The narratives include a place for gender behavior. Certain patterns for traveling and life in general, from the interviewee’s point of view, are expected of a woman, wife and mother. This finding extends beyond a Russian context. Researchers have investigated gender behavior and travel in a Western context, such as general constraints that limit women’s travels (Wilson & Little, 2005) and the feeling of freedom that comes when women travel and are not occupied with home duties (Elsrud, 1998).
Russians today have the freedom to choose their own travel and no longer accept that traveling to a particular destination is impossible. However, the habitus formed in the Soviet times still structures their travel practices in regards to appropriate travel, patriotism and travel dreams. Also today, habitus determines what is possible or impossible in certain situations. For example, narrators believe that certain travel destinations are possible to visit and consider behavioral issues in destinations, such as the attitude towards acceptance of Russians abroad.

The development of habitus comes along with the individual’s national mentality (Rozov, 2010). A lack of independence and an inability to organize things are typical of Russians (Rozov, 2010). Similarly as observed from these life history narratives, people were used to someone else organizing things in advance. There was no need or possibilities for individual solutions, even during vacation travel.

Kozlova (2005) writes that most ordinary Russians who were disinterested or uninvolved in politics did not feel a lack of political freedom. According to her, freedom itself is specific for Russians in both subjective and objective forms. Even under society’s forcing power, there is a place for individual will and one’s own interests.

This study showed that to be restrained, the person should feel that way herself. We are as free as we let ourselves be. This conclusion refers to e.g. one narrator talking about “the regime” and another commenting on the same issue by stating, “there was no pressure”. Travel life histories reflect individuals’ choices even in the Soviet and Russian context, with their specific historical and social circumstances. Society, family and cohort effects influence travel behavior (Zimmerman, 1982). The study findings show that all these factors matter in Russian women’s travel behavior. Due to personal family, habitus and ideological differences, people view travel practices in a different light.

Personality is another important factor influencing the construction of women’s travel life histories. Personality affects certain behaviors in particular situations (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Personality differences start in early stages of life, such as openness to experience and curiosity, and these differences follow a person throughout life.

This study focused on the women’s subjective experiences and how they constructed their travel practices within society. The study findings suggest that in order to understand the traveling practices of these women, their experiences should link to their socio-historic patterning and the specific context, gender and nationality. This combination of perspectives frames the study and gives a theoretical foundation. This study helps fill gaps in understanding travel behavior through the connection of the above concepts described. These concepts have not been applied for addressing why women travel the way they do. In essence, this study linked individual travel lives to social reality through culture, habitus and gender.

### 7.2 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

In practice, the experience and value that the researcher brings come before the theoretical bases (Shankar & Goulding, 2001). The purpose of my study was not to generalize but to go into the micro-level of women’s lives and connect their lives to societal aspects. However, the findings showed several relevant practical business insights.

Considering the Soviet past and the political situation, Russians are vulnerable to the issue of national acceptance. Providing Russians with a general welcoming feeling...
will increase their willingness to travel to those welcoming destinations markedly. Developing tourism products to fit their needs will attract more tourists, particularly Russians. The study findings underscore the importance of Russian language and organized programs for Russians, making Russians feel comfortable and safe.

Tourist stereotypes are common and usually based on the first generation mass tourists, those who have the economic and political possibility to travel (McKercher, 2008). It takes time for the country to learn how to travel and international travel practices are new to Russians. This newness is why Russians still use travel companies, so cooperation with travel companies is key for destinations that want to attract more Russians.

Nowadays Russians have sufficient information and possibilities to choose their travel destinations. For the generation of highly educated Baby Boomers, the focus of this study, cultural services are important during the trip. Through an improved understanding of individuals and their culture, companies could attract more tourists and encourage them to travel.

Even with government support for the inbound and domestic tourism, the Russian outbound travel market is showing extraordinary growth. That makes Russians a very promising tourist group for many countries. Yet the lack of cultural awareness can lead to stereotypes or the generalization of common features of group members (Albu, 2013). The tourism professional’s expertise in dealing with customers influence the holiday experience (Reisinger & Turner, 1999), which why it is important to understand and consider the customers’ cultural characteristics. This study shows that historical events and cultural background affect the behavior of Russian customers in tourism.

7.3 EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

Strict criteria do not fit consumer culture research; the study’s interpretive framework should guide the researcher in the evaluation process (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). Interpretive research makes “sense of experience and behavior, and seeing or understanding some phenomenon in its own terms, grasping its essence (e.g. interpreting a cultural form)” (Spiggle, 1994, p. 492). The trustworthiness of this study is addressed via Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) widely used approach for evaluating ethnographic research. They suggest evaluating interpretivist research according to 1) credibility, 2) dependability, 3) transferability, and 4) confirmability.

Credibility flows from good research practices, when the researcher is familiar with the topic and the data is sufficient (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). One technique that several researchers suggest to enhance credibility of interpretation is peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell, 1994). During the research process, I showed this study to peers, who questioned the interpretations. In my case, several experts not directly involved in my PhD process helped me clarify and correct ideas. The feedback during these conferences allowed for challenging the assumptions and making choices.

Organizing the interviews in a comfortable place for the narrator also strengthened credibility. Each participant gave permission to record their life history. I asked each participant if she wanted to read her history in the written form in Russian. They knew that their names would be changed in the dissertation and they did not want to read their stories in Russian in written form.
An audit trail helps ensure dependability. I recorded the phases of the research process, documenting the decisions and research activities.

Generalization is unsuitable for this research. Implementation by another researcher could lead to different results. As said in the chapter devoted to reflexivity, my background, gender and education affected the research process and interpretations. Another researcher could have identified different findings. In addition, the influence of different life and social circumstances on people is so big that if I undertook the research again, the results could be different.

The findings of this study, however, could be transferable and useful in other settings as the research context is well described. This study’s findings could help other researchers in similar studies. Good transferability influences a reader’s adaptation of his or her own life situation with the one he or she reads about (Tracy, 2010). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest thick descriptions in order to provide study transferability. These thick descriptions mean that readers have the possibility to read rich information on the study context and participants. I tried to include the descriptive information in the context, data and participants up to the point of guarding the narrators’ confidentiality.

