ETHNICITY

Ethnicity: Diversity and Homogenization

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COMMUNICATION OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN PUBLIC SPACE IN LATVIA

The issue of interethnic communication has its place in a certain part of society's interethnic interaction in the modern sociological, socio-anthropological and political scientific literature, and also in the public consciousness. Scientific consciousness tends to study this communication only in the situation when both individual bearers of different ethnic identities and collective bearers of collective ethnic identity interact. These are independent ethnic groups with a developed identity which influence the cultural life of a country, the system of communication and even politics. And this multi-ethnicity is primarily recognised as a value in the society not only by Latvians as a state-forming nation, but also by ethnic minorities. But it is necessary to discover the attitude of Latvian society to its ethnic diversity. The basic problem is the following: if Latvian society can recognise ethnic minorities as collective subjects of a fully-fledged interethnic communication.

The purpose of the article is to show the attitude of different ethnic groups in Latvia (Latvians and part of the ethnic minorities) to the parameters of the space of public communication that can be used for

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resolving ethno-political issues. The opinions of respondents from the multi-ethnic society in Latvia, have been used as the object of analysis. The article shows the resources and restrictions for interethnic communication in Latvia. Inter-ethnic communication is not only aimed at forming solidarity among the representatives of different ethnic groups based on the recognition of their equal status in a pluralistic society. Such communication also reproduces institutional differences between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities, which very often limits a possibility for recognizing the identity of ethnic minorities as a form of national identity. The conducted sociological research shows that the public consciousness in Latvia is more focused not on the recognition of the equal status of the identities of the ethnic majority and minorities, but on the reproduction of institutional differences between them. The opinions of respondents from different regions of the state have been used as the object of analysis. [1]

Key words: Latvia, ethnic groups, ethnic minorities, ethnic identity, ethnic categorization, public communication, ethno-political life.

Formulation of the Scientific Problems of the Research

Latvia is a traditionally multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. According to thedata provided by the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs as of 2017 in the country's population of 2.129 million, Latvians comprised 1.279 million (59.6 % of the population), Russians –557.6 thousand (27.0%), Belarussians – 69.3 thousand (3.4%), Ukrainians – 51. 2 thousand (2.4%), Poles – 45. 6 thousand (2.2%), Lithuanians -26.6 thousand (1.3%), Jews – 8.6 thousand (0.4%), Roma – 7.5 thousand (0.4%), Germans – 5.2 thousand (0.2%). The share of ethnic minorities is especially large in the biggest cities of the state. In the capital city Riga, the representatives of ethnic minorities comprise more than a half of the population (53.8%), in the second biggest city Daugavpils – more than 80% (Latvijas iedzīvotāju sadalījums … 2017; Latvijas iedzīvotāju skaits... 2017; Pastāvīgo iedzīvotāju etniskais … 2017). Moreover, the structure of this ethnic diversity itself possesses significant peculiarities related to the fact that the share of the largest ethnic minority – Russians – more than twice exceeds the number of

other ethnic minorities in Latvia in total. Russians in Latvia differ from other ethnic minorities in number and in qualitative factors of organising their own socio-cultural infrastructure, which involves a wide spread of the Russian language in the sphere of Latvian business, the system of private education (including higher education), the entertainment sphere, and mass media. Russian is a mother tongue for a vast majority of Latvia's Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, and Jews. Close interpersonal, as well as informational connections with Russia, its culture, history, and political and information fields significantly influence the reproduction of the Russian cultural environment.

Among the many versions of the role of social communication (and interethnic communication as its variety) there are two extreme positions in its understanding in sociology. The first one recognizes a very small role of social communication in the formation and functioning of social systems, but the main role is given to the established normative order, institutionalized social differences and hierarchies. The other position considers that social actors, as well as social communication between them plays the most important role in the functioning and development of social systems. The first position is very clearly presented in the structural functionalism of T. Parsons, in which social communication is considered in the context of the role interaction of the actors, and it takes place under the influence of the social normative system. This leads to the fact that it is not the participants of communication who set its parameters, but the normative system of the social order. Ultimately, social communication is seen as a way to translate the normative requirements of the social system into the behavior of individual actors (Parsons 2002, pp. 572–575, 580, 646). Moreover, such understanding of social communication does not necessarily imply the equality of its members, as role-based interaction may be based on stratification, hierarchy and inequality of their statuses (Parsons 2002, p. 622–623). Therefore, the weakness or absence of social communication between collective actors means the weakness of their integration into one normative social system and the fragmentation of social and cultural space. In modern sociology, this line is presented, for example, in sociology of N. Luhmann, who believed that the social differentiation is more significant for the functioning of social systems than the social communication between the individual actors (Luhmann 2007, p. 45, 551–557). A similar understanding is presented in the sociology of P. Bourdieu, who believed that the nature of social communication

is entirely dependent on the dispositions of the social agents in social space (Bourdieu 2007, p. 97–107).

An alternative concept of social communication is presented in the sociology of G. Simmel, M. Weber, and in the late works of E. Durkheim, who saw human needs and interests (but not only a social order) as the source of the formation of communication links (Simmel 1996, p. 486–490, 492; Weber 2016, p. 86–94; Durkheim 1995, p. 208–243; Durkheim 1995, p. 291–292). In modern sociology this position is represented, for example, in the sociologic constructivism of P. Berger and T. Luckmann, who believe that the folding of the "ordered reality of everyday life" is influenced not only by supra-personal objective social processes, but also by the interactive nature of the social world that people share with each other (Berger, Lukmann 1995, p. 41, 43, 211, 248, 254). According to the version of J. Habermas, the role of social communication is significant in the evaluation and adjustment of conditions of this communication by its participants (Habermas 2008, p. 307–308, 320; Habermas 2000, p. 42, 187–197, 210, 244, 247).

Interethnic communication is viewed as a form of social communication that happens "between people of different cultures". Researchers associate the importance of studying such communication with the need to analyse the possibilities for mutual understanding for effective interaction between people of different cultures (Rogers, Hart, Miike 2002, p. 5, 7). Communication between people of different cultures can occur over a wide range of characteristics and goals – from the desire to put forward the legitimate claims of ethnic identity to the bias against other groups, from the establishment of associative relationships between groups prior to their dissociation (Kim 2006, p. 284, 291), from imposing the dominant culture's standards and exclusion of non-dominant cultures from public life to the positive recognition of ethno-cultural minorities in the common cultural space (Young 1996, p. 29), etc.

For Latvia, as a traditional multi-ethnic country, the question of the influence of different ethnic groups' identities on the common sphere of public communication is extremely relevant. Interethnic communication is a very complex social phenomenon. On the one hand, it is an important way of achieving mutual understanding between ethnic groups, when these groups communicate as equal partners. In order to ensure such an equal dialogue, ethnic groups are guided by the principles of political equality and universal moral norms (Anderson 1999, p. 302–310; Gordon 2017; Rawls 2005, p. 60–61, 84, 126–134). Moreover,

the appeal to universal moral norms in interethnic communication reflects the interests of the groups that are socially less protected (Rawls 2005, p. 395–396).

But on the other hand, interethnic communication expresses the status differences between ethnic groups and institutionalised differences between the ethno-national majority and ethnic minorities. The expressed ethno-social stratification stimulates the fragmentation of civic culture and enhances the relativity of morality depending on the evaluation of "us" and "they" (Gert 2016; Freeman et. al. 1992, p. 311–329; Harman 1975, p. 3–22; Waldront 1989, p. 561; Wong 1984, p. 23–36). However, interethnic communication does not fully reflect these fixed statuses of various ethnic groups. It is dynamic and selective, facilitating only part of the content of the institutional differences between ethnic groups (Barth 1996, p. 75–82).

The dominant socio-political thought in Latvia when assessing the place of ethnic identities in the state relies upon two basic statements which in one or another form were realised in the legislation regulating the forms of demonstration of ethnic minority identities. Firstly, it is the recognition of Latvia as "the nation state of the Latvian nation" and "the Latvian nation" (these concepts are included in the Preamble to the Constitution (Satversme) in 2014). Secondly, it is the recognition of the individual right of people who belong to ethnic minorities to the preservation of their identity. This principle is also included in the Constitution whose Article 114 stipulates the right of ethnic minorities "to maintain and develop their own language and ethnic and cultural originality" as a manifestation of essential human rights (Latvijas Republikas Satversme 2014).

It is obvious that the interethnic communication is possible when not only individual people – bearers of an original ethnic identity are recognised as its subjects, but it is essential to recognise the potential of a collective identity of ethnic groups in the formation of a civil society. As it is known, the issue of recognising ethnic groups as fully-fledged subjects of the interethnic communication arouses the largest number of discussions in scientific literature, which review the issue of collective and individual legal relations, national state and pluralistic civil society, multiculturalism, liberalism, etc. (Barry 2001, p. 19–55, Kymlicka 2007, p. 61–172). In this sense, the research hypothesis is created taking into consideration the ideas of a long discussion among the representatives of multiculturalism and liberalism (H. Arendt,

B. Barry, J. Cohen, A. Arato, J. Habermas, W. Kymlicka, R. Nozick, J. Rawls, P. Ricoeur, N. E. Snow, Ch. Taylor, M. Wieviorka, I. M. Young etc. (Arendt 1958, Barry 2001, Cohen, Arato 1994, Habermas 1993, Kymlicka 2007, Nozick1974, Rawls 2005, Ricoeur1966, Snow 1990, Taylor 1994, Wieviorka 1995, Young 1999)).

In the given research, the main methodological viewpoint was based on Jürgen Habermas's theory, according to which, resolution of problems of interethnic relationships in a society, creating circumstances for mutual understanding for individual and collective actors, can be formed through mechanisms of public discourse in which its participants recognise each other as responsible actors and do not prejudice their individual and collective identity. According to Habermas, the problem of recognition of collective identities of non-dominant groups in western society (religious, ethnic, class) is connected to the fact that the existing legal discourse itself is orientated to the recognition of subjective, individual human rights. At the same time Habermas believes that collective actors who argue about collective aims and the distribution of collective amenities action the political life. Habermas thinks that it is possible to coordinate the individualistically orientated Western law and interests of collective subjects, which is proved by the historic experience of liberalism and social democracy. These political forces managed to overcome the deprivation of rights of non-privileged groups. However, it happened in the forms of struggle for social and state universalisation of civil rights (Habermas 1993, p. 128–155).

Inter-ethnic communication is not only aimed at forming solidarity among the representatives of different ethnic groups based on the recognition of their equal status in a pluralistic society. Such communication also reproduces institutional differences between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities, which very often limits the possibility of recognizing the identity of ethnic minorities as a form of national identity. The conducted sociological research shows that the public consciousness in Latvia is more focused not on the recognition of the equal status of the identities of the ethnic majority and minorities, but on the reproduction of institutional differences between them. The most important indicator of full inter-ethnic communication is the discussion, and not the neglect of problems in ethnic equality, which claim any ethnic groups. The materials of sociological research suggest the opposite. In the minds of the ethnic majority there is no expressed need to discuss problems with ethnic equality that accentuate ethnic minorities.

This article presents some data on the reproduction of status differ-ences between Latvians and ethnic minorities at the level of interethnic communication between these groups.

Data of the Quantitative Sociological Research

In order to demonstrate the attitude of a civil society towards the communication of ethnic groups in public space in Latvia, the au-thor shows some data of representative sociological research "Gender, Culture and Power: Diversity and Interactions in Latvia and Norway" (2016). The number of respondents is 1003 (particular characteristics of respondents in Table 1).

Table 1.Characteristics of respondents

Social characteristics	Total	%
Gender		
Females	494	49.3
Males	509	50.7
Ethnicity		
Latvians	687	68.5
Russians	257	25.6
Other	49	4.9
Education		
Incomplete primary	19	1.9
Primary	57	5.7
Incomplete secondary	65	6.5
Secondary	211	21.0
Secondary professional	356	35.5
Incomplete higher	61	6.1
Higher	233	23.2

Citizenship		
Citizens of Latvia	871	86.8
Residents of Latvia	112	11.2
Citizens of other states	12	1.2
Native language		
Latvian	640	63.8
Latgalian	41	4.1
Russian	292	2.1
Other	29	2.9
The language of daily communication in the family		
Latvian	673	67.1
Latgalian	25	2.5
Russian	297	29.6
Other	6	0.6
Religious affiliation		
Lutheran	294	29.3
Catholic	233	23.2
Orthodox	226	22.5
Other	32	3.2
Atheistic worldview	177	17.6
Refuses to answer	41	4.1
Place of residence		
Rīga	294	29.3
District of Rīga	164	16.4
Vidzeme	121	12.1
Kurzeme	166	16.6
Zemgale	105	10.5
Latgale	153	15.3

The main parameters of inter-ethnic communication in Latvia are determined by the relationship between Latvians and the largest ethnic minority in the country – Russians, this article shows the data in the comparative analysis between these two parts of Latvian society. The study revealed that respondents in the majority had a positive view of the institutional framework of inter-ethnic communication in Latvia. The majority of respondents among Latvians (70% – 80%) and Russians (60% – 70%) believed that in business, in public administration, in the sphere of politics, journalism, education, science, culture and art, sports, and entertainment industry Latvians and the ethnic minorities with the same level of education and similar abilities have equal career opportunities. However, Russians were less optimistic in the attitude to such areas as public administration, the legal system and the police (less than 50%)(Table 2).

Table 2. Attitude towards the fact that Latvians and representatives of ethnic minorities with the same level of education and similar abilities have equal career opportunities in these areas of life in Latvia. Answers – "completely and almost agree" (%).

