**THE EARLY HISTORY OF U.C. IN ESTONIA (1992 ～ 1996)**

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## Preface

I would like to express my gratitude to be given this opportunity to write the early history of the Unification Church in Estonia. I also feel my responsibility to do it now, because the worldwide Blessing is progressing rapidly and its wave will surely come to Estonia too. As the first official missionary to Estonia, I am probably a proper person to inform to True Parents how the history of restoration started in Estonia.

We (my wife and I) stayed in Estonia for four years from October 1992 to September 1996. (During that period we officially worked as a missionary till July 1994, and then stayed there to continue our home-church activity.) There might have been some facts that we could not know or experience in those days. I admit that this article does not cover all aspects. However, I believe that it can convey some truth because almost all the important points in the process of restoration of Estonia have been shown at the beginning time. We hope this short history can be useful for the future development of U.C. in Estonia.

## 1. The Prehistory of U.C. in Estonia (1991 ~ September 1992)

First of all, I would like to mention about the situation of Estonia before my wife and I arrived at Tallinn for the first time (October 4th, 1992, on the Day of Victory of Heaven). I was assigned as the first missionary to Estonia at the leader's meeting, which was held early September 1992 in Baldone, Latvia. We attended the meeting after we finished the summer workshop in the Baltic Nations by I.L.S.

The three Baltic nations, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania were annexed into the Soviet Union after World War 2. However, as they had been independent countries since the end of the World War 1 and they never felt they were parts of Russia, they would not belong to even CIS after the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Now they are returning to Europe. But our movement in this area started at the end of the Soviet era.

As you know, what is called "Russian Providence" really began just after True Parents met with Gorbachev at Kremlin in April 1990. We remember various events after Moscow Conference; many VIPs (prime ministers, members of parliament, professors, artists, and so on.) from each republic of the former Soviet Union were invited to East Garden, New York in spring 1991, and a lot of university students and youths were invited to I.L.S. seminars in the USA. (Later they were held in Hungary and Baltic Nations). We can say that the Unification Movement came to Estonia for the first time in this context.

We heard that five parliament members and VIPs from various fields (education, culture, sports etc.) were invited to the USA in 1991. (People invited were mostly Estonians.) So we tried to follow up to them soon after we came to Estonia. We could reach to several prominent people, but almost all showed negative responses; one said, "I just wanted to go to the USA, that's all. I have no interest in any religions." Or other one said, "I don't want to be involved in U.C." and so on. Finally, we could keep in contact with two VIPs. One is Mr Indrek Toome (former Prime Minister), another is Mr Kaljo Kiisk (actor and film director). They have become friends of ours.

We were informed that many youths were invited to the USA in 1991 and 1992. We also tried to reach to them by calling or sending letters. But the result was also negative. They did not respond and show up. As some of them left Estonia and went abroad and some were missing, there was no possibility to have contacts. However, we could meet with two young people (I. K and M.S) who participated in I.L.S seminar in the USA.

Since I.L.S. seminars started to be held in the area of Baltic Nations, mainly Lithuania and Latvia at the end of 1991, there were many university or college students who participated in these local seminars. (As there was no missionary in Estonia at that time, Jas Smith in Riga, the representative of Latvia, undertook the invitation activity to Estonian people.) Those invited were both Estonians and Russians. The number of participants may be more than one hundred. But most of them didn't show up again after seminars. We later knew that the reason why they participated in seminars was to just enjoy their vacation time at the seminar site.

When we arrived at Tallinn October 4th, 1992, one sister (O.K.) was the only person to see us at the Tallinn railway station. She was a Russian-speaking girl and had Russian mentality (her original background was Ukraine). When she studied at Sankt-Petersburg University, she saw a notice board at the campus and participated in I.L.S.seminar in the USA. She belonged to CARP in Sankt-Petersburg during her student time; I suppose she came back to Tallinn after the graduation in June 1992. (we heard she was not welcome by CARP in Sankt-Petersburg).

We have to mention that there was another approach to Estonia before the summer in 1992. That was from the Finnish U.C. Mr Sasaki, a church leader of Finland, and some Finnish members came to Estonia at the springtime in 1992, and organized "One Heart Festival" (Wanwa-do demonstration and D.P.lecture) at four major cities, Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu and Rakvere. They could gather dozens of Estonian people at each city and tried to organize the association membership. One brother, Peter.L., was one of them. The reason they committed to Estonia is based on the agreement between the continental leader of Europe and the leader of Russian Providence, Dr Seuk. (I am not sure when it was done). According to that agreement, some European countries had a sisterhood-relationship with east European countries and the Baltic Nations; they were allowed to support the former communist countries. Estonia was a sister-country of Finland (but this agreement expired in summer of 1992).