Good interpretive research occurs when the reader has the feeling of Eureka (!), a sudden insight (Thompson, 1990).

My knowledge of the issues is culturally conditioned and my background affected the study structure and interpretation. During the whole study process, I was reflexive by being aware of my preconceptions and experiences connected to the topic. I see reality as socially constructed. Following Kozlova (2005), in interpretive studies, researchers want to understand the people they study. At the same time, they narcissistically want to understand themselves. There is a desire to put one’s own life trajectory into the societal structure and to see where everything, including myself, came from to get to another level of understanding (Kozlova, 2005).

I share the same city of origin as the interviewees in this study. On the one hand, this is an advantage. I understand what they are talking about, and I rely not only on theory but also on memory and feelings. On the other hand, there is the danger of interpreting the analysis from the viewpoint of specific norms and rules of the familiar reality. That I am from a different generation than the study participants helped maintain some distance.

The travel life-histories helped get a more nuanced understanding of the world of Russian women, and subjective representations of women’s worlds. Instead of the independent “objective truth”, meanings develop through conversation with one’s realities (Crotty, 1998). In my study, the researcher’s voice is a prism for the participants’ voices (Feighery, 2006).

### 7.4 LIMITATIONS

This study has limitations, such as generalizability. In such a qualitative study like this, the small number of respondents gives the possibility to reach a deep understanding of the issue but no statistical knowledge. This study is limited to nine women’s narratives from a particular cohort from the same region. These narratives are the base for the findings. The analyses of the participants’ travel life histories help improve the contextualized understanding of the importance of several factors for Russian
women’s travel practices. The study aim was not to generalize, rather to link the lives of this small consumer group to their socio-historical frames.

Secondly, my study lacks comparison with the other generational cohorts. People who did not experience the Soviet values and travel restrictions may pay minimal attention to the issues of being Russian and its importance for travel practices. This study’s purpose was to go deep into the travel life of one specific group of people in order to understand the issues that affected their travel lives. All women represented the same age group, worked for the government and lived in the same city. Women representing different professional groups and cities could tell different stories.

Thirdly, data collection for this study was during Russia’s political and social crisis in Crimea. As mentioned in previous chapters, this time period may have influenced the respondent moods and attitudes towards present day traveling.

7.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

This study offers several future research possibilities. Western values commonly guide the understanding of consumer behavior. Moreover, researchers sometimes use non-Western cultural factors without a deep understanding of their roots. How culture influences consumer behavior is a topic that needs more attention in a non-Western context, especially linking between social and political factors, and the lives of individuals. Future research should connect to non-Western cultural contexts and the importance of historical circumstances for the person’s life and consumer behavior. Historically meaningful events are a basis of people’s values. Individuals representing different generations could differ in their consumer behavior and in tourism. This study does not use any comparison with younger generations.

In addition future research should investigate young generations as an important consumer group. Their values considering travel behavior related to Russian context would deepen insights into this study’s findings. For example, living through completely different political and economic times younger generation could value similar or different things.

Further research could gather rich comparative data to widen the understanding of how the social, political and cultural factors affect Russians today. Women’s travel practices depend on the social and political context (Green, Hebron & Woodward). Researchers often present women as victims or survivors. Future research could examine the daily lives of women without putting gender issues on the pedestal.

Finally, habitus gives us freedom and constrains us at the same time. Different life experiences and circumstances that people demonstrate through different forms of capital make people feel and act differently. Further research could focus on the individual level and to what extent personal background and life conditions affect travel practices.
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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1. TRAVEL LIFE HISTORIES OF RUSSIAN WOMEN

These travel life histories follow each of the nine individual’s travel lives. Originally, these travel life histories were in Russian, which I translated into English as closely as possible, so as not to lose the participants’ voices. First, I put each story in chronological order and then constructed them into the narrative form. The timeline of life - childhood, youth, adulthood during the Soviet times and adulthood during the Russian times was the base for the chronological order. After structuring I translated the Russian text into English and added the inserts in brackets that explain locations or Russian culture dependent issues. Chapter 4.5 describes gathering and constructing the travel life histories.

Elizaveta

The sun, the sea, fruits, warmth, south - these are the strongest associations I have while looking back at my childhood trips to pioneer camps in Ukraine. They are too difficult to forget. Half of those trips were funded by the organization my parents were working for, so it was affordable enough to go there once or twice while I was at school.

After graduation from college and going to university in Leningrad [now St. Petersburg], travel became more difficult financially as nothing was funded. So we got holiday packages from the labor unions of Russia. As I remember, going abroad was not an easy financial task then.

More than that, it was more even more complicated to get a permit for traveling out of country. Sputnik was a youth organization responsible for the trips abroad. They existed as a part of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League in Moscow, and Intourist, which existed as a separate entity. Once we went to Czechoslovakia with a group from the university. This was the only way possible to get out of the country.

After my third year I got married, and during the fourth year I traveled with my husband. As we didn’t have children and were more or less financially stable, we got a trip from the tourist company, Intourist, to Bulgaria. We spent an amazing two weeks enjoying the sun and the air as well as going on all excursions possible. The most interesting fact was that Russians were not allowed into the Roman Baths. The Russian guide explained to us that it was simply not allowed to take Russians so as not to ruin the wall paintings or something else.

Afterwards, we went to Bulgaria with our child when he was four, and then when he was eleven. To be able to go on a vacation we had to save up for a year. Apart from financial obstacles, everyone was thoroughly checked in the Soviet period. In every group there was a KGB representative to watch us. It is not that anyone was worried. We never intended to break any rules, not to say that we were ever forbidden to do anything in particular. We didn’t complete applications for visas, they were given to us. We didn’t get a foreign passport. Intourist got a specific document of us which was shown at the border on the way in and out.