Social areas	All respondents	Latvians	Russians
Small business	86.1	89.4	78.8
Medium-sized business	81.7	85.2	73.5
Big business	74.2	78.9	63.4
Public administration	57.6	62.2	47.1
Legal system	58.3	62.2	49.3
Police	59.1	63.2	49.7
Municipalities	66.2	69.6	58.5
Politics	64.7	68.6	55.9
Journalism	78.8	84.0	66.7
Science and education	79.1	83.8	68.0

Culture and art	82.1	86.2	72.5
Sport	84.1	86.8	78.1
Entertainment industry	85.3	87.9	79.4

At the same time respondents expressed optimism for the rights of ethnic minorities in the realisation of their identity in private and public life. More than 90% of respondents believe that ethnic minorities in Latvia have such rights in families of respondents and their circles of friends; approximately 70% – to express their views in the media, in relations with colleagues at work /school, in the activities of non-governmental organisations and in the field of entertainment and culture; approximately 60% – in the political life (Table 3).

Table 3. Ethnic minorities' rights to realize their identity,
and to express beliefs about their values (%).

	All respondents	Latvians			Russians		
	Are or rather are	Are or rather are	Sometimes are, sometimes not	Not or rather not	Are or rather are	Sometimes are, sometimes not	Not or rather not
Family of respondent	93.0	94.0	3.8	2.0	90.2	5.2	4.2
Circle of respondent's friends	93.0	90.7	6.1	3.1	87.9	5.9	5.9
In relations with colleagues at work /school	67.2	66.1	26.9	6.8	68.7	22.9	8.1

In the activities of non-gov-ernmental organisation	69.6	69.7	24.0	6.1	68.3	20.3	11.2
To express their views in the media	73.5	74.2	19.9	5.7	70.9	16.7	12.1
In the sphere of culture	68.2	69.2	22.7	7.8	64.7	20.6	14.4
In the sphere of entertain-ment	69.5	70.5	21.7	7.7	66.3	20.3	13.1
In the politi-cal life	62.6	64.3	25.6	9.9	58.2	26.8	14.7

More or less 90% of Latvians and Russians respondents do not see the existence of discrimination in society towards ethnic, gender groups and groups with non-traditional sexual orientation (Table 4).

Table 4. Have you ever observed or do you observe any discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation at the organisation, team, or institution you belong to? Answers – "discrimination has not been" (%).

	All re-spondents	Latvians	Russians
Discrimination against Latvian female	94.8	93.9	96.7
Discrimination against other nationality female	92.7	93.3	91.2
Discrimination against Latvian male	97.0	97.1	96.7
Discrimination against other nationality male	93.5	93.7	92.8

Discrimination against Latvian female with non-traditional sexual orientation	90.8	91.6	88.9
Discrimination against Latvian male with non-traditional sexual orientation	91.0	92.0	88.6
Discrimination against other nationality female with a non-traditional sexual orientation	91.1	91.8	89.2
Discrimination against other nationality male with a non-traditional sexual orientation	91.0	92.1	88.2

The optimistic view on the situation with women, sexual and ethnic minority's rights depends on the attitude to these issues as not a priority. The research revealed a clear hierarchy of preference structures of the various social, political and cultural values. Respondents were asked to evaluate different social issues in order of importance from 1 to 10, where 1 means "this for me is most important" and 10 is "there's no meaning in my life". The answers were grouped in the range from 1 to 5 (very significant values to the average value). It turned out that the most important to the respondents are the issues of social guarantees and security (91.3 %), political stability in the world – 84.9%, freedom of speech and political views – 61.6%, and the preservation of national values – 56.6%. But "peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies" scored 40.5%, and "guarantee of ethnic minorities" – 21.8% (the lowest share among all evaluated positions). However, it showed enough significant differences between Latvians and Russians in the assessment in their lives Latvia's national values and those values that are directly linked with the preservation of ethno-cultural identity of ethnic minorities. So, the "guarantee of ethnic minorities" as very important to the average degree of importance was 38.9% for Russian and 14.3% for Latvians (Table 5).

Table 5. Most important values. (Group range from 1 to 10 %)

Social, political and cultural values	All re-spondents	Latvian	Russians
Social guarantees and security	91.3	91.4	91.2
Political stability in the world	84.9	85.2	84.3
Freedom of speech and political views	61.6	63.5	57.5
Preservation of national values	56.6	59.8	49.0
The cultural life diversity	54.1	57.6	46.1
Peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies	40.5	38.6	45.1
Gender equality	38.0	40.8	31.7
The opportunity to participate in governmental decision making	37.9	35.2	43.8
Guarantee of ethnic minorities	21.8	14.3	38.9

Social identities – gender, sexual orientation (traditional and non-traditional), and ethnic (Latvian, Russian, Belarusian, Polish, Lithuanian, Jewish, Roma) – offered to the respondents for their assessment are of a neutral character within a pluralistic and democratic society with the established principles of tolerance towards social and ethno-cultural diversity. However, the research data proves that the respondents essentially disagree with a neutral status of these identities in Latvia's society, which stratifies them according to the level of their significance for a person's successful life. But this assessment does not mean that the respondents themselves approve this situation. They more likely believe that these mass attitudes to social identities or stereotypes of them are spread in the society. In fact, the respondents rely on the belief about the existence of not only differences, but also inequality and stratification of social identities.

The data prove that neither gender, nor sexual identities are considered neutral by the majority of the respondents. Ethnic identity as such in all offered options is not considered neutral either. Moreover, in relation to the largest ethnic groups in Latvia – Latvians and Russians – less than a half of the respondents recognised their ethnic identity as having a neutral influence on their life in Latvia. More than a half of the respondents consider only such social identities as Belarusian, Polish, Lithuanian and Jewish as neutral. However, it can more likely be explained by the small number of these groups in Latvia. The only exception is the identity of such a small group as Roma. Furthermore, this is the identity, in the respondents' opinion, that experiences the most intolerance in the Latvian society (around 45%). Apparently, the underestimated assessment of the significance of ethnic minority identities as compared to the Latvian ethnic identity for the implementation of life goals within the Latvian society is related to a lesser degree of political involvement of ethnic minorities, their representativeness among government, political, economic and cultural elite.

However, at the same time, while most respondents do not consider a gender orientation neutral, more than a half of the respondents think that both female and male identities positively or almost positively influence a person's life. Therefore, there is not any special opposition of these identities. However, in the assessment of sexual orientation and ethnic identity this opposition is extremely obvious. The respondents two and a half times as more often consider traditional sexual orientation more positive for living in the Latvian society than a non-traditional one (51.6% and 19.4%, respectively). The differences in the assessment of the Latvian identity and ethnic minority identities are not so significant, but are nevertheless evident. The Latvian identity is considered 1.6 times more favourable than the Russian, Belarusian, Polish and Lithuanian identity, twice as more favourable than the Jewish identity, and about 4 times more favourable than the Roma identity. Moreover, these differences exist separately among both Latvian and Russian respondents. A part of the respondents who consider the ethnic minority identities' influence as negative or almost negative attracts some attention. The largest part is accounted for in the assessment of the Roma identity (around 45%), which is followed by the Russian and Jewish identity (10% – 14 %), then the Belarusian, Polish and Lithuanian (from 2% to 9% among Latvian and Russian respondents) (Table 6).

Table 6. Influence of social identity and ethnicity
to a person's life in Latvia (%)

Identities	All	Latvians			Russians		
	Positive and almost positive	Positive and almost positive	Neutral	Negative and almost negative	Positive and almost positive	Neutral	Negative and almost negative
Female	52.2	50.8	45.7	3.4	54.9	39.2	5.9
Male	56.8	55.5	43.5	1.0	59.8	36.3	3.9
Traditional sexual orientation	51.6	48.9	47.5	3.6	57.2	37.9	4.9
Non-traditional sexual orientation	19.4	17.5	46.4	36.1	23.9	36.9	39.2
Latvian	63.6	60.8	36.8	2.3	69.3	28.8	2.8
Russian	40.2	39.7	48.9	11.4	41.2	44.1	14.3
Belarusian	36.8	35.1	60.0	4.8	39.9	50.7	9.5
Polish	37.4	35.1	61.4	3.4	41.8	52.3	5.9
Lithuanian	41.1	38.9	59.2	1.8	45.4	51.3	3.3
Jewish	30.8	29.0	58.7	12.4	34.0	55.6	10.5
Roma	16.3	14.8	40.0	44.9	19.3	35.0	45.8

One of the task of the research was to identify the level of private communication between people on the issues of equality among gender groups, ethnic minorities and groups with traditional and non-traditional sexual orientation. It was found that no more than a fifth part of the respondents discuss these issues "often" and "sometimes". The survey

showed a significant excess of a part of the respondents who "never" discussed these issues over those who did it "often" or "sometimes". This difference is 4–5 times larger when discussing the issues of women's equality with men. Discussing problems with the people with non-traditional sexual orientation – 3 times. Ethnic minorities' issues – 2 times (among the Russians) and more than 3.5 times (among the Latvians). Therefore, the issues of women's equality, sexual minorities and ethnic minorities are obviously not in the focus of interest for people in Latvia (Table 7).

Table 7. Frequency of discussions on the issues (%)

Topics	All respon-dents	Latvians		Russians	
	"often" and "some-times"	"often" and "some-times"	"never"	"often" and "some-times"	"never"
With women on women's equality issues	20.9	23.1	39.6	16.7	49.3
With men on women's equality issues	16.3	18.5	44.1	11.1	51.0
With persons with non-traditional sexual orientation about their equality issues	11.1	11.2	36.8	10.8	35.0
With persons with traditional sexual orientation about equality issues of the persons with non-traditional sexual orientation	15.2	15.7	43.4	13.4	46.1

With the Latvians about the Latvian ethnic minorities' equality issues	19.6	21.3	39.2	15.4	41.2
With the ethnic minorities' repre-sentatives about their equality issues	16.2	14.7	50.7	19.3	40.2

In general, respondents expressed no desire to increase the amount of information about ethnic minorities in different types of social communication (media –internet, radio, television), officials, political parties, NGO, scientists, secondary and higher education system, religious organisations communication with the civil society). Such a desire was expressed by less than half of all respondents (from 34.5 % to 48.3%). However, very large differences were found in this interest towards the problems of ethnic minorities among the groups of Latvian and Russian respondents. If 30 – 40% of Latvians expressed a desire to increase the amount of public information on the problems of ethnic minorities, the Russian respondents did it in 50% – 60% of cases (Table 8.). In fact, the areas of public communication are the most problematic spheres of social life, where the interests of Latvians and ethnic minorities diverge. The sphere of public communication on issues of ethnic minorities significantly adjusts the overall picture of the perceptions of the respondents about a real consolidation of multi-ethnic Latvian society.

***Table 8. Necessity to increase information about
the solving problems of ethnic minorities in
Latvia (answer – "it is necessary", %)***

Communications	All	Latvian	Russians
In the media (internet, radio, television)	48.3	41.3	63.1
Officials communication with the civil society	41.1	33.5	57.5

Political parties' communication with the civil society	42.1	34.9	56.9
NGO communication with the civil society	43.3	37.6	55.6
Scientists communication with the civil society	39.1	33.0	52.3
The secondary education system	46.0	40.9	57.8
The higher education system	44.2	38.3	57.5
Religious organisations communication with the civil society	34.5	27.4	49.7

Data and Analysis of the Qualitative Sociological Research

In addition to the data of quantitative sociological research, it makes sense to supplement the analysis of the possibilities and limitations of interethnic communication in Latvia with the data of qualitative sociological research. 22 respondents took part in the qualitative research: 15 out of them are Latvians (L), and 7 ethnic minorities' (mainly Russians) representatives (EM). According to their professional characteristics, 5 respondents are members of Saeima (S), 5 respondents are NGO activists (NGO), 5 respondents are secondary school teachers (T), 4 journalists (J), 3 employees at universities or research centres (R). A vast majority of the respondents are famous people in Latvia who have been involved in the implementation of the Latvian ethnic policy, and various ethnic discourses for a rather long time, a few of them since the beginning of the 1990s.

