Tallinn University

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FOXY AND FEISTY: BEAUTY AND GENDER NARRATIVES ATTRIBUTED TO LATINA WOMEN LIVING IN ESTONIA

Master's Thesis

Supervisor: Kerli Kirch Schneider, PhD

Tallinn 2024

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ABSTRACT

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Title
Foxy and Feisty: Beauty and Gender Narratives Attributed to Latina Women living in Estonia

Study Programme	Level
Communication Management	Master

Month and Year	Page Count
May, 2024	143

Abstract

This thesis explores beauty and gender roles attributed to Latina women living in Estonia, by exploring three themes: Latina women gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics in the telenovela *"Rosa Salvaje"* and its Estonian reception; Estonian millennial men's perceptions of Latina women compared to those of Estonian women, and the self-perceptions of migrant Latina women living in Estonia. Through textual analysis and in-depth interviews, the study uncovers how media portrayal perpetuates or challenges stereotypes, shaping cultural identities in the intersections of race, class and gender.

The results reveal that telenovela perpetuates stereotypes of Latina women as passionate, emotional, and either virtous or hypersexualise, aligning with narratives of Marianismo and Machismo. The research also highlights how these portrayals reinforce societal class and racial hierarchies, particularly through the depiction of lighter-skinner Latina women as more successful. Latina women living in Estonia face both gender and racial stereotypes, navigating these identities within these narratives.

Keywords
Latina women, migrant Latina, Estonian millennial men, Estonian telenovela aficionados, Estonian women, telenovela, Rosa Salvaje, gender theory, CRT, LatCrit, intersectionality, marianismo, machismo, stereotypes, beauty, race, class, ethnicity, media narratives, storytelling, counter-storytelling, cultural perception

Place of Preservation
Tallinn University

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Ülikool Tallinna Ülikool	**Instituut** Balti filmi, meedia ja kunstide instituut
Autor Andrea Guiselle Montanaro Bertinat	
Pealkiri Seksikad ja keevaverelised: Eestis elavatele ladina naistele omistatud ilu ja soo narratiivid	
Õppekava Kommunikatsioonijuhtimine	**Tase** Magistritöö
Kuu ja aasta Mai 2024	**Lehekülgede arv** 143

Kokkuvõte

Käesolev magistritöö uurib Eestis elavatele ladina naistele omistatud ilu ja soorolle, kesken dudes kolmelle teemale: ladina naistega seonduvad soorollid ja füüsilised/psühholoogilised omadused teleseriaalis *"Rosa Salvaje"* ja selle vastuvõtt Eestis; millenniumipõlvkonna eesti meeste arusaamad ladina naistest võrreldes eesti naistega; ning Eestis elavate ladina naiste arusaamad iseendast. Uuringu käigus teostatud tekstianalüüs ja süvaintervjuud näitavad, kuidas meedia kujutised võivad stereotüüpe nii tugevdada kui nõrgestada, kujundades kultuurilist identiteeti rassi, klassi ja sotsiaalse soo ristumiskohas.

Tulemused näitavad, et *"Rosa Salvaje"* eelkõige süvendab ladina naiste stereotüüpe, kujutades neid kirglike, emotsionaalsete ja kas vooruslike või hüperseksuaalsetena. Selline kujutamise viis ühtib Marianismo ja Machismo narratiivides. Uuring toob esile ka selle, kuidas niisugused kujutamised tugevdavad ühiskonna klassi- ja rassilist hierarhiat, eriti heledama nahaga ladina naiste edukamatena kujutamise kaudu. Eestis elavad ladina naised seisavad silmitsi nii soo kui rassiliste stereotüüpidega, kujundades oma identiteeti vastavalt nendele narratiividele.

Märksõnad

Ladina naised, ladina immigrandid, millenniumipõlvkonna eesti mehed, eesti seebiseriaali fännid, eesti naised, seebiseriaal, Rosa Salvaje, sotsiaalse soo teooria, kriitiline rassi teooria, LatCrit, intersektsionaalsus, marianism, machismo, stereotüübid, ilu, rass, klass, rahvus, meedianarratiivid, jutuvestmine, alternatiivsete lugude jutustamine, kultuuritaju

Säilitamise koht
Tallinna Ülikool

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"I know things older than Freud, older than gender."

Gloria E. Anzaldúa

"Latinas embark in daily world travelling.

Their journeys are defined and imposed on them by the territories they traverse."

Esperanza Hernández-Truyol

1. INTRODUCTION

The motive underlying this research is a deeply personal one. I moved to Estonia in the summer of 2019, and as the third official Paraguayan woman to ever live in the country (Statistica Database, 2022), I was soon made aware of my exoticism, of my charm and my uniqueness. However, I always received mixed opinions on either my appearance or behaviour: "*You don't look Latina*", "*Why do you cut your hair?*", "*You have the blackest eyes I have ever seen in my life*", "*How come your English is so good?*", "*Being loud comes with the passport*", and the list goes on. I left a country that alienated me for similar reasons; like not being feminine enough, wearing eccentric clothes, and being too outspoken. Navigating otherness, I asked myself, what is it that people think I should be more of? What do Estonians feel they know about Latina women? And how am I not fulfilling their expectations? And what about the other Latinas here? What are their own experiences in the country?

This multiperspectival thesis explores the narratives of beauty and gender roles attributed to Latina women in an Estonian context. More specifically, it examines how prevailing norms are reinforced, negotiated, and/or challenged in the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" (Pimstein, 1987-1988) by Estonian millennial men, and migrant Latina women living in Estonia. By examining these layered interactions, this research aims to shed some light on the specific experiences of migrant Latina women in Estonia, and contribute to a broader understanding of how cultural perceptions and gender roles are negotiated and challenged in the face of media influence and societal expectations. To achieve this goal, the methodology of this study employs an approach that integrates qualitative research for a more comprehensive analysis of cultural interactions. First, the textual analysis of "*Rosa Salvaje*" examines how Latina women are portrayed and how these representations align or contrast with traditional gender roles and beauty hegemonies. Second, a total of 12 in-depth semi-structured interviews focused on three subject groups: 5 Estonian millennial men, and their own perceptions of gender and beauty, compared and contrasted

with telenovela portrayals and real-life experiences; 5 migrant Latina women, and how they negotiate their identities in the light of the stereotypes broadcasted by telenovelas and the media, and how they perceive societal expectations in an Estonian context; and lastly, 2 Estonian telenovela aficionados, that provide a deeper insight into the cultural impact of telenovelas in Estonia, offering context on how these shows integrated into the Estonian cultural discourse.

1.1. Research Background

The import of Mexican telenovela formats became a widely known phenomenon in the late 20th century (Newcomb, 1997), and it continues its predominance and popularity until today. Overtime, telenovelas have had a significant impact on international spheres, turning into a vehicle for showcasing Latin American culture to foreign audiences, relying upon narrative forms that deeply articulate the cultural imagination of the continent (Martín-Barbero, 1993). Through dramatic and emotional plotlines, different aspects of Latinx life are illustrated, spreading awareness and a sort of collective admiration among its viewers. Estonia was no exception and adopted the romanticised glamour of this far-off format in the 1990s. After regaining its independence, the country underwent significant changes as it transitioned from a Soviet-controlled state to a sovereign nation (Raun, 2001). Struggling economically, entertainment options were limited, and telenovelas made their estelar entrance into national broadcasting channels; where previously, audiences had mostly been exposed to propaganda and regime-approved content (Paulu, 1974).

The telenovela as a cultural product, has two dimensions: the industrial one with clear economic goals; and the symbolic one, creating meaning and representations (Cassano, 2020). In appearance, the axis themes are always universal and far from being identified to any political agenda: love, family, betrayal; topics easily found in everyday common life — and one of the reasons why these stories became a global sensation. The narratives can create a shared cultural experience for their public regardless of background or geographical location, and then again, they can also be responsible for shaping social

attitudes and values. Durin and Vázquez (2013) state telenovelas adjust to strong moralising content, which ultimately leads to illustrate what is allowed, and what is forbidden within society (p. 24). Moreover, issues such as poverty, discrimination, sexism and classism are also present in these stories, serving both as tools for critique or endorsement of current social systems.

1.2. Research Problem, Aim and Questions

This project aims to identify and explore the narratives of beauty and gender roles attributed to Latina women as perceived by both Estonian millennial men and migrant Latina women in Estonia, particularly through the lens of the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" — Wild Rose, or "*Metsik Roos*" in Estonian — aired during 1993 and 1994. From a multiperspectival approach, the research explores: (1) the different gendered discourses encountered within telenovelas, and specifically, "*Rosa Salvaje*"; (2) how Estonian millennial men perceive Latina women, as a generation that grew alongside such telenovelas; and (3) how Latina migrant women living in Estonia navigate and perceive their own identities in the context of these imported cultural narratives. The aim is to uncover how these viewpoints are reinforcing, contesting, and/or shaping societal constructs of femininity and gender roles. To achieve this, the following research questions are addressed:

RQ1. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics are attributed to Latina women in the telenovela "Rosa Salvaje"? How do these roles and characteristics interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

RQ1.1. How do Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret the depictions of Latina women in "Rosa Salvaje"?

RQ2. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics do Estonian millennial men (who have Latina partners) attribute to Latina women? How do their

perceptions relate to the portrayals of Latina women in the telenovela "Rosa Salvaje"? How do their perceptions interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

RQ2.1. How do these gender roles and characteristics compare to Estonian women (according to Estonian millennial men)?

RQ3. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics Latina women living in Estonia attribute to themselves and how are these different from the characteristics of Estonian women? How do these roles and characteristics interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

To explore how Latina women are seen in Estonian context, this thesis draws from the "*Rosa Salvaje*" depictions, the aficionados' interpretations of them, and the experience of Estonian millennial men, and migrant Latina women. The Estonian millennial men chosen for this study are well-educated, bilingual or polyglot; and they all had close encounters and life experiences with Latinx culture and particularly with women in a romantic aspect. The first reason for targeting this group is to recognise when their notions of Latinicity first arose, and if anything changed after being in actual contact with a Latina partner. The second, is to identify how this group perceives gender roles in both cultures. Telenovela aficionados are included as subject experts, and they will narrate the social phenomena in the country. For migrant Latina women in Estonia, it has come to my attention – by being part of the community in Tallinn – that the majority of these women came to the country due to a romantic relationship with a local man. This project would also try to shed light into the different challenges Latina women face when migrating to Estonia.

The purpose of this thesis is to understand the given role to Latina women in Estonia, within the different cultural context of the country, in order to challenge and expand traditional expectations, in addition to providing a greater comprehension in regards to the settled community in Estonia. Studying the ways in which Latina women are perceived and constructed by Estonian millennial men and themselves within a diaspora,

can provide insight into how cultural and social norms around gender and femininity are shaped and maintained, regardless of the place where cultures are encountered. Furthermore, analysing the experience of migrant Latina women in the context of Estonian society can help in the discussion of the practices intersecting racial, ethnic and national identities when it comes to these minorities and their roles in foreign communities.

1.3. Research Limitations

While this research aims to provide valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of the subjects regarding the construction of gender roles and cultural influences, it is still essential to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the sample might not represent the broader population's views and experiences, limiting the study to the generalisation or essentialism of the findings. Secondly, the study relies on self-report data, which may be subject to social desirability bias and/or inaccurate recollection — language barriers, cultural nuances and potential misinterpretations. And thirdly, the analysis centres on a specific media to formulate a possible depiction of women's representations and further interview questions, and it might not fully capture the current cultural dynamics on gender perception as contemporary media and other cultural factors might have evolved and played a significant role into shaping a different reality since then.

1.4. Research Structure

This thesis is organised into six chapters. The first chapter offers an introduction to the research problem and its objectives. The second, delves into the theoretical framework and reviews relevant literature. In the third, the methodology is explained, introducing the research design, data collection methods and ethical considerations. The fourth, showcases the empirical findings, encompassing the data analysis and the interpretation of results. In the fifth, findings are incorporated with the theoretical framework, inspecting the possibilities and implications for future research. Lastly, the sixth and final chapter concludes the study with a summary of the problem and findings.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter synthesises the theoretical approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding on how dominant narratives of beauty and traditional gender roles are attributed to Latina women within an Estonian context. The framework integrates various theories, such as gender performativity, gender as social structure, Marianismo, Machismo, CRT, and intersectionality to explore the dynamic interplay between media portrayals in telenovelas and the societal expectations for (Latina) women in Estonia.

This research is rooted in the portrayals of Latina women in the popular telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*", assessing how the dramatised depictions of Latina women may conform to or deviate from traditional gender roles and beauty standards, and how these representations are interpreted by Estonian millennial men and by Latina women themselves. Through a multiperspectival approach, the study aims to offer insights into the complex ways in which cultural perceptions and gender roles are negotiated and reshaped in response to global media influences.

In the following section, each theory and its contribution to the project will be discussed in detail, in order to attain the theoretical framework to address research questions, data analysis, empirical findings and conclusion.

2.1. Latina Identities: Stereotypes Traversing Borders

Gender is encouraged from the get-go. Male babies will engage in masculine behaviours: playing with appropriate toys, like cars and balls; and female babies, will be limited to feminine behaviours and their assigned toys: dolls and Easy Bake Ovens (Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada & Ross, l972). West and Zimmerman (1987) first introduced the concept of "doing gender", arguing that gender is performed rather than inherent to individuals. The authors maintain that each individual is judged based on their adherence to societal

gender norms, and failure to perform gender as expected can result in social consequences: men will be punished if catched playing with dolls, and women if playing with cars. This idea of "doing gender" resonates with Butler's theory of performativity, which focuses on the creation of gender through individual actions (1990). Gender as we know it, is not an innate, natural or biological characteristic, but rather a social and cultural construct, created — and maintained — through repeated acts and performances. People don't "have" gender, they "do" gender through constant repetition, and it is precisely through these gendered behaviours, that gender is made to be: real. These conventionalised acts depicted in a socially regulated context, constrain and enable our cultural norms and expectations towards gender:

> "Does being female constitute a 'natural fact' or a cultural performance, or is 'naturalness' constituted through discursively constrained performative acts that produce the body through and within the categories of sex?" (p. xxviii)

In Gender Trouble, Butler also challenges the idea that there is an essential self underlying a person's gender identity. She argues, the sense of self is constantly being constructed and reconstructed through our interactions with others, rather fluid than fixed. Gender performativity is taken in consideration in this research, for analysing how roles are actively performed and reiterated in media and telenovelas, influencing the audience perceptions of what it means to be (perform) a — Latina — woman.

Risman (2018) proposes a conceptualisation of gender as social structure:

> "I conceptualise gender as a social structure with social processes that occur at the individual, interactional, and macro levels, and with explicit acknowledgment that each level of analysis is equally important, and that the world we live in is like a game of dominoes, when one part changes, it can set off a chain reaction." (pp. 96-7)

Gender identities among Latina women are complex constructions influenced by multiple factors that go from cultural expectations, familial upbringing, and societal norms. Latinas find themselves navigating alienating factors, such as sex, ethnicity, culture, language and sexuality (Hernández-Truyol, 2003), both within their own communities and in outlandish societies. In her work, "*Latinas–Everywhere: Alien Culture, Gender and Sex*", Risman (2018) explains how family leads the way in Latinx communities, in spite of all diversity across the continent. Family is responsible for the creation, construction and constitution of identities, as this is the place where meaning starts: appropriate and acceptable conducts — which are without exception gendered and sexualised. This vision is male, and it delimitates and predefines the context of women's journey following the dominant positions of family, church and state. Here, "the Latina did not participate, or consent to the constitutive definition that determines who she is. She is fabricated and sculpted in the image, desire, and fantasy of the Latino" (Hernández-Truyol, 2003, p. 225). She is at the receiving end of a message with values she did not create, however, held responsible to maintain.

Lagarde (1990) conceived the idea that women — particularly Latinas — live in a sort of captivity, subordinated to power and the occupation of their own lives ruled by institutions and individuals (the others: the men, the family, the church), with the obligation to comply with the feminine duty of their group of affiliation, materialised in stereotyped lives, with no alternative whatsoever (p. 37). She also maintained that women occupied captive spaces: the house, the convent, the whorehouse, the asylum… — and often, more than one at a time. Such captivities would come in place depending solely on their chosen behaviour: caregivers inhabit a house, devoted mothers, wives and daughters, a convent; and misbehaved sexual bodies, a whorehouse.

Marianismo (Stevens, 1973), characterises women as morally superior, yet obedient and subjugated to men. This is the prevalent gender role construct in Latin American countries, and "a Latino cultural value" (Arrendondo, 2002, p. 314). The Latina identity has been developed on the context of an "ideal woman" fabricated in the image and likes

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of the Virgin Mary (Hernández-Truyol, 2003): pure, passive, respectful of men and family, submissive, strong yet long-suffering, chaste — except for their husband; in summary, a mother, a saint. The ideal of Marianismo fits live a glove to its much more well known counterpart: Machismo, which encourages men to be "hot blooded, passionate, and prone to emotional outbursts" (Rivera, 1994, p. 240), and "cold, intellectual, rational, profound, strong, authoritarian, independent, and brave" (Hernández-Truyol, 2003, p. 228). This "macho" man dominates his wife, engages in extramarital sex and rules his household with an iron fist (López & Chesney-Lind, 2014, p. 529). Such expectations and constructions related to gender can be troublesome, leading to stereotyping Latinxs across various social spheres.

Stereotypes of Latina women often depict them as feisty, strong-accented, and overly sexualised individuals. If you ask anyone around, they would without a hint of doubt, remember Sofia Vergara's character in Modern Family: Gloria (Lloyd & Levitan, 2009-2020), and refer to it as the epitome of a Latina . The Latina spitfire (Rodríguez, 2004) is loud, emotional and most of all hypersexualised: a bombshell, a hot, exotic, passionate, curvy goddess swept by rage and an irrational behaviour. This compartmentalization minimises agency and diversity, reinforcing harmful stereotypes, rather than reflecting an intersectional approach, considering their complexities of identities and experiences. (see ANNEX D)

Historically, gender scripts have dictated that all women should conform to certain ideas, such as being sexually inexperienced and demurely attractive (Tolman, 2002). However, such ideals have also been largely unattainable for women of colour — including Latinas, who are typically depicted as hypersexualised, manipulative and dangerous, thus emphasising an innate "badness" within (López & Chesney-Lind, 2014). In media, there are two main narratives within Latina women: (a) the one who follows the righteous path — as white women, as the Virgin Mary — a racialised and religious narrative for lighter-skinned and higher-status women (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004, Castillo, 1997) who will preserve her virginity to safeguard family and honour; and (b) the one who is too

licentious, and hence considered "*la otra*" (the other), not suitable for marriage and domestic duties (Hurtado, 2012).

Similarly, Alcoff (2006) recalls how she was othered by a lover in her book, "*Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*":

> "When I was much younger, I remember finding out with a shock that a white lover, my first serious relationship, had pursued me because I was Latina, which no doubt stimulated his vision of exoticism. We had grown up in the same neighbourhood, attended the same schools, listened to the same music, and shared similar ambitions toward college and escape from our shared class. Yet our first encounters, our first dates, which I had naively believed were dominated by a powerful emotional and intellectual connection, were experienced by him as a fascinating crossing over to the forbidden, to the Other in that reified, racializing sense. I felt incredulity, and then humiliation, trying to imagine myself as he saw me, replaying my gestures and actions, reflecting back even on the clothes I wore, all in an attempt to discern the signs he may have picked up, to see myself as he must have seen me. I felt caught in that moment, finding myself occupying a position already occupied and fashioned elsewhere, incapable of mutual interaction." (p. 193)

Such exaggerated and one-dimensional portrayals are often more harmful than accurate. Andemicael (2002), proposes a much accurate depiction of the dimensions a Latina women possesses and how intricate and difficult it is to define an identity within a saturated and stereotypical spectrum:

> "Very dark eyebrows, lashes and eyes, skin somewhere between yellow ochre and olive brown, and pigment discoloration — splotches of white like dry salt lakes on an amber plain — at the temples and jaw. She knew the details minutely, each birthmark and imperfection, but still failed — as she had since she could remember — to perceive the whole face as a stranger might and ascertain the

identity, ethnicity, culture, and race of the woman before her. Was she beautiful? Was her complexion sallow or seductive? Was she black? Was she so pale and soft-featured as to be mistaken for white? Was she dark enough to be Latina? Discernibly Colombian? Or did she simply look mixed — too indefinable to be seen as anything authentic at all?" (p. 28)

The discussion of stereotypes around Latina women as hypersexualised and feisty, provides a critical setting for analysing the Estonian reception of the characters in "*Rosa Salvaje*", by exploring how such representations are accepted, negotiated, or rejected within the Estonian context, where cultural perceptions differ significantly from Latin America.

And what about the Latina immigrant? Andalzúa (1987) also identifies the intersection of cultures when it comes to describing the experience of migrant women: *la mojada, la mujer indocumentada* (the illegal, the undocumented woman, p. 12), an oppressed minority doubly threatened in a foreign country. In cases where Latina women found themselves migrating to contrasting cultures, they are also the prey to a sense of physical helplessness, leaving every sign of familiarity and safety to venture to the unknown, almost in the quality of a refugee, or worst, a hostage. Immigrant Latina women face a multitude of challenges, all shaped by their cultural background, and societal stigmas. In her article about "*Hispanic Women*", Gibson (1983) illustrates how Hispanic — Latina, in this research — women who immigrated to the U.S experience the same manifestations of racism, poverty and sexism; and share the same concerns regarding the preservation of their cultural identity and language in a foreign terrein. She also mentions that Anglo researchers and social scientists have almost entirely used an ethnocentric approach to portray Latinx immigration as stereotypical, considering their lifestyles deviant and/or pathological (p. 114). Women are "depicted as mother figures, self-sacrificing, passive, pleased and obliged to produce large families, living within rigidly defined sex roles, and dominated by the males" (p. 115). And to top it off, they have also gained fame that immigrant Latina women would trick any white male into breeding a child in order to obtain citizenship, and monetary rewards.