When my son turned four we went to Bulgaria one more time, and the service there seemed very appealing. I am talking about the service opportunities we were
given there, which we certainly couldn’t receive in the Soviet Union being middle class. I remember we could have received a room with two single beds and a bed for a child. Along with that, the room was spacious. The hotel was at the beach, and they served free drinks for the customers. Ice cream was free. We were simply astonished by such conditions.

After maternity leave I was called for work in the Komsomol district committee. I definitely can say I am a Soviet person to the core. In my family there was not any ‘want’ or ‘can’t’, we only had ‘have to’ and ‘must’, which is so different from the upbringing of people today. Few people who truly understand this ‘must’ or ‘have to’. They tend to know more of ‘I want, I will or I won’t’. This is how I was, this is why they took me to work, I knew all of that.

When I finally went abroad in 1988, it was officially allowed. I went to Finland. It felt different. First, Finnish marks were cheaper at that time so we had more opportunities. We could not exchange the currency in the banks, rather only if we went there in a group, and the sum of money for the group was limited. Certainly, there was one in the group who was watching, because the system controlled everything. Obviously, we were not told about such a person but somehow we knew. To say more, our mentality was different, which is still quite distinctive nowadays. I still recall the time when my classmate and I were walking down the street and we saw how they were redecorating the building sides while the footing was covered with newspapers to prevent drops falling.

In terms of purposes of my traveling experience I could mention one which is of such high significance. I was truly interested in how things were organized outside Russia. I used to arrive at hotels and analyze the design, service, equipment, planning, etc. Then I would ask the maids to show me around. They went bug-eyed and I went to the reception to talk with a manager about the storage rooms with all the inventory. As one can judge my life was fully dedicated to work.

With time the Soviet Union traditions were gone. The socialist systems existed, people had more or less equal rights, the flats were of the same planning. Of course, the affluent had a bit more. And suddenly people could buy detached houses and private houses, a boat or a car. People wanted to invest money into something they will need every day, not just for going somewhere and enjoying the time by spending money on traveling. I cannot say that only civil servants could afford going abroad. Anyone could apply for a trip, but nobody knew who would get a trip pass. For example, only 250 candidates could go, so to speak.

People know that tourism had not existed officially until 1998, as it was a part of economics, a separate field. Therefore, there were not any qualified educational programs and materials connected with tourism. But what actually existed was the focus of tourism planned for Soviet people; they all were patriotic.

Svetlana
The school time was not filled with any remarkable trips, apart from going to camps for pioneers. I cannot say I was dreaming about traveling to some other interesting places, as we all had a close bond with our homes, it seemed scary to stay far away from home. People would feel homesick a lot, and this is the reason they did not go far for long. Even when we happened to go somewhere there were not any special behavior rules. People were used to being obedient, for example, we woke up early, went to bed early as well, never escaped from adults. To some certain extent as pupils we were intimidated a bit. To be perfectly honest, I just wanted to be at home.

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At school nobody had a tendency to discuss the opportunities or lack of those for traveling. All people had different resources. Sometimes those who succeeded in studies or sports were chosen for holidays in Artek [a children camp on the Black Sea in Ukraine] and they deserved that, no envy over that.

Having graduated from high school, I started working and realized I wanted to explore new places in the world. The destination was insignificant, it was more about the desire to travel. Traveling in the south of the Soviet Union had started in the Caucasus. There were half dozen such republics as Georgia, Armenia and Baku. To go on a trip it was enough to pay for the voucher. Along with collecting the recommendation letter and your moral characteristics. After the southern travels I got married and had children.

Family vacationing took place in such places like Tuapse [Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia], a place recommended by friends. It was difficult to get a voucher there. This is why we went there by ourselves, independently. All the holiday vouchers were issued among enterprises, and further among labor unions. Therefore, there was a competition of application for vouchers as the demand exceeded the supply. While choosing the candidate they considered the working experience, the family status, whether you had children or not, their age and any illnesses of a parent and a child. The second time was a trip to Repino, Leningrad [now St. Petersburg]. It was not something I wanted, but that was the place I got a voucher for.

While traveling in the southern areas of the Soviet Union some things struck me the most. Once I remember getting off the train and seeing no women in the streets, just men, lounging away and goggling at us. Before we had arrived there I cannot remember a specific briefing, probably they gave basic rules, but it is hard to remember.

After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990 everything became heavy, weather included, as it was August. Nobody knew what was coming. Life became harder. From the economic point of view, the devaluation of ruble had started. Some people were gaining in the process. Some were losing a lot. For example, those people who were building cooperatives did not have time to finish. Therefore, everything they had saved up simply crumbled. Those who purchased cooperatives in time paid off less due to the devaluation of currency.

Fortunately, my family owned neither the former nor the latter. I neither won nor lost. In the 1990s, we had coupons for food. Meanwhile, the country was running out of provision and clothes. Those who had financial resources had not suffered that much, but there were times when one did know how to feed the kids. There was no money at all. We survived. That time has passed.

When thinking about trips abroad I think about how sprawling our country, Russia, has always been, and we had enough freedom. Why are we supposed to aspire to go abroad? So what if those people abroad live better? That is their country. Outcasts are seldom welcomed. Russian people are not that welcomed either, so I would not want to experience that unwelcomeness. When I first came to Finland, I did not experience many significant differences, just a few.

If I had a chance I would go traveling now. I would fly to Greece or India, which looks very appealing. Nowadays we have more opportunities. Thus I have relatives who are used to traveling to different places every two years. They tell us interesting stuff about countries so that I have a growing interest in it, like traveling to China. My attitude to tourism has changed since I have gained more freedom after the children have grown up.
When thinking about all those countries and foreigners, I start thinking about Russians. I feel strongly proud of our history, our tsars like Peter the Great and Alexander, and Nikolai, extraordinary scientists, all those people of art. We are one glorious nation. From time to time Russians are a mystery, difficult to figure out, even for themselves. To say more, we are unbreakable, as what does not kill us makes us stronger.