Before we came to Tallinn, we contacted with Mr Sasaki in Helsinki by calling from Sankt-Petersburg; after that, we met with him and a Finnish member, L.H., at the apartment room that they rented in Tallinn. We rented it instead of them after they left. This was good for them too, because they wanted to share the room whenever they come to Tallinn.

## 2. Our Arrival to Estonia (October ~ November 1992)

Our arrival to Estonia was just at the same time when Lennart Meri was elected as a new president of Estonia. Then a new young (33 years old) Prime Minister, Mart Laar, was also appointed and the new government started. We were a little bit surprised at this coincidence. That meant we could start with new Estonia, which was reborn after the transition period in chaos (at that time happened the train of events: the old parliament in the Soviet time was dissolved, the first democratic general election was held, new parliament members were elected, and the free-market economy was introduced during the past year). Later Mr Toome said to us, "You lived with us for that troubled time."

On October 5th, Jas Smith (missionary to Riga) came to Tallinn and helped us. He introduced some previous participants of I.L.S.seminar to us. My wife and I tried to contact ourselves with people based on the list of former participants. 3 Finnish church members came to Tallinn on the first week and the last week of November to take care of their "association members" in Estonia. They visited the same four cities and gave lectures. (I accompanied them and helped them). However, the number of participants in each city was less than about 20. We noticed that people were not interested in religious teachings and lectures.

We were very busy during November because True Mother came to Moscow on 22nd. We had to invite some people to the Moscow conference from Estonia. We had no time for daily church activities.

## 3. New Start of Our Movement in Estonia (December 1992 ~ August 1993)

As various members mentioned above were engaged in Estonia, there were some confusions in our movement at the beginning time. However, it was clear that my position was a city leader of Tallinn assigned by the Moscow headquarters. So we first tried to follow directions from Moscow (later Minsk in Belarus became the regional headquarters of the Baltic Nations); our priority was to get as many new members as possible and raise core members by organizing I.L.S. seminars for university students or high school pupils. As far as our region is concerned, while Minsk, Vilnius, Riga had already built some steady foundations by 1992 (because they had started earlier pioneer witnessing in Russian providence), Tallinn had almost no foundation. Therefore, there was no choice for us except joining in seminars of regional level which were sometimes held in Belarus and Lithuania. The seminars during winter break in early 1993 were in Belarus (one young girl, K. R., joined our church activity after this seminar), and the seminars during summer break in 1993 were in Lithuania. Before the seminars we visited main universities or colleges, and high schools and tried to recruit participants; teachers were recruited for teacher's seminars and students were recruited for D.P.lecture workshop in I.L.S. seminars.

Indeed seminars became a good opportunity to recruit young people, but we had to be absent from Estonia for a long time to attend them. The fact that seminar cites were in other former Soviet Union's countries were not necessarily attractive for people in Estonia, especially native Estonians. It was not the former Soviet Union but Nordics or western European countries that Estonians wanted to go if they would have a chance. As a result, it seemed that we failed to catch native Estonians during that time. Furthermore, as the seminars used Russian as a common language, it was very difficult for ethnic people like Estonians and Latvians to understand lectures.

There is an unforgettable thing during that time. A Finnish member, L. H., stayed in Tallinn during the first half of 1993. He came as a missionary this time. (As you know, True Father ordered each country to send a national leader or his substitute to the former Soviet Union). L.H. was told to help me by Dr Seuk at the Moscow meeting in January. L.H. and I had to cooperate and establish the foundation of our movement. He and I visited Tallinn Technical University and Tartu University to organize the CARP in these two major universities. Several students already participated in I.L.S.seminars. We wanted to expand our activity, but students did not continuously come to D.P. lectures. In our side, cooperation-relationship between L.H. and I did not work well. It was partly because he was sent as a substitute of Mr.Sasaki and had his own aim to take care of the "association members" (who were mostly elder Estonians) with whom Finnish church members contacted first. However, since the priority in Russian providence was to organize the I.L.S. seminar and focus on younger people, we could not sometimes get along with each other. It eventually resulted in disunity.

Though L.H. asserted that we should do total church activities, by taking care of all generations and by starting IRFF activity and so on., he had no strategy, nor any concrete methods. He gradually lost his interest in witnessing Estonian people and turned into the Russian-speaking people who lived in Kohtla-Järve and Narva. Meanwhile, he repeated round trip between Tallinn and Helsinki. I asked him to bring his family to Tallinn so that he could be engaged in total missionary activities. He brought his wife and children on June, 8th. But two weeks later (it was the very time our summer seminar was about to start.), he suddenly told me that he had decided to stop his activity in Estonia and go back to Finland.