Schutte (1998) also analyses how individuals that operate in multiple cultures, will necessarily have to leave part of themselves behind each time they cross over:

> "As a concept, Latina exceeds the category of the national. Because as Latinas we are not tied to a specifiable national culture (in contrast to members of a culturally dominant group).... In order to receive recognition as a cultural agent, I must show that I can be both a Latina and a North American; that I can alternate between these identities, so much that in extremely "tight" cultural situations, I can perform, in my North American voice, a public erasure of my Latina voice, if need be. My white, Anglo-American counterpart is not called on to perform such a feat with respect to her cultural background…" (p. 59)

Alienation and identity formation as highlighted in this chapter, is directly applicable to how Latina women perceive themselves and are perceived in Estonian society. Here, the role of family, community, and the overall societal expectations, examine the shaping of Latina identities with dominant gender narratives.

Additionally, this thesis opts to use the terms "*Latina*" and "*Latinx*" over the terms "*Latino*", "*Latin*" or "*Hispanic*" primarily due to the specific cultural, linguistic and geographic focus of the research. The term "*Latina*" here, explicitly refers to women from Latin American countries where Spanish is predominantly spoken: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela; in which Brazil is not included due to its own local and regional identity, embedded with a different language and hence, a completely independent cultural and ethnic background.

Gimenez (1989) explained the term "*Hispanic*" has been argued to be racist by critics, associated with colonialism and the Spanish heritage, coming across as stereotypical or simplistic, when it came to describing a very diverse group of people. "*Latin*", on the other hand, has been strongly suggested as the race-neutral alternative, rooted in

self-identification. In the 1970s, the U.S. Census Bureau coined the term "*Latino*" to offer a pan-ethnic name for their migrant groups, however this term generated certain controversy as it might be perceived as an Americanisn (Bender, 2007), or even, as the gendered term in Spanish that traditionally refers to men and women collectively, in a masculine sense: "o = man". This research chooses to adopt instead the more inclusive alternative, "*Latinx*" to refer to other aspects of the cultural spectrum. "*Latinx*" — first used by the LGBTQIA+ and feminists online in 2004, describes an in-between space, constructing identities that could openly include a much more broad variety of racial, national and gendered-based identifications (Morales, 2018).

2.2. The Role of Telenovelas

Martín-Barbero argues melodrama is the central appeal of telenovelas in Latin American formats (1993), as this narrative redefines ancient oral traditions and gives them a tangible place in modern society, articulating the cultural imagination of the entire continent. Telenovelas hold a significant sway over society, particularly in those who share similar values and social statuses. The media provides a platform for specific communities to connect and resonate with different stories, allowing the audience to reflect aspects of their own lifes. As a result, individuals become emotionally invested in the plotlines, and this serves as a means to explore and interpret features of a different reality, blurring the lines between culture and geography. This is precisely why telenovelas became a massive international hit, which allowed different countries to adopt the format as their primary source of entertainment, and to showcase aspects of Latin American culture to foreign viewers.

In the 1980s, telenovelas became the number one cultural export of Latin America representing 70% of the total hours of exported programming (Barrera & Bielby, 2001, p. 6). This was true for Mexico, ahead of the game in regards to other countries such as Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela; due to their own massive production industry, making it as a consequence, for Mexican Spanish to become Latin America's lingua franca among other Spanish-speaking nations. There were several developments that turned Mexican

telenovelas into as the number one imported cultural product: (1) Televisa — Mexico's biggest media producer — transferred authority over production and distribution from sponsors to producers, making sponsors pay for ad slots rather than airtime; (2) Writing was focused on reaching the most number of families showcasing Mexican cultural elements and create source of fundings to TV companies; and (3) The format became prime-time entertainment, with narratives and a format meticulously designed to appeal large audiences (Martín-Barbero, 1993). Its popularity and exceptional reception in countries like Russia, and those who were part of the USSR, including Estonia – can be explained by national references being almost absent from the stories (Waisbord, 2004) hence the content can be repurposed without fearing any political agenda, and the melodrama has an appeal to the collective imaginary accessing a sort historical memory (Martín-Barbero & Muñóz, 1992) of repression, the eagerness for development, and overcoming difficult obstacles; a projection were a nation's present climate transforms into the main character of the story.

Its extraordinary acceptance was mostly due to its distribution system, however, it will fall short to only attribute success to this sole factor. Emilio Azcárraga Milmo was the son of Emilio Azcárrage Vidarrueta, the founder of Telesistema Mexicano, which would later become Group Televisa. Under Emilio's work and vision, telenovelas reached audiences worldwide, significantly influencing the global perception of Latin American culture, and forever shaping Spanish-language entertainment. His father has set rules based on a code of values for all network content, specifically when it came to telenovelas; they would need to address "family unity, national pride and personal development" (Fernández & Paxman, 2000, p.192). In 1992, during a press conference, Milmo had been very explicit about the role of telenovelas in Mexican and Latin American societies:

> "Mexico is a country with a large class of people who are [economically] screwed. Television's responsibility is to bring these people entertainment and distract them from their sad reality and difficult future." (Quiñonez, 2001, p. 56).

Despite its audience success related to the identification with characters, stories and actors; issues of class, gender and race are important axes that shape storylines in telenovelas. These centre lines often offer complex ideas in which processes of cultural and national identities are imagined in a continuous state of development — and forward the assumption that Latin America is somewhat inferior to other nations such as the U.S or European counterparts (Nasser, 2008). Additionally, telenovelas are also responsible for shaping social attitudes and values. Their greater-than-life characters have the ability to tear apart the most basic traditional norms, or on the contrary, to ensure their perpetuation and proliferation. Issues such as poverty, discrimination, corruption, sexism and classism are present in these stories, often reinforcing gender roles, patriarchal views and heteronormative behaviours — and a classic feature will most certainly include hypersexualised female characters, and their strong, dominant aggressive male counterparts.

In Estonia, where direct cultural exposure to Latin America is rather limited, telenovelas like "*Rosa Salvaje*" played a crucial role in shaping perceptions of Latina women. This framework will enable the research to explore how such portrayals influence Estonian millennial men views of Latina women, particularly in terms of reinforcing or contesting traditional gender norms around issues of stereotypical images revolving dominant narratives of beauty and traditional gender roles.

2.3. Gender Narratives and Latinas in Telenovelas

The analysis of telenovela production, its global influence on identity, and cultural creation has increasingly focused on the interplay of class, gender, and race, particularly since the global export of Latin American telenovelas in the 1980s and 1990s (Amaro, 2015, p. 690). In examining the gender narratives present in Latin American telenovelas, it is evident that these media productions are not mere entertainment forms but rather sophisticated reflections and reinforcements of societal gender norms and stereotypes.

The "Cinderella" genre of telenovelas, illustrates a particular type of story: a poor, innocent and untamed girl living in extreme poverty and/or exploitation, awaiting salvation through male intervention or a miraculous fortune. She will then undergo a transformation that turns her into an elegant noble-like woman through a process of education and fashion make-over. She will only then be able to match the male protagonist, though initially holding some resistance as she is also chaste and inexperienced. This was the formula designed by Valentín Pimstein, Televisa's main executive producer from 1958 until 1995 — in which "*Rosa Salvaje*" is among his productions. He developed a plotline formula based on Disney's Cinderella, and its initial goal was advertisement (Slade, 2010, p.11). This particular type of story emerged in Mexico due to the attention the telenovelas received from the government and the Catholic Church, which later generated an alliance between both and Televisa — the main media monopoly — and by law, all content attempting to go against "good customs" would be prohibited, making the Cinderella genre a synonym of conservatism and social repression (Fernández & Paxman, 2000). This new depiction is consistent with the cultural and religious principles of Marianismo (Stevens, 1973) which prescribe that women show greater acceptance and commitment than men. And in this sense, both culture and religion insist women are subversive to men.

The representation of women in these narratives is deeply influenced by the socio-cultural and religious fabric of Latin America, predominantly shaped by Catholic moral standards. The dichotomy of the virtuous versus the "*la mujer mala*" (the bad woman), as discussed by Anzaldúa (1987), is a recurrent theme: married women who take care of the children are good, and women who might rebel against the system are bad. For women in Latinx culture, there were only three paths to choose: the Church as a nun, the law as a mother, or the streets as a prostitute (p.17). In this sense, women are either idealised for their purity and chastity or demonised for their sexual autonomy, thus perpetuating the "virgin-whore" dichotomy (Arredondo, 2004) that has historically shaped perceptions of Latina women with idealised values of purity, chastity and modesty

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– the women desired for marriage; and narratives of sexual freedom – the women used and disrespected by men.

Telenovelas rely on gender stereotypes depicting the main characters — women — as subalterns dominated by men (Wijayanti, Affifuloh & Fernanda, 2021, p. 345), with narratives that reflect patriarchy and classism, normalising such stereotypes and social expectations (Amaro, 2015, p. 14). Glascock and Ruggiero (2004) further illustrate this point by examining how telenovelas portray male and female characters. Men are often depicted in positions of power and authority, reflecting traditional notions of Machismo, whereas women are confined to domestic roles and subordinate positions, a reflection of Marianismo: "characterised by a sense of self-sacrifice for the betterment of the family and spouse, but often to [their own] detriment." (p. 392)

These representations are not just limited to gender roles but also extend to physical characteristics. The authors suggest Anglo features often emphasise class and success in men, but indicate submissiveness and beauty in women — who would usually be casted with lighter hair than their male counterparts. The portrayal is also controlled by racial phenotypes, age and beauty standards (Mastro & Ortíz, 2008), and such factors not only indicated both men and women's role within the plotline, but also their success in the narrative, contributing to the perpetuation of stereotypes when it comes to race and class. Additionally, aggressiveness — understood as "the opposite of being docile" (Amaro, 2015, p. 688) — in men represents power and dominance, while in women ideas about racial and class superiority.

The intersection of gender, class, and race in telenovelas therefore becomes a crucial aspect of understanding how these narratives shape and reflect societal norms. As Rivadeneyra (2011) points out, the objectification of women in these stories is a consequence of socialisation, where "women are often objects to be gazed at and evaluated based on their physical appearance" (p. 209). Furthermore, the gender analysis of telenovelas reveals an environment where male dominance, classism, and sexism

intersect with colonial legacy, and colonialism is often represented in class struggles and class representation:

> "Part of the success of telenovelas is due to romantic and exotic representations of marginalised groups who will always fail at assimilating into Eurocentric ideals." (Amaro, 2015, p. 686)

In this sense, it could be argued that telenovelas carry a coloniser/colonised conflict in their content. Benavides (2008) argues that the coloniser is portrayed as one projected onto the darker, enslaved body, that ultimately represents "lust, emotional freedom and less civilising constraints" (p.7); whereas the colonised is one striving for economical and political freedom, while being casted into a frame of proud inferiority.

Furthermore, the study of sociolinguistics, as explored by Lakoff (1973) reveals that language in these narratives also perpetuates gender stereotypes. Women's language is often depicted as restricted and superficial, reinforcing traditional gender roles and expectations.

Media serves as a channel for shaping perceptions of femininity — and masculinity; exploiting the female body to either market products and set standards of beauty and expected behaviour. This idea reflects societal norms and influences notions about women's moral standing, in multiple subjects concerning sexuality and family roles. Their portrayal caters to male interests — male gaze (Mulvey, 1975) — upholding specific standards, mainly suggesting that women's main value is tied to their physical appearance and virtue.

In consequence, the gendered portrayals in telenovelas discussed in this section, promote a skewed representation of Latina identities, reducing them to discourses of either purity or hypersexuality. Moreover, the intersection of gender with class and race in these narratives, where characters are casted based on their physical characteristics that signify

social roles and status, can further contribute to the reception and impact of this format in Estonian society.

2.4. Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality

Critical Race Theory (CRT) studies the underlying relationships among race, racism and power; considering not only conventional civil rights but also a much more comprehensive standpoint including economics, history, legal reasoning, and equality theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 7) among other disciplines. It also addresses the intersections between classism, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression — along with privilege. This framework acknowledges, and validates the important role of people's shared experiences in influencing how they view the world as well as how they see themselves in relation to others around them (Bernal, 2002).

The roots of CRT can be traced back to criticisms within the Critical Legal studies movements (Crits); however it has evolved over time, becoming a diverse and expansive framework that is able to address complex intersections; not confined to the legal realm and/or the field of education like during its initial decade. Influences from developing critiques in ethnic studies, women's studies, cultural nationalist paradigms, Marxist and neo-Marxist frameworks, and internal colonial models (Solorzano & Yosso, 2010, p. 474) made it possible for CRT to encompass different branches such as LatCrit, FemCrit, AsianCrit and WhiteCrit scholarship, indicating its interdisciplinary nature and increasing relevance across numerous diverse fields.

One of the main themes in CRT is in regards to the social construction of race, meaning the ideas behind race are the product of social thoughts and relations; and that racism is an ordinary and naturalised aspect of daily life, intersecting with other forms of subordination (Crenshaw, 1991), and challenging the notion of race as a biological reality (p. 18). Society invents and manipulates races at their best convenience, and rather often uses physical traits to encapsulate higher-order traits, as personality or moral behaviour

(p. 10). This tenet will be rather important when it comes to understanding why Latina women are bound by imagined aesthetics and stereotypical signs.

The LatCrit strand extends the insights by focusing on the intersections of race within the context of Latinx communities, and providing a unique lens only relevant to Lantix experiences. Scholar within this field, such as Espinoza and Harris (1998), Solorzano and Bernal (2001), Valdes (1996) and Villalpando (2004) emphasise in their studies, key elements like ethnicity, language, culture, immigration/migration, and citizenship status. LatCrit contributions underscore the significance of understanding race and racism through the experiences of racially subordinated groups. Counter-storytelling as methodology highlights narratives that challenge "essentialist constructions of race and identity" (Rolón-Dow & Davison, 2020, p.4).

The concept of intersectionality, as introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1991, addresses the limitations in understanding the different experiences of minority groups, particularly women; by examining the intersection of primarily, race and gender. However, it could also examine class, nationality, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, etc; in diverse settings. Traditional standpoints would often overlook the challenges faced by these minority women, where race or gender are often simplified to essentialism: "reduce the lives of people who experience multiple forms of oppression to additional problems: racism + sexism = straight Latina women experience" (Harris, 1990). This reductionist perspective restricts a deeper understanding of how such intersections can all play part into creating a submissive or subordinated social role.

The intersectional analysis grapples with questions about whether each factor should be considered: separately, additively, and/or in other ways. It challenges the oversimplified structure that hinder the complex and interconnected nature of discrimination based on race, gender, and other factors, encouraging an approach that is able to recognise and address diverse forms of oppression from a more individualistic perspective. It centres experiences within systems as these are constructed by historical patterns, and most importantly provides a platform in the pursuit of social justice, engaging in diversity,

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multiculturalism and human rights (Dill & Kohlman, 2012, p. 156) for the creation of a more equitable society. "Intersectionality is the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far" (McCall, 2005, p. 1771).

CRT and Intersectionality provide critical lenses from which telenovelas — and specifically *"Rosa Salvaje"* — can be scrutinised for underlying racial, gender and class biases. Social constructions of race and gender, and the stereotypical depiction Latina women face amidst telenovela representations can be uncovered by applying these frameworks, and help understand how the Estonian audience interpret and assimilate racial and gendered discourses presented in the media, based on their own cultural narratives regarding racial identities and traditional gender roles.

2.5. Millennial Gaze: A Generational Reconstruction/Perpetuation of Gender Roles

Mannheim (1952) conceptualised one of the first notions of "generations" as we know them today. In "*The Problem of Generations*" it is exposed that shared experiences — especially during formative years — shape collective consciousness and identity within age groups. Generations are not only a group of people born and living around the same time, but also a community characterised by the social dynamics and the significant events they undergo. Such experiences result in a common worldview or perspective, differentiating one generation from another. Distinct generations live at the same time, however since their "experienced time" is the only real time, all generations in fact live qualitatively different subjective eras (p. 283). This fracture of time between specific age groups is what Pinder (1926) called "the non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous". This difference in perception and experience is due to the unique socio-historical contexts each generation is embedded in during each important stage of development: childhood, adolescence, adulthood and senescence. Therefore, even though multiple generations coexist within the same historical period, their interpretation, reaction, values and belief towards certain topics can be vastly different, leading to the concept of generational identity.

Late scholars like Strauss and Howe (1991) proposed a definition of generations based on non-overlapping cohort groups with approximately 20-year timelines, emphasising specific historical events and cultural relevant labels to define such collectives; i.e. Baby Boomers, and their traditional values; Generation X and their MTV Culture; Millennials and their iPad kids.

In modern research, the term "generation" refers to an artificial construction that combines multiple birth cohorts and attributes assumed characteristics to people born within specific spans (Costanza, Rudolph & Zacher, 2023). In this sense, generations are a social construct used to categorise groups of individuals based on shared characteristics, experiences and values, shaped by historical and social events — such as war, or economic depressions.

What about Millennials? The term refers to individuals born roughly between 1980 and 2000, although there is some variation in defining the generation (Fisher, 2015). In terms of media consumption, Millennials are highly connected digitally — as the first truly digital native generation — spending a significant amount of time on smartphones and the internet (Berger, 2018). Nevertheless, they would also engage in traditional media like radio, and television. This generation is the one that has experienced the cultural shift from modernism to postmodernism, and the fusion between two centuries:

> "It is worth noting that these are concepts the media has presented to children growing up in the late twentieth century, and that Millennials accept these concepts as part of their understanding of reality." (Bloomer, 2014, p. 4)

This cultural mutation not only impacted their perceptions and beliefs about hierarchy, originality, and intertextuality — but also about gender roles, particularly within the group still born in the 1980s, influencing their understanding of societal norms and shaping perspectives on gender representation based on their television exposure and consumption.

Descriptions of Millennials often highlight a strong appreciation for diversity, and a preference for collaboration over authoritarianism, pragmatism, optimistism, confidence and achievement orientation (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Women in this generation have shown increased efficacy and confidence due to their stronger participation in the labour market and academic fields, while men have remained relatively unchanged in their gender roles (Paechter, 2007).

The most notorious research in the subject has been made by Risman (2018) in the book: "*Where The Millennials Will Take Us: A New Generation Wrestles With The Gender Structure*". There, the author explains how in contemporary society, both men and women are expected to take part in the labour force, with employment becoming a criterion for marriage among Millennials, which leads them to experience a much more prolonged transition into adulthood, shifting its definition from: adult = marriage and parenthood (like with Baby Boomers and Gen X), to adult = economic independence, and then comes marriage and parenthood.

Millennials exhibit broad support for diverse family structures and lifestyles, including gay marriage, single motherhood, cohabitation, and interracial dating (pp. 177-8). They reject traditional wedding norms in favour of personalised expressions of identity, such as destination weddings and online invitations (p. 176). Although there is an adopted value of gender equality, cultural beliefs remain sexist and traditional gender norms persist, particularly when it comes to caregiving work (Gerson, 2010). Consequently, Millennials display less progressive attitudes towards gender equality in the home, subscribing to the ideology of "egalitarian essentialism" (Cotter, Hermsen & Vanneman, 2011): individuals support the idea of social advancement and equality for women, yet simultaneously believe in the inherent differences between men and women, and the feminine/masculine roles. While both perceive marriage as a partnership of equals, women are more likely to weigh work-life balance over salary when considering careers; women take the lead in family decision-making (Pepin & Cotter, 2017) — in terms of economic decisions; putting men in charge due to intensive mothering still being strongly upheld and intensive

fathering not yet been established as a cultural expectation (Gerson, 2010). In conclusion, among the Millennials "the gender structure remains very powerful today, even if it has changed, and women have many more options than in previous centuries." (Risman, 2018, p. 150)

This framework is relevant for understanding how shared experiences can shape a collective, specially in relation to media consumption and gender perception. This is important in the study of how Estonian millennial men interpret ethnic and gender stereotypes presented in telenovelas like "*Rosa Salvaje*". This generational approach suggests that Estonian millennial men might possess a unique understanding of such narratives, compared to those of previous generations, with the possibility of translating into either the perpetuation of traditional views, or a more variable progressive interpretations of gender roles.

The role of women in Estonia has been deeply influenced by nationalistic and Soviet ideologies (Kaskla, 2003), yet creating an unique framework through which Estonian millennial men might perceive Latina women. Early Estonian nationalism portrayed women as tireless farmers, embodying an expected national identity, while Soviet propaganda promised gender equality, however imposing a "dual burden": "women worked, then returned home with the expectation that they care for the family while the husband sat and watched" (p. 305). This superficial promotion of equality during the Soviet era, might have led Estonian millennial men to expect similar domesticity and traditional gender roles from all women, including Latinas. However, the exoticised, sexualised and almost fetishised image of Latina women might create conflicting expectations, where expressiveness equals sexual conduct, and Latina women are both idealised by their exotic attributes, however critiqued if they fail to conform to local gender norms.

Gender identity construction in Estonia reflects a complex interplay of national identity and historical legacy: women were not pressed to accomplish gender equality (Ghodsee, 2004), but rather dealt with issues concerning the restoration of the Estonian national

identity or achieving economic independence. In this sense, Estonian women were expected to still incorporate the nationalist ideal of reserved, stoic and resilient caregivers — the white woman to marry (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004, Castillo, 1997); while Latina women undergo narratives that align with male desire: the expected passion and vibrancy associated with Latinx culture — "*la otra*", the woman for playing (Hurtado, 2012). This complex interplay shapes expectations of Estonian millennial men, potentially reinforcing stereotypes of Latinx culture within Estonia.

2.6. Demographics in Estonia

Long before Latinxs set foot in Estonia and begun blending into everyday life, notions of Latin American culture among locals first occurred due to the popularity of telenovelas screened in the mid 1990s (Opermann, 2014) — in which "*Rosa Salvaje*" (Mexico), "*Esmeralda*" (Mexico), "*Corazón Salvaje*" (Mexico), "*Cara Sucia*" (Venezuela) and "*Luz María*" (Peru) are among the most popular titles (Kroonika, 2018). These media representations imposed, almost imperceptibly, models of femininity, manners and practices associated to Latina women, and a general picture of Latinx American culture and values, conforming a portrayal that would overgeneralise Spanish-speaking country's own national identities.