There is a tale about a stepmother and a stepdaughter. The mother wanted to pester the life out of the stepdaughter. She made her stepdaughter work and had a bad attitude towards her. She nourished and cherished her real daughter. It all resulted in a strong stepdaughter and a weak real daughter. I suppose there are no bad nations, only politicians who try to affect ordinary people. Whatever people might think about Russians, we are a great nation. We have always been open, generous, merciful and responsive. Maybe they could be afraid of us because they cannot understand us. Maybe this is the reason.

Maria
I was born in a military family, for this reason I had been traveling since birth. From the first trips I remember southern destinations like the Black Sea or Yalta. More than that, I certainly remember my parents and I went to the south to stay at a holiday center for around three weeks every summer since age three. Funny enough, I still can’t stand all these road trips, and the best memories relate back to palms, warmth, good weather, and, of course, the sea. All this traveling I could have caused some worries and concerns, but not for us. That time was different and we were used to moving around so much. From a financial viewpoint, we also didn’t experience any difficulties, as both my parents were working. In between summer holidays in the south we found some time for visiting grandparents, who lived in the Leningrad area. The main differences between these destinations were climate, of course, and people that were less reserved as they were in Karelia. I was totally happy about the trips in my childhood and wouldn’t change a thing.

My first time abroad occurred in 1989 when I was studying at Petrozavodsk State University. I got a holiday package as a student. We went to Yugoslavia and spent time staying in a hotel at night and having outings in the daytime. All the excitement was about the fact that it was the very first group trip abroad. I still remember I had 50 rubles exchanged into foreign currency, as we were allowed to exchange a fixed sum of money that time. So 50 rubles was the money I had on me.

The leader of our group was responsible for the money part, he was in charge of all the formal aspects, and we were not supposed to walk by ourselves in the city. People were talking that there was a person in the group who was watching us. However, we never knew who they were. In fact, we didn’t feel that we were being followed. I liked everything also because it was my first time abroad and the fact it was a group trip. Frankly speaking, if you were traveling anywhere you were hanging out with the other people of the trip. For example, I went with a friend of mine, and we were together all the time and never felt pressured in terms of behavior or anything else. I remember myself buying cosmetics and clothes. They were beautiful and different, we hadn’t had them yet back in the Soviet Union.

After the abroad experience I traveled to Sevastopol, Yalta, Minsk, and Riga with my sister or friends. There was also a period when I was working and didn’t travel at all. After Yugoslavia I also went to Cyprus. What struck me most was that nobody followed the traffic rules. I had noticed that as I am a driver myself. Instead of signaling a maneuver Cypriots gesticulated a lot.
Back in those days people didn’t travel abroad that much. It was more about going to the south of Russia, and everybody went there with more or less the same frequency. However, I remember one girl from the final year at university who went to Yalta or Sochi with a boyfriend for a weekend, just for a couple of days, and that was astonishing. It was amazing because she could go from a chilly spring into the warm seaside. It was not about being brave or something; she went there with a fiancée she was going to marry one day.

Starting in 2000 I resumed traveling after a significant break. After the fall of the Soviet Union, people had constant problems with salary delays and different limits. I traveled somewhere but not often due to something connected with crossing the border. About 10 or 15 years ago I took a trip to Finland as I was meeting a good friend of mine in Turku. During those days they issued visas based only on invitations, and the limited number of days you were going to spend in Finland. What surprised me was Finland’s cleanliness and silence. All the people were law-abiding, and that was what I really liked. I visited Helsinki afterwards as I have many friends there. Currently I am used to driving to Joensuu, for example, which is not difficult. The visa is issued for a year, and the visa center simplified all the paperwork.

If I had a chance to go anywhere, I would probably choose Vietnam. I have always dreamed to see something exotic, or Thailand for example. Thailand is not that far in terms of a distance because I don’t really like long flights. Three to five hours is my limit. Moreover, I can’t stand long road trips which spoil all the impressions a journey can bring. I am not a huge fan of exotic foods, but I would like a change in meals for sure. I am always up for something new, so to speak.

Another important aspect is language. When I travel to Finland I can make all the arrangements by myself. On the contrary, if you go farther you’d better speak English. For example, I just came from Greece; no one spoke Russian there. All in all, service in Russian is very important.

While traveling you are in the mixture of nationalities. In my way of thinking, Russians are more emotional. Surprisingly, judging from my recent experience in Greece, Russian tourists behaved even better than others. Of course, everyone seeks different purposes in traveling. People tend to choose different types of tourism. Nowadays, fitness tourism is quite popular; however, decades ago it was unbelievable to think about traveling somewhere just for doing some sport.

Valentina

I have been living and working in Petrozavodsk all my life. Currently I am teaching banking, financial papers, monetary markets, etc. I remember when I was a child my family used to travel a lot, starting from Crimea and finishing in Batumi, Georgia, to the south of Russia every summer, and only there - no foreign countries for holidays or vacation. It took some certain money to go on a vacation there. We went there only thanks to the above average income of my grandmother, which differed from a typical Soviet Union worker’s income. My first trip abroad was probably in 1990 when the Soviet border was opened. However, I guess the very first time was in 1987 when I was working and we took our students to Germany, the German Democratic Republic it was then.

During elementary school every student was supposed to write a “how I spent my summer” essay. Those who didn’t just go to the countryside to visit their grandmother, but went somewhere else, got a chance to tell others something truly interesting about the summer. You could speak in front of the class, and the teacher praised such
Attempts. There wasn’t a single boast about your social status enhancement because of spending your summer somewhere.

After school, I went to the university and continued going to different cities either with my grandmother or with the university. Most commonly, on organized trips where you were supposed to buy a trip and go on a journey with a group of people. There was not by chance they didn’t form groups. Trip organizers could always find some travelers wishing to buy the trips. Otherwise, my grandmother made all preparations in advance by buying tickets in the winter because it was impossible to buy any in the summer. I remember us traveling to Lazarevskoye [South of Russia, Krasnodar krai] like holiday-makers without any booking in advance. At one point, my two girlfriends and I were granted a trip by the university for good studies and proactive attitude.