## 4. Meeting with the Ministry of Education

We could have a meeting with the ministry of education in Estonia on January 29th, 1993. The attendants from the ministry were Mr Kalju Luts (deputy minister), Mr Avo Meerits (director of Estonian Education Center), Mr.Kunder Kulli (in charge of Higher Education of university level). The Deputy Minister, Mr Luts, knew about the Unification Movement through Mr.Indrek Toome. He said there are following three possibilities for us to introduce Unification Principle at Estonian schools;(1) through Estonian Education Center, (2) Religious Science Institution in Tartu, and (3) Theological Institute. Among these three, (3) is connected with the Lutheran Church; therefore Mr.Luts advised us to make contact with (1) and (2).

Mr.Meerits was a person in charge of education at high schools. He has already worked with some religious group to organize a large seminar on moral education for high school teachers. He said that about 400 teachers participated in the seminar but it was not very satisfactory. Therefore he thinks that teachers will be interested in other (not religious) new ideas. As for the universities, Mr.Luts advised us to make contact with three major universities, i.e. Tartu University, Tallinn Technical University and Tallinn Pedagogical University. He especially recommended us to the Social Study Department of Tallinn Pedagogical University, for he thought that they were ready to have contact with our movement.

We explained our activities with high school teachers and university students. We also gave the information on the scholarship of Bridgeport University. They seemed to be interested in such an opportunity to study abroad.

Mr.Luts expressed somewhat anxiety about our movement. He said that they wished to be a member of a worldwide family, but at the same time they were afraid of being swallowed up and losing their own identity. He thought the most important thing for Estonia today was to establish a national identity. Mr.Meerits also said that other groups or organizations which tried to approach Estonia always regarded Estonia as a part of Russia or Nordic countries, etc. and used the same way of approach as they used in those countries, but they failed. Mr.Luts and Mr.Meerits insisted on their being different from Russia or other Baltic nations. They also felt that our movement was big-country-oriented. We explained our purpose of working in major big countries was to educate them to be unselfish and to make a contribution to the world. We also said that we respected their identity and proposed that we would plan a workshop in Estonia.

After this meeting, however, we could not make a concrete plan, because the reorganization of the ministry of education was taken place at the end of February. We lost the contact persons with the ministry on account of this reorganization. But we tried to keep in contact with the ministry of education. We approached officers in the administrative office and found that they were mostly Lutherans and Lutheran church occupied the education in Estonia. One officer who was in charge of religious education at schools called us "you are from Moon's church" and suggested that we should contact with the state office of internal affairs and know the law of religious activity in Estonia. Another officer in the Education Center changed his face when he noticed we came from "Moon's church." And he said that he rejected to help us.

In Estonia, the administrative power of the ministry of education was not as strong as one in Russia. People were oriented to a democratic system and personal opinions were respected. So we felt we could not rely on the ministry of education so much, rather personal contacts were more important.

## 5. Follow up -Activity (September ~ December 1993)

Seminar participants (mainly Russian-speaking people) were not so serious that they could not keep in contact with us after summer seminars. But we tried to contact with participants from the eastern part of Estonia (the area Russian speaking people live). A newly joined to our movement, K. R. was eager to witness her hometown, Kohtla-järve. After the summer seminar in 1993, we sometimes visited a gymnasium and a high school with her and met with students and teachers. There might have been some possibilities to establish the foundation in Kohtla-järve at that time, but we had no member to send there; older sister, O.K, did not understand Devine Principle well to become a full-time member yet and K.R. was too young (only 18 years old) to entrust church activities to her.

We invited some pupils from Kohtla-järve to Tallinn to attend Sunday services. Four or five pupils came to a couple of times, but not more. Tallinn was too far for them to come constantly. Meanwhile, it was not easy to set up some foundation in Tallinn. We had 3 high school teachers (Russian-speaking) whom we could invite to the summer seminar. My wife and I held a teacher's meeting once a week. However, they could not become the responsible person to organize other teachers and students.

In November, True Mother came to Moscow and Minsk. Peter, O.K, K.R, 3 high school pupils and I made a long trip to Moscow and Minsk and attended both of TM's speech conference in Kremlin, Moscow and National Opera Theater, Minsk. The number of attendants from Estonia was few. National leaders of Belarus and the three Baltic nations had the honour to have a breakfast and a lunch with TM at a hotel on November 23rd. I felt very sorry to TM that we had a too-small foundation in Estonia to inform to TM. So after I came back to Tallinn, I planned to hold the video-show meeting to introduce the Unification Movement to as many Estonian people as possible. On December 18th we had a video-show at Kinomaja (film house). Participants were few, but it was a necessary condition to share TM's blessing with people in Estonia.