Problems with ethnic equality by Latvians. The respondents-Latvians often expressed an opinion that the emphasis which Latvian Russians put on the issues of implementation of requests of their collective identity is not justified; such opinions are artificially constructed and placed in their consciousness by Russian mass media. It leads, in the respondents' opinion, to a poor sense of belonging to Latvia in Russian-speaking population. However, there were not any specific

facts presented which could prove such interpretation of the Latvian Russians' identity:

"We study the influence of Russian propaganda on the Russian-speaking population's consciousness who speak about their problems. As far as identity is concerned, them a majority of Russian-speaking residents do not feel their full belonging to Latvia". (L, R)

Some respondents consider a sheer fact of existence of Russian-speaking environment in Latvia as an obstacle for inter-ethnic communication. The need for preserving a Russian collective ethno-cultural identity is considered as Russian chauvinism:

"There is no communication because of the information environment in two languages, which makes it impossible to come to an agreement about key issues, such as history, language, Ukraine, non-citizens, etc." (L, R)

When discussing the issues of ethnic equality, a vast majority of respondents-Latvians indicate that there are no norms in the legislation that discriminate against ethnic minorities. But it is not said that the Latvian legislation also includes the rights of ethnic minorities to develop their ethnic and cultural identity in the norms of ethnic equality. This leads to a negative attitude to the preservation of education in Russian. The ideas about their ethnic discrimination widespread in the Russian public consciousness are considered as a phantom of imagination. Therefore, it is important to change the consciousness and psychological attitudes of ethnic minorities by immersing them into the Latvian information environment:

"In Latvia, no one is discriminated against, as everyone has equal rights. The only differences relate to the status of citizens and non-citizens. I do not find it right that in Latvia there are Latvian, Russian, and Ukrainian schools. There should be Latvia's schools. However, for national groups should be subjects with the in-depth curriculum in the national culture". (L, NGO)

Some respondents tend to consider the problems of preservation of ethnic identity in relation to the issue of ethnic equality, but in relation to the tasks of integration of the society:

"Since we have the Social Cohesion Committee in the Saeima, the issue of ethnic identity is included in agenda. From the viewpoint of the integration of society, ethnic identity is a very important issue. There are no any restrictions for people of different ethnic origins. But another thing is that in accordance with the Preamble to the Constitution it is

obvious that in Latvia there will be no absolute equality in the sense that there will be no state language...As for the Latvian-Russian relations, there is still a lack of information on this issue on both sides." (L, S)

Ethnic equality is seen as an opportunity for all ethnic groups to have an equal access to public resources. At the same time, the respondents-Latvians pay special attention to the sphere of public communication and the priority role of the state language in it. Therefore, the phenomenon of ethnic equality is understood in conjunction with the duties of Russians to use the Latvian language in the public space, and with their socio-cultural competence. And the refusal to speak Latvian, some respondents perceive as a discrimination against Latvians:

"Speaking about equality, it is bad that a Russian young person after graduating school does not speak Latvian." (L, R)

"Ethnic discrimination exists. It is discrimination against Latvians, when they are addressed in Russian. Why do they have to speak Russian?" (L, NGO)

Ethnic equality is often reduced to the right of ethnic minorities and migrants to realize their ethnographic features in a private sphere. The majority of the respondents-Latvians remove the preservation of a full-scale cultural life and education in the languages of ethnic minorities from the sphere of human rights and they do not relate them to the problems of ethnic equality. Thus, identities of ethnic minorities are not considered as an integral socio-cultural phenomenon:

"The society must be provided with information on ethnic equality. As the question of culture is raised. What does a person see? First of all, some cultural differences. He speaks a different language. He has different festivals. Different religion. He sings and dances in a different way. For example, somebody cannot eat pork." (L, NGO)

"Russians cannot celebrate their holidays, or speak their language, can they? It is me who feels discriminated when I have to speak Russian."(L, R)

The respondent, who has been for a long time defending the principles of real ethnic equality in the press, directly connects these principles and the formation of a civil society. It is important to rely not only on the declared ethnic equality, but also to monitor deviations from it, including ones at the government level. And institutions of a civil society need to promote the convergence of ethnic communities:

"The issue of ethnic equality is one of the most crucial among politicians. This frozen issue on equality allows keeping the power without

forming a civil society…Russians and Latvians cannot live in myths about each other. But if there are no denials of discrimination on the part of the official authorities, it gives rise to suspicions... I agree, it is necessary to spread information on the problems of ethnic minorities. However, in order to do it, we need to change qualification of teachers and politicians. Media, two information spaces generate politicized ethnic stereotypes, describe ethnic communities in the framework of stereotypes. Media now do not bring communities together." (L, J)

Ethnic minorities' self-categorization. The research outcomes disprove the idea about "the split" intheRussiancommunityinrelation-tothevaluesoftheirowncollectiveidentity. Perhaps there are different political sympathies in relation to certain parties that claim to express the interests of this part of Latvia's population (the parties "Harmony", "Russian Union of Latvia", etc).The respondents showed generally similar views in relation to their own self-categorization as an ethnic group which has the need for maintaining its collective ethno-cultural, including ethno-linguistic identity. All respondents-representatives of ethnic minorities have emphasized their ethno-cultural identity. At the same time, they perceive the orientation of the Latvian state's ethnic policy, especially in relation to the status of the Russian language, the education reform at ethnic minorities' schools, the problem of statelessness for a large part of ethnic minorities, the problem of ethnic minorities' political participation, the peculiarities of information policy in the Latvian media, the communication between the government bodies with ethnic minorities through this ethnic categorization. Ethnic minorities' representatives consider the categorization of their collective ethno-cultural identity as a necessary characteristic of their subjectivity for the inter-ethnic communication. Moreover, compared with the respondents-Latvians, the representatives of ethnic minorities list the problems that affect this part of the Latvian society in a very detailed way. In addition, there is a desire for the comparative analysis of the ethno-political situation with the period of 1918–1934, as well as with the world cultural context:
        "Russian is a foreign language, although during the First Republic it was not, as well as German. There used to be Russian schools during that time. Now, there are not departments of Russian schools in the Ministry of Education. Therefore, these schools are not legitimatized. The third problem is non-citizens. I do not know how it will be sorted

out. Ethnic minorities have the right for their language, history, their myths. Integration can be only future-oriented. But the integration here is focused on the past. We have assimilation. I am writing about it all the time. But Latvians are not interested in these articles."(EM, NGO)

"It is extremely important to spread information about specific problems of ethnic groups. For example, it is important to debate about the reform in education, or about the issue of non-citizens. It is necessary to talk about the whole scope of ethnic minorities' problems. For example, speaking of Roma, the social aspect is important."(EM, J)

The issue of assessing the level of ethnic equality in Latvia was the most controversial among ethnic minorities' representatives. Part of the respondents interpret the phenomenon of ethnic equality from a formal legal viewpoint, not considering in its context the rights of ethnic minorities to preserve their collective ethnic and cultural identity and often reducing it to the issue of naturalization:

"I rarely encounter the problem of ethnic equality, but more often – the ethnic identity, as I work as a producer on the radio. The issue of ethnic equality is not relevant in Latvia."(EM, J)

However, the respondents described in detail the problems in the underestimated status of the Russian language in the legislation, and social and political life in Latvia. Apparently, this understanding of ethnic equality is a reflection of poor ideas about this phenomenon in the public consciousness.

Another part of the respondents-Russians, who actively work or worked in politics before, believes that it is necessary to include the problems of preserving the collective ethno-cultural identity of ethnic minorities in the content of the standards for ethnic equality:

"The issue of equality of ethnic groups is still relevant in the society. The issue of the equality of ethnic minorities cannot be resolved once and forever. Objectively we have two large groups who speak at home mostly in the Latvian language, or mostly in Russian. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure the rights of this second part of the society, to ensure them with the right to use their language. There should be amendments to the law which say that the Russian language is not a foreign language not being the second state language. It is not a threat to the Latvian language as a state language… Apart from this problem there is also the problem with non-citizens. The process of naturalization has stopped and it is not promoted by the government... There are differences in the opportunity to occupy various posts by non-citizens. But the majority

of the non-citizens are Russians. These differences are extremely vivid... It is necessary to conduct an audit of all decisions concerning ethnic minorities made by the government. But there is not any….” (EM, S)

Resources for inter-ethnic communication in ethnic minorities’ minds. The respondents-representatives of ethnic minorities believe that the inter-ethnic communication could be an important resource for the reconciliation of interests of this group and Latvians. However, they assess the existing forms of this communication very critically. Almost all respondents pointed to the negative stereotypes existing in relation to Russians, which are perceived in the society as strangers:

“In the society Russians are often addressed as “them”. There are a lot of negative ethnic statements about Russians on the Internet… We are offended when Russians are referred to as visitants, outsiders. My family have been living here since the 18th century.”(EM, T)

“Negative stereotypes: Russians are a fifth column.”(EM, T)

“There are many stereotypes in social media now.”(EM, J)

The respondent, who has been a member of the Saeima for a long time, mentions the absence of public discussions on ethnic topics in general, which leads to the degradation of inter-ethnic communication. The right-wing parties are especially responsible for the formation and implementation of the surrogate of inter-ethnic communication:

“There is a lot of meaningless communication between the government and minorities. The responsibility for the integration is in the Ministry of Culture where they implement the policy of their political party – assimilation. This style of communication is constantly degrading. There are neither adequate discussions, no TV programs either on the state television or the private one. On the Internet, the owners are more concerned about traffic, advertisement, provocative headings. In politics, there is a blockade on discussions on ethnic topics. Especially, taking into account the Ukrainian context. There is no initiative to start such discussions in the political parties, neither Latvian nor Russian. Maybe, in connection with Latvia’s 100th anniversary there will be a discussion about the Latvian political nation…The ban on Russian TV channels. There is a second state language in Finland. If we declare ourselves a country in Northern Europe, we have to consider their experience.”(EM, J)

In the opinion of this respondent, the cultural product which is created in Latvia by the Russian population, is inferior in quality to the

Latvian culture. However, the respondent did not provide any facts that can prove his assessments.

However, daily communication at work between Latvians and Russians is built outside the framework of recognizing the value of ethnic minorities' collective identities. The focus on joint economic projects without transforming the political content of inter-ethnic communication in Latvia is too optimistic. One of the respondents paid attention to the fact that the daily communication between Latvians and Russians happens without any conflicts, because it does not address the issues of ethnic identity:

"The issue of ethnic identity has been relevant all the time. But not in relation to daily communication. I have never had such problems."(EM, T)

Ethnic identity as a civilizational value cannot be ignored in the modern society by concealing and withdrawing it from the public debate. Therefore, we need to agree with one of the respondents about the need for a constant introduction of the society with the problems of ethnic equality (EM, J).

But in general, the respondents believe that the recognition of the minorities' right for their collective values, including the values of historical memory can be the condition for normal communication between Latvians and ethnic minorities:

"We should not "break the backbone" with May the 9th situation. It should not be forbidden for schools to attend the events in honour of May the 9th. The dialogue method is more efficient than the ban method. Ethnic communities have different attitudes, different values, including the sphere of foreign policy. It should not be perceived as anti-Latvian actions. Why are textbooks for Russians in Latvian? Children do not understand the text! Russians should step by step be involved in cultural projects, for example, writing textbooks." (EM, T)

Conclusion

Democratic multi-ethnic states set themselves a very challenging goal: to ensure the integration of society based on the culture of ethnic majority with respect for the cultures of ethnic minorities. This implies the structuring of ethnic identities. At the same time, a liberal democracy protects the principle of equality of citizens with different ethnic identity in all spheres of public and private life. The functioning of the common

public space of inter-ethnic communication without hard barriers is an important criterion for the recognition of multi-ethnic diversity and equality of all citizens, regardless of their ethnic origin and cultivated ethnic identity. The sociological research has confirmed the relevance of this approach. This study showed the existing untapped reserves of liberal values to create the open space of public communication for all ethnic groups.

At the same time, the study showed a very large share of respondents who considers a public communication on issues of ethnic minorities in Latvia as not important. Largely this is due to two main factors:

1. The lack of knowledge of the respondents about the existing spectrum rights of ethnic minorities in Latvia in accordance with the law. This is confirmed by the materials of the study conducted in Daugavpils (2014) (Volkovs 2017, p. 36 – 49); and
2. A weak focus on the rights and opportunities of ethnic minorities in the political process and political communication, especially in the programs of political parties, inter-party interaction, in leading mass media of Latvia, in the political culture of ethnic groups (Volkovs 2016, p. 321–340). The scientists who actively study Latvian political culture have observed a rather slight display of the values of political participation, while the expectations of paternalism on the part of the state, political parties are revealed in full (Brants 2009,Golubeva 2009).

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Ádám Németh, Ilmārs Mežs

SPATIAL PATTERNS OF ETHNIC DIVERSIFICATION AND HOMOGENIZATION IN INTERWAR LATGALE

While multiculturalism in a modern sense became a hot topic almost everywhere in Europe during the last decades, and there is a growing interest in understanding the possible social, economic and political outcomes of diversification, a number of regions in Central and Eastern Europe have been ethnically, linguistically and religiously extremely diverse 'far beyond living memory'. Similarly to Bosnia, Vojvodina or even the Vilnius area, Latgale – often called 'the land of blue lakes' – is undoubtedly one of those traditional multiethnic territories. Although the easternmost region of Latvia has been a popular research area for social scientists since the restored independence, the ethno-cultural history of the region can be considered still an incomplete puzzle worth to pay attention.

The aim of the study is to analyse the spatial patterns of ethnic diversification of Latgale in the first half of the 20th century – focusing on the interwar period – and elucidate the main causes and circum-

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stances of the alterations (where, why, how?), taking into account the most substantial demographic, socio-economic and political factors. The paper's contribution to the field of Baltic studies is the mapping of the revised, municipal-level census data by 1935 and 1943 for the first time, and the analysis of different types of diversification based on the dynamic interpretation of the ethnic fragmentation index.

Key words: multiculturalism, spatial patterns, ethnic diversification, interwar period, homogenization

Sources and methods

For the country-level analysis, we used the ethnic data from the official Latvian population censuses by1925, 1935, 2000, and 2011, the Soviet censuses by 1959 and 1989 as well as the Russian imperial census of 1897. While the questionnaires of the interwar censuses were accurate, exhaustive, and suitable for Latvian conditions, most of the historians do not recognize the population registration by 1943 as a proper census. It was ordered and coordinated by the German occupying powers and the questionnaires consisted of only a few questions thus the results may be debatable indeed. Despite this fact, these data serve as the only opportunity to estimate at least the main directions of ethnic changes in that turbulent historical situation. In case of the finely nuanced spatial analysis, the core units of investigation were the municipalities, the smallest existing administrative units. After the geo-referenced digitization process the harmonization of the polygons and the aggregation of demographic data according to the administrative border modifications were a crucial task in order to provide perfect comparability between 1925–1935 and 1935–1943. The calculation, classification and visualization were supported by the ESRI ArcGIS 10.2 software package.

Since Latgale is one of the most typical examples of the traditionally multi-ethnic regions in Europe (Strods 1989, Apine 1996, Ivanov 2010), describing simply the population number and ratio of its ethnic groups does not seem to be a suitable method to grasp the degree and direction of diversification. Therefore, this paper proposes a different approach: the adaptation of the *ethnic fragmentation index* (a special version of Hirschman-Herfindahl Index) which can be considered a way of "compressing information on the number and population shares of ethnic groups in a given setting to a single number" (Schaeffer 2014). (Such indexes are usually used in the literature as independent variables.)