When the iron curtain opened then you could start talking about your social status and your traveling achievements. Back in those days there was a feeling that you could go abroad easily, but very few actually could. After the fall of the Soviet Union, most importantly, you did not need any holiday voucher, any official invitation, nothing. Earlier you had to submit your family or relatives’ proof of financial support of your stay abroad.

Obviously, there were different life standards. Foreigners seemed to get big money, and we had to exchange ours to go abroad. One had to go to the state bank with a passport, including visa, and get a limited amount of exchanged money. I remember a dollar was worth sixty Russian kopek [one ruble = hundred kopek] and a Fin mark was in accordance with the international exchange rate.

The very first time I went abroad was Berlin. My first greatest memory of Berlin was absolutely nobody in the streets after 9 pm, which looked like a cemetery to me. Similarly, when I went on a work trip to Hachenburg [Germany] we used to walk in the evening on the paved alleyways, and again no one or nothing to hear apart from your heels over these streets. What also struck me most in Berlin was the clean streets and shops.

In the Soviet Union we didn’t have any variety of clothes at all. Everything was dull and plain, the same plaid coats for children. And everything was different abroad, so many colors, different styles and cuts. I even remember buying Salamandra trainers for my husband. Not only did we buy things there, but a lot of clothes were sold further at home. Those who could buy jeans were trendy, that I remember even from my university times. Those people were thought to have connections, which was not true in real life. When I was studying at the university in the second or third year in 1980 or 1981, people started having imported clothes, and I remember my friend’s father was working as a professor who took work trips abroad. So he used to bring her skirts and chewing gum you get in foreign shops.

We also started going to Finland, but it was a whole another story with visas at that time. You had to go to Saint Petersburg because you could only get a visa for 10–15 days. There were multi entry visas then. It was not financially hard for my family and me to travel to Finland, because our banking school had been financed well. Moreover, I even bought the first model of Zhiguli [a car] for forty rubles, while it cost four thousand rubles back home. As for further traveling experience, I kept coming back to Finland, for example, to work at a strawberry farm, also work trips to Germany, and, of course, Turkey and Egypt. Since 2000 I kept traveling with my family, mostly to Egypt and Turkey, and we tried all the tourist attractions possible.

I guess going abroad has always seemed desirable, either now or back then when the border was closed. Some people strongly believed that only fully “right” people
were given an opportunity to go abroad. They even said there had been some KGB agents in those groups of tourists who went abroad. I didn’t even know about that. People went to Poland, we did not. I never wanted to go to America. I cannot say why exactly, just some sort of a version. Many people went there in search of an American dream, but I never wanted to and do not want to now. I wish I could go to Sweden or Norway and Argentina, which is surprising. The only barrier now is financial. Otherwise I would go right away.

Marina
The first childhood trip I remember was a night train trip to Leningrad. I was 14, studying in eighth grade at that time, and as we didn’t have much money, I was brave enough to go there by myself to visit my uncle. The ticket in a sitting coach cost 35 kopek, and one could buy it easily at the railway station. After a year when I completed the ninth grade I traveled to Arkhangelsk [the north of Russia] to visit my relatives and work in a sovkhoz [a state-owned farm], where the students of the agricultural college collected herbs, cut the hay, etc. Having worked in Arkhangelsk for a year after graduation from high school, I returned to Petrozavodsk in 1969 and started working for the railroad. I remember well how the chief accountant gave me the advice to never work in forestry, as if I wanted to eat I should rather work in trade. So after some training courses I started working as an auditor in a railroad company, then marriage and children happened and some typical trips to Arkhangelsk to visit relatives.

In 1974-1975 with my friend, we took a trip to Abkhazia [Georgia], as she was originally from the area. We didn’t have to get special arrangements, just to buy tickets and go there. I cannot say we were dreaming of something more at that point. I had a family and all the issues related to that. Moreover, the living standards at home were not motivating.

I guess I didn’t want to visit a precise place. I was quite satisfied by taking a week or two in the summer somewhere in Krasnodar [Southern Russia] or Abkhazia. Some people were dreaming about traveling to the sea, to lie in the sun get some warmth. We used to plan trips to places like Tuapse [South of Russia] or Gelendzhik [South of Russia] in April or May and then in the summer all these trips usually came true.

At work I could apply for a holiday package that simply required filling in some applications and buying tickets. With my friend, we took a number of organized trips to Nalchik [Kabardino-Balkar Republic], Pyatigorsk [Southwestern Russia] and Zheleznogorsk [Krasnoyarsk Krai], which means we were in a group of people who were supposed to follow some rules, for example, never come late and be on time, not to cause scandals or misbehave, always to inform about leaving somewhere, etc. We probably felt kind of limited when hearing all these rules, because coming from a village I wished I could have visited more places of interests. There was not anyone who watched and followed us completely everywhere, but we had a leader of the group responsible only for organizational aspects.

Apart from holiday vouchers from work, with my husband we would travel by ourselves a lot. We had to find and rent a flat and choose whether to cook or to eat out, to spend time on the beach or to stay at home. We continued traveling like that even through Black Monday [when stock markets all over the world crashed] when the meltdown occurred.

More than that, when the Soviet Union fell we were all watching TV as it happened, the displacement of government, the live coverage of all that. To my thinking, it
became more complicated to go on with the traveling, the extra zeros in the currency, the delay of salary payments, etc. As for wishes to visit some others places or countries, I wouldn’t say I was dreaming of something in particular. I was more focused on work duties and the ability to meet deadlines and requirements.

The first trip after the Soviet Union fell was after 2000. We took a driving trip to Blagoveshchensk, close to Anapa [northern coast of the Black Sea, Russia]. My boss had purchased a countryside house there, so I was asked to check it and the surroundings out. Most importantly, I wanted my son to get some warmth therapy in the sea, and we did some shopping as well because the goods were imported from Turkey there. I remember I bought these thin jeans for my son that were just appearing here.