According to the site Statistics Estonia, the current population of the country in the beginning of 2023 is 1.357.739 people. Two main generational groups are identified amongst the male Estonian citizens: 1) Generation X: Born from 1965 to 1980, now having between 58 to 43 years of age, and compiling the 13,1% of the population in 2022; and 2) Generation Y or Millennials: Born from 1981 to 1996, having now between 42 to 27 years of age, and compiling the 14% of the population in 2022 — and also being the age group were most men in Estonia are currently in. Other two secondary generational groups are: 3) Baby Boom Generation: Born from 1946 to 1964, now having between 77 to 59 years of age, and compiling the 8.3% of the population in 2022; and 4) Generation Z: Born from 1997 to 2010, having now between 26 to 13 years of age, and compiling the 7,8% of the population in 2022 (Statistica Database, 2022).

According to the 2021 census in Estonia (Statistical Database, 2021), the number of nationalities among the Estonian population is bigger than ever, with a total of 211 different ones living in the country. This constitutes more than 30% of the current population. The largest segment still belongs to Russian nationals, with around 315.000 inhabitants. "Other nationalities" come third, representing around 100.000 migrants. Given the current political climate, around 27.000 people within this category correspond to Ukrainian nationals, leaving another 70.000 migrants of different countries and nationalities.

In Estonia, Latin migration isn't too representative thus far, but it is growing exponentially taking the last decade in consideration. In 2011, the record (Statistica Database, 2011) shows 64 people from Spanish-speaking countries — Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela — migrated to Estonia, in which 46 were male, and only 18 female. The new register (Statistica Database, 2021) up until the end of 2021, indicates 541 migrants from the above-mentioned countries — with the addition of Honduras, Paraguay and Panama — settled in Estonia, in which in total 345 are male, and 196 female; a percentage increment of 857% of overall Latin immigration, and 1087% when it comes to women relocating in the new country in only one decade. By 2023, it can be assumed those numbers have already increased, and taking into account these calculations, it can be expected that, by the year 2031, the country could potentially host over 5000 Latin immigrants, in which at least 2000 would be female.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter in this thesis serves as a comprehensive guide to the research approach and procedures employed in addressing the research questions. This chapter meticulously outlines the methods utilised for data collection and analysis, which comprises textual analysis of the Mexican telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*", and in-depth interviews conducted with Estonian millennial men, migrant Latina women in Estonia and Estonian telenovela aficionados. It provides a rationale behind the selection of these specific research methods, explaining how they were chosen to effectively investigate and respond to the research questions. Furthermore, this chapter also places a strong emphasis on ethical considerations, ensuring the research adheres to ethical standards and principles. It also acknowledges and discusses the limitations inherent in the study, providing transparency regarding the scope and boundaries of the research methodology.

3.1. Aim and Problem Statement

Media representations have the power to impact on beliefs and cultural behaviours by shaping perceptions, reinforcing or challenging norms and the "status quo", and even setting the agenda for public discourse. This multiperspectival and qualitative study investigates how dominant narratives of beauty and traditional gender roles are attributed to Latina migrant women by Estonian millennial men in, addressing the overarching goal of understanding the cultural dynamics and gender roles within the specific context of the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" aired during 1993-1994 in the country. This research aims to answer the following questions specifically:

RQ1. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics are attributed to Latina women in the telenovela "Rosa Salvaje"? How do these roles and characteristics interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

RQ1.1. How do Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret the depictions of Latina women in "Rosa Salvaje"?

RQ2. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics do Estonian millennial men (who have Latina partners) attribute to Latina women? How do their perceptions relate to the portrayals of Latina women in the telenovela "Rosa Salvaje"? How do their perceptions interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

RQ2.1. How do these gender roles and characteristics compare to Estonian women (according to Estonian millennial men)?

RQ3. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics Latina women living in Estonia attribute to themselves and how are these different from the characteristics of Estonian women? How do these roles and characteristics interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

To address these research questions effectively, a mixture of qualitative methods was employed, combining the textual analysis of the Mexican telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" in order to understand the portrayal of Latina women in this context, and draw relevant interview questions for the study subjects. Once this first step was concluded, in-depth interviews were conducted with three distinct subject groups: Estonian millennial men, migrant Latina women and Estonian telenovela fans, all subjects currently living in Estonia. This methodological approach aims to provide a holistic understanding of the topic, encompassing both media representation residues and lived experiences from the perspective of different study subjects. Furthermore, the methodological framework drew inspiration from various theoretical viewpoints, encompassing CRT, gender theory with a specific focus on Marianismo and Machismo, and intersectionality, all of which have been thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework.

Ultimately, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive account of the research methodology, including the processes of data collection, coding and analysis.

Additionally, it seeks to delve into the ethical considerations and limitations of conducting research with potential sample representative issues, as well as generalisation dilemmas. However, its final goal is to contribute to an extensive grasp of how qualitative approaches can be utilised to explore intricate sociocultural phenomena on gender identities and equality in Estonia.

3.2. Methodological Framework

This portion elucidates the reasoning behind the research framework and provides a rationale for the choice of methods employed, like textual analysis and in-depth semi-structured interviews, for the analysis and completion of the research questions.

3.2.1 Research Strategy

Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) insights are used in order to analyse how race, racism, and power dynamics shape the narratives and representations of Latina women in the Estonian context. This framework guides the examination of how media representations in telenovelas — like the case of "*Rosa Salvaje*" — contribute to constructing racial and ethnic stereotypes. By acknowledging the social construction of race and the ordinariness of racism, this research examines how such portrayals impact the perceptions and treatment of migrant Latina women by Estonian millennial men, and how these representations intersect with issues of sexism and classism. CRT's special emphasis on storytelling and counter-storytelling (Solorzano & Yosso, 2010) as methodologies aligns with the qualitative nature of the study, allowing the exploration of migrant Latina women's self-attributed characteristics and experience, as a form of counter-narrative to dominant media portrayals.

Gender theory (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Butler, 1990; Risman, 2018) is also utilised, with a focus on Marianismo (Stevens, 1973) and Machismo, the most representative discourses within Latin American societies. This theoretical perspective will be used to dissect gender roles and stereotypes reinforced — or challenged — by the telenovela

"*Rosa Salvaje*" and its influence on societal perceptions. The analysis of Marianismo and Machismo gender roles provides a lens to understand the specific gender expectations and norms attributed to Latina women, and how these might differ or align with those attributed by Estonian millennial men, and to Estonian women. This exploration of gender narratives in telenovelas, the media, and Latin American continent, will inform the development of interview questions and the interpretation of the sample responses. This study investigates how these gender constructs influence Estonian millennial men's perceptions of the overall Latina women, and how these migrant Latina women perceive themselves in contrast.

And lastly, the intersectionality framework (Crenshaw, 1991; Hurtado & Gurin, 2004; Castillo, 1997; Amaro, 2015; Harris, 1990) plays an essential role in understanding the complex ways in which various forms of identity and systems of oppression intersect in the experiences of migrant Latina women in Estonia. By employing an intersectional approach, the research uncovers how race, gender, class, and particular factors such a immigration status and cultural background, all come into play in order to shape the happenings and self-perceptions of migrant Latina women in the country. Intersectionality is also a powerful, critical tool for examining how these women navigate their identities in a context that is significantly different from their home countries, as well as how their experiences compare to those of Estonian women. This approach allows for a more nuanced analysis of the interviews, highlighting the diversity within the migrant Latina community and the unique challenges they face.

These theoretical frameworks guide the entire methodological approach of the research study, from the design of the interview questions, the direction of the textual analysis, the interpretation and decodification of the data and the findings. By integrating these, the investigation aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the media's role in shaping perceptions of gender roles and racial/ethnic identities, as well as the lived experiences of migrant Latina women in Estonia. Overall, this multiperspectival analysis

will contribute to the broader discourse on gender equality, media representation, and cultural integration within the Estonian context.

3.2.2. Data Collection

To address the research questions, a detailed data collection strategy was employed, guided by the frameworks of CRT, gender theory, and intersectionality. Telenovelas were first aired in Estonia during Soviet occupation, however, "*Rosa Salvaje*" aired in 1992-93 is of cultural relevance to the study because it was the first one to ever be dubbed in Estonian, and not Russian. Its significance is undeniable, since it represents both a historical milestone, and a gate to different worlds under an umbrella of redefined new meanings.

Purposive and network sampling (Vehovar, Toepoel, & Steinmetz, 2016) was used to select participants who represent a cross-section of Estonian millennial men, migrant Latina women and telenovela aficionados in the country. These participants were identified based on judgements that would make them representative of the research criteria: (a) for Estonian millennial men, they would've needed to be aged 30-40 years old, and have/have had a romantic relationship with a Latina women; (b) for migrant Latina women in Estonia, the age wasn't part of the criteria, as their time in the country and experiences with Estonian culture/men were; and lastly, (c) the Estonian telenovela aficionados were encountered when analysing the cultural impact of the format within the Estonian context, and serve as a medium to understand the appeal and impact of telenovelas in the country.

The research was posted in social media, particularly in the Facebook community: "*Red de Mujeres en Estonia*" (Women in Estonia Network) and then followed by network sampling, where group members would suggest participants that fit the predetermined criteria. The telenovela aficionados were found when researching the impact of telenovelas in Estonia, where both have social media channels in which they openly discuss such topics; one being the YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/@jaanikavarton1929 and the other, the website https://furusato.ee/.

3.2.2.1. Textual Analysis

The textual analysis of the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" is a pivotal methodological step in the study designed to address RQ1. The primary purpose of this analysis is to discern which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics are attributed to Latina women within the narrative of "*Rosa Salvaje*". This includes a detailed examination of the textual and visual content in order to identify the prevalent themes and stereotypes perpetuated/challenged through the portrayal and representation of Latina women.

RQ1 looks to understand the specific gender roles and attributes assigned to Latina women in the telenovela, exploring how these are depicted in the show and what the possible implications on societal perceptions of Latina women might be.

The textual analysis also played an important role in the shaping and creation of the interview questions for the research. By dissecting the content and narratives within the telenovela, the study was able to identify prevalent themes and stereotypes associated with the portrayal of Latina women. This methodological approach ensured interview questions were grounded in the actual content that influences perceptions of dominant narratives of beauty and traditional gender roles, providing a direct connection with the theoretical frameworks and the empirical data collection.

3.2.2.2. Textual Analysis Plan and Processing

Smith (2017) describes textual analysis as a method in the fields of communication, to examine messages as they appear, through a variety of different mediums. The standard methodological process includes the formulation of a research question, and the selection of an appropriate text — "*Rosa Salvaje*" in this thesis — in relation to the research objectives that will ultimately support the findings.

The textual analysis found in this research consists of different steps and phases:

(1) Content analysis: Focused on text-based meaning and pattern identification, which deals with the broad ideas behind the text, like examining the opening credits, the plot structure, the depiction of main characters, and the visual elements.

(2) Discourse analysis: As per Foucault's definition (1984) of the analysis of the dominant statements, and the determination of the implicit rules that govern certain texts. Discourse analysis is particularly addressed in this thesis, as distinct perspectives arise from different discourses, shaped by individuals' positions, identities and social connections (Fairclough, 2003). Discourses can reflect reality projecting possible words, and also change society, framing how people relate to each other. Fairclough (2003) provides a methodological tool for identifying discourses within a specific medium:

> (1) Identify the main parts of the world (including areas of social life) which are represented – the main 'themes'.
> (2) Identify the particular perspective or angle or point of view from which they are represented.

Table 1 - Fairclough's methodological tool for textual analysis.

In this sense, the first item is analysed through the main themes and topics in "*Rosa Salvaje*", and the second one, by making a specific inspection of the telenovela through the lens of CRT, intersectionality and gender theory, and positioning its narrative impact in Estonia.

(3) Narrative analysis: Narrative being "a form of action, of performance, and the meaning it generates are effects of performance" (Blommaert, 2006, p. 182), and narratives as cognitive structures in which we understand the world, and as discursive actions (Gergen & Gergen, 2006). In terms of methodological analysis, examining narratives comes by playing close attention to the system in which construction and

representation are designed (Bamberg, 2006). More concretely, the "*Rosa Salvaje*" is situated in the spectrum of telenovelas and media.

For the purpose of this study, a total of 64 episodes were analysed; concretely numbers 1 to 20, 24 and then skipping every 5 episodes: 29, 34, 39, 44, 49, 54, 59, 64, 69, 74, 79, 84, 89, 94, 99, 104, 109, 114, 119, 124-129, 134, 139, 144, 149, 154, 159, 164, 169, 174, 179, 184, 189 and 194-199. The first 20 episodes were watched in order to fully grasp the central arguments behind the story, and then a system of 5 to 5 episodes was applied, with the exception of 124-129 and 194-199 who were analysed consecutively once more. For episodes 124-129, the main character depiction evolved quite drastically, and further examination and annotation was needed in order to include key elements of the storyline. Similarly, episodes 194-199 concluded the series, giving the audience a final message. Episodes were sourced from the free streaming platform Dailymotion, where screenshots for further analysis were taken based on relevance. (see ANNEX E)

3.2.2.3 Interviews

In-depth semi-structured interviews were chosen as methodological strategy for the purpose of this research. According to Rubin & Rubin (2005) these types of interviews allow more depth and richness, since the interviewer — researcher in this case, has the possibility to probe and expand the interviewee's responses within the presented structure (see ANNEXES A to C). For this thesis, interviews present themselves as an opportunity to associate the textual analysis findings — discourse and narratives encountered in the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" and analyse participants' understanding of Latinx culture within an Estonian context.

To remain consistent with the principles of CRT, intersectionality and gender theory when it comes to centring on the lived experiences of individuals, the interview design opted for an idiographic approach (Robinson, 2014) using a small sample size for intensive analysis of each case to be conducted. The total sample size consisted of 12 interviewees, in which 5 were Estonian millennial men, 5 were migrant Latina women and 2 were

telenovela aficionados in Estonia. This approach will allow for a complete exploration of the complex experiences of Latinx culture inserted in the Estonian context.

Each interview also contained photo-elicitation (Cleland & MacLeod, 2021) meaning, there was a specific section dedicated to describing pre-curated pictures — researcher-driven photo-elicitation. In this type of methodology, "the researcher decides on what they find interesting and potentially important for a picture" and "photographs are used as prompts for discussion" (p. 231) during the interview, where participants can respond with extended narratives and their personal interpretations of the images. Photography in this research is important, as it results in an alternate language to communicate and give the interviewees a deeper understanding (Walker, 1993), plus it might also bring up emotions and thoughts in ways narrative alone cannot (Harper, 1998). Furthermore, photo-elicitation allows participants and researchers to construct meaning together, offering a combination of visual and verbal data for analysis (Collier & Collier, 1986). By introducing pre-curated images related to themes from "*Rosa Salvaje*", emotional and cognitive responses can be evoked, helping in the understanding on how visual media influence perceptions of gender and culture.

All interviews and particular subjects are crucial to respond to all following research questions:

RQ1.1 focuses on how Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret the different depictions exposed in "*Rosa Salvaje*". Interviews allow the subjects to express their thoughts and feelings regarding gendered messages in Latin America and Estonia, and hence juxtaposing both cultures.

RQ2 centres on how Estonian millennial men perceive Latina women and which dominant discourses they attribute to them, and if their perceptions relate somehow to the portrayal defined by "*Rosa Salvaje*". The interviews explore the influence of overall media on personal/group perceptions, a method that helps in understanding how these align or contrast with dominant cultural narratives.

RQ2.1 accentuates how these roles and characteristics compare to the ones expected/attributed by Estonian women. Interviews again, allow for an exploration of cultural differences and similarities, providing insights on how gender is — culturally — constructed and performed.

And lastly, RQ3 focuses on migrant Latina women and which characteristics and gender roles were attributed to them and how these differentiate from Estonian women. The interview format enables the subjects to reflect on their experiences and how they believe to be perceived vs. how they perceived themselves in the Estonian context.

3.2.2.4. Interviews Plan and Processing

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all three groups to explore their perceptions of media representations in the context of telenovelas in Estonia, and more specifically "*Rosa Salvaje*", to discern whether these portrayals impacted their understanding of race and gender roles.

The interview scripts were created based on the findings from the textual analysis of "*Rosa Salvaje*" and three different ones were proposed, based on each interviewee group. All scripts presented an image viewing section, in order to understand the perception of the characters, women's beauty and behaviour, and differences from Estonian gender roles and culture.

For Estonian millennial men, the focus of the interview explores the intersections of media, cultural perceptions and gender roles as they relate to both Estonian and Latina women. Interviewees were aged from 32 to 40 years old, they all have or had a Latina romantic partner, and travelled to at least one Latin American country. For telenovela aficionados, the goal is to examine the cultural impact and reception of telenovelas in Estonia, particularly "*Rosa Salvaje*", as the first Estonian dubbed telenovela ever to be aired in the country. Interviewees were aged 34 and 44, and were identified online as fans of the telenovela. And ultimately, for migrant Latina women, on the other hand, the

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questions were designed to understand their own perceptions of media representation, and how such representations compare to their real-life experiences and cultural identities in Estonia. Interviewees had lived in Estonia from 4 to 8 years, and they all have or had an Estonian romantic partner. Their nationalities are 2 Mexican, 1 Argentinian, 1 Venezuelan and 1 Colombian.

The interviews were conducted via Zoom in the periods from December 2023 to April 2024. To facilitate easy access and comfort, from 25-60 minutes long, and were recorded with the participants' verbal consent. All invitations were sent using Tallinn University email address as an authentication process for the research conducted for academic purposes. The conversations with 5 Estonian millennial men and 1 telenovela aficionado were in English, as that is the common language for both researcher and participants, whereas the conversations with 5 migrant Latina women and 1 telenovela aficionado (also Estonian) happened in Spanish, the mother tongue for both researcher and participants, with the exception of the aficionado, who chose Spanish as preferred language for the interview. All interviews were transcribed in English, and translated from Spanish to English using Notta.ai — https://www.notta.ai/ — an audio and video transcription tool powered by AI. The audio from each interview was imported into the software, where the tool would transcribe all conversations with time stamps, in either English or Spanish. For the Spanish interviews, they also offered an automatic translation in English. All transcriptions were rechecked and edited when/if needed, to ensure the accuracy of the data findings.

3.2.2.5. Interview Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study is grounded in the social constructivism paradigm, which assumes that knowledge and reality are constructed through social interactions and cultural contexts (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This paradigm provides a framework for interpreting the diverse ways in which individuals perceive and experience a given social phenomena, which is central to exploring the cultural interactions between Estonian millennial men and migrant Latina women in Estonia, through the lens of media

representations — the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" — shaping individual/group perceptions related to beauty and gender role narratives.

Together with textual analysis (Smith, 2017) as described in the previous section, this research also utilises thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) for the qualitative data collected from the interviews, identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within the data (p. 79). The process as illustrated by Braun & Clarke, has 6 different phases:

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Table 2 - Braun & Clarke's phases for thematic analysis.

(1) Familiarising with the data: Transcripts were read and re-read in order to gain a deeper understanding of the content, noting initial ideas and impressions that were aligned with both the social constructivist approach and the theoretical framework.

(2) Generating initial codes: Several coding methods were utilised to enrich the understanding and interpretation of the data. Primarily, inductive coding was applied generated from the raw data, a "learn as you go" method (Saldaña, 2015, p. 102), particularly effective in capturing the participants' experiences and perspectives. Secondly, concept coding in order to assign broader meanings to segments of data that contain more abstract ideas, "a concept is a word or short phrase that symbolically represents a suggested meaning broader than a single item or action" (p. 314); this method is helpful in categorising social constructs, central to understanding how societal norms influence the perceptions of gender roles. And lastly, versus coding to "identify

dichotomous or binary terms" (p. 354) such as contrasting gender norms, and/or conflicting views on beauty and gender narratives, cultural comparisons and media impact. As the interviews were conducted both in English and Spanish, all transcripts were translated to English in order to ensure the accuracy of the themes and the interpretation of data. By integrating these coding methods, the analysis is able to capture the themes that relate to the theoretical framework. This approach ensured the analysis remained grounded in the participants' point of view, while also allowing the exploration of broader cultural and societal influences.

(3) Searching for themes: The textual analysis provided a rich foundation for identifying recurring patterns or themes in conversations with participants that were significant to the overarching research questions. This stage started after an extensive period of coding, where a variety of codes were applied to encapsulate the nature of the different study subjects and their connection to each other. After finishing the review of the 12 interviews, each code was evaluated for its relevance to the research, and similar codes ended up being clustered together to form pertinent themes. Isolated codes ended up being discarded, and/or will be presented in the section for future research and recommendations. For example, the separate codes of "physical capability" and "emotional intelligence" ended up being renamed to "gender role narratives" instead; and the isolated codes like "learning Spanish" and "personal pursuit" were disposed of. The categorisation was created in a separate document with the quotations that followed each code. On the first step, the three sets of participants were separated in order to create their own codes and clusters, each with a different colour, and during the second revision, the content ended up being put together — among all participants, after identifying the recurring patterns. This process allowed for a better visualisation of each theme and how it contributed to the general framing of the discussion chapter.

(4) Reviewing themes: This part of the process involved analysing the coherence and depth of each theme and code and that these could effectively respond to all research questions, adhering to the conceptual framework of the study. Each theme was closely

examined, considering individual elements of data and how each theme interacted with one another. The order of the themes was also rearranged with the objective of addressing each RQ in the presented sequence. Following the previous example, "physical capability" and "emotional intelligence" were part of a bigger theme called "gender stereotypes" that resulted in the topics being clustered inside a broader theme: "gender roles in society" with a unifying code "gender role narratives". Through this phase, streamlining the themes was important, but also making sure all themes and their codes had an enhanced explanatory power. As the themes were reorganised and redefined, a clearer narrative structure took place, reflecting the multiperspectival approach of this research, in order to portray an accurate representation of gender roles, media influence and cultural perceptions.

