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**From “free economic zone” to territorial self-management. Early visions of economic autonomy of Soviet Estonia in 1986-1988**

There have been several studies about the restoration of independence in Estonia – the rise of civil society, mobilization through social movements, the nation-building process, the legal restoration of the state in 1990-1991 but studies about early perestroika period has not gained much attention in the scholarship so far. However, the period 1987-1988 saw rapid growth of debates about economic autonomy of Soviet Estonia - from proposals of becoming a first “free economic zone in Soviet Union” (Bogomolov, Kõörna) to “territorial self-management” (IME proposal), as well as bringing in the term “economic sovereignty” in 1988. While some of the proposals can be even called “economic utopias”, it is worth to pay attention to the fact that whereas the political claims for future statehood were rigorously censored, the innovative economic claims flourished extensively.

The paper will bring out these early visions that different authors imagined for the future economic management of Soviet Estonia and investigates this in historical as well as in transnational context. For that, the paper also has to look at earlier discourse of “self-management” in socialist economic thought. I will argue that a significant reason why it was possible to draw such visions was the availability of certain transnational economic discourse in Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe which was legitimate to use and was open for new interpretations. How did Estonian and Russian authors articulate this discourse during that time and transformed the old terms into new concepts like “economic sovereignty”?