We had a short trip to Japan during the winter break. We cleared away our belongings like furniture, books, and daily goods in our apartment in Tokyo. We had already decided to settle down in Estonia.

6. Moscow Meeting and New Change (January ~ March 1994)

We were informed that Japanese sisters would be sent to each country in the leader's meeting at Moscow in the middle of January. According to Father's direction, 10 sisters should have come to each country. But this direction could not keep in CIS and the Baltic Nations. We discussed how we could accept them at the meeting. It turned out that Japanese sisters would be sent to the country or city where a big foundation had been already established.

Another point at the meeting was that each city should reinforce centre-activities; we should have D.P.lecture every day at our centre. So first I did my best to make faithful core members; I focused on raising 3 members, K.R, her friend Juria, and Peter.L. (unfortunately, they fell into Adam-Eve relationship among them for a while.). We rented a new flat for centre-activities. As Witnessing Campaign in worldwide started on February 15th, on True Parents' Birthday, we began to witness students at Tallinn Technical University. We visited the student dormitory and invited them to our centre. After we witnessed for two weeks, about 40 new guests came. (Olga, who later attended 97's Blessing ceremony in Washington, was one of them). They were both Estonians and Russians. I gave lectures in English. Peter sometimes translated English into Russian. But there was no appropriate person to be able to translate English into Estonian, so we could not catch Estonians who did not understand English.

We were informed that the Witnessing Campaign was successful in other cities. In Tallinn, we had some guests at our centre for one month and a half, but it was less than ten that came constantly and listened to the D.P.lecture. They could not be involved in the church activities in the end.

K.R. and Juria lived at the centre but there was no central figure there, so it was very difficult for them to carry out the life of faith by themselves. I needed an elder sister who can guide them. I could not help deciding to send them back to their own home for a while.

## 7. Personnel Transfers (April ~ July 1994)

After the Moscow meeting in January our regional leader, Mr J. T. and his wife made their rounds trip of our region and came to Tallinn for the first time on February 12th. Our region had to prepare for accepting Japanese sisters and one Korean brother in each country. Before the next Moscow meeting in the middle of April, Mr J.T. informed me by telephone that American missionaries, Mr and Mrs H. in Minsk will come to Tallinn to support us. Then Mr H. first came on April 22nd and stayed for one week to look around our situation in Tallinn. He was an older member, about 45 years old, and also graduated UTS in the same year (1992) as I. Since I needed a matured young sister to coordinate our centre, I did not understand why he had to be sent to Tallinn. I replied to Mr J.T. that there was no reason for Mr H. to come. Mr J.T. did not listen to my view. On May 9th he informed me by a letter this time that Mr H. would replace me as a leader.

Larry Haft and his family arrived at Tallinn on June 2nd. They lived in our centre. I intended to hand over my responsibility and finish our public activity at the moment. However, Moscow sent IW, A.C., to Tallinn so that she would mediate two families. She came to my flat first and then went to a hotel which Larry reserved for her. We were given a special 40 days to work together. I followed and supported Mr H. as a leader. Although there were some providential activities left like a translation of TM's speech into Estonian, we lost financial support and finally stopped the public activity in Russian providence on July 25th.

There must have been serious confusions both spiritually and physically during this period. Before Mr H. came to Tallinn, he was in Ukraine and Belarus where Russian-speaking people lived. I advised again and again to him, "Russians and Estonians are different, so we need a different approach to them." But he was too much influenced by Russian ways to understand this point. It was very difficult to mix Russians and Estonians at the study group or some meetings. In witnessing, I took different ways to approach and follow up Russians and Estonians. Other Christian churches do the same way in Estonia. Anyway, we could not ask him to take care of Estonians whom we were witnessing. It is no exaggeration to say that the door of our church was closed to Estonian people at that moment.

## 8. Publication Activity and Care of Estonians

Indeed both Estonians and Russians live together in Estonia, but Estonians are native and restored their national sovereignty. So it is necessary to witness Estonians in achieving the restoration on the national level. Though I was a city leader of Tallinn, I had held this kind of national view and felt my responsibility to realize it. In this sense, first of all, we needed materials in the Estonian language. (Russian materials were given from Moscow, but they were of no use for Estonian native people).