(5) Defining and naming themes: In this phase, each theme was carefully examined to elucidate a fundamental concept and tell a story with the collected data. The titles and order chosen correspond to the research questions in place, being the product of reflective consideration, and designed to resonate with the central tenets of the theoretical framework. A total of 10 themes emerged from this process, central to the narrative of the empirical findings:

Index	Theme	Codes
Theme 1	**Latina Media Stereotypes**	- Stereotypical perception - Exaggerated behaviour - Physicality
Theme 2	**Impact of Media Narratives**	- Negative consequences - Media portrayal - Media narratives in real life - Separation from media portrayal - Challenging stereotypes - Sexualisation
Theme 3	**Exposure and Attraction to Telenovelas**	- Rosa Salvaje in Estonia - Drama and emotion - Romantic ideals

Index	Theme	Codes
		● Lifestyle contrast
Theme 4	**Gender Roles in Society**	● Traditional gender role endorsement ● Dismissal of traditional gender roles ● Gender role narratives ● Gender equality recognition ● Gender inequality recognition
Theme 5	**Beauty Narratives**	● Physicality of Estonian women ● Physicality of Latina women ● Physicality stereotypes ● Rejection of physicality stereotype
Theme 6	**Behavioural Traits**	● Estonian women behaviour ● Latina women behaviour ● Comparison in expressiveness
Theme 7	**Media Impact on Cultural Perception**	● Local integration ● Cultural comparison ● Acknowledgement of stereotypes ● Dismissal of influence
Theme 8	**Assumptions for Latina Women**	● Attributed behaviour ● Attributed physicality ● Personal identity
Theme 9	**Cultural Reflections and Comparisons**	● Latina vs. Estonian women ● Women's expectations in Estonia ● Latina gender roles
Theme 10	**Photo-elicitation Impressions**	● Class perception ● Religious influences ● Racial hegemony ● Gender violence ● Hypersexualisation

Table 3. - Research's themes and codes.

(6) Producing the report: Final step of thematic analysis where the empirical findings are created considering research questions, theoretical framework and chosen themes and topics.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

At the beginning of the interview, all participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research, what their participation entailed, and how their responses would remain anonymous but the interview recorded for later transcription and analysis — only using voice recordings, not full video. All participants had the opportunity to accept the conditions and give their recording verbal consent before starting with the questions. (see ANNEXES A, B and C)

Protecting the identity and privacy of the participants was also extremely important. All 13 participants were made anonymous, using only a letter to refer to them: R, M, D, P, etc; as exposed in chapters 4 and 5. Additionally, all recordings and transcripts were stored securely, accessible only to the research team — researcher and supervisor — and will be permanently deleted three Months after the completion of the project. As a particularly sensitive and taboo subject — gender, race, sexism, etc — a recognition and understanding of the cultural norms and personal boundaries of the participants needed to take place during all interviews, making sure not to transmit or infer either the approval or the disapproval of any of the commentaries made, in order not to contaminate the richness of the collected data. The design also included measures to avoid any form of exploitation. Participants were not offered any incentives or compensation in order to participate in the study, and their cooperation was solely voluntary.

3.5. Research Limitations

While the research methodology employed in this study is robust in addressing the complex dynamics of gender roles and media representation, it is important to acknowledge the limitations accompanying the chosen approaches. Such limitations are particularly notable concerning the topic, the participant selection, and data collection methods, each influencing conclusions and the possible generalisability of the findings.

In the first place, the focus on a single telenovela, "*Rosa Salvaje*" — while still providing a very detailed case study — limits the ability to encounter different narratives across the broader genre of Latin American telenovelas and media portrayals of Latina women. The narratives found in the studied telenovela might not be representative of all the genres. And secondly, the participant selection might also pose its set of limitations, as the study relies on a relatively small — and possibly non-representative — sample of all three subjects: Estonian millennial men, latina migrant women and Estonian telenovela aficionados. Despite the participants providing valuable perspectives, their views might not capture the full picture of societal perceptions regarding beauty and gender narratives. The experiences of each participant are influenced by personal and cultural backgrounds, which may not accurately represent broader demographic groups within Estonia or among different Latinx communities.

Additionally, in-depth semi-structured interviews depend heavily on the articulateness and self-awareness of the participants, as well as their willingness to disclose personal information. This dependence can lead to potential biases, as the data might weigh differently in those comfortably speaking about sensitive topics like race and gender. The analysis of the interview data also borders subjectivity, where the researcher's perspectives and/or preconceptions might influence the result interpretations. And lastly, the use of photo-elicitation as part of the methodology relies on the assumption that participants are able to interpret such images in ways that are meaningful to the research questions. The interpretation of images can also become highly personal, influenced by their own unconscious biases or lived experiences.

3.6. Author's Standpoint

As a Paraguayan migrant woman living in Estonia, this research is deeply rooted in my experiences in the country, introducing a layer of reflexivity and personal engagement in the subject. My standpoint as the researcher originates from feelings of otherness and cultural juxtaposition, creating an opportunity to probe the very nuanced dynamics of identity and cultural representation in the Estonian context. This connection informs the

investigative lens, and enhances the depth of the interplay between media portrayals and real-life experiences of Latina women in Estonia.

Nonetheless, my personal involvement also poses certain challenges and considerations when it comes to maintaining objectivity and reflexivity. There has been a particular care when formulating the research questions, the interpretation of the data, and the overall narrative of the entire study, in order to ensure the best possible framing angle.

By acknowledging my positionality as the author, I can critically and consciously analyse the data, ensuring that all findings reflect the most accurate experiences and perceptions of the participants, without these being shaped by my own personal narrative. This approach also aligns with the principles of CRT and intersectionality, which also advocate on the recognition and reflection on the researcher's influence in the investigative process.

4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1. Textual Analysis

"*Rosa Salvaje*", Wild Rose in English, Metsik Roos in Estonian — is a Mexican telenovela (see ANNEX E FIG. E1), produced by Televisa, and aired on Canal de las Estrellas from July 6th, 1987 until April 8th, 1988. The show had 199 episodes of 22 mins each, and it was hugely successful in countries like Armenia, Nigeria, Serbia, Russia, Canada, Indonesia; and of course: Estonia. As a matter of fact, this telenovela was the first foreign soap opera to ever be broadcasted on ETV, during 1993 and 1994, and during its last year, it became the most watched show in the country. According to a survey, more than 588.000 people watched it — a third of the entire population by then (Kroonika, 2018).

4.1.1. Content Analysis

4.1.1.1. Opening Credits

In the opening credits, the audience gets to see Rosa, the main female character. Her face is dirty, hiding behind a baseball cap, and she appears to be wearing jeans and a hoodie: a very traditional "masculine" outfit. She is a tomboy (see ANNEX E FIG. E2). And she is playing with other — male — kids, giving away her young age. Soon enough, she climbs up the wall of a private property to steal prunes. She ends up trespassing by accident and is caught by two sisters — the antagonist counterparts. Then, Ricardo, "the prince", appears and she is suddenly safe. She kisses him shyly and rushes to the exit.

The theme song includes the following lyrics:

> "*Tengo ganas de vivir, tengo ganas de sentir [I am eager to live, I am eager to feel], demostrarle al mundo entero, la mujer que habita en mí... [Show the entire world, the woman that lives in me...] ...Rosa salvaje soy yo, Rosa salvaje [Wild*

rose I am, wild rose], tengo triste el corazón, cada mañana le pido a la virgen, [I have a sad heart, every morning I ask the virgin], que el me ame como lo amo yo… [that he loves me as I love him…]."

The first part, denotes that Rosa is an inexperienced young woman, slowly saying goodbye to her childhood, and entering new adulthood terrains. As she is perceived by others as "manly"and "wild", she wants to show everyone that she is actually a beautiful woman inside out. In the chorus, the title of the telenovela is repeated twice, and then, the virgin — by far Mexico's most important Catholic religious icon — is brought up, as Rosa prays that she is loved back by her prince. (see ANNEX E FIG E3)

4.1.1.2. Plot Structure

- Introduction: Presentation of characters in which Rosa is the protagonist. She is poor but spirited, with "a heart of gold" and dreams and aspirations established from the beginning. Ricardo, her male counterpart, is a wealthy man, introduced as spoiled and flirtatious.
- Rising Action: Rosa becomes intertwined with Ricardo after breaking into his house. They end up getting married in episode 12, and this marks numerous conflicts and challenges for their union in the chapters to come.
- Climax: The two main conflicts; Rosa's and Ricardo's relationships and Paulette's quest to find her daughter. Other side stories also contribute to the plotlines' climax; like the triangle between Dulcina, Cándida and Federico; Tomasa's illness, Leonela's plotting and Ernesto's interference in Rosa's life.
- Falling Action: After Paulette and Rosa are reunited, the audience gets to see an accomplished woman in her: mostly secure of herself.
- Resolution: After Rosa's accident, she tells Ricardo the baby she is expecting is his. Once recovered, they are reconciled and remarry in the last episode.

4.1.1.3. Depiction of Main Characters

- Rosa: Main female character (see ANNEX E FIGS. E4 to E6). Portrayed as someone impulsive, transparent, with no manners, however still endearing. She is poor, the "cinderella" of the story. She spends her time playing football with younger kids, dirty and unapologetic. After she meets Ricardo, she starts worrying about her looks, takes showers regularly, and even promises to try to dress more ladylike. As a woman in love, Rosa believes she is not enough, and becomes dependent on her husband, feeling alone and insecure, and these emotions often lead her to submission or rage — towards Ricardo. She is proud and does not accept help from anyone, "kneeling only before the Virgin". She can turn violent due to jealousy or feeling betrayed, and after this, she can be stubborn and not see reason. Rosa will avoid pain or being fooled at all costs. She likes taking care of her people, and is always willing to share whatever she has with them. In matters of physical affection, she is modest and somewhat chaste, and even though she has had many romantic candidates, she can only love — and hate — one man. As the story develops, she becomes a more refined and controlled woman, as she starts gaining the ability to reflect on her actions — especially after being reunited with her biological mother.

- Tomasa: Rosa's adoptive mother (see ANNEX E FIG. E7). She took her in after her mother was forced to abandon her. She was the family cook. She is poor, selfless, a good Christian with her feet on the ground, as she has had a really hard life. She is also portrayed as ignorant, and a bit too worried about things. At the beginning, she doesn't trust Ricardo's intentions with Rosa, and she doesn't want to see the child she loves suffering. As the story progresses, she becomes more flexible, but still conservative and looking out for Rosa.

- Dulcina: Ricardo's older sister, and head of their household — Marianismo (Stevens, 1973). She has secret plans for her brother, and tries to manipulate things to get what she wants. However, Ricardo still seems to be her weak point, and ultimately, she succumbs to his wishes and scenes. She is portrayed as mean

and ruthless, always scheming horrible plans to keep her fortune and make sure her family name is always respected. She keeps being constantly vexed by Ricardo, ending up humiliated, and in consequence only more frustrated and fuelled with vengeance. This hatred is extended to her sister Cándida, which she also seeks to destroy over a romantic dispute. She even kills her husband's lover in a jealousy attack. She interferes in everyone's lives, just to make sure she can maintain her wealthy status, which is jeopardised by bankruptcy. However, Dulcina doesn't ask for favours or begs to anyone, which shows how proud and inflexible her character is. Whenever feeling diminished — by either Ricardo, Rosa or even her other siblings — her wickedness arises.

- Cándida: Dulcina's and Ricardo's middle sister. She is submissive and rather jumpy. Seems insecure, so she goes along with Dulcina's plans, as she is the older sister. She has an affair with the family's financial advisor and attorney. She ends up pregnant but loses the baby in an accident, and then surrenders herself to madness, as she couldn't bear the loss or accept that her sweetheart will end up marrying her sister. Hospitalised, she starts getting better, and regrets being so mean to her brother and Rosa. She asks for their forgiveness, and turns against Dulcina, plotting her own personal revenge (see ANNEX E FIGS. E8 to E10)

- Leonela: The golden cradle princess of the story. She is in love with Ricardo, and wants to marry him. She is from a good and wealthy family, doesn't work and is rather frivolous. She becomes Dulcina's ally and helps her to plot against Rosa and Ricardo, in order to separate them. She is fake and manipulative, constantly trying to seduce him. What is interesting about this character is that the actress was replaced half way, so the viewer has two very distinctive versions of Leonela (see ANNEX E FIGS. E11 and E12). In the first, it seems the actress wasn't ready to fully compromise to be the villain of the story — as she didn't want to face the social stigma this role would represent in real life and her future jobs as an actress (Random, 2014); so one could not figure out if Leonela was "evil" or not. After she was replaced, her looks and attitudes changed, and it was obvious how Leonela stopped holding back her bad intentions, and quickly became the

antihero. She fights Rosa until the last minute, and after hitting her with her car, ends up trapped in the rails of a moving train, being killed by the impact.

- Paulette: Rosa's biological mother (see ANNEX E FIG. E13). She had to abandon her, as she resulted in being the lovechild of an extramarital relationship with the family's driver. As a rich, well-educated woman, her family couldn't afford such type of embarrassment. She always regretted that decision, and the weight of it followed her to the present time. She devotes herself into finding her lost daughter, and first only confides in her nana, who saw her grow. Then, both her husband and son end up discovering her "teenage sin" — as she calls it — and help her in the quest. After reuniting with Rosa, she is too scared to lose her again, and wants to keep her all to herself, even plotting against her reconciliation with Ricardo. She said: "*I am the guardian of your happiness,*'" which denotes a very attached mother-daughter relationship. Paulette feels sorry afterwards, ends up apologising and helps Rosa again.

- Irma: Secondary character. She deserves a mention based on her role in the plotline, and also how her look was associated with it. She only wears sexy lingerie whenever appeared (see ANNEX E FIGS. E14 and E15). Irma is the "second woman", Federico's lover — Dulcina's husband. He tries to kill her because of knowing too much, but fails, as she is left paralysed. She promises revenge, but ends up getting killed by Dulcina herself.

- Ricardo: Main male character. Portrayed as a charming and desirable man (see ANNEX E FIG. E16). He is wealthy, educated and has chauvinistic — machista — behaviours through the show. He meets Rosa and helps her out, but his attention to her had ulterior motives: he wanted to piss their sisters, as he is also a rebel who does not like being told what to do. He uses Rosa and marries her. He regrets doing this and starts being mean and aggressive to her, up to the point of using physical violence (see ANNEX E FIGS. E17 to E19). He is ashamed of Rosa and wants her to learn some manners, turn her into a proper lady, a task he assigns to Dulcina and Cándida. Ricardo has a perverse view on women: he believes them to be schemers, manipulative and vicious. He gets whatever he

wants based on threats to either Rosa, his sisters or Leonela, and always manages to justify his bad blood. After Rosa leaves for good, he tries to get her back and cannot handle rejection well, so he starts acting jealous. Ricardo also accepts being in a relationship with Leonela after Rosa, even though he didn't really like her either. Ultimately, he discovers he loves Rosa and is renewed and improved by this feeling. He is the typical portrayal of a man-child.

- Rogelio: Ricardo's twin brother (see ANNEX E FIG. E20). He is a good man, however depicted as crippled, not a "real man". He grows fond of Rosa and defends her in the house. He calls both Ricardo and his sisters out when they misbehave, making him the most centred character in the story. He is shown as weak, less than a man, bitter, and unapproachable. He undergoes surgery and "becomes whole". (see ANNEX E FIG. E21)

- Ernesto: Secondary male character in love with Rosa (see ANNEX E FIG. 22). Appears after she starts working as a waitress in a bar, and falls completely head over heels. At first, he seems really caring and gets closer to Rosa as a friend, hoping she will notice what a great pair they are. As the story progresses, he becomes demanding, acting violent even, frustrated by his unreciprocated love.

- Federico: The family accountant (see ANNEX E FIG. E23). He first has a secret affair with Cándida and leaves her pregnant. Soon after, he marries Dulcina — her sister — out of interest: he is after what is left of the Linares' fortune. He also has a lover, Irma, who he tries to kill on repeated occasions, as she was aware of his plan. Dulcina kills him after she discovers he robbed the family.

4.1.2. Discourse Analysis

Telenovelas follow a dominant narrative that tries to evoque the audience's experiences, they articulate a historical context, and rarely go beyond traditional gendered representations (Amaro, 2015). "*Rosa Salvaje*" falls under the Cinderella genre in telenovelas, also known as "María", formulas predetermined by Televisa: predominantly fair heroines — light-eyed Rosa — maids in the houses of the rich — she was maid in

two different households; and ending the fairytale cycle by marrying the son of a powerful house (Slade, 2010). The conventions in the TV network were very strict: no smoking, no poverty, no abortion, no politicians, no one of Indian descent, except as maids or labourers (p. 11). The telenova is centred on a heterosexual couple that meets and falls in love in Episode 1, and find countless obstacles to their love and the possibility of being together, right until the end of the show, around 200 episodes later.

4.1.2.1. Themes

- Power Dynamics: Present at all times, particularly with social status: Poor vs. Rich. Wealthy characters speak with authority and condescension, justifying their reasoning behind a more privileged lifestyle. Like after meeting Rosa, Ricardo tells her "*You don't belong here. People like you should stay in their place.*" The Linares sisters often use pejorative names to refer to Rosa "or her kind": *mugrosa* (filthy), *muerta de hambre* (starving, literally, "dead starving"), *gata sarnosa* (mangy cat), *vagabunda* (tramp), *sinvergüenza* (scoundrel), among others. Issues of social class and economic disparity are presented too. Rosa, a poor young woman, falls in love with Ricardo, a wealthy man, highlighting the inequality in their backgrounds. By consequence, social justice is constantly addressed, as Rosa strives to overcome adversity and improve her life circumstances.
- Family Dynamics: Exploring complex family relationships, including conflicts, rivalries, alliances, betrayal, deception and competition within both Rosa's and Ricardo's families. Family plays a significant role in shaping the characters' lives and decisions, adhering to a heteronormative model that emphasises the traditional structure of male and female roles. The storyline reinforces the conventional notion of a heterosexual couple at the heart of family dynamics.
- Identity and Representation: Dialogues contribute to the construction of identities and how characters are portrayed in the drama. Rosa's dialogues often highlight her determination to overcome adversity with phrases such as: "*I may be poor, but I will not let that define me. I will fight for a better life.*", or "*If life offers me an*

opportunity, it should be a job, not a man." The dialogues reflect her aspirations, her desire for independence and the importance of family and loyalty. They symbolise the empowerment journey of her character, and she uses them to challenge gender stereotypes and assert her rights within two different worlds: the men's one, and the rich's one. She encounters situations where:

1. The gardener, Don Seba, justifies Ricardo being violent to her by saying: *"You must have done something to upset him."*

2. Rogelio corrects Rosa, and she takes it as a joke adding: *"Men always do that to women."*

3. Don Seba tells Rosa what to do after discovering she is pregnant. He demands her to tell Ricardo.

Rosa undergoes a transformation and her journey involves self-discovery and personal growth — in terms of behaviour and beauty. When it comes to Ricardo, he undergoes a transformation too, as he navigates the complexities of his feelings for Rosa. Initially, his conversations with her were more centred on how she should start behaving in order to become a respectful woman, but overtime, he addresses her with much more humility and empathy. To compare, he used phrases such as:*"I will change her [Rosa], I will make her learn how to behave and even teach her how to dress,"* and, *"You [Rosa] have shown me a different world and I have found a better version of myself with you."*

- Religion and Culture: Other dialogues along the story also contain references to Mexican and Latin American culture, specifically when it comes to family values and religious points of view that can influence their actions and decisions. For example, Rosa experiences a life-threatening situation, and it appears all hope is lost. However, in a pivotal moment, a statue of the Virgin Mary – Virgencita de Guadalupe miraculously shed tears, signalling divine intervention. This event is interpreted as a sign of hope and protection, and serves as a turning point in the story. Mexican cultural traditions and values are interwoven into the narrative,

including celebrations, customs, and rituals that reflect the characters' cultural heritage.

-   Gender Roles and Expectations: The portrayal of traditional gender roles and expectations, particularly in relation to Rosa's character — who also challenges these norms as she asserts her independence.

4.1.2.2. Rosa Salvaje through the lens of CRT and Intersectionality

Through the lens of Critical Race Theory, the telenovela explores a number of different intersections: race and social class, colorism and beauty standards, and representation and stereotypes (see ANNEX F). Within race and social class, Rosa comes from a lower socio-economic background, and her struggles are tied to her economic status. This aligns to how racial hierarchies intersect with forms of oppression, such as economic disparities; enhancing the gap in inner class division based on income and exploitation (Du Bois, 1970).

Colourism is defined as an internalised form of racism that involves prejudice, stereotyping and perceptions of beauty amongst members of the same racialised group, whereby light skin is more highly valued than dark (Gabriel, 2007, p. 11). "*Rosa Salvaje*" delves into issues of colourism and beauty standards within Latin American societies. The show portrays how characters with fairer complexion are often associated with higher social status and privilege — responding to a Eurocentric aesthetic where appreciation is set on fair skin, light coloured eyes, long light hair, smaller facial features and thinner bodies (Awad, Norwood, Taylor, Martinez, McClain, Jones, Holman & Chapman-Hilliard; 2015). Even though Rosa was "less" due to her economic background, people would still be mesmerised by her "light eyes", and possessing this attribute ultimately made her earn social points in order to achieve her goals, as people — often men, were drawn and willing to help her. When she started working at the bar, men would gather there to behold the newly hired light-eyed girl. The owner was happy as Rosa was making her more money than usual.