Through probability theory it shows the likelihood of an event when two inhabitants belonging to different ethnic groups meet arbitrarily. The values can vary between 0 and 1, where 0.00 means a completely homogeneous population and 1.00 refers to a completely heterogeneous one, when each member of the community belongs to different ethnic groups.

$$EFI = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{k} s_i^2$$

s: population share of ethnic group 'i'
k: number of groups
EFI: Ethnic Fragmentation Index (Hirschman-Herfindahl Index)

Beside the statistical sources, the *geographic – ethnographic definition* of the region has to be also briefly addressed. Topographically, Latgale is situated between the Daugava and Aiviekste rivers (and to the east of them); however, the administrative boundaries have not been corresponding to these lines for centuries. During the 19th and 20th centuries the "statistical Latgale" either stretched somewhat beyond its geographic boundaries, or it was smaller than that territory. For instance, a large part of Jēkabpils district on the right bank of the Daugava River belongs to Vidzeme in religious and ethnographical terms. On the other hand, while Abrene area was the part of Latvia – and Latgale – between 1920 and 1944, the Ilūkste county was transferred to the region only in 1949. In the meanwhile, Liepna was merged with Alūksne district, Varakļāni with Madona district, while the rural settlements near Krustpils with Jēkabpils district (Figure 1). Therefore, the pre-World War II data are comparable with the post-war data only after their recalculation according to these administrative changes (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Administrative division of Latgale in interwar Latvia, and the aggregated structure of municipalities for providing perfect comparability between 1925, 1935 and 1943 (compiled by Ádám Németh)
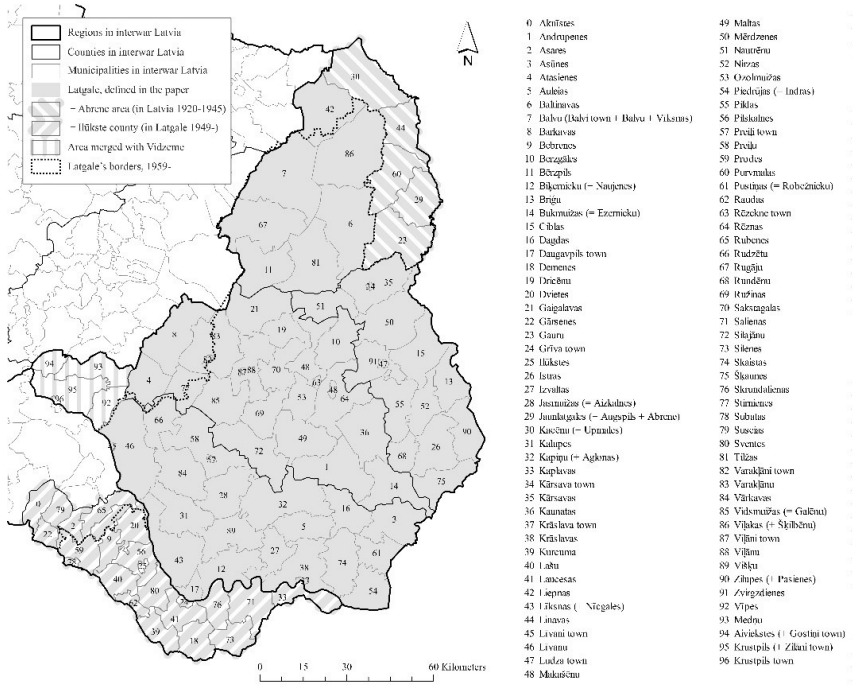
Latgale's ethno-linguistic characteristics at the end of the nineteenth century

The separate historical development of Latgale was resulted in a number of special cultural and socio-economic characteristics. For example, higher fertility rates compared to Vidzeme, Zemgale or Kurzeme, lower average living standards, denser settlement networks (compact villages instead of farms typical to rest of Latvia), or the emergence of a strong regional identity (Ivanov 2010, Runce 2013 etc.) based on the common Catholic religion and the Latgallian mother tongue which is more than a simple dialect (Bojtár 1997, p. 169–170).

The multicultural heritage of Latgale also goes back to its divergent historical development. According to the first modern census of the

Russian Empire in 1897, 51% of the region's population spoke Latvian (Latgallian), 16% Russian, 13–13% Belarusian and Yiddish, and 6% Polish. The Latvians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Belarusians lived mostly in the countryside while the Russians and Jews were concentrated rather in the towns, especially in Daugavpils, Rēzekne and Krāslava. The linguistic composition of Ilūkste county was presumably among the most hetero-geneous ones in contemporary Europe, where speakers of Latvian (29%), Belarusian (18%), Polish (16%), Russian (15%), Lithuanian (11%) and Yiddish (9%) lived in nearly the same proportion (Figure 2). However, it is important to emphasize that official statistics can be considered only an approximate reference point in this traditionally multicultural area. The different dimensions of identity (ethnic origin, mother tongue, religion, citizenship or even local identity) were layered on each other in various ways, thus many people had multiple or hybrid identities.

Figure 2. Population by mother tongue and fragmentation index considering mother tongue of the "Latvian counties" (1897) (Németh 2013, p. 414)
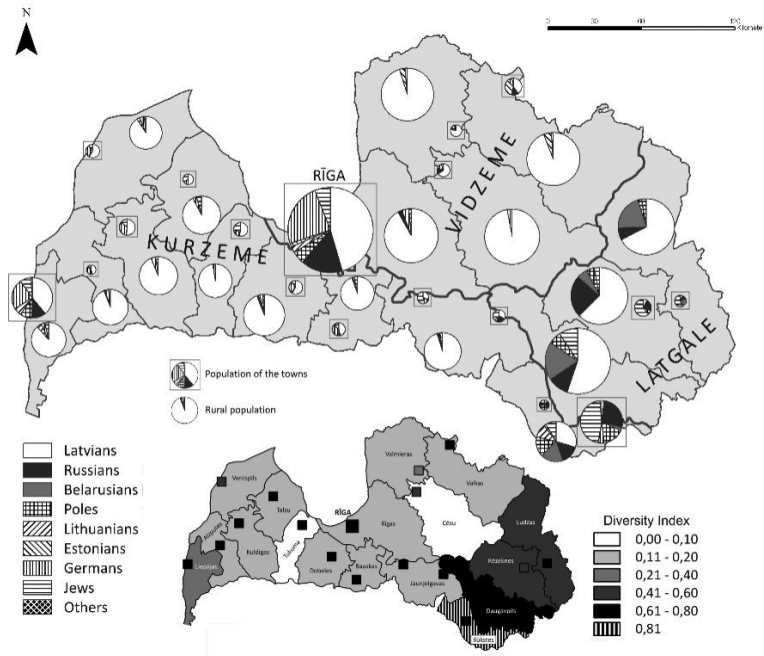
The first major transformation of Latvia's ethnic composition in the 20th century was related to *World War I* (Mežs 1994). The increase in the proportion of Latvians (+35 000 people, + 5.1% percentage points) was mostly fed by immigration, since tens of thousands of Latvian refugees returned to their kin state after 1919 from Soviet Russia. Apart from them, only the number of Russians increased significantly (+39 000 people, +2.5 percentage points), however, this growth was rather apparent. On the one hand, the base values by 1897 are uncertain because officials did not make difference between Russians and Belarusians consistently. Moreover, due to the German invasion in 1917 virtually all the Russian officials, the military, and a part of the industrial working class left the country. Thus, similarly to Estonia, in fact there was a major decrease only partially compensated by the flight of a few thousand 'white' Russians from Communist Soviet Russia (Katus et al. 1997, p. 226). The decrease in the proportion of Germans was primarily caused by emigration; the Bolshevik terror and the expropriation law of the 1919 agricultural reform forced masses of German landowners to emigrate (Rauch et al. 1994, p. 58–63). The number of Latvian Jews dropped drastically as a result of the deportations in 1915 when approximately 26 000 Jews were resettled from Kurzeme to Russia, and after the war less than half of them returned (Lohr 2001, p. 410–411).

As a result of these processes the fragmentation index of Latvia dropped by 0.09, indicating the obvious homogenization of the ethnic structure. Similar processes took place in Latgale, though the region was not affected by the Jewish deportation, and the increase in the proportion of Russians was more noticeable here, thanks to the inclusion of the mostly Russian-inhabited Abrene area to Eastern Latvia.

Demographic and migratory processes behind the ethnic alterations

The interwar period usually appears in the literature as the era of ethnic homogenization (Mežs et al. 1994). Was Latgale characterized by similar or different trends in comparison with the national tendencies, and what were the causes and consequences of the changing ethnic patterns? Taking into consideration the values of ΔEFI on national level, we can observe homogenization in Latvia: the fragmentation index decreased first by 0.04, and then further by 0.05 until 1943 (Table 1, Figure 3). In order to elucidate the main reasons, we have to take into

Table 1. Figure 3. Change of the ethnic composition and the fragmentation index in Latvia (left) and Latgale (right), 1897–2011. Symbols: 'lan': data by mother tongue, 'a' with Abrene district, 'c' census data, 'm' data by Mežs and Németh2013. (Compiled by ÁdámNémeth)

Latvia	SUM	Latv.	Rus.	Bela.	Ukr.	Poles	Jews	Lith.	Ger.	oth/unkn.	EFI
1897[lan]	1,929,387	68.3	8.0	4.1	0.1	3.4	6.4	1.3	7.1	1.3	0.51
1925[a]	1,844,805	73.4	10.5	2.1	0.0	2.8	5.2	1.3	3.8	1.0	0.44
1925	1,801,465	75.0	8.5	2.1	0.0	2.8	5.3	1.3	3.9	1.1	0.42
1935[a]	1,950,502	75.5	10.6	1.4	0.1	2.5	4.8	1.2	3.2	0.8	0.41
1935	1,905,936	77.0	8.8	1.4	0.1	2.6	4.9	1.2	3.3	0.8	0.40
1943[a]	1,803,104	80.1	11.5	2.3	0.6	2.1	?	1.3	1.0	1.1	0.34
1943	1,760,173	81.9	9.5	2.3	0.6	2.2	?	1.4	1.0	1.1	0.32
1959	2,093,458	62.0	26.6	2.9	1.4	2.9	1.7	1.5	0.1	0.8	0.54
1970	2,364,127	56.8	29.8	4.0	2.3	2.7	1.6	1.7	0.2	1.0	0.59
1979	2,502,816	53.7	32.8	4.5	2.7	2.5	1.1	1.5	0.1	1.0	0.60
1989	2,666,567	52.0	34.0	4.5	3.5	2.3	0.9	1.3	0.1	1.5	0.61
2000	2,377,383	57.7	29.6	4.1	2.7	2.5	0.4	1.4	0.1	1.4	0.58
2011	2,067,887	62.1	26.9	3.3	2.2	2.2	0.3	1.2	0.1	1.7	0.54

Latgale	SUM	Latv.	Rus.	Bela.	Ukr.	Poles	Jews	Lith.	Ger.	oth/unkn.	EFI
1897[lan]	501,623	50.6	15.5	13.2	?	6.2	12.7	0.3	1.0	0.4	0.68
1925[a]	572,791	55.1	26.5	6.0	?	5.6	5.4	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.62
1925	529,451	59.0	21.2	6.5	?	6.0	5.9	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.60
1935[c, a]	605,516	61.0	26.8	2.7	?	3.9	4.6	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.55
1935[c]	560,950	64.8	22.1	2.9	?	4.1	4.9	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.53
1935[m, a]	605,516	58.6	27.0	4.2	?	4.4	4.6	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.58
1935[m]	560,950	62.3	22.3	4.6	?	4.7	4.9	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.56
1943[a]	547,655	60.9	29.2	5.8	?	2.9	?	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.54
1943	504,728	65.5	23.9	6.3	?	3.1	?	0.7	0.1	0.3	0.51
1959	435,145	50.2	35.6	5.3	0.6	6.6	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.9	0.61
1970	429,272	46.0	38.6	5.9	1.0	6.5	0.7	0.6	0.0	1.6	0.63
1979	422,906	41.7	41.9	6.6	1.3	6.3	0.5	1.0	0.0	2.0	0.64
1989	421,758	39.4	43.4	6.6	1.9	6.5	0.0	0.6	0.0	3.5	0.65
2000	384,666	43.1	40.4	6.0	1.5	7.2	0.0	0.6	0.0	2.7	0.64
2011	304,032	46.0	38.9	4.9	1.6	6.8	0.1	0.6	0.1	2.5	0.63
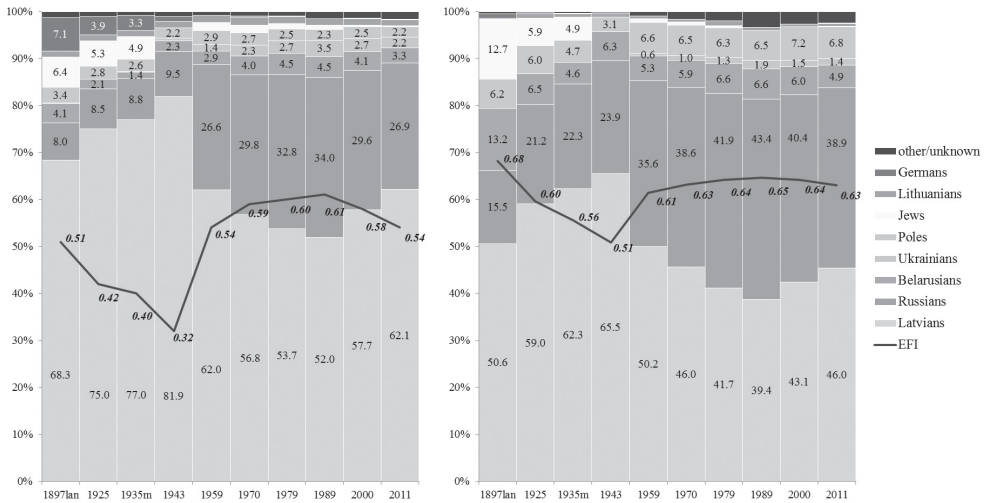
account the factors influencing the directions of diversification: the ethno-specific differences in natural increase, net migration as well as the assimilation trends.