However, nobody accepted traveling as something superior like social status enhancement. Everybody was just talking about how different the life was abroad. When someone would bring a can of coke or beer, it was big, some sort of personal achievement. People liked that but did not dream about going abroad. It was not like that. To some certain extent, it was a bit more expensive and complicated. No one could imagine exchanging rubles into Finnish marks, what for? Having come back from a trip to Anapa I showed the pictures, told a story of how wonderful and beautiful it was there, how good it was to have a vacation there.

In fact, we used to travel to the South of Russia every year when the children were little. The first reason was certainly the sea. Another one was the escapism from all everyday problems when you didn’t have to clean, wash and cook. We enjoyed spending time by relaxing and going to amusement parks, as we hadn’t had any of those here in Chalna [the Republic of Karelia, Russia].

Currently, in 2014, I am dreaming of going abroad. It appears to be not the deepest dream of mine because of some ‘buts’, although I wish I could go there and see what happens in different places. Thus, I recently visited Joensuu because my friends invited me. I can’t say I was impressed because it was more like a shopping marathon; we rushed around stopping by some shops and drug stores. Apart from that, a recent trip was Minsk, which impressed me deeply. What struck me the most was the cleanliness and neatness of streets and buildings, the culture, the way people treat you nicely and talk to you, just amazing.

In the future I am thinking of traveling somewhere abroad. I have nothing particular in mind. The only thing that matters is the duration of a journey, I wouldn’t want to spend half a day flying to Thailand, for instance. I am not concerned about the language issues because when traveling worldwide you will always meet another Russian along the way.

Anna
I still have flashbacks from my childhood when apart from pioneer camps, my family of four and I used to travel to Kherson [Ukraine], the territory belonging to the Soviet Union. We purchased a summer house and spent summer time there voluntarily-compulsorily, so to say. After summer holidays when all classmates got back together, we never used to show off the places we had visited - back in those days all pupils had an opportunity to go to camps.

Usually a child could apply for a trip to a camp through the labor union at a father’s or mother’s workplace. It was all about whether you wanted to go or not. Very few people could go abroad in those times. When someone did, it was something huge. My aunt was working as a dentist at that time so she could afford traveling abroad. She used to tell me stories about the trip. However, from what I can recall she took on
some bad habits, which the local people laughed at. For example, when she came back she brought a flower printed pack full of beautiful souvenirs like chewing gum, pens, etc. Probably that grew my interest and I started thinking about traveling somewhere out of the area.

Tallinn [Estonia] was a city I traveled to with my sister when I was 17. The culture seemed different, especially in terms of better customer service. More than that, everything appeared to be clean and tidy. Therefore, it was appealing. I wish I could know the language, so as not to have any communication barriers in shops. However, I also remember times when you could be refused service if you were speaking Russian in Estonia. Fortunately, apart from that we did not feel pressured. You could easily get a travel voucher at ‘Intourist’, catch a bus and be off.

I personally think everything depends on the upbringing, which is how we were behaving. For example, I felt ashamed of some of our fellow Russians from the country when they let themselves speak loudly in a bus. They looked like they were from another planet. I would say the scale of Soviet upbringing depends entirely on the family. I suppose we were intimidated by all these Komsomols, Little Octobrists [organizations for children], school, etc., but at the same time institutions framed and disciplined us. For people living abroad it might seem weird because freedom is what is good for them. We never threw cigarettes butts in the grass. It was a norm of behavior. Wherever I traveled, I have always felt strong about my home country and had a strong feeling of belonging to the Soviet Union.

Before starting the journey, your application and characteristics were processed looking for such matters as good qualities, membership in the Communist Party. I don’t remember any instructing on behavior involved in the process. Probably, I was brought up properly and had it all in my character. The purpose of traveling abroad was to see as many places of interest as possible, though we were not given as much time as they could have provided us with. We tried to stay in a group because it was a new place. People were scared to be lost, etc.

After I went to study to be an accountant, we were offered only two travel options, either Moscow or L’vov [Ukraine]. It was intimidating to go to Ukraine as we learnt the history and were scared they would not accept us. We also went to Kiev, as we were truly interested in looking around. We used to talk about traveling and all the trips, but there was never any boasting.

In terms of dreaming I cannot say I was looking forward to go to the United States of America but what I really wanted was the seaside in Sochi [Krasnodar Krai, South of Russia]. I had always wanted to travel but then I got married. Along with the marriage came perestroika [soviet political and economic restructuring during the years of 1980-1991]. Nineteen ninety was a financially difficult year, a period of instability. During this period each prime minister was replaced every six months, monetary reform was ended in three days. We were literally giving rubles away. Kashpirovskiy [a Russian hypnotist] showed up also on TV. American TV shows started. Of, course, people were scared but they were not scared to stay completely without a job. We tried to live the real life and not an illusionary one. However, one could never stop dreaming about traveling, even to Finland.

After the 2000s my colleague and I went on a triple trip, Sweden-Finland-Norway, which was a bit expensive for both my husband and me, so I was the only one who went. While we were on the journey I never felt any discomfort. We came across other Russians in tour groups but never had any barriers in communication or different attitudes. This particular trip encouraged further traveling. After stopping by the
countries which are famous for what I really love - frost, snow and cold - I continued with domestic tourism within Russia. Once we spent quality time in Saint Petersburg for a cultural program. We left the hotel at 7 in the morning and came back around 11 in the evening.

These Russian trips are the holidays I crave. I would definitely go traveling across Russia. I still have a dream, we both, my husband and I actually, to go to Yuzhno Sakhalinsk [far eastern Russia]. I have a friend living there whom I have not seen since the university. Maybe I would go to Paris, which has its downsides apart from the romantic stuff. You could go out somewhere in the center and see something you wouldn’t like. Every time you travel somewhere you should believe you are going to be a welcomed guest. Nobody would like to come across with negativity like at a restaurant in Poland. They say there is a sign: “Russians are not served here”.