When it comes to the representation of gender roles, "*Rosa Salvaje*" portrays traditional gender roles in Mexican and Latin American societies, where women are expected to conform to domestic and nurturing roles. Some examples can be:

1. Rosa starts taking showers and caring about her image: After knowing Ricard, she seems to care about her image for the first time.
2. Ricardo explains what men want from women: "*The only thing a man wants is a beautiful and passionate woman waiting in the bedroom.*"
3. Ricardo talking to Rosa: "*Polish yourself and start looking pretty for me.*"
4. Ricardo often loses his nerve with Rosa, and demands her to start learning how to be a good wife.
5. Ricardo bosses women around: He tells them what to do and how to act. For example, Dulcina to give him money, Leonela to stop talking to Rosa and Rosa to start behaving properly.
6. Dulcina explains to Ricardo: "*You are a man, you are not allowed to oversee our domestic service. That role belongs to the women of this house.*"
7. Ricardo tells Rogelio: "*Women bring so many complications, it is a real pity we cannot spare to live without them.*"
8. Dulcina talking about Federico: "*Men always lie. I will deal with him like all spiteful women do: by following him.*"
9. Rosa after her accident, without knowing she would survive, tells Ricardo: "*You have been the only man in my life.*"

The subtle emphasis of idealised qualities of femininity, including purity, innocence and self-sacrifice — Marianismo — are depicted continuously throughout the telenovela in almost all female characters. These roles may either conform to or challenge such ideals at the same time, with Rosa being the best example for it; she is someone that embraces traditional norms by accepting gendered ideas of how to look and behave; but at the same time she is also empowered by embracing her identity, seeking always for justice, defending her family and upbringing, and even helping others. After being disappointed

by Ricardo's trick, she develops a strong sense of self and overall overcoming, which starts to defy societal expectations. Rosa asserts her agency and independence, finding other women allies to share her struggles with — her mother, the women at the bar, her co-workers at the restaurant; displaying female solidarity and support. At its most extreme intersection; issues of reproductive rights and family dynamics also surface, as after Rosa is found to be pregnant, characters battle with different decisions and opinions related to motherhood and family responsibilities. When the doctor confirms the news, he expresses: "*Congratulations, miss. And congratulations to the father, too.*" She soon clarifies her child will not have a father.

4.1.3. Narrative Impact

"*Rosa Salvaje*" had a significant impact in the realm of global television and culture. Its influence extended well beyond Mexico, capturing audiences in various countries across different continents. The show was particularly successful in Armenia, Nigeria, Mexico, Japan, Kenya, Latin America, Italy, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Estonia, South Korea, Ukraine, Canada, the United States, and Indonesia (Fliist, 2022). For many of these countries, this show was the first ever telenovela to be aired on television, and that exoticism contributed even more to its spread and popularity among viewers. "*Rosa Salvaje*" enjoyed a late widespread recognition, mostly during the mid 1990s, a couple of years after its original release in Mexico, playing a significant role in popularising Latin America cultural products on a global scale — for example, Verónica Castro, the actress who played Rosa became an idol and got to tour the world due to her different roles.

In Estonia, the show was aired in 1993-1994 by Eesti Tevelisioon and it was the first foreign soap opera on ETV. In April 2014, ETV re-aired the telenovela in an attempt for the audience to acquire a "lighter show" for the upcoming spring and summer Months. According to a survey conducted in 1994, Rosa Salvaje was the most watched TV programme that year. The telenovela "attracted hundreds of thousands of viewers in the evenings. The staged fairy tale about a poor, uneducated girl who instantly fell in love

with a rich heir was the favourite TV series for Estonians at that time, and her fate was a topic of conversation in every group." (Postimees, 2022). Even Verónica Castro has been brought up on Estonian media as: "the 66-year-old star of the newly independent Estonia's biggest media sensation, the Mexican soap opera '*Rosa Salvaje.*'" (ERR Menu, 2014). Even the opening credits' song became a popular hit back then, and later became a parody song for Pärnu's band: Kuldne Trio.

As recalled by a viewer: "The series was shown in Estonia in 1990 - I was 9 years old then, and it was the first TV series of my life, which I was so engrossed in that I hardly missed a single episode. If my father had another program at home at the same time, my grandmother helped me by taking me to the neighbouring farm, where I could watch the next episode of her series on Aunt Helve's TV. The world of the wild rose was like the first bright spot of colour in newly independent Estonia and in my own life at the moment when I was stepping out of childhood and becoming a teenager. There was something pink, warm and romantic in the air... I sensed something like that in Mexico too, and of course the beauty of nature and the warm climate, which already charmed me in the series, but Mexicans are by no means as noisy and bravura as the series showed. Instead, they are pleasant, polite and rather restrained. In any case, we ourselves spoke louder. Back then, in Estonia, watching this series, I started to see the big picture - if you are good and honest, your life path will be straight and smooth. Good is always stronger than evil, the poor get rich and love conquers all. Yes, the world became more beautiful and somewhat stunning, as if a wild rose was smelling somewhere." (Furusato.ee, 2022)

4.2. Interview Analysis

This section explores the themes and codes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts, providing understanding of how each group of participants perceived and interacted with the portrayals of Latina women in the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" and their broader implication in the Estonian context. Ten distinct themes have been identified, all of them grounded in CRT and intersectionality, and underscoring different aspects of cultural perception, gender roles, and the impact of media narratives.

These themes serve as the foundation for the discussion chapter, as they illustrate the experiences and perceptions of all study subjects, contributing to a broader understanding of the societal and cultural dynamics at play in shaping identity and intercultural interactions.

4.2.1. Latina Media Stereotypes

Theme 1	**Latina Media Stereotypes**	● Stereotypical perception ● Exaggerated behaviour ● Physicality

Table 4 - Interview theme 1.

The first theme, and codes encapsulate stereotypes attributed to Latina women in the media. The selection emphasises how such narratives — stereotypes — are socially constructed and perpetuated through media portrayals. It is important to note, that this first theme and its codes are from comments regarding what the participants believed were media-responsible impressions on the Latina women as the world "knows them". All three subjects distinctively discussed what they thought were stereotypes of Latina women in the media, either in a more general sense, in telenovelas or "*Rosa Salvaje*". The quotations provided from the Estonian millennial men interviews illustrate the idea of an expectation within Latinas in the media, such as:

"*Salma Hayek did a wonderful job portraying the Latin women.*" (Interviewee R - Estonian millennial man)

This comment reflects the stereotypical perception that Latina women are a homogeneous group, a persistent idea reinforced by the media, which emphasises a certain criteria of representation for Latinas. This stereotype is further explored:

"*They were definitely very attractive and loud, definitely. Here we can talk about two aspects, like I do remember growing up as a teenager, like having this mental*

image of a physical body of a Latin woman being very shaped, very curvy."
(Interviewee R - Estonian millennial man)

"*I think they look really nice, like at least the ones they got on the TV.*"
(Interviewee K - Estonian millennial man)

When it comes to migrant Latina women observations, they added:

"*I always admired a lot about the women in the telenovelas, especially the Colombian ones, it was the beauty of those women like the curves, how feminine they could be.*" (Interviewee A - migrant Latina woman)

"*In Venezuela we have this woman like that with big breasts, with boobies, with, you know, super curves, lines, everything, pretty much like that. That's like the stereotype you have there.*" (Interviewee V - migrant Latina woman)

"*I think it's funny because they dramatise us. I mean, I think that most of the time the scenarios or the problems that come out in telenovelas happen in Mexico, in the family. I don't know, situations like that, but I think that the Latin woman is dramatised a lot.*" (Interviewee D - migrant Latina woman)

"*That we're also like weak in the sense that this image of the Latina woman, that she's always looking for a man to support her, to take care of her, economically and also, physically as we look for someone who is like physically bigger, looking for protection, that's how I've seen it.*" (Interviewee V - migrant Latina woman)

Estonian telenovela aficionados also shared their perspective on the depiction of Latina women and the stereotypes shared by the media:

"*There was always a lot of drama, they were very much like that, if something happened, I don't know what, it was always a scandal. I always thought that women in general are like that in Latin America, in Mexico, and if there is a*

problem, they'll make it bigger than maybe it is." (Interviewee J - Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*I think they're supposed to look like dolls…. They are like dolls wearing beautiful jewellery, big earrings and necklaces, beautiful makeup of course, and even at home, the rich people are very fancy and not resting until they are perfect.*" (Interviewee O - Estonian telenovela aficionado)

These comments reinforce stereotypical perceptions, exaggerated behaviour and physicality, underlining the portrayal of Latina women as overtly sensual and emotionally expressive, which can influence perception and personal expectations in different settings. These codes also suggest that the media often shifts their focus on physical attributes, reinforcing narrow standards of beauty, impacting Latina's perception and treatment in society.

4.2.2. Impact of Media Narratives

Theme 2	**Impact of Media Narratives**	- Negative consequences - Media portrayal - Media narratives in real life - Separation from media portrayal - Challenging stereotypes - Sexualisation

Table 5 - Interview theme 2.

The second theme encapsulates an exploration into the role media plays in shaping public opinion and personal identities of Latina women, especially inside the context of Estonian society. This theme is critical because it is able to reflect the often problematic portrayal of Latina women in the media, and the tangible consequences into how they find themselves navigating such spaces. Six codes are found inside this theme: negative consequences, media portrayal, media narratives in real life, separation from media portrayal, challenging stereotypes and sexualisation. Each delineate the multifaceted

ways in which media influences are manifested. Negative consequences and sexualisation discuss the lived experiences of Latina women based on a belief system delimited by the media:

"*Every time someone makes a comment like 'ah as you are Latina, you love the party, you are like very sexual'. I don't like this because it is like this image that they have of us…. when are you going to climb on top of the table, like Salma Hayek in that From Dusk Til Dawn movie, I mean, they have this image of, I don't know, very sexual, very exuberant, that Latinas are like that.*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

"*That hypersexuality, and in fact the Latin culture is kind of hypersexualised because of all these things that are fostering that. So the love bonds are a kind of reflection of that, of that histeria, of that thing. In fact, there is a saying in Argentina, I reckon in Paraguay too, that is 'the man proposes and the woman predisposes'.*" (Interviewee A — migrant Latina woman)

"*The understanding that people are more relaxed also into their sexual behaviours, like they're okay, like showing off their bodies, it's always warm anyways.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial men)

Media portrayal and media narratives in real life, capture the extension of fictional narratives into real-world ones, where imagined characters and scenarios from telenovelas are seen as actual Latina characteristics. This is evidenced by comments like:

"*That sort of family muégano[1], because the family is above all things. So, I think that this has been an instrument of propaganda for the adaptation of Latin American women. And precisely this issue is in the soap operas or in the content*

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[1] The word muégano in Spanish refers to a type of Mexican sweet made from fried dough balls that are stuck together in syrup, signifying a clustered or tightly bound group. This analogy is used to describe families that are closely knit or connected, highlighting the strength of family bonds and the intensity of such relationships.

that I remember from Televisa or TV Azteca. It was precisely the self-sacrificing woman, the woman who sacrifices herself above all things for her family or the loved one. In Mexico, the indoctrination comes from Televisa or TV Azteca, which are the two largest information monopolies and historically have been very important in political matters, and there is an interesting tangle there. So all of this is propaganda and obviously, just like the propagator [telenovela monopolies], was to create content that says how the world should be, that builds the reality." (Interviewee P — migrant Latina woman)

"*When a woman is beautiful and works hard, then she can manage everything, even poor women. And also, in my experience... It was in my heart because my grandmother also told me if you are a good girl, if you act properly then everything will be okay in your life, and also this telenovela said the same thing to me.*" (Interviewee O — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*In other words, I am the product of a telenovela. My low-income mother, my father's family with money. He has white skin, my mother brown skin. They were together but hiding, and then his family saw that my mom is like a poor person, and they began to denigrate her just like 'Maria la del Barrio' [another very famous Mexican telenovela].*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina women)

"*The patriarchal system is much more common [in Latinx culture] and all of this as I've understood this chisme [gossip] is a lot going on, which is for me overall… I have a very small family, like I did not have this gossip thingy at all in my family, so it is interesting to see in real life, these things going on and all of these shows have it a lot, these intrigues between family members and so on, so all of this is new for me and it seems quite real, like all of these intrigues between family, as is shown in the telenovelas. So in this sense, I think it's a bit true.*" (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial men)

Separation from media portrayal and challenging stereotypes, on the other hand, represent a conscious resistance and critique of these stereotypes, indicating a nuanced engagement with the media images. This is seen in remarks like:

> "*It's like she's a hot woman [Latina in telenovelas] or I don't know if I feel like that, or how I feel about that. I didn't feel like that in Colombia. I don't have that perception of myself of being like hot, like fire.*" (Interviewee C — migrant Latina woman)

> "*But what I saw in Mexico, really, Latin women, are very friendly, and can also be emotional, but not loud. They are very polite, very friendly, and smiling, but nothing like in this telenovela, actually, they don't talk like this.*" (Interviewee O — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

This theme delves into both the detrimental and transformative aspects of media representations demonstrating how society perpetuates/challenges them interchangeably.

4.2.3. Exposure and Attraction to Telenovelas

Theme 3	**Exposure and Attraction to Telenovelas**	● Rosa Salvaje in Estonia ● Drama and emotion ● Romantic ideals ● Lifestyle contrast

Table 6 - Interview theme 3.

Exposure and attraction to telenovelas is a theme that surfaced to understand the particular appeal behind the format for Estonian audiences. It highlights how "*Rosa Salvaj*e" captivated almost the entire country, and it reflects on the cultural engagement with media narratives that so distinctively contrast with local norms. The codes derived are: "*Rosa Salvaje*" in Estonia — reflecting about its impact in the population; drama and emotion — as the main reasoning behind their attraction to the format; romantic ideals —

the idea of an intense and forbidden romance as central axis; and lifestyle contrast — illustrating how different from Estonian society telenovelas are. The specific subjects for this theme are Estonian telenovela aficionados and Estonian millennial men, who are able to extensively express their point of view on the subject.

> "*I remember it was super popular, like everybody was watching it. We were living in the countryside where people had their own little bits of land, like to work after the day job and it was like when 'Rosa Salvaje' had started it was just completely empty and everyone was gone.*" (Interviewee I — Estonian millennial man)

> "*There's a juicy detail that you won't get anywhere else other than me: my dad worked in the government at the time and they finished a government official reunion, in order to go home to see 'Mestik Roos'.*" (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

> "*And yes, then I think like 500,000 people were watching it. So almost half of the people in Estonia. It was very popular. That did remind me, my dad used to watch it too, and he didn't watch, he doesn't watch telenovelas.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

These statements not only confirm the widespread viewership of "*Rosa Salvaje*" in Estonia, but also contextualise its timing and reception within the country, marking a significant cultural import, as the first ever dubbed Estonian telenovela in the country after the regaining of their independence. When it comes to drama and emotion, and romantic ideals, the participants mainly highlighted the peculiar allure of emotional narratives, atypical to Estonian culture and/or TV productions:

> "*It was so different. We Estonians are quite quiet, we don't talk much. There's no drama and everything, but in telenovelas there was always that and I don't know why I thought it was good.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

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"I remember the drama was the bigger part just like the show itself, all the drama and the intrigue and the 'chisme' [gossip]." (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

"*Poor woman and rich man. They meet, fall in love. Everything is possible. If you are poor, you can still find your prince."* (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

Lastly, the differences between the opulent lives depicted in telenovelas and the modest life of newly independent Estonia of the 1990s indicated a sort of escapism, contrasting their lifestyle, and providing an idealisation of romance and wealth:

"Because what was interesting for me in this telenovela was that the 90s were a poor time for Estonians because we just got our freedom back. We came out from the Soviet Union and then people didn't have much money, but this Mexican telenovela showed us a better life, and also women were very beautiful because Estonia maybe didn't have so many products to put in the face or in the hair or even beautiful clothes, so that maybe." (Interviewee O — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"I think it didn't matter for us, was it Mexican or was it like from Costa Rica or from Venezuela, it didn't matter, it was something so, I don't know, so different from our usual life." (Interviewee H — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"They are so beautiful [Latina women] because yeah, there is a big contrast here. Nowadays Estonians are more alike but in that time everything was grey. This was like an explosion of colours and I don't know, they looked like they had perfect makeup and clothes and everything." (Interviewee O — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

These codes expose the impact of "*Rosa Salvaje*" through its exoticism, emotional depth and portrayal of idealised lifestyle and romance, which had Estonian viewers' attention, inadvertently shaping consumption patterns and cultural expectations and aspirations.

4.2.4. Gender Roles in Society

Theme 4	**Gender Roles in Society**	● Traditional gender role endorsement ● Dismissal of traditional gender roles ● Gender role narratives ● Gender equality recognition ● Gender inequality recognition

Table 7 - Interview theme 4.

This theme captured the all-round nature of gender dynamics as discussed by all interview subjects. They allow for an exploration of the varied dominant narratives, and traditional gender roles endorsement or its dismissal, within the different societal context: the Latinx, and the Estonian. Among the comments that reflect on the idea of traditional gender roles — either endorsing or dismissing these, such examples can be found:

"*One of the roles, of course, [for women] is to become a mother and to have children and bring us the new generation of children.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"*For a lot of Estonian men, it's more on the men's side to decide and make the decision. Financial, everything material. Where are they gonna live? Where is the man gonna find the job? They'll move to the city where man has the job. Then vacation, free time, and hobbies.*" (Interviewee K — Estonian millennial man)

"*I think it all comes down to the woman and the man, but here the man waits to work, maybe the woman doesn't, but not because you are Latina, but simply because you are a woman, you expect me to simply stay at home taking care of the children.*" (Interviewee V — migrant Latina woman)

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"I think the status quo is living with your partner, having kids, having a lower-paying job than your partner, or having a job position that's no more important than his. I think economic dependency is very much related to the status quo, and this leads to different types of violence. If I had to say what is the status quo of a woman between 30 and 35 years old, in general in the world, is a married woman, living with her partner most likely underpaid or not paid at all, with children." (Interviewee P — migrant Latina woman)

"If they don't take care of themselves, what they eat, how active they are, then automatically for me, it makes a... How can I say this? They are, I cannot say lazy, but if they don't care to take care of themselves, then how can they take care of someone else, like the kids, the husband?" (Interviewee K — Estonian millennial man)

The code gender role narratives describe the traditional societal narratives towards gender, when it comes to physical capabilities and emotional intelligence differences among women and men. To further expose this topic, such comments can be considered:

"I wouldn't expect women to do hard physical labour as efficiently as men, as I wouldn't expect men to be as capable of connecting with other people and networking." (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"I don't think Estonians would have survived without women because the men are useless. They drink and do whatever comes to their head but the women have always kept their feet on the ground." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

Issues of gender equality are explored through it's recognition or dismissal, taking a very simplistic approach and overseeing sexist issues still embedded in society nowadays:

"This is a right [abortion] that we have had for a long time. Women's vote is from the same year the First Republic was established. So kind of the big fights of the feminist movement are over. But we still see a big gender pay cap. It's 17.7% this year. Today we were speaking with a colleague that women have the liberty to be independent, to work. But they still have to take care of the kitchen, the children, and the house. So it's like I feel that Estonian women don't fight for their rights. When you mention feminism, then all these middle class women, they turn their head and think like 'oh, this is this horrible lesbian stuff.' So they really don't know and they are not self-aware." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"Everybody can do or achieve whatever they want…. In these times it's quite free. Everybody is quite open…. Like in our household, we do not have roles. My partner does not do dishes and cooks, only I do dishes. We both cook." (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

"Women have been included in the, let's say, decision-making processes and workforce rather equally to men." (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

This critically examines how ingrained gender norms are — regardless if they seem to be more progressive, or inclusive. It dissects the dynamics of gender in a contemporary Estonian context, influenced by both global narratives and local realities.

4.2.5. Beauty Narratives

Theme 5	**Beauty Narratives**	● Physicality of Estonian women ● Physicality of Latina women ● Physicality stereotypes ● Rejection of physicality stereotype

Table 8 - Interview theme 5.

In this theme, the exploration of different discourses related to beauty — hegemonies, expectations, and stereotypes; are considered to discern the distinct perceptions related to the physical appearance of women from different ethnic backgrounds — in this thesis, Latina and Estonian women. In order to understand the general perception of beauty for both cultures, interviewees were asked to describe and explain how the typical Estonian women looks:

> "*A potato-coloured hair. And like that, basically like maybe a bit of the nose style. A little bit distinctive like the shape of the nose, light skinned, not blonde, but yeah the potato colour like something in between, and yeah, all body shapes.*" (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

> "*The Estonian woman, I would say, has long hair, like ashy or brown ruby, white, fair skin, eyes. No, no, it's as much as coloured, but I don't know, brownish or so, thin, pretty…*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

In contrast to the typical Latina woman:

> "*Latina women are like in general the image that you have of the Latina woman… Is like buttocks, busty, big long hair with waves, a lot of makeup, heels, tight dress, kind of showing a lot, the curves, I'd say bombshell.*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

> "*Very black hair... darker skin, black hair, very dark eyes, and voluptuous.*" (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

For both cases, it seems there is a perceived exotism towards what is different, and an homogeneity towards members of the same culture. However, such characteristics were also sometimes challenged by the participants, rejecting the simplification or generalisation of women to stereotypes:

"Latina women are even more different because, for example, in Argentina you can see more of this kind of Italian influence and everything. When you go towards Bolivia, you see completely other kinds of faces. Then you go towards Mexico, you'll see another, like, you can see these indigenous traits, and then they're super beautiful." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"There is actually an interesting thing about it, is that the Estonian people are very, very diverse by blood and genetics, because there has been so many foreign influences over Estonia, and there has been a lot of racial mixtures in Estonia, and in biology, diversity creates attraction." (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

4.2.6. Behavioural Traits

Theme 6	**Behavioural Traits**	● Estonian women behaviour ● Latina women behaviour ● Comparison in expressiveness

Table 9 - Interview theme 6.

Similarly, behavioural traits provide a structured way to explore and contrast the perceived behavioural characteristics of women from both groups — the same way as in with beauty narratives. Three codes are conceived within this category: Estonian women behaviour, Latina women behaviour and comparison in expressiveness, a particularly important discussion topic among all participants, as it seems "expression" — known as utterances, communication skills, demonstration — has been a highly distinguishable feature among both cultures, and the main contrast interviewees referred to the most.