At the end of the 19th century, within Tsarist Russia, the Governorates of Estland, Livland and Kurland differed from the rest of the empire not only in economic and cultural but also in *demographic* terms. The Estonians, Latvians, and Baltic Germans were among the first nations in Europe who entered the third phase of demographic transition characterized by slowly declining mortality rates and rapid decline in birth rates, whereby population growth slowed down. At the same time, they entered the second stage of mobility transition too (Zelinsky 1971), which meant the intensification of rural – urban migration, and the long-distance migration became a massive phenomenon too. Emigration at the turn of the century was mainly directed to the east – Saint Petersburg and Siberia. The other ethnic groups in the Baltic region and the Lithuanians and Russians living in the neighbouring provinces moved into these stages of demographic and mobility transition only several decades later (Figure 4).

The rate of *natural increase* of Latvians, who underwent the demographic transition surprisingly early, fell below 2% already in the 1920s (Zvidriņš 1983, Katus 1994). On the other hand, the Russians of Latvia

had younger age structure, higher fertility rate and natural growth, furthermore they usually married at a much younger age. (Hajnal 1965). The rate of natural growth was higher among the Belarusians and Poles but lower among other minorities compared to the Latvians, while the Germans and Estonians had already witnessed a natural decline.

The *regional differences* in demographic indicators were significant within Latvia, which can be seen as a result of the different historical development of Latgale (Németh 2012). Considering the pace of demographic transition, this region showed similarity rather with neighbouring Lithuanian and Russian territories. The contrast was sharp: while the population of Vidzeme and Kurzeme annually increased by about only 300 and 1,100 on average through natural growth, the average annual growth of Latgale was about 7,200 people between the two world wars. In other words, the four eastern counties provided almost 70% of Latvia's total natural increase in these years (Ceturtā tautas skaitīšana Latvijā 1935, p. 288–295).

Figure 4. Fertility rate in some North and East European countries or regions by 1881 and 1934, compared to the Estonians (percentage points) (Sakkeus 1993, p. 3.)
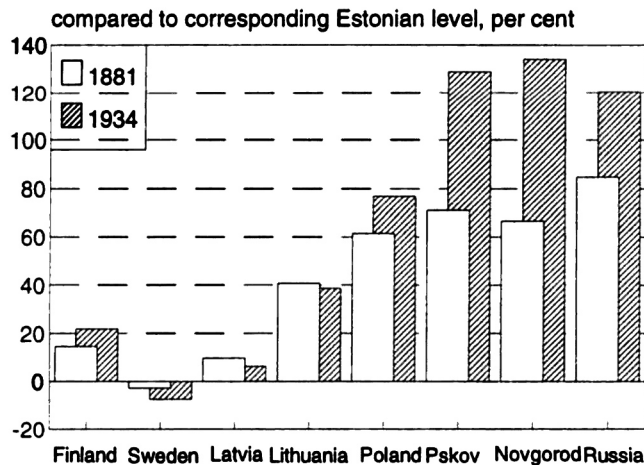
The change in ethnic composition was, of course, not affected only by these processes. The contemporary statistical publications called the

difference between the actual change of population and natural increase *"mechanical growth"*, which should be understood as an outcome of migration and – taking into account each ethnic group separately – assimilation. Which factor and to what extent was responsible for this "mechanical growth"?

The birth of independent Latvia coincided with the entry of the Latvian population the third stage of mobility transition, along with the stagnation of long-distance migration. Emigration slowed down by the 1930s, and the diminishing *migration* potential increased rather the population of the local cities. In addition, with the arrival of temporary foreign guest workers, signs of the fourth phase of mobility transition were already visible: under bilateral agreements the Estonian and Latvian agriculture employed a number of Polish and Lithuanian labourers (Katus et al. 2005, p. 3). Seasonal and permanent internal migration occurred from Latgale too. Thus taking into account the low intensity of mobility, the "mechanical" component of the change of the size of ethnic groups was more likely to indicate assimilation trends.

The "missing data": assimilation and statistical manipulations

According to estimations "about 50 000 former non-Latvians became Latvians by *assimilation* during the interwar period, most of them in Eastern Latvia" (Mežs 1994b, p. 20); however, it can only partly be considered a spontaneous process. The assimilation of Latvian Estonians was, for example, at a late stage, as shown by the high percentage of mixed marriages and the frequency of the use of Latvian language in everyday life. Similarly, the leading Latvian statistician of the era, Marģers Skujenieks, described the Latvianization of the Abrene area as spontaneous assimilation, and declared the local Russians to be "anthropologically Latvian" people who had recently been Russianized (Latvijas Statistikas Atlass. Skujenieks 1938, p. 14). Although there were no open and violent Latvianization efforts even after 1934 – under the authoritarian regime led by Kārlis Ulmanis – the political elite tried to foster the increase of Latvians' share with various indirect "tricks". Such an example was the reorganization of the education system (Lacombe 1997, Purs 2004), or the so-called "free lunch program" (Purs 2002) but this effort was mirrored in statistical data management too.

For instance, the children born in ethnically mixed families – one of the parents being Latvian – were automatically termed Latvian by

the 1935 census (Zvidriņš, Vanovska 1992, p. 28). However, even if we compare the ethnic data of this census with those of the former and latter ones, it still does not explain the radical decline of the number of certain minorities by 1935. Although during the nationalist Ulmanis regime many people tended to identify themselves rather Latvian due to "aspects related to family and workplace" (Rauch et al. 1994, p. 59), it cannot be a sufficient explanation. (Such multiple changes of declared ethnic affiliations were facilitated by the fact that hybrid identity in Latgale was still an ordinary phenomenon; see e.g. Latvian-speaking Jews, Catholic Belarusians or Russians, or people with Lithuanian ancestry but with Polish national identity.)

In addition, Ilmārs Mežs noticed that the ethnic affiliation of respondents on the original census questionnaires were subsequently amended at least in 14 000 cases in 18 settlements of Latgale, often "corrected" and annotated the changes with pencil. It is not known who (presumably census officials), when and why made these modifications, however, the official census data were published after this *manipulation*. In most cases, the ethnic affiliation of Poles and Belarusians, less frequently Russians and Lithuanians were changed to Latvian, although there were changes between these groups as well. If we revise the officially published data (or, more precisely, ignore the subsequent modifications), the ethnic compositions of these municipalities by 1935 show a much more realistic picture compared to the 1925 and 1943 censuses (Table 2, 3). Therefore, following the proposal of Mežs and Németh (2014), we work with the original data instead of the official census data.

Table 2. Share of Latvians, Belarusians and Poles in selected municipalities of Latgale. Data by 1935: officially published census data (source: Mežs and Németh 2014, p. 72)

	Latvians					Belarusians				Poles				
	1925	1930	1935	1941	1943	1925	1930	1935	1943	1925	1930	1935	1941	1943
Demenes	12	27	52	20	33	39	26	6	23	18	22	12	24	11
Kaplavas	18	31	62	31	48	58	31	23	38	15	25	7	9	5
Kurcuma	12	24	56	22	24	15	11	9	16	31	32	6	32	15
Laucesas	11	32	41	19	23	6	5	2	11	23	15	11	22	12
Piedrujas	3	17	57	7	13	92	68	34	82	2	10	3	2	0
Robežnieku	5	24	62	14	19	58	51	26	75	23	19	8	11	3
Salienas	29	38	56	30	51	24	22	12	21	9	13	3	13	5
Silenes	11	40	69	18	22	33	15	4	34	3	2	1	2	0
Skaistas	41	45	88	58	80	49	28	2	10	5	20	4	7	3
Skrudalienas	16	31	52	13	17	25	10	5	24	8	12	2	11	9

Table 3.18 municipalities where the original census questionnaires were modified by unknown people for unknown reasons before the publication of the official census data in 1935. L: Latvian, B: Belarusian, P: Polish, R: Russian, Li: Lithuanian (Mežs and Németh 2014, p. 73)

Municipality	Pop. number	B → L	P → L	Li → L	R → L	P → B	Sum	%
Aulejas	7,336	374	-	-	-	-	374	5%
Demenes	3,521	702	368	-	46	-	1,116	32%
Jasmuižas	6,629	-	353	-	-	-	353	5%
Kapiņu	12,474	801	605	-	-	-	1,406	11%
Kaplavas	2,383	456	82	-	-	55	593	25%
Krāslavas	7,943	578	-	-	-	-	578	7%
Kurcuma	2,548	183	493	251	-	-	927	36%
Laucesas	4,002	120	338	252	84	-	794	20%
Naujenes	6,171	46	243	-	6	-	295	5%
Piedrujas	6,793	1,692	-	-	-	-	1,692	25%
Pustiņas	4,274	1,318	-	-	-	-	1,318	31%
Raudas	1,035	19	58	53	-	-	130	13%
Salienas	3,839	597	115	-	242	-	954	25%
Silenes	3,365	45	22	-	524	-	591	18%
Skaistas	6,788	1,633	-	-	-	-	1,633	24%
Skrudalienas	3,335	651	106	-	97	-	854	26%
Sventes	2,706	25	196	-	-	-	221	8%
Višķu	10,230	-	289	-	-	-	289	3%
SUM	95,372	9,240	3,268	556	999	55	14,118	15%

Spatial patterns of the ethnic homogenization and diversification

There is no consensus in scientific literature whether we should measure ethnicity at all. The contrast between the malleable, situational and multiple feature of identification, i.e. the *constructivist* theory (Barth 1969, Jenkins 1997 etc.) and the 'discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups … as fundamental units of social analyses' (Brubaker 2002) is a fundamental problem for such investigations. Nevertheless, a significant part of the international scientific community believes that, despite all their faults and imperfections, quantitative methods should form an important segment of ethnic studies (e.g. Williams and Husk 2013). By covering a large area and time interval, quantitative methods connected to human geographical tools can give an idea of the main trends by analyzing and visualizing the changing diversity patterns. Therefore, the robust results of quantitative analyses could rather serve as a basis for further research projects, for instance case studies with qualitative methodology.

All in all, the demographic and migration trends showed a clear ethnic homogenization on a national level in interwar Latvia: only the proportion of Latvians increased significantly until 1935 (+118 000 people, +2.1 percentage points). The rate of Russians, despite their actual growth, stagnated, while that of other minorities declined. The area with the fastest *homogenization* in the country was undoubtedly Latgale, where the proportion of Latvians grew significantly – although to a lesser extent compared to the official census data – but even so by about 3.5 percentage points. Where Latvians lived in majority, it usually took the form of homogenization, elsewhere that of strong diversification, most noticeably in the Abrene area. On the northern side of the Lithuanian-Latvian border, mainly around Zalve, Eleja and Auce, a slight increase in the proportion of Lithuanians was observed too.

The ethnically mixed settlements of Latvia were concentrated still in Latgale by 1935. The *spatial patterns* of diversity indices in Latgale had not changed significantly since 1925 (Figure 5, 6). While the relatively homogeneous northern and western municipalities were dominated by Latvians, and the settlements in the Abrene area maintained their Russian dominance, in the south eastern part of the country a higher degree of ethnic mixing was observable. The more or less equal number of Latvians and Russians resulted in bipolar ethnic compositions around Rēzekne. On the other hand, in South Latgale another 'subtype'

of diversity was typical; the list of the most fragmented towns was led by Daugavpils (0.76) and Krāslava (0.74), while the most diverse rural municipality in the whole Baltic region was Kurcuma that time (25% Polish, 20% Latvian, 20% Russian, 19% Lithuanian, 16% Belarusian; EFI=0.80).