More than that, if I can definitely state I aspire to travel in the future, my husband does not, so this along with the financial part makes Karelia [the republic of Karelia, Russia] the only prospective future tourism of mine.

Anastasia

All my traveling experience can be divided into two periods: trips I took within a country called the Soviet Union and traveling abroad. I remember myself being a child who took regular trips to Leningrad due to the fact we had relatives and a grandmother living there. After my granny died I used to travel to the village of Salmi [the Republic of Karelia, Russia], which is in the Pitkiaranta area, which was, of course, so much different from Leningrad. Speaking about other places we simply didn’t have funds for going anywhere. There were three children in my family, and my father was the only one who was working.

Having completed my first year at elementary school I started going to the pioneer’s camp in Lososinnoye [the Republic of Karelia, Russia], which was available thanks to some holiday packages, which father could get at work in the Onega tractor factory. When I was in eighth grade my parents divorced. Therefore, the financial background became worse, and when I went to the pioneer camp I used to travel there as a dish washer. At that time we didn’t spend much trying to save money for traveling or buying things like clothes. People seemed to be decent and humble. Moreover, they were more concerned about basic needs. I remember sewing some clothes for myself and I felt just fine among peers.

After graduation from high school I had worked for a year when the chief engineer helped me to apply for a study place at a university in Saint-Petersburg in 1967. I was studying at the university, which meant we were supposed to join a construction brigade. That was the right thing to do. In addition, it was all about a feeling of belonging to a community, because that was what a Soviet person would do at that time. During my third year of university, I got married and had a child the next year. There was no way for traveling at that point. What we had at that time was summer holidays in Feodosia, which is a part of Ukraine nowadays, and a part of the Soviet Union previously.

Since 1980 the trips abroad of mine started. It was quite difficult to go to capitalist countries at that time. Therefore, before going you were supposed to apply and get your application and characteristics approved by the Party Committee. They were responsible for making a decision about my moral fiber. I don’t know exactly what it meant, probably, whether or not I understood how to behave while abroad.

Before going somewhere we were told what to do and not to do on the trip, what people to contact and not. For example, we were told not to be late because it was
simply not polite. I was disciplined and worked as a teacher at some point, so it was not a problem. In addition, I was known to be a good mother. My son studied well at school.

Anyways, people started talking and thinking about going abroad more. So did I. That’s why I took a Poland-Czechoslovakia-Germany trip. When my group and I were on a trip in Romania, in Tisa, people paid attention to us, and we paid attention only to shops and the availability of goods we saw. I remember when we arrived at the hotel in Czechoslovakia. The bellman took our luggage and was on his way to bring it to the rooms. It was a bit overwhelming because we were not used to that kind of attitude and service. We had Fanta soda at breakfast and lunch, which was also unusual.

I wouldn’t say I experienced a lack of finances on these trips; we exchanged money and got free time in between scheduled activities when we could go shopping. We didn’t question all the rules and scheduled activities that existed for our group. We simply took things for granted. I think if only I could have spoken foreign languages, probably, I would have wanted to travel further like my children do nowadays.

In 1991 I got the chance to go to a capitalist country - Finland. I joined the group accidentally thanks to a mother of my child’s classmate, and it appeared to be so much different from the socialist countries I had visited. It wasn’t just because of the variety of goods, but the beauty and cleanliness. This trip to Finland was much more eventful and richer when we looked around, visited governmental institutions, libraries and kindergartens and, of course, all those aqua parks. Having returned from the trip to Finland I decided if I ever traveled somewhere again it would be traveling abroad only.

In 1989 I registered for the waiting list to move to Finland due to the Ingrian [Finnish] origins of my mother. More than that, a deficit of clothes and food had started. People tended to buy everything because the ruble was devaluing. When we got closer and it was time for moving I just didn’t go because I was afraid of the effect it might have on my son’s studying due to the fact he was considered as a part of military education to a certain extent. This is why I went to Finland one more time to work on a strawberry farm. When my younger child got older we went to Yevpatoriya [Crimea, now Russia] in 1997, as we had been on a waiting list for a holiday package of a health resort.

Nowadays, my children are adults and I see how they travel to Europe, rent cars and take road trips in Spain or Portugal. In the 2000s I started going to Hungary, Croatia, Turkey and Egypt. I never loved the sea that much but having enjoyed it once, you can never stop wanting to go back.

When I think about traveling in the future, I can definitely say that if I have a chance I would gladly travel to Europe, to such countries as France and Italy. I wish I could visit such places of interest as the Coliseum and the Eiffel Tower. On one hand, all these pictures and stories look and sound so appealing. On the other, the depreciation of the ruble provides worries and a lack of confidence from the financial and political points of view.

My husband and I watch the news every day and follow all the current affairs happening around us. It is all a bit tense, all these military supplies we have in the air and on the sea. People are scared of a war possibility. During the presidential elections in 2012, people did not have such a sincere belief in Putin. However, nowadays, his rating has increased among the Russian people due to his actions, Crimea, for instance. Respect and authority are in the air.

To compare things now with what had been during the Soviet period, probably, some of the things are coming back. The only thing that is completely lost in this
process is the ideology we had in the Soviet Union. Frankly speaking, the lack of ideology is about the lack of education and influence on our youth. I am not against globalization and broadening our horizons as long as the youth are brought up based on true ideals.

Olga

If you wanted to be chosen for school trips, your active involvement into school life was highly appreciated. In this way I went to Pryazha [the Republic of Karelia, Russia] and on some other school trips mostly. My parents both worked as teachers. This is why it was quite difficult for them to travel anywhere. Once I remember I went to Saint Petersburg to buy a dress instead of visiting any places of interest. When we were studying at school people used to go to Finland and people got some excitement from that. When someone went there, they were not treated as someone different. However, you could instantly tell that people had been to Finland as they put those lovely dolls, which were impossible to buy anywhere here, in the windows.