When it comes to capturing the expected behaviour of an Estonian woman, descriptions as them being more reserved, quiet and less expressive came to surface in all interviews, highlighting that the cultural norm where restraint, emotional control and caretaking are valuable:

"An Estonian woman is tall, slim, blonde, with light coloured eyes. Basically mute, submissive, she almost doesn't exist, she doesn't speak much, like that idea of the woman senator, who exists without existing. Yeah, they're basically transparent." (Interviewee P — migrant Latina woman)

"Relaxed, easygoing, not very, you know, not very passionate, maybe. It's, of course, some very strong passionate women about what they do, but not very expressive." (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"There is a lot of silence. Maybe not all things are said." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"They take care of themselves, of their parents." (Interviewee K — Estonian millennial man)

"They are very chill. They are not jealous, they don't give so much to the drama. I have heard from Estonian men that they tend to be very cold women, not showing as many signs of affection." (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

For Latina women, there is a general consensus regarding the expressiveness, openness and vocalisation, indicating a perception of being more passionate and aggressive in their interactions:

"They have a really, really short fuse, you know, like to piss them off really quickly." (Interviewee K — Estonian millennial man)

"I think much more vocal, much more hands-on, let's say, she doesn't leave stuff just, I don't know, you know, to the silence. Everything is, or at least everything is discussed daily." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

And lastly, the code comparison in expressiveness, acts as a bridge between these two perspectives, providing a parallelism of the communication and emotions between both

groups, suggesting that language, and cultural backgrounds might be direct influences for such behaviours. The most notorious comments regarding this topic were:

> "*I'd say that the Latin people in general and also Latin women, they talk and communicate much more. And then also Estonians would communicate less and use less words and talk slower, whereas Latin people would talk faster with more words. And I feel like it has something to do with... the Spanish language also, which is very expressive, fast with a lot of, you know, the "chingadas" (jokes) and, you know, it has quirks to it. And so I see the main differences coming here are linguistic backgrounds.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

> "*[Latin women are] more open with their emotions... more willing to show them [than Estonian women].*" (Interviewee I — Estonian millennial man)

4.2.7. Media Impact on Cultural Perception

Theme 7	**Media Impact on Cultural Perception**	- Local integration - Cultural comparison - Acknowledgement of stereotypes - Dismissal of influence

Table 10 - Interview theme 7.

The theme examines how media — particularly telenovelas, influence and shape societal views and behaviours regarding cultural norms and stereotypes in gender roles. It helps dissect the relationship between media content and the audience reception in specific cultural contexts. The first code, local integration, highlights how foreign media content becomes woven into the local cultural fabric, making the stories resonate as if they were their own:

> "*The story was ours... it didn't seem like such a far away story.*" (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

Cultural comparison, explores the impact of foreign media on shaping perceptions about other cultures — Estonian perceptions towards Latinx culture. Comments suggest that such TV formats offered a window to different emotional expressions and behaviours that aren't traditionally seen or encouraged within Estonian culture:

> "*Brought some kind of curiosity or might say the example for people also that it is possible to, you know, be expressive and it's okay.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

> "*Probably it was one of the first things from the outside world that wasn't from the Iron Curtain.*" (Interviewee I — Estonian millennial man)

Similarly, the codes acknowledge stereotypes, address how the media reinforces and propagate stereotypes, specifically about Latina women. Participant's comments indicate a recognition on the role media played into building such narratives:

> "*It just gave me the stereotype of a Latina woman, I think. Because in reality, not many Latina women were here to have a real life experience. I think I have met none before my partner, personally. And especially in the time of Metsik Roos, where even less people from outside here. So everything was from TV. Everybody has watched these telenovelas.*" (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

> "*It begins to build a narrative and a language within the culture, these telenovelas and so on, that same construction of language that is built in society and the construction between all of us ends up somehow affecting in a direct collateral way.*" (Interviewee A — migrant Latina woman)

> "*That is what the telenovela is all about, just creating drama after drama after drama and my personal experience with my partner, we are very dramatic, both of us also. So our life has been a lot like in telenovelas.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"But I say that it [telenovelas] affected the image [of Latinx culture/women] a lot." (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

"I think they understand Mexican as Latin in general. Their idea of the world is that Latin Americans eat chilli and tacos. All Latinos speak Spanish. I think this idea has had a great impact on a very specific generation, this idea of Latin America, starting with Rosa Salvaje believing that it is Mexican…" (Interviewee P — migrant Latina woman)

On the other hand, the code dismissal of influence captures perceptions in which participants did not perceive a significant impact of telenovelas:

"I actually don't know. In the end, I think maybe yes [influenced culturally], but actually I think society was so naive at the time that it even didn't consider these cultural differences. This story was ours. This was because everybody watched it." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"We did not give too much thought about Latin culture because it was so far away. And these shows were just part of the opening of the West and all of this new stuff, like it was all part of the Coca Cola and the Hollywood movies and so on. Plus, it's super easy to get into these shows. You give people two episodes and they're addicted. All of this is like escaping from daily life and this trauma, I think it's exactly why everybody across the world watches these telenovelas, like in the Latin countries, in whatever country." (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

4.2.8. Assumptions for Latina Women

Theme 8	**Assumptions for Latina Women**	● Attributed behaviour ● Attributed physicality ● Personal identity

Table 11 - Interview theme 8.

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Assumptions for Latina Women is one of the most important themes as it explains the ways in which they are perceived within the socio-cultural context of Estonian society, heavily influenced by media representations and societal expectations. It also makes a special allusion to how Latina women self-identify within the spectrum of stereotypes. This theme investigates the intersection between external assumptions and internal self-conceptions, providing an exploration of the Latina identity. The first two codes ensure the classification of all participants' comments, meaning all three different points of view are considered and revised. First, attributed behaviour encompasses the externally imposed characteristics that society assigns to Latina women, reflecting pervasive — media driven — stereotypes:

> "*We think that all Latin people talk a lot and have a lot of like emotions, if they feel love, they show it too. And there's also more drama as well, they are more jealous, jealous in general.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

> "*Super outgoing or expressive is the word, like, and a bit more like feisty and fiery.*" (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

> "*I think they're already coming in with the mentality that she's Latina, she's going to be extroverted, she's going to be funny, she's going to know how to dance salsa, she's going to... Everything that is, I mean, all that, those things that you expect from a Latina, but not really, like…*" (Interviewee V — migrant Latina woman)

> "*...I see it a lot with my mother-in-law because when I met her it felt more like an interview than a casual visit, she asked me lots of questions, for example about my immigration status, the type of person I was, if I was like a party girl...*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

> "*Sometimes I feel that Europeans or Estonians believe that you are in love with them or that you want to get married or that you want to have something to take advantage of…*" (Interviewee C — migrant Latina woman)

Second, attributed physicality focuses on the physical stereotypes associated with Latina women, derived from media depictions that perpetuate specific aesthetic traits as an emblema for the entire group. Statements underline the external expectations placed on appearance, frequently generalised, ignoring the vast diversity within Latinx populations:

"*I always thought that they were very pretty, I saw in the telenovelas they were very well dressed, well, of course, that's how it is in there, because they have their makeup and everything...*"* (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*Typical Latin woman, dark hair. I'd say there is definitely far more variety to hair and stronger hair too, like stronger, much fluffier, more waves, curls, I would say.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"*They expect the Latin woman to be like super seductive, super sexy... Because that's something you see a lot as well. Europeans have this perception of the Latinos. Well, of Latina women.*" (Interviewee V — migrant Latina woman)

And lastly, personal identity captures the self-perception and narratives of Latina women themselves, challenging or navigating external stereotypes. This code underlines the agency of Latina women in defining their own identities, resisting simplistic categorisations and articulating their understanding of the attributed characteristics and roles given by the media and Estonian society:

"*I always had a lot of conflicts with that, the representativeness within telenovelas.... It is very difficult to represent the Latina woman, because there are as many representations of the Latina woman as there are Latin women.... being from a country that was also a colony of a Spanish empire and had the arrival of a lot of Europeans, plus the locals who were here, plus the immigrants that we had due to the First World War, the Second, unemployment and hunger in Europe, Latin America has been home to a lot of Europeans at that time.*" (Interviewee A - migrant Latina woman)

"Because not only am I a brunette Latina woman, but I am also very striking in different ways. I know that my presence makes many Estonians uncomfortable because it is very disruptive and not knowing how to read them, I have been the one that has to find other ways, limit the interaction because they are also waiting for an intense woman, they know that I am Latina, that is, they see me and they know that I am Latina." (Interviewee P - migrant Latina woman)

"Well, it depends on the telenovelas, but at least the ones in Venezuela, I always had this insecurity that they showed a very exuberant woman, like a lot of attributes, you know? A lot of attributes that I didn't have, because I'm a skinny person, so that's always been complex for me." (Interviewee V - migrant Latina woman)

The exploration of these codes is crucial for the research in order to understand how Latina women are seen — according to them — and see themselves, contributing to a broader discussion on ethnicity, gender and media influence.

4.2.9. Cultural Reflections and Comparisons

Theme 9	**Cultural Reflections and Comparisons**	● Latina vs. Estonian women ● Women's expectations in Estonia ● Latina gender roles

Table 12 - Interview theme 9.

This theme was chosen to explore the perceptions and societal expectations that shape the experiences of both Latina and Estonian women. This exploration helps to shed light on the interaction of beauty and gender narratives across diverse cultural communities — such as the Latinx and the Estonian. Three codes are used to convey the messages found in the interviews: Latina vs. Estonian women — which contrast the attributions for women in both cultures; women's expectations in Estonia — that investigates what are the many roles and meanings Estonian society gives to women, either in a multicultural

or national context; and Latina gender roles — a description on the expectations from both Latinx and Estonian societies for Latina women. Among the statements found in the first code, Latina vs. Estonian women, comparisons in the perceived differences in cultural expectations and personal agency afforded to women can be traced:

"*Estonian women, they are taller, I think in general, they are more natural, maybe if you compare it with telenovelas, they don't wear makeup so much and everything, but in personality also Estonian women are much calmer, they don't make as much fuss, also there is not so much drama.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*A very correct, very organised, very, very aligned person, you know? [Estonian women]. And like that's not expected of a Latina woman, I mean, they think that, as a Latin, you're more flexible, more relaxed, let's say. And there may be some reason, but maybe it's already taken for granted. And it doesn't take into account that there are simply people who aren't, regardless of whether they're Latina or not.*" (Interviewee V — migrant Latina woman)

"*I saw in this message that Mexican women are very emotional, have very strong voices and also can act very crazy. But Estonian women of course are very calm, don't show your emotions, are polite and quiet and more like background. You cannot show yourself too much.*" (Interviewee O — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*Much more character, stronger, stronger will, more opinions, more talkative, I think more controlling than Estonian women. I guess Estonian women would be like the man goes out, doesn't know where… I don't see a Latina woman not knowing you're going out. Where the fuck are you going? I don't think any Latina woman would actually like not ask.*" (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

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"*I think that maybe Latino women stand up for themselves much more. They think they do have a choice. Not like an Estonian woman. They kind of like to give up or let things happen, maybe alcoholic men, violent men, they just 'oh, it's okay. My dad was just the same, so it must be the pattern I must follow'. They accept it maybe more easily.*" (Interviewee K — Estonian millennial man)

Examining women's expectations in Estonia from the Latina perspective, was also key to discern how roles are both similar and different from those observed in Latinx culture. This code allows the investigation of gender roles dynamics in Estonia, and contrasts them to the more traditional views still prevalent in Latinx cultures:

"*I would say that, for example, this thing of supporting one's partner or who pays for things, and I think that in Estonia it is like everyone doing their own thing, everyone working, it is not expected that the man is Estonian, to support the woman…*" (Interviewee D - migrant Latina woman)

"*I think that applies a lot in Mexico and all the aesthetics where white comes from, because white is a very specific race with very specific physical features. So, in Estonia I don't know if what is different is what they consider beautiful. I think this idea of the beautiful is more related to the same North-European aesthetic that they're tall, thin... Characteristics of an Estonian woman or a Northern European woman.*" (Interviewee P - migrant Latina woman)

"*I never felt that the family of my partner expected something from me… They might have expected that I would be Estonian because of a cultural issue of theirs, that the son has an Estonian partner, and reproduces…*" (Interviewee A - migrant Latina woman)

Lastly, Latina gender roles delves into the expectations placed on Latina women within their own cultural context or the Estonian one, which includes traditional views on femininity and support roles. These statements, again from the migrant Latina

participants, make a special remark on the pressure faced by them in order to conform to certain beauty and behavioural standards:

"*A Latina woman is so that she is always perfectly groomed; hair, makeup, clothing…. I remember when I was in Mexico, I put much more attention to myself, my image and every week I would do my eyelashes, my nails, my eyebrows, I always was like taking care of all those little details because, otherwise it was disgusting for Mexican men.*" (Interviewee D - migrant Latina)

"*Makeup or these things, I don't wear any of that, I don't make a cult of my body. I come from a city where women worship their body and everything is about what you look like, how you dress, how you dress to show your body. And I don't know, maybe growing up in a different family in a different environment… but many of those things don't represent me.*" (Interviewee C - migrant Latina woman)

"*I also don't know if it's because he's an Estonian [partner] or because he's there, but he doesn't pay too much attention to these beauty standards… If I wear makeup, or I don't, if I dress up or I don't… In fact many of the times he told me he prefers less, or less is better. And the Latin man, the Mexican, who is completely different, very macho, very jealous, very controlling...*" (Interviewee D - migrant Latina woman)

"*In Venezuela women are always put as, we have this word cuaima [snake], a super jealous woman. That's very common, I think in general in Latin America, well, the woman is jealous of the man and so on, very, very crazy, very…*" (Interviewee V - migrant Latina woman)

"*I don't know if Estonian men want to like this whole emotionality thing, like if it fits inside them first and as if they could see their life with a Latina woman, whereas I feel that as in their lifeline is to marry another Estonian. Because Estonian women are more like behaved, they are not going to say anything, they*

have everything very well stipulated   already in their life and they know each other, they know their same culture, while the Latin woman is like an experience." (Interviewee C - migrant Latina woman)

"*I'm curious about the fact that, in part, Estonians might be attracted to Latinas. But I feel that in the long term, it can be very much the case that, in the end, they expect that stability from an Estonian. And it's not something they're looking for with a Latina. You know what I mean? Like stability is going with your Estonian partner. Maybe because, well, they're more culturally compatible, they understand each other better, okay. But at first, perhaps with a woman from Latin America, they don't expect it or don't look for it, because I've seen it in some cases. What's up with that?*" (Interviewee V - migrant Latina woman)

"*So it's also a Latin expectation, like to be like an object, that is, it's also been given to us by the culture, like that's an object and they have to take you and take care of you and that's delicate and then like the perception of us as women, like it's like being treated well, for example.*" (Interviewee C - migrant Latina woman)

4.2.10. Photo-elicitation Impressions

Theme 10	**Photo-elicitation Impressions**	● Class perception ● Religious influences ● Racial hegemony ● Gender violence ● Hypersexualisation

Table 13 - Interview theme 10.

The last theme arises from the use of visual stimuli — specifically photographs from "*Rosa Salvaje*", in order to evoke participants' verbal responses. This technique was valuable because it unravelled deeper emotional reactions and triggered memories, which might not surface doing interviews alone. This theme is also grounded in CRT and

intersectionality with its codes, to uncover implicit biases and stereotypes, and build a bridge between the theoretical constructs supported with visual representations, with the objective of accessing either personal or cultural narratives. Class perception was conceived through the responses attributed to an image depicting a group of children in a setting that appears economically modest. (see ANNEX F TABLE F1)

> "*Okay, poor. I see. Poor, yeah, clothes broken and so on. Children, lots of children. Poor and family, probably the main character's family probably.*" (Interviewee L — Estonian millennial man)

> "*Because you can see that they are not Estonians, because of their physique. They have dark hair, very dark eyes, dark skin too, and yes, it is also very different… Estonians are more with blonde hair and everything like that, you can see that they are not from Estonia.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

> "*The contrast is the ridicule of poor people, of humble people.... First, they always speak poorly in the telenovelas, which ridicules the people of the hoods, as if they weren't people who are literate. Then they're always dirty, aren't they? Always brown kids with dirty clothes. Always brown, never, never a white kid with light eyes. If there is one, it is because a rich man abandoned them in that humble place. But there is no chance that a light-eyed blonde would be poor. That's how all telenovelas in Latin America represent the poor. So, of course, it's like we're marginal, we don't know how to speak. Offensive, I find it very offensive.*" (Interviewee A — migrant Latina woman)

In religious influences, the focus is on the image of the Virgin Mary, a powerful symbol in Catholicism, and Rosa, the main character next to her (see ANNEX E FIG. E3). The code derived from the participants' comments tied to religion and the — gender — roles it adheres to. There is a clear difference between both cultures when it comes to this topic; for Latinx, this is something embedded in daily life and identity, whereas as for

Estonian they view the symbol as exotic or even alien, reflecting the country's largely secular society:

"*Ave Maria [Virgin Mary]. I have a Maria reference, definitely. As Mexico has a very high percentage of Catholics in there, then that leaves a mark on the cultural behaviour, and could assign some sort of roles as men, as providers, and women, as nurturers.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"*Here is the Virgin of Guadalupe… She was praying, but that's true, in Mexico I did see a lot of people praying, in the church and everything. I don't believe in God, but I respect cultures a lot. Full of people in the churches in Mexico, I've never seen a church full of people here in Estonia, if there's not a Christmas concert or something.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*That's the rose of Guadalupe…. Catholicism is something that culturally is taken very seriously in Venezuela, in Mexico I think a little more, but as always it's the virgin, having the virgin at home.*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

"*The Madonna [Virgin Mary], these kinds of scenes, somehow I think they are so exotic to an Estonian who has come from the Soviet Union where basically religion was not prohibited but almost like not allowed either. I think this kind image says nothing to an Estonian.*" (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"*We're not religious, like we don't have these forces and pictures and statues of Christ around us.*" (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

Racial hegemony came up as a code to describe the perception of racialised beauty standards in both Latin America and Estonia, and the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*". Under this code, two main pictures were shared with the participants, a group of society girls and a bride (see ANNEX F TABLES F1 and F2), in which Estonians were asked to describe what they saw, and Latina women to tell whether they felt represented or not:

"*It's always interesting to see that in Latin America, beautiful is always blonde and quite light. And actually, quite like Northern European. I think this is the best look in Latin America.*" (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"*I see her with very fair skin, with light hair, and the Mexican woman doesn't look like that. I wouldn't say I see myself as one, particularly as a Mexican woman. My sister does, my mom does. Their skin is darker, the features, the cheekbones, they're different and everything. And I look like my dad. My dad comes from a Mennonite family, so that's why my skin is lighter, but I wouldn't consider myself within this image of the Mexican woman and neither is this woman, I see her as a Whitexican. So no.*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

"*I think more than a Latina woman, it's the dream or what people have in their minds, how they would like to see themselves, but that's not what a Latina woman is like and this is not, it's definitely not like that. First, she's a white, blonde woman, and that's very typical in Latin America that they have this inferiority that if you're not white or blond, then you're not in the right class, it all depends on how you look. If you're whiter, or you're darker, and I can really see from this telenovela that they put a protagonist who looked pretty regardless of whether they represented the Latinx or not, it's like that you don't have to see. That is, if there are women who look like this, but the more general representation of everyday life does not believe it.*" (Interviewee V — migrant Latina woman)

"*This shows so much blonde hair. That's something that I don't really remember seeing, like those kinds of hair and those hairstyles. Also, I can't seem to recall these kinds of things…*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"*They could be Russian women as well… I don't actually think they are particularly Latin, they are very white…. One generalisation I would make about Latin women, is that I've noticed that the upper classes are always whiter and and*

the lower classes are more Latin actually. Again, like blonde, white, I think at times it looks like upper class." (Interviewee M — Estonian millennial man)

"*I say they could be anything, really. I mean, I see them and I wouldn't think, first of all, that they're Latina or Mexican. They're women with money, I can tell by the image, the type of clothes, clothing, jewellery, hair. For the time, they're people who had money, but I wouldn't say Latina women…. People with money to whom my mom cleaned the houses for, cause she was the help. I remember one time she took me to one, because she couldn't find a nanny. She took me to the house where she worked and it looked like this. White women of money. That in general, usually not completely Mexican, almost always of Spanish or French descent, with very fancy surnames.*" (Interviewee D — migrant Latina woman)

Comments seem to indicate that the women in these images have predominantly European features, in a Latin American telenovela context providing insight into racial hierarchies and the overall preference for whiteness. These discussions illustrate how racial and cultural identities are constructed and contested within and outside of Latin American communities.

The photo in question depicts a violent altercation between women (see ANNEX F TABLE F2), which in the context of the telenovela might seem like a normalised or sensationalised behaviour . The code gender violence, reveals varied responses attached to cultural values. For Estonians, such violence isn't characteristic of their society, causing discomfort, while Latina women, acknowledge that even with a dramatised scenario, such behaviour does resonate with harsh realities and norms in Latin America:

"*Not here, it wasn't like that. Not in Estonia and I've never seen women fighting like that.*" (Interviewee J — Estonian telenovela aficionado)

"*Okay, seems to be violent. That's what it means with the hot blooded, like someone does something and she goes violent. This is something I would imagine*

Russian women do when they're fighting over men or something like this. Russian women are also, they're really familiar with, when compared to behaving with the Latinos." (Interviewee K — Estonian millennial man)

"*And I think it also depends on the class that the woman belongs to, let's say. But this is not a day-to-day thing, I mean... In other words, they have fewer resources or opportunities, fewer things. And they're always like the most violent in quotation marks. Kind of.*" (Interviewee V — migrant Latina woman)

"*For me, it totally represents the violence of the nineties, early 2000s, yes, totally, between women, also the man beating the woman, let's say, here I don't see it, but I mean, it was very natural, it seems to me from that time. Not so much importance was given to the power of the word, rather to the physical power or the authority that they gave you, I think it represents a lot of that time.*" (Interviewee A — migrant Latina woman)

And lastly, hypersexualisation as code, delves into the implications of describing a Latina woman emphasising its sexual appeal, often at the expense of their agency and depth as characters. The image of a woman in lingerie (see ANNEX E FIGS. E14 and E15), typically associated with privacy and sensuality, is employed to understand and explore attitudes towards hypersexualisation in media. Comments suggest that this portrayal aligns with the stereotypical notions of Latina women being inherently sensual or exotic:

"*And we see long black hair, finally, that looks more Mexican than those ladies, than before.*" (Interviewee R — Estonian millennial man)

"*The gossip girl that's hot, the hot 'gossiper'. Brunette, good curves, good faces, the hypersexualization of women.*" (Interviewee A — migrant Latina woman)

5. DISCUSSION

In the discussion chapter of the thesis, the findings from the study are synthesised and interpreted in the context of the established theoretical frameworks, in order to identify the many ways in which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics attributed to Latina women in the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" are perceived by different groups within Estonian society and by Latina women themselves. The analysis considers how these perceptions align with, and/or diverge from, the dominant discourses surrounding Latina women. The research questions are:

RQ1. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics are attributed to Latina women in the telenovela "Rosa Salvaje"? How do these roles and characteristics interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

RQ1.1. How do Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret the depictions of Latina women in "Rosa Salvaje"?