Figure 5. Ethnic composition by municipalities in Latgale, by 1925, 1935* and 1943 (*modified data: Mežs and Németh2014) (compiled by Ádám Németh)
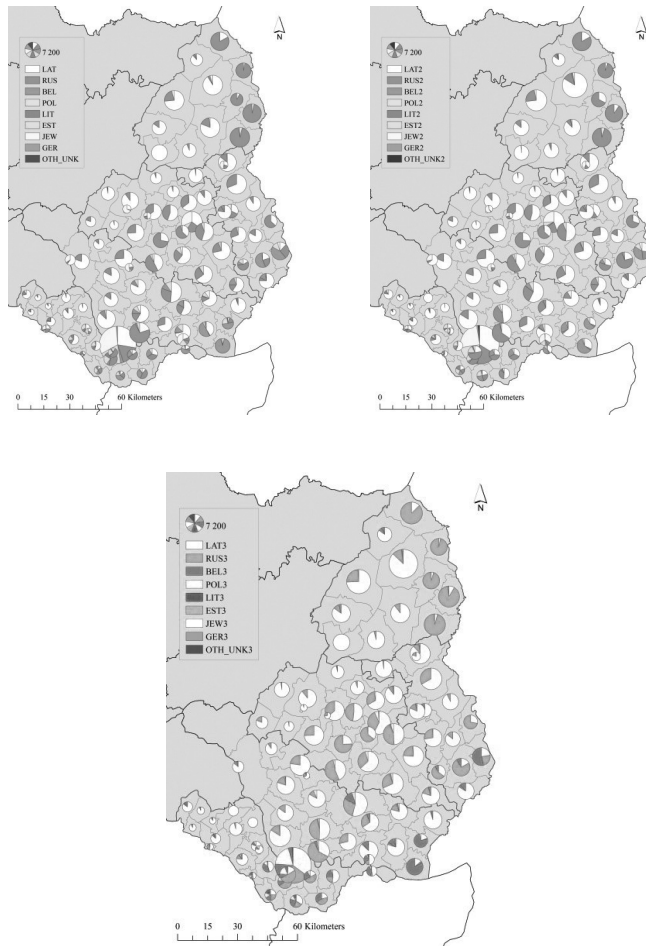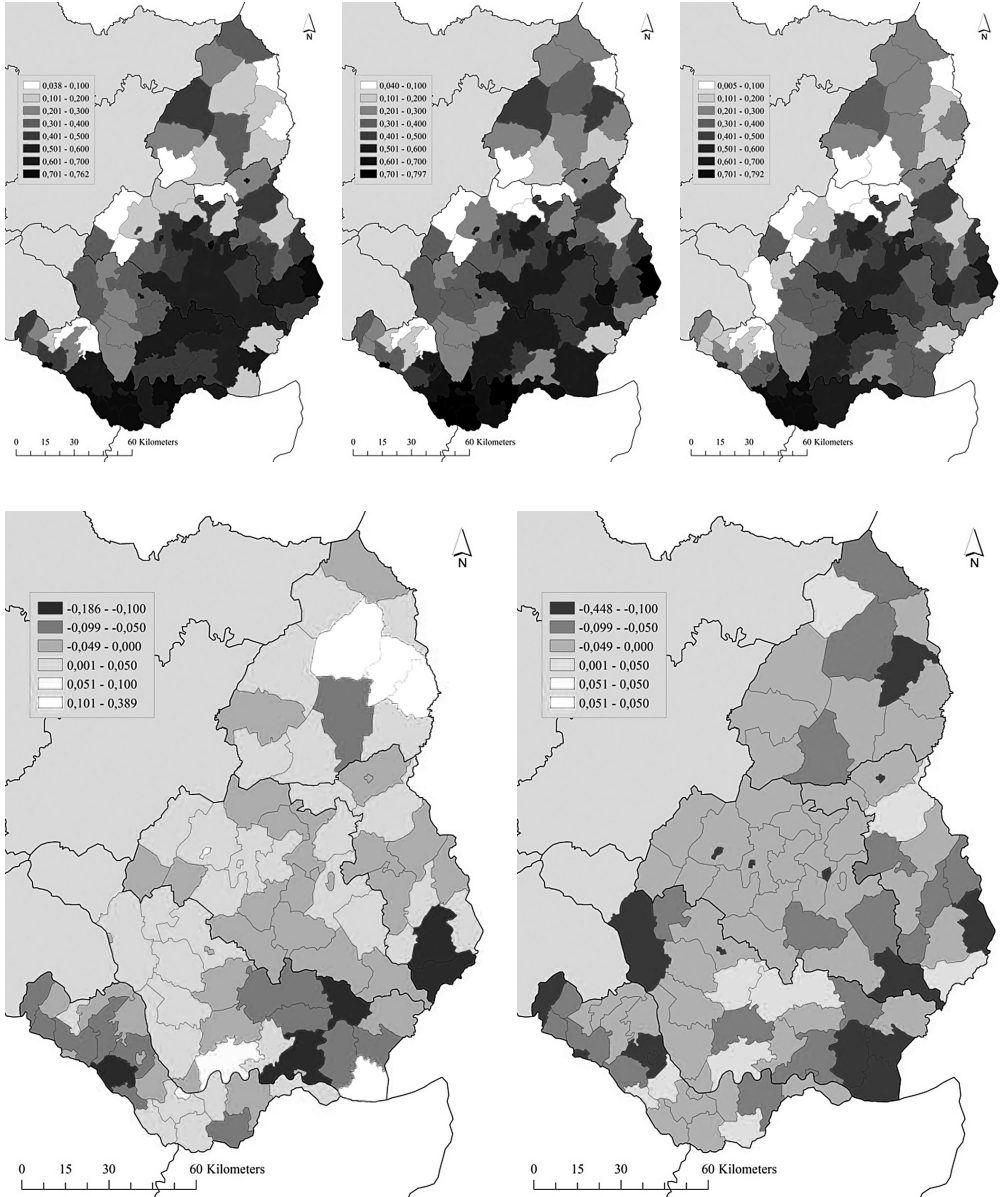
Figure 6. Ethnic fragmentation indexes by municipalities in Latgale, by 1925, 1935* and 1943, and their changes between 1925–1935 and 1935–1943 (*modified data: Mežs and Németh 2014) (compiled by Ádám Németh)

Main trends of ethnic alterations during and after World War II

In World War II Latvia has lost approximately 30% of its population which value was among the highest ones in Europe (Rauch et al. 1994, p. 219). During the first and second Soviet occupation altogether 200 000–260 000 people were either killed or deported to Siberia, and at least 100000 Latvians sought refuge in the West (Sakkeus 1993, p. 7). About 52 000 Germans were "resettled", almost all Jews and many Roma people were killed during the Nazi occupation, and a lot of people fled east with the retreating Russian Army in 1941 (Spekke 2006, p. 365). In the chaotic years of the war the German occupying powers conducted a population registration in 1943. Although historians do not recognize it as a proper, official census, thus its results cannot be treated without reserve indeed; it is suitable at least to gain a broad perspective of the main directions of ethnic alterations.

Latvia never before and ever since has been as homogeneous as prior to the second Soviet occupation; in 1943 the proportion of the titular ethnic group was 82%, while the fragmentation index dropped to 0.32 in Latvia and to 0.51 in Latgale. It is hardly surprising that the disappearance of the Jewish and German population contributed to the increase of the relative weight of all ethnic groups, except for Poles. (One may suspect, however, that there were many who used to declare themselves Polish; but in 1943, due to the changing political situation, rather e.g. Latvian.)

Among the 92 municipalities in Latgale, Latvians increased their share by at least 1 percentage point in 53, Russians in 37, Belarusians in 28, Poles and Lithuanians in 5 administrative units (Figure 5, 6). In general, in the rapidly homogenizing municipalities we can observe the disappearance of the Jewish population and/or the sharp decrease in the proportion of Poles, and the simultaneous increase in the share of Latvians. Of course, there were exceptions too: e.g., the growing rate of Russians in Purvmalas, and that of Belarusians in the municipalities of Piedrūjas, Pustiņas, Pasienes and Zilupes resulted in the shrinking number of Latvians. There were only 10 cases where the data indicated ethnic heterogenization. What is common in them is the slight decrease in the proportion of Latvians and sometimes Russians, and most often the slight increase in the rate of Belarusians – see e.g. the changes of Sventes, Silenes or Kapiņu. Comparing the datasets by 1925, 1943 and 1935 (either the official or the proposed one by Mežs and Németh),

we can notice the temporary jump in the number and proportion of Belarusians and the temporary fall in the number and proportion of Poles in 1943, respectively. To explore the causes of this phenomenon is an issue for future research.

The second Soviet occupation in 1944 was in many ways a turning point in the history of Latgale. On the one hand, the communist era saw the start of the slow depopulation of the region: the economically most disadvantaged counties of Eastern Latvia lost 40–60% of their population in a few decades, mainly due to internal emigration. Currently about half as many live in Latgale as in the years before World War II. On the other hand, ethnic homogenization was replaced by fast heterogenization: the constant in the decreasing number of Latvians and the increasing number of Russians tipped the scales, and turned the region into one with relative Russian majority by the end of the 1970s (Table 1, Figure 3). It can be explained by the immigration of Eastern Slavs into Daugavpils developed into a centre of heavy industries but there were demographic reasons too. The biggest gap in the pace of demographic transition between neighbouring nations of Europe, stretching over almost half a century, could be observed in relation to Estonians and Latvians as well as Russians on the other side. By that time the former ones had already entered the last stage of the transition characterized by low birth and mortality rates, and about zero population growth. By contrast, Russian immigrants were characterized by younger age structure and higher fertility rates (Parming 1977, p. 39). Thirdly, although the fragmentation index started to increase in Latgale, in fact the ethnic structure has become bipolar with balanced rates of Latvians and Russians. Nevertheless, hybrid identities are still very typical in Latgale.

Summary

The objective of the paper has been to give an overview of when, where, why and how did the ethnic compositions of the municipalities in Eastern Latvia altered until the World War II. The analysis yields a number of novel aspects for social scientists focusing on the Baltic States. (1) Instead of the traditional way of tracing the change of the majority-minority relation, the study focused on the directions and degree of diversification. Other novelties include (1) the analysis of the process on the level of the lowest existing administrative units, (2) an alternative interpretation of the 1935 census data (3) as well as mapping

the results of the 1943 census on the level of municipalities. In fact, the series of maps themselves constitute a new scientific result which, after the aggregation of data, enables us for the first time to directly compare the spatial patterns of ethnic diversity by 1925, 1935 and 1943.

The paper pointed out that the ethnic composition of Latgale was continuously shifting towards homogenization in the first decades of the 20th century, and it explored its causes and mechanisms too. The increase in the rate of Latvians between the two world wars can only partially be explained by demographic processes, because certain statistical manipulations may be suspected in the background. An obvious example is the 1935 census. Although the ethnic structure underwent a significant transformation after 1897, the spatial patterns of diversity did not change fundamentally until 1943 or even today. While we find homogeneous settlements with Latvian majority in the western and northern part of the region, the middle, around Rēzekne, is still dominated by polarized compositions, and there are fragmented settlements in the south around Daugavpils. However, it is important to emphasize that ethnic identities in Latgale have always been fluid, and a significant part of the population have traditionally a hybrid identity. Therefore, this quantitative paper, covering large time intervals and studying large-scale spatial trends, can best contribute to providing a firm basis for further qualitative research.

Acknowledgement

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"IS THIS NOT A UTOPIA?" THE WORK OF THE RIGA LITERARY AND ARTISTIC SOCIETY (1908–1915)

The authors of the article, on the basis of the archival materials and Latvian periodicals of 1907–1915, reconstruct the history of the Riga Literary and Artistic Society (1908–1915), which united representatives of the Latvian culture of three local nationalities – Russian, Latvian and German. The article describes in detail the structure of the board of the RLAS and the main forms of its activities (literary and musical evenings, the organization of two Baltic congresses of journalists in 1909 and 1910) in terms of the approval of the basic concept of the community – the national unity of the Latvian nationalities.

Key words: Riga Literary and Artistic Society, culture of Latvia of the 1900s-1910s, national, ethnic-international, multicultural society.

One of the pages of the archival inventory of the fund with the documents of the Riga Literary and Artistic Society (RLAS) contains a small addition apparently made by an archive's employee: "Kāda biedrība?" ("Which society?"). The question clearly demonstrates that today the

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existence of Latvian artists' society has been completely forgotten. The restoration of the history of the RLAS is important from both academic (historical, literary, cultural) and societal point of view. The concept of national unity, defended by the society throughout the years of its existence and even during the First World War, is worthy of attention, respect and study.

The idea of creating the RLAS belongs to the end of 1907. On the eve of the Christmas holidays, Riga journalists, writers, artists, musicians of three main local ethnic groups – Russians, Latvians and Germans – decided to establish a society with the aim to organize joint practical cultural life, to arrange art exhibitions, to publish books and almanacs, to hold literary evenings (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1908, p. 1). Organizational issues were resolved until the end of February 1908, when the society was officially registered[1] (LVVA Nr. 1. p. 1). The information about the existence of a new society appeared in Latvian newspapers on April 1, 1908, after the society, which at that time united 30 art workers, held the first open general meeting (Biedrību dzīve 1908, p. 3).

The main idea of the society – the equality of all local languages and cultures – was to be demonstrated by the international board chosen by the general assembly. The society's chairperson was Ivan Aleksandrovich Inozemtsev (Ivin), a Russian journalist who also collaborated with Latvian periodicals and wrote articles in the Latvian language. He was the one who initiated the foundation of the society, and it is important that the initiative came from a representative of the Russian group. The Latvian press constantly emphasized that the creation of the society, where all cultures and languages are equal, is a "sign of our time", "significant changes", a demonstration of the "humanistic readiness of the people who have a numerical advantage not to oppress other peoples, not to turn our society into a hotbed of hatred and the split of nations"[2] (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1908, p.2).

The merits of I. A. Inozemtsev are also noted some time later. In 1911, the newspaper "Dzimtenes Vēstnesis" (Herald of the Homeland) publishes a comprehensive analytical article "Rapprochement of Local Nations in Practice", which was devoted to the evaluation of the so-

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[1]   The Charter of the society was signed by the governor of the province of Livonia on the 29th of February, 1908.

[2]   In the original: "... humānas gatavības, lai tautība, kura ir skaitliskā pārsvarā, neapspiestu parējās tautības vai nepārvērstu par tautību naida un šķelšanās perēkli".

ciety's activities. "I have to state that the most work comes from the Russian side, also the most idealism and sacrifice. It is the chairman who demonstrates attentive attitude and tolerance towards all other nations"[3] (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1911, p.1) – the author of the article, a Latvian journalist, critic, writer Līgotņu Jēkabs, who was elected as a vice-chairperson, thus concludes his observations. During all the years of the society's existence, Līgotņu Jēkabs actively defended the society's ideas in the Latvian press. Edvards Vulfs, a Latvian poet, playwright, prose writer and a translator became one of the secretaries of the RLAS. During the First World War, he actively translated Russian military poetry into Latvian; the largest number of such translations belongs to him. The second secretary was an ethnic German Ernst Blumenthal, who was known as a Russian poet Yevgeny Sharantsev in the artistic world.