Due to the fact that my parents were teachers with a below than average income, they could get holiday tours from work. There was a period when nobody went anywhere, as people could hardly afford it. I remember going to the south of Russia and on some trips abroad. Speaking about the latter we used to be given some instructions about what to do and not to do during the stay. I don’t remember that well but it was not that harsh, I suppose. I remember the horror we felt when we ran late in Bulgaria because we decided to stop by the cafe to meet my husband’s uncle.

When we were in Batumi [Georgia] I was amazed by the dancing fountains there, I still sometimes think that was something I will never see in my life. More than that, it was so much different from the Soviet life. However, I cannot say what I felt at the moment. I could not detect whether it was a good or a bad feeling. I cannot say I felt proud of my Soviet passport or something though I was known to be quite straight in my behavior.

During the Soviet period one had to save up for a year to travel to the south of the USSR. People did not make that much money. Speaking about going abroad, well, I did not have money. Probably I also did not dream about anything in particular.

When the Soviet Union fell, there was uncertainty; people were scared. I don’t exactly remember where I was and what I was doing. I definitely recall the time when I was reciting the ‘I pull out of my wide trouser-pockets a duplicate of priceless cargo…’ [poem of V. Mayakovki, My Soviet passport] I had shivers with this ‘... and envy, I’m a citizen of the Soviet Socialist Union!’ It felt like... I was a pioneer. It involved all the love a person can have for his country. With time this love has disappeared. I still hurt for Russia.

When I was on a journey during the times of Russia I never felt to behave in a certain way probably because I was not a patriot. When my daughter was 17 or 18 we went to Finland. The very first time there was a trip to Huhmari [North Karelia, Finland] from a labor union. We were impressed by the big pool we saw there. There was nothing like this in Petrozavodsk back in those days. I even bought some earrings for my daughter.

When we were in the pool I noticed something interesting about how foreigners behave in a new environment. When they find themselves abroad among strangers they tend to shout and behave wildly, maybe it relates only to uneducated people.

After Finland I understood I have been dreaming to go to Italy or France, to go to the theater in Milan, for example. Any trip broadens your horizon even without a
visit to a museum. I remember all these beauty and impressions I was experiencing when I was in Paris in 2010. Of course, it was so much different from more plain cities like Helsinki or Joensuu.

I can detect exactly the moment when this passion for traveling was born, I guess, it was not connected with the iron curtain opening but more with my moral curtain from the rest of the world opening. I think it happened when I was studying at the university. A realization came to me. People did not live forever and there were so many things to see and learn. I appear to be a romantic or a daydreamer here living in fantasies.

When thinking about those trips to the south, I remember feeling bad about the way I was dressed. I had a good body and nothing to wear like all those good-looking people. The reason was probably a deficit of clothes in the USSR. Nowadays I don’t experience any low self-esteem. All people are just very different.

Probably there are some [foreigners] who don’t treat Russians well. On the other hand, there are many [foreigners] who really do. I understand criticism towards Russians when there are people who travel to another country to live by governmental financial aid without an attempt to go job hunting. That patriotic feeling I felt while reciting Mayakovski [Russian poet] has vanished. I still can’t stand it when people speak negatively about Russia. We do have disadvantages but I do not want anyone who does not live here speaking badly about the country.

Elena
All these traveling habits have not been typical for my family. My father was a family man, apart from that we were occupied with a country house in the summer and once even took a trip to the sea. I recall we got a holiday voucher to Riga [Latvia] because we were offered an apartment and some excursions there. I remember us on an outing, which was interesting due to visits to a church and a place of convicts. It was interesting because the jail represented the war, and they showed us how the prisoners were kept. While we were on a journey no one told us about some restrictions of things we could or could not do.

Later I heard Latvians did not like Russians that much there. At school I was studying with different Soviet nationalities like Georgian and Belorussian, people of different incomes, affluent and ordinary. We never thought of differences among people.

I have always been a family woman because I feel comfortable and safe at home, which could have been a possible reason for not traveling that much. When the Soviet Union fell I did not feel like panicking or something, probably, because I was ready to let things go as they went. I was at home, my kids were with me, that was all I needed. Nowadays, I would probably go somewhere if I had a motivator who would go with me or ask me to go with them, for example, if my daughter had invited me to stop by the grand Opera in Paris. Until I am pushed by someone I don’t feel the need to go anywhere. But sometimes I have a feeling... like when seeing all these TV programs about different countries. But nobody ever pushes me.

I believe nowadays it easier to go traveling because people possess more information and are more used to trains, for example, and there are fewer concerns about the whole idea. In terms of the financial aspect I could definitely spare some money for a good trip. I personally think if a person wants to go somewhere they should be given a right to. However, some people were banned from outbound tourism in the past and some are still not permitted.
When reminiscing about the Soviet Union I recollect only good memories. There was no discrimination among people. It did not matter whether you were a Russian or not. People lived a safe life. During the Soviet period people had more or less the same financial resources, and it was quite challenging for people to go abroad on a vacation. The main concern was to feed and to buy clothes for my children.

Nowadays, I have two daughters and a granddaughter, too. Probably these are also the reasons we are not so active in terms of tourism. Maybe it would be useful to change the surrounding environment and go somewhere just for yourself, for inner peace and relaxation, but, on the other hand, it feels equally good at home. One more thing; if I had not had responsibilities like my husband, my cat, fish, a summer house and work in the garden - all of these surpass the desire to go. Apart from that, it feels so sad because in your heart you want to come back home, the place where someone is waiting for you. When you are traveling it does not feel that different, especially when you walk around the city, stop by the theaters, museums, etc. From a tourist perspective, some people are hospitable and welcoming, some are not. In contrast, they say we have a lot of welcoming people in our town.
This dissertation examines overlooked Soviet and Russian women's travel practices through life narrative interviews. During Soviet times, citizens had few travel possibilities; the situation differs nowadays. Several theoretical domains—culture, habitus and gender—help examine how women interpret, and the meanings of, their travel life histories within Soviet and Russian society.