RQ2. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics do Estonian millennial men (who have Latina partners) attribute to Latina women? How do their perceptions relate to the portrayals of Latina women in the telenovela "Rosa Salvaje"? How do their perceptions interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

RQ2.1. How do these gender roles and characteristics compare to Estonian women (according to Estonian millennial men)?

RQ3. Which gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics Latina women living in Estonia attribute to themselves and how are these different from the characteristics of

Estonian women? How do these roles and characteristics interact with the dominant discourses of Latina women?

This chapter is divided into 5 sections. The first section addresses RQ1 by examining the specific gender roles and characteristics ascribed to Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*" exploring how these portrayals may perpetuate or challenge prevalent stereotypes. For RQ1.1, the focus shifts to how Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret these portrayals within Estonia. In the second section, the RQ2 explores the perceptions of Estonian millennial men (with Latina partners), analysing how their perspectives of Latina women are informed by the telenovela compared to their lived experiences. In addition, RQ2.1 further contrasts these perceptions with those regarding Estonian women, highlighting the cultural and social dynamics at play within intimate cross-cultural relationships and the potential for media to influence personal expectations and gender dynamics. Finally, RQ3 captures the self-perceptions of Latina women living in Estonia, providing insight into their self-ascribed gender roles and characteristics. It examines the dissonance or resonance between their self-identification and the dominant narratives, including those disseminated through telenovelas.

The chapter concludes by discussing the limitations of the study, acknowledging the complexities and potential biases inherent in qualitative research. It also outlines the contributions of the research to academic discourse on media representation, gender roles, and ethnicity, proposing directions for future studies that could further illuminate the intricate connection between media portrayals and societal perceptions of Latina women.

5.1. Portrayal and Perception of Latina Gender Roles and Characteristics in "*Rosa Salvaje*"

The telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" can be analysed as a cultural artefact that communicates gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics attributed to Latina women. Through the theoretical lenses of gender performativity (Butler, 1990), gender as social structure (Risman, 2018), CRT particularly referring to storytelling and counter-storytelling (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) and the context of telenovelas as cultural products (Martín-Barbero, 1993), it can be understood that the Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*" interact with dominant discourses in various manners.

As per the results of the textual analysis, the character of Rosa — the female lead, is initially depicted as a tomboyish figure, engaging in behaviours and activities considered traditionally masculine, for which she was frequently criticised and frowned upon. Her imminent transformation from a young inexperienced woman (Tolman, 2002) faithful to all telenovela Cinderella genres (Slade, 2010) is brought about by encounters with male characters and a subsequent process of self-reflection, symbolises the societal expectation for women to conform to the feminine ideals (Hernández-Truyol, 2003), because in this context tomboy = bad, transformation = needed. Rosa's transition from a wild child to a more refined woman is a performance of gender as theorised by Butler (1990), where her identity is continuously constructed through her interactions and the expectations placed upon her by others — family, lover, friends, enemies, other male characters, etc. However, "*Rosa Salvaje*" does not just simply reinforce traditional gender roles. Rosa's character also exhibits a level of agency and independence that defy the typical portrayal of Latina women as submissive and passive. This representation presents a paradoxical situation, as it simultaneously challenges and reinforces traditional gender norms. Her journey in the telenovela can be seen under two different lights: (1) the woman needing saving or taming by a man — storytelling, following the status-quo; and, (2) the independent, hard-working and resourceful woman — counter-storytelling, challenging

the pre-established norms. Yet, her dependence on male characters for validation continues throughout the plotline and reflects the persistent hold of patriarchal structures on the narratives of Latina women (Wijayanti et. al, 2021).

CRT and intersectionality further reveal how the telenovela navigates racial, gender and class hierarchies. Rosa's characterisation as a fair-skinned and light-eyed Latina who ascends socially through marriage reflects societal colourism (Gabriel, 2007) and classism that mostly privileges lighter skin tones, associated with European descent and/or wealth (Arce, Murguia & Frisbie, 1987). These dynamics presented in the telenovela outline the complexity of discerning a consistent Latina identity, without considering such social constructs.

The discussions in "*Rosa Salvaje*" about love, social class, family relations, and particularly the portrayal of women in relation to men and society, strongly resonate and adhere with the ideological frameworks of Marianismo (Stevens, 1973) and Machismo. Women in the telenovela are idealised for their purity and submissive behaviour, or vilified for their autonomy and sexuality. These very contrasting depictions perpetuate the "virgin-whore" dichotomy (Arredondo, 2004), assuming the supposed moral and sexual character of the Latina women.

When it comes to Latina identities in the telenovela, these are crafted within a context where cultural expectations, family upbringing and societal norms as conceived by Risman (2018) where family constructs gender identities — shaped by a male vision.

The appeal of the telenovela across different countries, including Estonia, suggests that the narrative resonated with universal themes of love, struggle and transformation, despite the culturally specific portrayal of Latina women. This universality of emotions and experiences, encased with all the specificities of the format, allows for a more global character identification and their stories: the melodrama appealing to the collective imaginary (Martín-Barbero & Muñóz, 1992; Martín-Barbero, 1993).

5.1.1. Estonian Interpretation of Latina Representation in Telenovelas

In the discussion of how Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret the depictions of Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*" — and generally, in Latin American telenovelas, concurring themes emerged that are able to reflect cultural narratives and gender norms present in both cultural contexts: the Estonian, and the Latin American. The content illustrated in "*Rosa Salvaje*" has, with no hint of doubt, left a lasting impression on the Estonian audience, shaping their perceptions of Latinx culture and Latina women, particularly when it comes to the millennial population, a generation in which media consumption became a vital part of their everyday reality (Berger, 2018; Bloomer, 2014).

A key theme: Latina media stereotypes, came up from the interviews with Estonian telenovela aficionados with the perception of Latina women as embodying a form of exotic emotional expressiveness (Rodríguez 2004). Additionally, in the theme exposure and attraction to telenovelas, the Estonian interview participants — both telenovela aficionados and millennial men; admitted they were drawn to the format due to the heightened drama and passion displayed (Martín-Barbero, 1993), which stood in stark opposition to their own local norms of communication and emotional expression: colours contrasting the greyness of the current political climate, aspirational wealth and style, romantic ideals, and the overall cultural contrast. These distinctions not only showcase the perceived differences between Latin American and Estonian societies — either in the 90s, or nowadays — but also suggest a fascination with the "otherness" that telenovelas presented, "a stimulated vision of exoticism." (Alcoff, 2006, p. 193)

Moreover, the interviews also revealed a well established image of Latina women as fitting certain beauty and behavioural stereotypes among the Estonian telenovela aficionados. They are often seen as passionate, talkative and expressive, all traits perceived as typical based on their representation in telenovelas. Such observations are set in evidence by the participant's opinions about the beauty and behaviours of Latina women in telenovelas: as the protagonists were all pretty and skinny, and lived their

emotions unapologetically, this set the standard for the continent. The Estonian audience started being part of the 20th century telenovela phenomena (Newcomb, 1997).

In addition, the perceived emotional availability and romanticism of Latina women is also seen as normative, reinforcing gender roles, patriarchal views and heteronormative practices (Fernández & Paxman, 2000) about female behaviour and expectations in romantic contexts, since the telenovela sells the idea of "meeting prince charming" (Wijayanti et. al, 2021). The narratives in "*Rosa Salvaje*" resonate with the traditional "Cinderella" genre in telenovelas (Slade, 2010), promoting a message that aligns with the cultural scripts of Marianismo (Stevens, 1975). The storyline suggests that if women remain virtuous and hardworking, they can overcome adversity, which is a narrative that closely mirrors advice passed down through generations in Estonia, according to the telenovela aficionado participants. This resonance between the cultural values in the telenovela and local Estonian values illustrates a cross-cultural adoption of gendered narratives, adhering to colonised scripts (Benavides, 2008).

To summarise, the thematic analysis of the interviews reveals that Estonian telenovela aficionados interpret Latina representations through a lens that combines intrigue for the dramatic and what they considered to be "exotic" with a recognition of the potential reinforcement of gender and beauty stereotypes. These interpretations are influenced by Estonia's socio-cultural history amidst significant political and social changes going from Soviet-controlled state to sovereign nation (Raun, 2001). The country was experiencing the "opening to the West" and seeing new influences, styles and aspirations for their newly free society.

5.2. Estonian Millennial Men Perception of Gender Roles in Latina Women and Media Influence

This section discusses RQ2 and is divided into two different parts:

(1) Gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics attributed to Latina women by Estonian millennial men:

This argument navigates the theoretical framework, focusing on the millennial gaze segment and reveals a multifaceted influence in both societal norms and individual experiences — with Latina women, and Latina partners. Drawing upon Mannheim's notion of generational construction (1952) and theories on millennials perpetuating/challenging gender structures (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Risman, 2018) this segment provides insights into how shared experiences shape the collective consciousness of a generation, and influence their perspectives on gender and overall cultural identities .

Estonian millennial men exhibit a very specific understanding of Latina women, shaped by a blend of generational attitudes, cultural narratives, and evolving gender roles, characteristic of this generation (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). They are able to recognise the diversity of Latina women's appearances and behaviours, appreciate their cultural depth, and engage in both traditional and modern gender roles (Risman, 2018). This generational approach — gaze — is framed within the context of shifting media consumption (Berger, 2018) and sociopolitical influences (Kaskla, 2003) which both perpetuates and redefines narratives: CRT's storytelling and counter-storytelling combined. The interview findings highlight both the progress in the understanding of gender equality where stereotypes are being reevaluated, and the lingering influence of traditional gender roles with their ingrained narratives: egalitarian essentialism (Cotter et. al, 2011).

In exploring the assumptions about Latina women's physical attributes, Estonian millennial men manifested a diverse range of perceptions that went back to their teenage years, with the exoticised image of a dark(er) woman, curvy and voluptuous, the objects to be gazed (Rivadeneyra, 2001). Their responses in the matter have very similar descriptions of Latina women, and at the same time accept and acknowledge either their ignorance on the subject — before travelling to the continent and thinking stereotypically.

Other interviewees also recognised the diversity within Latina communities, and being able to perceive "different faces" when travelling the continent.

Regarding gender roles in society, Estonian millennial men demonstrate varying degrees of adherence to traditional norms and recognition of gender equality (Risman, 2018). Some of the interviewees still uphold traditional views, associating women — either Estonian or Latina — primarily with motherhood and caregiving (Gerson, 2010) and simplifying their function and role to being mothers, or taking care of their family — husband and children; and also indicating intensive fathering might have not evolved in Estonia (Gerson, 2010). Other participants advocate for gender equality (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002), emphasising equal opportunities and a fairer system in Estonia, when it comes to decision-making and workforce participation indicating women are taken into account, and the country doesn't experience *"olden patriarchal styles"*. While these comments may seemingly counter traditional gender roles and gender equality, they also seem to dismiss the structural and societal issues that women face (Cotter et. al, 2011), specifically regarding migrant Latina women, as if every woman possesses the same opportunities as men, and/or other more privileged women from different origins, societal status, skin colour, etc (Espinoza & Harris, 1988; Solorzano & Bernal, 1998; Valdes, 1996; Villalpando, 2004). Further comments reinforce the stereotype that certain tasks or skills are inherently masculine and that it is exceptional for women to possess proficiency in traditionally male-dominated fields, stating women do have gender-assigned activities (Weitzman et. al, 1972). This dictates that abilities are gender-based, rather than recognising individuals' diverse talents and capabilities irrespective of gender. Additionally, there is a recognition of persistent gender inequalities, such as the gender pay gap and the burden of unpaid caregiving work (Kaskla, 2003) indicating better awareness of the structural barriers to gender equality despite the modern adherence to egalitarian points of view. Women have had abortion and work rights since the First Estonian Republic, however they are still expected to do all the housework and carework, while still making less money (Pepin & Coter, 2017).

Estonian millennial men attribute to both Estonian and Latina women the same narrative when it comes to gender roles — according to them. Latina women are free to work, free to make household decisions, and also "should" become mothers and be the main caretakers for family members. A subtle adherence to Marianismo principles (Stevens, 1973) is noticeable among the results: Latina women are expected to self-sacrifice for the betterment of the family and spouse, often thinking that is indeed a free choice for them (Cotter, et. al, 2011).

In discussing the assumptions about Latina women's psychological traits — or behaviour — Estonian millennial men recurred to repetitive themes: fun, outgoing, expressive, feisty and fiery. These descriptions suggest that the stereotype may stem from media cultural representations, which portray Latina women as lively and exuberant (Rodríguez, 2004). The notion that the Latina woman is more in touch with her emotional side is contrasted with stoicism or emotional restraint associated — by the participant's themselves — to the Estonian cultural stereotype. It is essential to recognise these perceptions can be reductive, failing to capture the many aspects of Latina women's personalities, and endangering the perception of the cultural group as a whole.

(2) Estonian millennial men perceptions in regards of the Latina women portrayed in "*Rosa Salvaje*" and the Latina women dominant discourses:

As previously established and presented in 5.1, "*Rosa Salvaje*" presents Latina women through various lenses, encompassing stereotypes and gender narratives. In terms of representation, the telenovela perpetuates stereotypes of Latina women as either virtuous and submissive or hypersexualised and manipulative, reflecting Anzaldúa's bad woman (1987) and Arredondo's virgin-whore binary (2004). This dichotomy is seen in the female character arcs, where Rosa, Leonela, Dulcina and Cándida embody conflicting narratives. Structured as a Cinderella story, the textual analysis revealed several themes like: (a) gender roles and expectations: Rosa's transformational journey to go from bad to good, and conform to societal norms (Risman, 2018); (b) power dynamics: economic

disparities emphasising class divisions, and privilege (Harris, 1990); and (c) representation: characters embody specific traits, supporting gender and racial stereotypes (Mastro & Ortíz, 2008), such as the virtuous/manipulative depiction for women, and the powerful/chauvinistic one for men (Amaro, 2015; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2004). The show also reflects how Latina women navigate racial, gender and class biases: Rosa's struggle with her lower socio-economic status also stresses the intersection of race and oppression, with colourism and hegemonic beauty standards playing a crucial role in how the characters are perceived (Amaro, 2015). Rosa's fair complexion affords her certain privileges — despite her poverty — accentuating Eurocentric standards of beauty that give more value to lighter skin and fairer features (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004; Castillo, 1997).

Interviews with Estonian millennial men revealed perceptions of Latina women that both reflect and contradict the telenovela. When it comes to the portrayal of Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*", interviewees added that female characters are often described as feisty, hot-blooded, fiery and emotional, having big reactions over small things, getting angry and violent (Rodríguez, 2004; López & Chesney-Lind, 2014; Andalzúa, 1987; Arredondo, 2004; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2004), which further reinforces the stereotypes with their own perceptions, as they mentioned Latina women being more controlling, dramatic, and overall emotional. Participants acknowledged stereotypical portrayals of Latina women aligning with the telenovela's depiction, yet also diverged from it, by not entirely, or necessarily associating "*Rosa Salvaje*" to Latinx culture, as the show was dubbed in Estonian, and presenting an universal story of romance and melodrama (Martín-Barbero, 1993).

Additionally, the photo-elicitation segment revealed how the physical portrayal of Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*" aligned with racialised societal perceptions in terms of beauty and class — colonised/coloniser (Benavides, 2008), but seemed to create an understanding gap that contradicted their previous descriptions. Participants commented on the appearance of white women in the show, highlighting their blonde hair and pale skin, and their understanding of colourism (Gabriel, 2007; Awad et. al, 2015) and its direct association to class: higher socioeconomic status = white and educated, while a lower one = dark and unsophisticated (Castillo, 1997). Telenovela beauty standards affiliate Anglo and Eurocentric features with class and success, and the interviewees were able to understand this context, however, did not fully agree on the depiction. Their personal views on the physicality of Latina women seem to reinforce exoticism stereotypes, the dark-skinned, dark-haired woman; rather than the Eurocentric beauty portrayed in telenovelas. This notion challenges the portrayal of race from the media, however reinforces the spitfire stereotypes (Rodríguez, 2004). This depiction contributes to a skewed representation of Latina women, illustrating the idea that women of higher social status are whiter (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004), while the ones from lower classes are portrayed as more "typically" Latin.

5.2.1. Comparative Analysis of Gender Roles: Latina vs. Estonian Women according to Estonian Millennial Men

By analysing how Estonian millennial men compare both Latina and Estonian women, several themes emerged: behavioural traits, beauty narratives, impact of media narratives and cultural reflections and comparisons. Such categories offer a nuanced perspective on gender roles, characteristics and perceptions on both cultural groups.

When it comes to beauty narratives, the participants compare the physical characteristics between Latina and Estonian women. Latina women are described as curvy, voluptuous, dark-haired with darker skin tones (Rodríguez, 2004; López & Chesney-Lind, 2014), contrasting with the "potato-coloured" — ashy blonde — hair and pale complexion of Estonian women. This comparison reflects alienating factors for Latina

(Hernández-Truyol, 2003) as well as an exoticised image (Alcoff, 2006), perceived as different from Estonian standards of beauty, more related to Eurocentric hegemony (Amaro, 2015). Nonetheless, interviewees are also able to reflect and reject certain stereotypes in favour of a more varied Latin — and even Estonian — influence, by recognising intercultural mixes in both types of women, a reflection of a generational perception of reality through diversity (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Such recognition challenges simplistic narratives for Latina women and highlights the importance of considering broader cultural and racial contexts in which these identities are constructed and shaped, bringing up reflections on the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) in women's beauty narratives.

In the aspect of behavioural — psychological — traits, Estonian millennial men observed significant differences in the behaviour of Latina and Estonian women, particularly when it comes to communication styles and emotional expressiveness. Latina women are often described as more vocal, communicative, and passionate, and even talking at a faster speed than Estonian counterparts. This behaviour can be attributed in part to the different linguistic backgrounds, reflecting how language is also a vital part of shaping gender roles (Lakoff, 1975). In contrast, Estonian women are described as more reserved and less expressive, tending to communicate less and maintaining a sense of quietness, which could be linked to Ghodsee's argument of Estonian women not being pressed to accomplish gender equality (2004) due to a more undisturbed nature. Participants also mentioned that Estonian women are more prone to "let things pass" — like an abusive or alcoholic partner, as opposed to Latina women, who might be more "short-fused and easily pissed" (Rodríguez, 2004).

Media narratives had a important role in shaping these perceptions of beauty and behaviour, and specifically, telenovelas aired in Estonia — such as the case of "*Rosa Salvaje*" — which depict Latina women through stereotypical lenses, both as virtuous and hypersexualised (Hernández-Truyol, 2003; Stevens, 1973; López & Chesney-Lind, 2014), perpetuating the virgin-whore dichotomy (Arredondo, 2004). These portrayals influenced how Estonian millennial men view Latina women, associating them with

feisty tempers, foxy appearance and familial intrigues (Fernández & Paxman, 2000). While some participants acknowledged these stereotypes, others also highlighted their divergence from reality, describing their firsthand experiences as key elements to disconnect from the status-quo narratives, and give them more logical and analytical insights into the multifaceted identities of Latina women. What is particularly interesting, is the recognition and acknowledgment of familial roles and patriarchal systems within Latinx communities, noticing the prevalence of gossip and intrigues, exactly how they are portrayed in telenovelas into real life settings: as Arrendondo would suggest, Marianismo as a cultural value (2002). These situations, as encountered by Estonian millennial men, differ from the archetype of Estonian families, where drama is avoided and individualism is highly valued.

In the theme of cultural reflections and comparisons, it has been revealed that the most outstanding differences are related to personality traits, societal roles and overall cultural perceptions. Latina women are once more described as outspoken, assertive and opinionated in comparison to Estonian women — however, context is important, and the image of Latina women in this research are being evaluated within a different cultural setting (Schutte, 1998) causing them to either adapt or defy the status-quo, depending on their particular personal circumstances as a migrant minority (Andalzúa, 1987; Gibson, 1983). Estonian women, on the contrary, carry a perceived resignation towards feminist causes (Ghodsee, 2004) that still situates them within a dual-burden role Kaskla described (2003).

5.3. Self-perceptions of Latina Women in Estonia and Comparative Views on Estonian Women and Traditional Gender Roles

Migrant Latina women living in Estonia are in a constant state of negotiating gender roles and redefining identities, considering societal expectations, media representations and personal backgrounds (Risman, 2018). Drawing for the foundational concept of Butler's performativity (1990) which argues gender identities are not inherent, but constructed through repeated acts — in this case media stereotypes — determining norms and

shaping realities. This performative nature interacts with pre-established narratives surrounding Latina women, who, as immigrants in Estonia, find themselves exoticised (Alcoff, 2006) and othered (Andemicael, 2002) repetitively. Participants acknowledged they often face stereotypes characterising them as sexy, passionate, dramatic, seductive, extrovert, and always happy. These labels reduce Latina identities to hypersexualised and emotional archetypes (López & Chesney-Lind, 2014), leaving them to relive captivity (Lagarde, 1990) as aliens in a foreign country (Hernández-Truyol, 2003). In contrast, the Estonian women perception of quietness, reservation, and being almost transparent — like someone fading in the background; further complicates how migrant Latina women are able to traverse their own identities (Andalzúa, 1987) in a different cultural setting (Schutte, 1998), engaging with cultural expectations that portray them in "telenovelish" ways. The migrant Latina women of this study made explicit emphasis on their diverse identities, influenced by factors such as backgrounds, nationalities and individual personalities.