The activity of the society was primarily educational in nature. In the autumn of 1908, the RLAS rents the permanent premises in the center of the city (Рижский вестник 1908, №217, p. 3), where it begins to hold weekly literary and musical evenings, so-called "family literary Thursdays" [4] (Рижский вестник 1908, № 232, p. 3) which very quickly became popular. On October 17, 1908, the newspaer "Rizhsky Vestnik" (Riga's Herald) wrote: ""Thursdays" of the RLAS are highly appreciated, overflowing a cozy apartment to the limits of its capacity. Already for the second "Thursday", many who wanted to attend the evening had to be denied for the lack of space" (Рижский вестник 1908, № 238. p. 3) [5]. The structure of the evenings was settled immediately and almost did not change in the course of time. In the first – literary – part, the

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[3]   In the original: "Jākonstatē tas, ka taisni no krievu puses visvairāk strādāts, vis-vairāk ideālisma un uzupurēšanās parādīts biedrības darbībā un ka taisni biedrības priekšnieks tādu uzmanību un toleranci parādījis pret visām citām tautībām".

[4]   From autumn 1909 till summer 1910 the evenings were held on Fridays (and, thus, were called "Firdays").

[5]   In the original: ""«Четверги» литературно-художественного общества положительно завоевывают себе симпатии, переполняя уютную квартирку до пределов вместимости. Уже на втором «четверге» многим, желавшим по-пасть на вечер, пришлось отказать за недостатком места». Two months later the members of the RLAS complain about the fact that ""Thursdays" due to an excessive influx of guests are no longer "intimate and cozy". See the Supplement to "Rizhsky Vestnik", November 22, 1908. In the course of time, the RLAS evenings continued to remain popular, the tickets were in constant demand.

reports[6] were read, the subject (or direction) of which determined the theme of the evening.

The evenings were devoted, for instance, to a particular author: such were the evenings devoted to V.G. Belynsky, N.V. Gogol, I.A. Goncharov, I.S. Turgenev, L.N. Tolstoy, A.P. Chekhov, as well as to "new poets", K. Balmont and V. Bryusov. Some evenings deserved the special attention from both the organizers and the public. Thus, the evening, held in honor of Leo Tolstoy, was marked as "the first in Russia after the death of the great writer" (O. Kr. 1912, p. 2). "Blaumanis evening", held of June 18, 1908, was also treated as a special one: it was charitable in nature, part of the collected funds were transferred to a very sick writer (Рижский вестник 1908. № 53. p. 3). The RLAS took an active part in honoring writers and creative groups on their anniversaries: for example, congratulatory telegrams were sent in honor of the 80th anniversary of L.N. Tolstoy to Yasnaya Polyana (Рижский вестник 1908. № 198. p. 3), in honor of the tenth anniversary of the team of the Moscow Art Theater (Рижский вестник 1908. № 236. p. 3) [7]. In March 1913, the society held "Aspazija evening", dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the creative work of a Latvian writer. The main purpose of the evening was to introduce representatives of other ethnic groups to Aspazija, therefore, all the essays were delivered in Russian (K. Freinbergs and H. Asars on drama, Līgotņu Jēkabs on poetry) (N. 1913, p. 5). Another "special" evening, held at the end of 1913, was dedicated to the 60th anniversary of V. G. Korolenko, who was admitted to the society as an honorary member. In January 1914, at a general meeting, a letter by Vladimir Korolenko addressed to the chairperson was read out: "Dear Sir, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members of the Riga Literary and Art Society for the honor shown to me by the election as an honorary member of the society. […] I consider the goal that society pursues, i.e. to unite different ethnic groups on the basis of culture, to be the most important and best task of our time, which is so filled with hatred. Poltava. January 20, 1914" (r. 1914, p.4) [8].

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[6]   From October 1, 1908, till September 1, 1912, 95 reports were delivered by 47 presenters.

[7]   On October 21, 1908, (№ 241) the newspaper "Rizhsky Vestnik" publishes a telegramme with the gratitude from K.S. Stanislavsky and V. Nemirovich-Danchenko.

[8]   In the original: "God. kungs! Lūdzu izteikt Literātu un Mākslinieku Biedrības biedriem manu sirsnīgāko pateicību par godu, parādītu man, ievēlot par goda

A lot of evenings were devoted to national theaters, music, painting, their history and modern state, as well as to creative personalities: to the actress V. Komissarzhevskaya, to artists (I. Repin, I. Aivazovsky), to composers, both Russian (P. I. Tchaikovsky), and Latvian (E. Dārziņš, J. Vītols). The second part of the evenings was musical. According to statistics, published in September 1912, 148 musicians took part in them. For some evenings, the choirs were invited (one time each) – Russian, Latvian, Jewish, Estonian; for some – other musical groups (e.g. a balalaika ensemble). In addition, the members of the RLAS (V.Cheshikhin, Ivin and others) participated with improvisations – "impromptu poems with the piano accompaniment on the topics given by the public" (Рижский вестник 1908. № 238. p. 3) [9], or impromptu theatre performances, mainly by a theatre critic Bozhena Vitvickaya (known to Riga's society as Madam Binocular) (Рижская мысль 1910, №781, p. 3). One of the successful musical evenings was devoted to Frederic Chopin. The music was accompanied by the Polish poems. The evening was attended by a special guest, A.I. Kuprin, who read his short story "Empty summer houses" (Рижская мысль 1910, №763, p. 3).

Part of the evenings was devoted to touchy subjects, the discussion of which resulted in a heated discussion, and in some cases was continued next "Thursday". Thus, the members of the RLAS discussed the problem of "pornography in literature" (Рижский вестник 1908. № 288. p. 3), "women's question" (Рижский вестник 1908. № 254. p. 3) (Ivin's and V.N. Troitsky's reports), "physiology of marriage" and the "meaning of life" (Рижский вестник 1908. № 260. p. 3) and "languages in local schools" (Рижский вестник 1908. № 269. p. 3). Another part of Thursdays, on the contrary, was devoted to not serious topics, for example, one of the February Thursdays of 1909 included the essays and legends about ... pancakes (Рижский вестник 1909. № 29. p. 3). As a way to make conclusions about the activities of the society, some evenings were devoted to self-reflection. For instance, when in 1910 the evenings were held on Fridays, one of the Fridays was called "Friday on Friday". The programme consisted of usual acitivites of the society, but

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biedri. Mērķi, kādu biedrība piekopj – dažādu tautību apvienošanu uz kultūras pamatiem – es turu par ievērojamāko un labāko mūsu laiku uzdevumu, kas tik ļoti pārpilda naidu. Poltava, 20. janvārī 1914. g.".

[9] In the original: «стихотворениями в прозе экспромтом на заданные публикой темы под аккомпанемент рояля».

presented in a humorous manner: Introductory nonsense, declamation of decadent poems from the collection "Dirty feet", Faces of Riga with Gyspy motives, etc (Рижская мысль 1910. № 785. p.3).

Literary and musical evenings, of course, were the main form of activity within the society, as evidenced by statistical reports published in the largest provincial newspapers (Рижский вестник 1909, № 49, p. 3; O. Kr. 1912, p. 2) [10]. On November 14, 1908, the newspaper "Rizhsky Vestnik" stated that "a young literary and artistic society finally found in the format of such evenings the cement that begins to solder and group all those who need to satisfy spiritual needs in the everyday life of cultural Riga" (Рижский вестник 1908. № 262. p. 3). Also, through the efforts of the members of the society, three art exhibitions were organized, a library-reading room was created (however, it was soon closed due to very bad premises) (Рижский вестник 1908. № 261) [11]. Finally, one of the most important events, conducted by the RLAS, was the organization of two congresses of journalists from the Baltic Region: in March 1909 and May 1910.

The main issue at the congresses (apart from the actual professional problems) was the question of the rapprochement of the nationalities and the coverage of the problem in the Baltic press. In the program approved by the RLAS, these are the questions that open up the list of issues discussed (Baltijas žurnalistu kongress 1909, p.1). Representatives of all groups, as was expected, talked about national excesses while describing other nations (although they all spoke about the need for convergence). The Germans were accused of separatism, of unwillingness to talk about the life of the Latvians (the same reproach, although to a much lesser extent, was addressed to the Russian press). In turn, the Latvians were reproached for being disloyal and inclined towards revolution. The Russian group was scolded for the "nationalist" attempts to give special advantages to the Russian language, that is, with the established equality of all languages, to make Russian the main language in the debates and paperwork (-Schg.-

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[10]   During the first year of its activity, the RLAS organized 19 "Thursdays", where 28 reports were delivered and 42 members participated with various presentations. From October 1, 1908, till September 1, 1912, five closed "Tuesdays" (only for the members of the society) and 84 "Thursdays" for both memebers and guests (altogether 4423 guests) were organized. Some "Thursdays" the RLAS organized were also private (with only nominal tickets available) [Рижская мысль. 1910. №785. p. 3].

[11]   The reading room was opened for readers on December 1, 1908.

1909, p.1). In the article, a review of the work of the RLAS, Līgotņu Jēkabs proudly writes about how these attempts were resisted by the Latvians and Germans. He concluded: "Equality of languages does not create any practical obstacles. If the society uses the Russian language more, it is only to facilitate understanding for those members who do not know either Latvian or German" (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1911, p.1)[12].

At the beginning of the 1910s, the cultural Riga was ready to agree with the statement of the colleague: the creation and activities of the RLAS showed that the main idea of the society – the idea of equality of all languages and cultures, the idea of mutual interest in other national cultures and constant movement towards rapprochement of cultures – "this is not a utopia" (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1911, p.1). The strong belief that this is not a utopia and not an illusion but a "demand of a new time" (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1911, p.1) was supported by the atmosphere of the journalistic congresses. There were free debates in four languages – Russian, Latvian, German, and Estonian. Resolutions adopted after the debates can serve as an example of a constructive dialogue. One of the resolutions was offered by a Latvian journalist Kārlis Dēķens: "To recognize the accusations of Germans of separatism and Latvians of revolutionism as harmful and indecent (discrediting these nationalities in the eyes of the authorities)". The second resolution was proposed by the Russian journalist L.N. Vitvitsky: "To recommend the local press to support the rapprochement of the nationalities" (-Schg.-, 1909, p.1) [13]. All the activities of the RLAS can be seen as an attempt to go beyond or, more precisely, to rise above the framework of national differences. Līgotņu Jēkabs wrote about this already in the first article about the society: "Joint practical work absorbs the nationalist chauvinism and teaches every member of the national community to see and appreciate in the other, above all, a person" (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1908, p.2)[14]. The society does not

[12] In the original: "Tagad praktika pierādījusi, ka valodu vienlīdzībai nebūt nerodas nekādi praktiski šķēršļi. Ja biedrība vairāk lieto krievu valodu, tad vienkārši tamdēļ, lai atvieglotu saprašanos ar tiem biedriem, kuri neprot ne latviešu, ne vācu valodas".

[13] In the original: "Apvainot vāciešus par separātismu un latviešus par revolucionārismu, lai tos diskreditētu valdības orgānu acīs, atzīst par kaitīgu un nepieklājīgu»; «tikai caur tautību tuvināšanos var novērst tautību pretestības un vietējai presei ieteicams pabalstīt šo tuvināšanos".

[14] In the original: "Praktisks kopīgs darbs norij tautisko šovinismu un māca katras tautības locekli vispirms redzēt un cienīt – cilvēku".

leave the attempts to approve the priority of universal over national even in the wartime. On December 15, 1914, the RLAS announces its decision to hold a large charity event – to arrange a musical and literary evening, and then to publish a collection in three local languages – Russian, Latvian and German. The hint of this unfulfilled plan (in March 1915, the collection "Literary Men and Artists to Soldiers" was published in two languages – Russian and Latvian) remained only in the reference to the Society's Charter, posted on the first page of the collection, immediately after the introductory words of the editorial board: "An extract from the Charter of the Riga Literary and Art Society. From § 3i. The members of the society in general meetings have the right to speak in three local languages, that is, in Russian, German and Latvian [...] Publications of the society [...] are also printed in one or in three above-mentioned languages" (Литераторы и художники воинам 1915, p.1) [15]. The presence of the third local nationality (German) was accepted only in the form of translations: three poems of a Riga German poet and playwright Eugenie Hirschberg-Pucher were translated into Russian and Latvian, the story of V. Günther was translated into Russian, the translation was made by Elizaveta Knauf, an ethnic German, who was well-known as a Russian poet and prose writer Elizaveta Magnusgofskaya. The collection "Literary Men and Artists to Soldiers" was the last activity of the RLAS. The beginning of 1915 is marked by another project (conceived and announced but not implemented) – the staging of one-act plays written by Eugenie Hirschberg-Pucher and Edvards Vulfs on the stage of the Riga Russian Theater. The plays were expected to be enacted in Russian and Latvian.

The activities of the society almost stopped, since the war scattered the members of the society, and since the ideas of the national unity defended by the society could not withstand the difficult reality of the wartime. Even before the war each national group pursued its own interests – to a greater extent it is relevant to the Russians and Latvians. The activity of the German group was minimal and more individual (for example, E. Hirschberg-Pucher). The priority task for the Latvians

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[15] In the original: «Извлечение из Устава Рижского Литературно-Художественного Общества. Из § 3i. Члены Общества в общих собраниях имеют право говорить на трех местных языках, т. е. на русском, немецком и латышском … Издания Общества … печатаются также на одном или всех трех вышеупомянутых языках».

during all the years of the society's existence was the task of helping "Latvian art to gradually move into the big world " (Biedrību dzīve 1913, p. 5) [16], "to introduce Latvian art and literature into the garden of arts of big national cultures" (Līgotņu Jēkabs 1911, p. 1) [17]. For the Russians, the creation of the RLAS and participation in it was the part of the state policy of supporting the foreign cultures: let the Latvian remain Latvian and the Estonian remain Estonian if it helps to strengthen the national unity of the Russian Empire. The thought was also voiced in the introduction to the collection: "Every single attempt, every extra penny helps to strengthen our national power, leading the Motherland to the victory over a strong and cunning enemy" (Литераторы и художники воинам 1915, p. 1). The war finally put the national above the international. The evidence can be found in the fact that the members of the society, speaking at other venues, began to put forward other ideas. Thus, in early January 1914, Vsevolod Cheshikhin addressed the society with a statement and a request to support the idea of a congress of supporters of an auxiliary international language in Riga – the congress of cosmoglotists. The activities of the RLAS have done so much for the international rapprochement that exactly Riga, Checheshin emphasizes, deserves to hold such a congress (LVVA, Nr. 2.).