My wife devoted her time to translate an English booklet, "Building a World of True Love," into the Estonian language with an Estonian English teacher. She spent almost half a year and completed the first Estonian material in June 1993. When we translated, we set important terminology such as "true parents", "give-and-take action," and so on. This work was very important to convey the right contents of Principle. We used this one to witness Estonians. This booklet was only an introduction to the Divine Principle and not enough to educate people. But if we try to translate Father's teachings, we will need several excellent Estonian people like professors, scholars or linguists. Another translation was TM's speech, "True Parents and the Completed Testament era. " We completed it in August 1994, but it was a private one and not published.

As we felt we had to learn the Estonian language, my wife and I started to learn Estonian through English materials seriously from early 1994. One Estonian girl helped us for 5 months. If we use Estonian language, even if broken, it will break a barrier between foreigners and native Estonians. As ordinary Estonians are reserved people, they would not speak foreign languages even if they hear and understand it. We have to understand the Estonian language (and speak if possible) to catch Estonian's heart. Their heart is very sophisticated and deep. Because their history has been a series of depression and sorrow since the 13th century. They would not trust anything that comes from outside. We need to become "an Estonian" to be able to touch with their heart.

(Most Estonians tend to dislike to be involved in any organizations, such as a political party or a religious group. They are very cautious to register. Especially if the centre of an organization is located in Moscow, they would not wish to be a member of it. Some of our acquaintances refrained from signing the application form of FFWPU during the Blessing campaign in 1997 even though they agreed to the purpose of our movement.)

## 9. Home-Church Activity (August 1994 ~ September 1996)

My wife, Naomi, was teaching at an Estonian high school since August 1993. I worked as a journalist. We continued to live in Tallinn. Especially my wife had a responsibility to carry out the project of the first Japanese education program in Estonia. We thought that the most important thing was to serve Estonia. We lived with minimum income and kept the same living standard as an average Estonian family. (My wife had a salary but I had no income).

At the weekend we tried door-to-door witnessing as our home-church activity. It was not so easy in Tallinn. People are very busy with daily works, and most young people are concerned with business success. Therefore, those with whom we could finally contact were mostly elderly people. They are people left while changing society but still heartistic. And it is also these elderly people that have kept good Estonian traditions.

Mr H. and his family stayed until December 1995. We do not know their concrete church activities during that period. We knew only that he moved a centre to Roosikrantsi Street in the city centre and organized CARP activity. After he and his family left, there was no official missionary till June 1996. Then Mr Endo from Sweden came to Tallinn as the third missionary to Estonia. We believe he set the foundation to prepare for receiving national messiahs assigned by True Parents.

Naomi finished the three years-project of teaching Japanese in summer 1996. We were very much relieved to know that four national messiahs would come soon and they would have the final responsibility to restore Estonia. We planned to return to Japan in October. I first went back to Japan and was invited to the first UTS graduate workshop in Alaska at the end of August. When I stayed in Japan just after the workshop, Mr K., Japanese national messiah, telephoned to me.

Mr and Mrs K. visited us in Tallinn on September 20th when we were shipping our belongings to Japan. We tried to help them to be able to inherit what we cultivated in the past four years; we introduced Mr.Toome (former Prime Minister) and some of our friends to them; two families seriously prayed together for the sake of Estonia at the Holy Ground in Linda Magi park, which is the spiritual centre of Estonia.

## Future View

When we met one Estonian-American in New York in June 1992, our everlasting relation to Estonia started. However, spiritually speaking, our heavenly ties with Estonia may be traced back to the far past time. Anyway, we firmly believed that God and True Parents sent us to Estonia and asked us to liberate Estonian people from their deep sufferings and sorrows. The more we learn and study the history of Estonia, the more we realize the Blessing should be given to them first. Now we realized that all things we experienced in Estonia did not happen without meaning, but repeated the same unfortunate events as in the history of Estonia (That is to say, conquests by Russians, Germans, Swedish, Danish, Polish, Latvians, etc.), and that we had to indemnify those events.

Estonia is a small country; her population is only one and a half million. She is not well known in the international community. Her people and society are not so open to others, either. However, Estonia has a great treasure to be proud of to the world: that is the Song Festival, which has been held every 5 years since 1869. We could experience its marvelous Fest in 1994. The Fest is a national celebration and a symbol of national unity for them. Estonians, though they are very individualistic in daily life, are united only by this Song Festival. They fully express their spirits by singing and dancing.

Song Festival is neutral from any ideologies, thoughts, and religions. But if the Blessing should be given to many Estonians on a national scale, we feel that the Song Festival must be the best opportunity to do it. If they will receive the Blessing in such a way, they can overcome the national limitation and become heavenly citizens centring on TP. The next Song Festival is scheduled to be in July 1999. How much grateful it would be to welcome True Parents on the stage of Song Festival's huge ground in Tallinn!

May God bless Estonia!

In the name of True Parents