The representation of migrant Latina women in Estonian society is deeply intertwined with the narratives presented in Latin American telenovelas. These narratives, and in particular, the Cinderella genre (Slade, 2010) — popularised by productions like "*Rosa Salvaje*" in Estonia — have perpetuated stereotypical gender roles and physical characteristics that shape the perception of Latina women both within Latin America and abroad. Telenovelas display Latina women through dichotomous lenses, emphasising either their virtue (Hernández-Truyol, 2003; Stevens, 1973), or their hypersexualised figure — trying to — challenge societal norms (López & Chesney-Lind, 2014). Such representations dictate how migrant Latina women are seen in Estonia, leading to assumptions about their behaviour, for instance being dramatic, jealous, dependent on male partners (Risman, 2018); and interviews reflected how these women faced social consequences, from being labelled as overly sexual to being treated with suspicion, in their condition of minority immigrants (Andalzúa, 1987; Gibson, 1983). Media portrayals also intersect with issues of class and race, perpetuating stereotypes that connect physical characteristics, such as lighter complexions with social status (Castillo, 1997). This leads

to the creation of skewed representations of Latina identities, reducing them to simplified and generalised narratives that do not fully capture the diversity and complexity within Latinx communities. Participants also discussed how they struggle with these stereotypes, either consciously distancing themselves for dominant narratives, or acknowledging the cultural impact of telenovelas on their own behaviours and attitudes.

CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) reveal how migrant Latina women in Estonia find themselves integrated into a complex web of gender roles, physical/psychological traits, and societal expectations influenced by dominant discourses. The CRT framework as such, draws attention to the pervasive influence of racial, gender and class constructs in shaping these women's experiences. The LatCrit strand further extends this analysis, to focus on the unique experiences of Latinx communities, uncovering how cultural, linguistic, and economic factors intersect with traditional narratives (Espinoza & Harris, 1998; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Valdes 1996; Villalpando, 2004). For migrant Latina women in Estonia, this intersection can be found in the residual effect of telenovelas, and the photo-elicitation interview theme, particularly discloses the interplay between class, religion, race and gender violence. For example, migrant Latina women in Estonia confront assumptions about their social status, often seen as lower-income; or their racial identity, emphasising the preference for European features and the tendency to view lighter-skin Latina women as more desirable or successful (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004), both leading to the underlying idea that Latin America is inferior somehow (Nasser, 2008).

Regarding the class code (see ANNEX F TABLES F1 and F2), poor families are depicted almost ridiculously, with children living in slums, dressed in torn clothing and portrayed as illiterate and marginalised. This resonates with the interviewees' personal experiences, who highlight the reality of low-income families and the normalcy of those circumstances. They also revealed how these narratives include racial biases, showcasing darker-skinned individuals as poor. In contrast, rich families are fair-skinned with light hair and eyes (Mastro & Ortíz, 2008). In terms of gender violence, participants mentioned to recognise such behaviours within Latinx culture, and how these situations are also

associated with lower-income families. Such depictions contribute to reinforcing class distinctions and perpetuating classism and colourism (Gabriel, 2007).

For the racial hegemony code (see ANNEX F TABLES F1 and F2), perceptions are influenced by historical, cultural and media narratives intersecting race, class and appearance. Interviewees seem to understand the connections between the appearance and social status, noting the concept of "Whitexican", a social media fueled denomination for white Mexicans (Alvarez-Pimentel, 2020), and also acknowledging the diversity within Latina identities, since Latin America was, after all, a colonised continent, who underwent several European migrations in distinctive historical periods.

According to Paetcher, millennial women, shaped by formative experiences and media exposure, display a diverse understanding of gender roles, unlike their male counterparts (2007). Migrant Latina women in Estonia navigate such gender roles amidst narratives from their cultural background and local influences. For example, the cultural norms and expectations embedded in Latinx communities emphasise femininity and appearance, leading to pressure for Latina women to maintain their image through meticulous grooming and fashion choices, to please male standards (Risman, 2018; Rivadeneyra, 2011). This contrasts with Estonian women's perceived natural beauty and independence, reflecting differing norms around gender expression and societal, possible consequences from their historical past (Kaskla, 2003; Ghodsee, 2004). Interviewees also stressed that in their experience, Estonian millennial men seemed to desire them with experimental purposes (Alcoff, 2006), typecasting them in the spectrum of "*la otra*", (Hurtado, 2012) the woman to use and discard, while the white woman — the Estonian woman — is the one to marry and take seriously (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004).

5.4 Limitations

Even with all the considerations taken in this study, it is fair to say that it still faces several limitations. The selected non-probability sampling, while useful for capturing varied perspectives, may not provide a comprehensive representation of either Estonian

society or the diverse Latinx community in the country. Moreover, the reliance on voluntary participation could have led to the exclusion of key viewpoints that might have added more depth to the study's findings, and/or resulted in the generalisation of the data collected (Maxwell, 2013). The cultural and generational contexts of the participants might have shaped their responses, and the study's focus on telenovelas — specifically "*Rosa Salvaje*" might have limited the discussion's scope, potentially omitting other influential factors shaping migrant Latina women's identities and perceptions regarding beauty and gender role narratives.

Another noticeable limitation is my position as the researcher. My background and perspectives could have influenced how themes and codes emerged from the data, as "all coding is a judgement call" (Sipe & Ghiso, 2004, p. 482) introducing unintended biases in the inclusion or exclusion of interpretations (Creswell, 2014). Contrarily, efforts to maintain neutrality might have led to the exclusion of facts that could contradict this stance, overlooking subtle realities of migrant Latina women's experiences in Estonia.

Lastly, societal perceptions and cultural narratives are dynamic — not immutable. The ongoing evolution of media portrayals, along with shifting cultural and societal dynamics, could impact perceptions of gender roles and cultural identities. Given more time, a follow-up study could track these changes, allowing for comparison of participants' evolving views, offering deeper insights into the interconnectedness of media portrayals and dominant narratives.

5.5 Contributions and further research

This thesis contributes to the understanding of how beauty and gender roles narratives shape the perception of migrant Latina women in Estonia, through the lens of media representations such as telenovelas. The findings shed light on the interactions between traditional cultural narratives, contemporary generational attitudes, and the ever evolving societal norms, revealing how these three factors collectively influence the identities and perceptions of Latina women. The research highlights how media portrayals both

reinforce and challenge (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001) stereotypes and established narratives, showing the ways in which telenovelas shape not only Estonian millennial men's perceptions of Latina women, but also the self-perceptions of migrant Latina women living in Estonia. This analysis advances academic discourse on media representation, gender roles, and ethnicity, revealing the connection between media portrayals, societal norms, and cultural identity, both contributing to the exploration of racial and class hierarchies (Crenshaw, 1991), and emphasising how traditional narratives intertwine these social constructs, reinforcing stereotypical perceptions that intersect with beauty and gender roles dominant discourses.

For future research, there are several promising avenues. The concept of "nepantleras" as defined by Andalzúa (2002) provides a framework for how Latina women navigate cultural, physical and societal worlds, acting as mediators between diverse spaces. This concept can be explored within the Estonian context, particularly in relation to the International Women's Network in Estonia, an NGO that supports migrant Latina women and aims to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps. There is also a rich opportunity to delve into transnationalism, examining how migrant Latina women's identities are shaped by their experiences concerning immigration status, and the interactions between different media narratives, societal expectations and cultural identities. Additionally, investigating the impact of American-fed media, and different cultural products — like bachata or reggaeton; together with the portrayal of Latina women in other media formats, such as films or TV series, might lead to deeper insights in diverse contexts. The study also revealed the prevalence of different related topics; for example, linguistic nuances from Spanish and Estonian could offer insights into cultural traits, such as the aforementioned differences in expressiveness, and communication styles. The topic of feminism in Estonian in contrast to Latin countries was also raised by participants, highlighting the need to explore current fights and movements, considering the differing cultural attitudes towards gender equality and women's rights. Furthermore, the study's findings indicate a potential area for investigating Estonian stereotypes, and the perception of Estonian women, exploring how these align or diverge from dominant narratives.

6. CONCLUSION

This study addresses three primary research questions: first, it examines the gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics attributed to Latina women in the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*", and how these attributes interact with dominant discourses surrounding Latina women. Second, it investigates the perceptions of Estonian millennial men (who have Latina partners) regarding Latina women's gender roles and characteristics, and it compares these portrayals to the ones in "*Rosa Salvaje*", exploring how they relate to dominant discourses. Third, it delves into the self-perceptions of Latina women living in Estonia, comparing these to the characteristics of Estonian women, and examining how these roles and characteristics interact with prevailing narratives. The research draws on diverse theoretical frameworks and includes 12 in-depth interviews with Estonian millennial men, Estonian telenovela aficionados and migrant Latina women living in Estonia.

The second chapter, presents the theoretical framework, exploring multiple perspectives to understand how dominant narratives of beauty and traditional gender roles shape the portrayal of Latina women in an Estonian context. The research is grounded in the popular telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" and its influence on Estonian society. Key theoretical approaches include gender theory (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Butler, 1990; Risman, 2018) — with a focus on Marianismo (Stevens, 1973) and Machismo, CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) which together provide a multiperspectival lens on how gender roles, race and class interact in telenovela narratives and how these might resonate with Estonian viewers. Additionally, the research focuses on Cinderella genres in telenovelas (Slade, 2010) in order to recognise how gender roles are portrayed in Latin American media, and how these depictions conform societal expectations, finding a dichotomy narrative for Latina women, between virtuous and bad (Hernández-Truyol, 2003; López & Chesney-Lind, 2014; Hurtado, 2012; Andalzúa, 1987; Arredondo, 2004). In regards to CRT and intersectionality, the

exploration of race, gender, and class in telenovelas (Hurtado & Gurin, 2004; Castillo, 1997; Wijayanti et. al, 2021; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2004; Mastro & Ortíz, 2008; Rivadeneyra, 2011) and their effect on cultural attitudes in Estonia. Finally, the framework examines and proposes a generational perspective on media consumption, bringing the attention to millennials and their perceptions on gender roles (Risman, 2018; Paetcher, 2007; Gerson, 2010; Cotter et. al, 2011; Pepin & Cotter, 2007), and how these societal norms and expectations interact with media narratives; and in the case of Estonian millennial men, and women, how such portrayals are shaped by national and historical legacies (Raun, 2001; Kaskla, 2003; Ghodsee, 2004).Through this comprehensive framework, the thesis investigates how Estonian millennial men interpret and internalise beauty and gender role narratives, and in addition, how migrant Latina women negotiate and reshape their identities in response to these portrayals.

The Methodology chapter delineates the research approach and procedures employed to address the research questions. The study involves the textual analysis of the Mexican telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" and in-depth semi-structured interviews with Estonian millennial men, Estonian telenovela aficionados and migrant Latina women living in Estonia. The section provides a rationale for choosing these methods in order to explore and respond to the research questions effectively. This methodology combines qualitative approaches, particularly textual analysis and interviews to obtain comprehensive results in terms of the understanding behind media portrayals and lived experiences. The textual analysis examines the portrayal of Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*" focusing on gender roles, physical and psychological characteristics and how these interact with dominant discourses, following Fairclough's methodological tool for content, discourse and narrative analysis (2013). The results inform the development of interview questions for all participant groups. The interview data analysis uses a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) followed by inductive, concept and versus coding (Saldaña, 2015), clustering the information into ten different themes, ensuring each is coherent and relevant to the research questions. Lastly, the chapter also highlights the importance of

ethical considerations, ensuring adherence to standards and principles; and discusses limitations and author's positionality.

Regarding the empirical findings, this chapter provides the analysis of the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" and how Estonian telenovela aficionados, Estonian millennial men, and migrant Latina women living in Estonia interpret and interact with the portrayals presented there. The textual analysis revealed pivotal themes illustrated in the telenovela, such as beauty discourses, class perceptions, cultural stereotypes and gender role discourses. Interviews with the participants shed light into how these representations impact the perception of migrant Latina women in the Estonian context. The findings identify the cultural differences and similarities between Latina and Estonian women, particularly in terms of behaviour, physicality, and societal roles. For instance, the study captures how Estonian participants view Latina women as more expressive and emotional, while Estonian women are perceived as more reserved and private. The influence of media narratives on shaping these perceptions is also included in the chapter, demonstrating how telenovela's depiction of Latina women reinforces or challenges societal stereotypes. Additionally, the photo-elicitation impressions theme provided insight into how visual stimuli can evoke responses related to class, religion and racial hegemony. Overall, the empirical findings provided variable insights into the impact of media representations and societal expectations when it comes to the portrayal of Latina women in the Estonian context.

Lastly, the discussion section synthesises and interprets the findings in the context of the established theoretical framework, exploring how gender roles and physical/psychological characteristics attributed to Latina women in the telenovela "*Rosa Salvaje*" are perceived by different groups within Estonian society and by migrant Latina women themselves. All three research questions are addressed: RQ1 examines the gender roles and characteristics ascribed to Latina women in "*Rosa Salvaje*", exploring how these portrayals perpetuate or challenge stereotypes and how Estonian telenovela

aficionados interpret them. RQ2 explores the perceptions of Estonian millennial men, and compares these to their perceptions of Estonian women, expressing how media and cultural narratives shape these views. Finally, RQ3 captures the self-perceptions of migrant Latina women living in Estonia, and inspects how these interact with dominant narratives. The chapter concludes by recognising limitations, and proposing future research directions.

This thesis directly contributes to the understanding of how media portrayals shape perceptions of migrant Latina women in Estonia, advancing discussions on media representation, gender roles and ethnicity. Through its qualitative analysis, the study deepens the understanding of intersectional identities (Crenshaw, 1991), contributes to CRT — and LatCrit — discourses on race and ethnicity (Espinoza & Harris, 1998; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Valdes, 1996; Villalpando, 2004), and informs gender theory by exploring the interaction of media narratives and its effects on generational constructs.

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ANNEX A.

<u>Interviews with Estonian Millennial Men:</u>

<u>Introduction:</u>

"*Hello, and thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. My name is Andrea Montanaro and I am a student at Tallinna Ülikool. I am conducting a study on the cultural impact of the telenovela 'Rosa Salvaje'. Your insights as an Estonian millennial man are valuable to understand perceptions of gender roles and cultural dynamics here in Estonia. This interview will be recorded for analysis but kept confidential. Are you comfortable proceeding*?"

<u>Questions:</u>

1. *How old are you?*
2. *What are your general perceptions of women's role in Estonian culture?*
3. *Can you please describe how the typical Estonian woman looks and how she behaves?*
4. *What do you remember about Metsik Roos being aired in Estonia in the 1990s?*
5. *Do you think Metsik Roos had any impact on Estonian society's views of Latinx culture? And what about women?*
6. *What were your first impressions or views on Latin American women?*
7. *Can you please describe how the typical Latina woman looks and how she behaves?*
8. *Do you think Metsik Roos (or other telenovelas) have impacted your views on Latina women?*
9. *In your opinion, how do Latina women differ from Estonian women in terms of behaviour? And physical appearance?*
10. *After personally knowing a Latina, have any of your views changed or shifted? Why?*

11. Do you think characters depicted in Metsik Roos — or any given telenovela, paint an accurate portrayal of Latina women?

Image Viewing:

"*Let's take a moment to look at some images from Metsik Roos.*"

1. *How do these visuals influence your perception of the characters?*
2. *What things can you notice about the cultural backgrounds of the characters?*
3. *How is women's beauty and behaviour portrayed in these images?*
4. *What things can you notice that are undeniably different from Estonian culture and gender roles?*

Privacy Disclosure & Ending:

"*Thanks again for your participation. Please remember, your responses will remain anonymous and only be used for research purposes. If you have any questions or further comments, feel free to share. If you wish for a copy of the draft before submission, we can arrange that, too.*"

Interviews with Migrant Latina Women in Estonia:

Introduction:

"*Hello, and welcome to our focus group discussion. My name is Andrea Montanaro and I am a student at Tallinna Ülikool. I am conducting a study on the cultural impact of the telenovela 'Rosa Salvaje' in Estonia, particularly on gender perceptions. Your insights as migrant Latina women in Estonia are valuable to understand perceptions of gender roles and cultural dynamics here in the country. This session will be recorded for analysis but kept confidential. Are you comfortable proceeding*?"

Questions:

1. *How long have you been living in Estonia?*

2. *How do you relate to the depiction of the Latina women from the telenovelas? How do you differ?*

3. *In your perception, do these representations align with your own cultural identity and behaviour? And how does it diverge?*

4. *Do you feel Latina women are portrayed realistically in Rosa Salvaje when it comes to beauty? And what about behaviour?*

5. *What differences have you observed in societal expectations for Latina and Estonian women in terms of behaviour and appearance?*

6. *How do beauty standards in Latinx culture compare to those in Estonia, in your experience? What about gender roles?*

7. *What influence, if any, do you think Rosa Salvaje might have had on Estonians' understanding of Latin culture?*

8. *After personally knowing Estonian men, what cultural differences have you noticed? And did you notice a certain mindset in them already?*

Image Viewing:

"*Let's take a moment to look at some images from Rosa Salvaje.*"

1. *How do these images resonate with your personal experiences or cultural background?*
2. *Were any of these characteristics personally attributed to you here in Estonia?*
3. *What things can you notice that are undeniably different from Estonian culture and gender roles?*

Privacy Disclosure & Ending:

"*Thanks again for your insight. Please remember, your anonymity will be preserved, and the information you provided will only be used for academic purposes. If you have any questions or further comments, feel free to share. If you wish for a copy of the draft before submission, we can arrange that, too.*"

Interview with Telenovela Aficionado t in Estonia:

Introduction:

"*Hello, and thank you for agreeing to share your expertise with me today. My name is Andrea Montanaro and I am a student at Tallinna Ülikool. I am conducting a study on the cultural impact of the telenovela 'Rosa Salvaje'. Your insights and perspective as a subject expert and aficionado are crucial for my study on media representation and cultural impact on this phenomenon, particularly here in Estonia. This interview will be recorded for analysis but kept confidential. Are you comfortable proceeding?*"

Questions:

1. *How old are you?*

2. *How did you first come across telenovelas and what drew you to them? And what about Metsik Roos?*

3. *What do you remember from Metsik Roos being aired in Estonia in the 1990s?*

4. *Do you think Metsik Roos had any impact on Estonian society's view of Latinx culture? And what about women?*

5. *From your perspective, what cultural or gender-related messages does Metsik Roos convey?*

6. *What were your first impressions or views on Latina women?*

7. *How do you think Metsik Roos influenced the Estonian perceptions of Latinx culture and how Latina women should behave or look?*

8. *In your opinion, how do telenovelas, or Metsik Roos specifically, portray beauty standards for Latina women? How do these compare to Estonian women?*

9. *How do Latina women differ from Estonian women in terms of behaviour? And physical appearance?*

10. Can you recall any specific episodes or scenes that stand out to you somewhat? Why?

Image Viewing:

"*I would like to show you some stills from Metsik Roos now.*"

1. *How do these visuals influence your perception of the characters?*
2. *How do these images resonate with your personal experiences as an Estonian woman?*
3. *What things can you notice that are undeniably different from Estonian culture and gender roles?*

Privacy Disclosure & Ending:

"*Thanks again for your participation and contribution to my research. Please remember, your responses will remain anonymous and only be used for research purposes. If you have any questions or further comments, feel free to share. If you wish for a copy of the draft before submission, we can arrange that, too.*"

FIG D1. Gloria from Modern Family.

FIG D2. Gloria from Modern Family: Foxy and feisty.

Retrieved from

https://screenrant.com/modern-family-gloria-pritchett-forgotten-facts-trivia/

ANNEX E.

Content and Discourse Analysis of Rosa Salvaje:

FIG. E1 - *Rosa Salvaje*'s promotional poster.

Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_salvaje

FIG. E2 - Rosa as a wild tomboy, with stains on her face.

FIG. E3 - Rosa and the Virgin of   Guadalupe.

FIG. E4 - Rosa on her wedding day.

FIG. E5 - Rosa's initial look.

FIG. E6 - Rosa's glamorous transformation.

FIG. E7 Tomasa in her house with Rosa.

FIG. E8 - Cándida and Dulcina twinning.

FIG. E9 - Dulcina and Cándida plotting.

FIG. E10 - After they cut all ties, the sisters stopped dressing alike.

FIG. E11 - First actress playing Leonela.

FIG. E12 - Second actress playing Leonela.

FIG. E13 - Paulette, saddened thinking of her long-lost daughter.

FIG. E14 - Irma, dark-haired in lingerie.
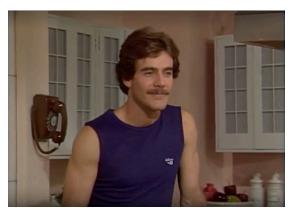

FIG. E15 - Wearing lingerie.

FIG. E16 - Ricardo as "prince charming".

FIG. E17 - Ricardo fighting Rosa.

FIG. E19 - Ricardo using force again.

FIG. E20 - Rogelio "crippled".

FIG. E21 - Ricardo and Rogelio.

FIG. E22 - Rosa and Ernesto at the bar.

Photo-elicitation pictures:

Society girls (beauty standards).

Rosa's hood friends.

Dulcina's bedroom.

Tomasa's room with Rosa.

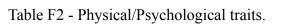Table F1 — Contrast of social class.

Beauty standard.

Beauty standard.

Dulcina attacking Rosa.

Dulcina attacking Cándida.

Table F2 - Physical/Psychological traits.