The change in the position of Cheshikhin is demonstrated by his book of poems "Patriotic Songs", published in late 1914. The book opens with the poem "To a Russian Soldier of 1914". The poet not only manifests the current idea of the "new third Russian Rome", which "looms there behind Berlin," but also openly and in a poster-like manner creates the antithesis of Russian and German: A German, a vampire will make the Earth German and wild. A Russian is the one who will make the world Russian, will humanize the world! (Чешихин 1914, p.1). [18] The history of the RLAS is the evidence of both the greatness and the collapse of any national utopia. One swallow does not make a spring. This proverb has been the leitmotif throughout the years of the existence of the society. And over the years, both Russian and Latvian members of the society passionately refuted it. The spring of 1915 confirmed the

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[16]   In the original: "... palīdzot arī latviešu mākslu pamazām izvest "lielajā pasaulē"".

[17]   In the original: "... latviešu mākslu un rakstniecību ievest lielu kultūras tautu mākslas dārzā".

[18]   In the original: «Землю немец ли, вампир, Озверит и онемечит. Россиянин – вот кто мир Обрусит, очеловечит!»

proverb. Nevertheless, the very attempt to resolve the national issue in a multicultural society is worthy of attention, and respect.

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ETHNIC MINOROTIES AND TYPES OF SOCIAL MEMORY IN LATVIA

After 1991, Latvia continued the process of mnemonic activities of various "communities of memory" that began in the late 80-ies in the course of democratization and liberalization of the society. Based on the data of various sociological surveys, the authors of the article analyze the content of political discourses of social memory of ethnic groups in contemporary Latvia. Special attention is paid to the characteristics of the social memory of ethnic minorities in public-political discourse.

Key words: ethnic minorities, politics of memory, mnemonic communities, social memory, ethnic identity.

The concept of social memory and ethnic minorities

Since the early 1990s, the post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe have witnessed the development of the politics of memory as an integral part of political transformation that is closely linked to the

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ethnopolitics of national states. These processes are of interest to researchers of social (including historical) memory. Thus, in her recent works Aleida Assmann singled out an essential feature of post-Soviet culture, which is a rapidly increased significance of collective memory in creating collective identities. After the fall of communist ideology, forms of collective memory on par with banned historiographic concepts of the pre-Soviet period make their come back and become effective means of collective mobilization (Assmann 2009, p. 62–63; Miller 2012, p. 24). At the same time, the researchers emphasize that the politics of memory creates new mnemonic differences and even borders between European nations and national historiographies. The gradual process of loosening (in Western European societies) or strengthening (in the countries of Eastern Europe) of national mythology also affects historical research, where, according to Assman, "national myths taken from the era before the two world wars" are being updated (Assmann 2014, p. 287). In the environment of "fluid modernity" in Bauman's terms, consumer society and global mobilization bring into existence hybrid forms of spatio-temporal socialization and the layering of identities. In this connection, recent studies have formulated ideas about competing groups of "memory activists" and "entrepreneurs of memory" (Assmann 2013 (1), p. 261).

Of Eastern Europe it is characteristic to perform trauma measurement of their social memory in the 20th century (Trebst 2011, p. 147). In case of differences in social memory of ethnic groups in multiethnic states, it is important to pursue a policy of mnemonic recognition (Assmann 2013 (2), p. 129). However, the process is not so simple, for even in academic discourse social memory is very often considered to be the "collective memory" of one social community and group. The tradition is known to be established by Halbwachs, who followed Comte's and Durkheim's principle that society has priority over the individual. It is the belonging to groups ("each of us is a member of several groups, bigger or smaller ones") that forms and determines the characteristics of social memory of the individual. What is more, collective memory itself is "a group considered from within". Since the society is divided into different social groups, it "develops original collective memories" (Halbwachs 2016). Still, the understanding of social memory must be supplemented by the sociological approaches developed by Marx, Weber, Spencer, and Simmel. They recognise the active role of individual actors in the formation of their social identity as well as the possibility of

synthesizing the types of social memory characteristic of various social groups, including ethnic.

It is no coincidence that in social memory Jan Assmann identifies elements of social construction in Berger and Luckmann's terms. This leads to the separation of "communicative memory" from the social memory array, the former based on unstructured individually experienced biographies (Assmann 2004, p. 15, 58–59). This approach is especially valuable in multiethnic societies in which ethnic actors actualize and construct their social memory and identity under the influence of the social memory of other ethnic groups as well as under practices of government institutions aimed at securing the social memory of the ethnonational majority as official and normative. As Pierre Nora observed, the most reductive is the normative interpretation of the social memory dealing with contradictory pages of history, for example, with the twentieth century, the "century of ruptures" (Nora 2010). However, Nora argues that in the modern world, with the role of the nation as a "uniting framework" giving way to society, the efforts of the authorities to preserve one "official" social memory will not be successful (Nora 2016 (2), p. 24, 31). In such a "democratisation" of history, there arise various forms of "memory of minorities, for which reclaiming their past is a necessary part of the assertion of their identity" (Nora 2016 (1)).

The concept of "social memory" in ethno-political documents and socio-political practices in Latvia.

The socio-political significance of the concept of "social memory" (also "collective memory", "historical memory") and practices associated with it, is testified by its inclusion in some official documents of the contemporary Republic of Latvia. Notably, the active use of the term "social memory" in state ethnopolitics falls on the last decade. However, all the documents regulating ethnopolitical issues include provisions reflecting the official interpretation of the twentieth century Latvian history. Thus, the first National programme on the integration of society in Latvia (2001) did not implement this or similar concepts at all. It may have been due to the understanding of Latvian society as multicultural and hence unfit to align with one social memory. For example, under the "essence of integration" this program considered "the willingness to voluntarily accept the Latvian language as a state language and the respect for the languages and cultures of Latvians and ethnic minorities

of Latvia". Overall, the programme emphasised civil and democratic values (Valsts programma... 2001, p. 6–7, 10).

However, the socio-political development of Latvia in the 21st century has been facing many challenges to a harmonious fusion of multiculturalism, civil and liberal values. Right-wing and nationalist forces aim at narrowing down the space for the public realisation of the identity of ethnic minorities, including marginalization of values of their social memory. At the same time, under the current "Guidelines on *National Identity*, *Civil Society and Integration Policy* (2012–2018)", social memory is treated as "a common understanding of history, past events and socio-political processes and their interpretation", and regarded to be the most important structural element of national identity, integration of Latvian society, as well as of Latvian "cultural space". It is noteworthy that this and similar documents denoting main vectors of the state ethnopolitics, have been developed and adopted in the climate of acute political struggle, the contest primarily reflecting conflicts between state and Russian population of the country. Thus, in "Guidelines" the social memory protected by the Latvian state is actually understood as an element of the ethnic Latvian identity. Such an understanding stems from the fact that although ethnic minorities are recognized as "traditionally residing in Latvia for generations and belonging to Latvian state and society", thus, as part of "the people of Latvia", still they are not considered in the context of "nation" and "state nation" framework, the one exclusively correlating with ethnic Latvians. Although the programme of integration recognizes distinct identities of ethnic minorities, the accepted version of social memory does not say anything about the peculiarities of historical or social memory of these groups of Latvian society. Moreover, the presence of a special social memory among the Russian population is seen as a negative sign of the "bi-communality" of Latvian society. Although there are data that a third of Latvians consider 9 May a festive day, and 79% of Russian youth view Latvia's Independence Day in a positive light, it is proclaimed that "the special attitude [of a part of the Russian-speaking population] towards the events of World War II threatens not only Latvian national identity but also geopolitical identity, i.e. belonging to the Western world". In order to prevent "bi-communality", there has been proposed a set of events meant to form a "consolidated social memory" and including only those oriented towards the official "understanding of the Second World War, Soviet and Nazi occupations of Latvia" (Nacionālās identitātes ... 2011,

p. 5–7, 19–22, 70–73). It should be noted however that attempts made by nationalist politicians, scholars and publicists to introduce similar interpretations into the preamble of the Constitution of Latvia in 2014 did not succeed (Grozījums … 2014).

The research of Latvian public space shows the substitution and curtailment of the legal discourse recognising social memory of ethnic minorities. It occurs with the help of discursive "banalisation" practices taking the form of "museumization" and mainstreaming ethnographic heritage of ethnic minorities. The interview cycle, focus group and opinion survey among members of ethnic minorities' non-commersial organisations and workers of five small local governments in all regions of Latvia conducted by one of the authors of the article in 2012, indicated that bigger part of support for non-commersial organisation of ethnic minorities is linked to the development of folklore events, local history projects or solving urgent social problems in particular places of residence of ethnic minorities. However, legal aspects of the civic participation of ethnic minorities were almost entirely excluded from the very spectrum of activities of their non-commersial organisations (Hanovs 2012, p. 238).

At the same time, over the past decade in Latvia there have been manifestations of the liberal approach to the social memory of ethnic minorities. This approach has been induced by the first few years following the inclusion of Latvia in the EU and of relative social and economic well-being. In 2007, the Saeima and government adopted the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030, which criticizes "the ethnocentric interpretation of official history, which is widely used in political discussions about today and the past." Such an approach "idealises inter-war Latvia and stigmatises the Soviet period ... [This] stigmatisation affects ... those who came to Latvia in Soviet times and now are popularly called "invaders", and in political and academic discourse – "Russian-speaking", "non-citizens" "representatives of ethnic minorities" (Latvijas ilgtspējīgas attīstības … 2007, p. 24).

As an alternative to "Guidlines", in 2012 Riga City Council adopted the "Riga City Society Integration Programme for 2012–2017". In this document, the integration of society is no longer associated with mainstreaming values of national identity, but with the mechanisms of "civic participation, intercultural contacts, equality" of representatives of all ethnic groups. The term "social and historical memory" as such is not mentioned, and the differences in the historical memory of

Latvians and Latvian Russians are silenced. What is discussed are the importance of forming a "patriotic attitude to the state", participation in festive events, exposure to Latvian folk traditions in schools of ethnic minorities. Tatiana Day is mentioned in the context of "preservation of cultural heritage". At the same time, they are Latvian schools that are recognised as less open to other cultures (Riga City … 2012, p. 4, 28, 29). While positively assessing the democratic and liberal stance of this program, it is still questionable whether silencing the actual problems of historical memory in the multi-ethnic society is justified. And it is even more problematic because the silence is characteristic of public and political personas speaking on behalf of ethnic minorities, while ethnic Latvian politicians constantly resort to the issue of historical memory in public discourse.

Ethnic minorities seek to supplement Latvian public space with elements of their social memory. This is also important because, for example, the "Canon of Latvian Culture" focuses mainly on Latvian culture and, among the samples of cultures of ethnic minorities, mentions only the work of directors Shapiro and Frank and ballerina Tangiyeva (Latvijas kultūras … 2016). The activism of ethnic minorities in institutionalising the singularity of their social memory on the territory of Latvia is most evidently manifested in the activity of Internet portals of their public organisations. There, information about history and culture of these population groups as well as their historical homeland have one of the central places (e.g. "The Information Portal of the Russian Community of Latvia" (2016), "The Information Site of the Russian Society in Latvia" (2016), "The Union of Poles of Latvia" (Dział ... 2016), the portal of IMHO-club (IMHO-club 2016, etc.). The goals of some public organisations of ethnic minorities are directly related to the cultivation of historical memory (e.g., the activities of the NGO 9may. lv). Codification and scholarly analysis of the social memory of ethnic minorities is typical of the materials on the Internet portal "Russians of Latvia" (Russians of Latvia 2016), of the cycle of humanitarian seminars and anthology "Russian World and Latvia" (Russian World ... 2016), the magazine "Baltic World" (e.g., Kondrashov 2008, p. 14–22; Roerich 2009, p. 32–37), many international academic conferences and scholarly publications devoted to Orthodoxy, including Old Believers in Latvia (New ... 2016; Orthodoxy ... 2014; Riga ... 2010), Latvian Jews (Museum ... 2016), etc. The topic of social memory of Russians in Latvia is also addressed by Latvian Orthodox Church (Latvian ... 2016). The subject

of social memory of Latvian Russians, as well as other ethnic minorities in Latvia, is regularly addressed by the daily newspaper in the Russian language "News Today". In the above-mentioned publications, the most popular is the idea of the continuity of the social memory of ethnic minorities at all stages of the history of Latvia.

Ethnic Identity and Social Memory

The fixation of boundaries between the types of historical memory characteristic of different ethnic groups in no small measure depends on the place of ethnic values in the system of all social values in multiethnic societies, on the topicality of problems related to interethnic relations for the inhabitants of such countries. The data of "DNB Barometer of Latvia" of October 2014 indicate that problematic issues of interethnic relations are not among those considered by Latvian residents as most topical. So, among the predisposing factors to the identification with Latvia, "normal relations between representatives of different ethnic groups" were marked only by 21% of respondents. At the same time, only 8% of respondents connect frustration with life in Latvia with their low estimate of interethnic relations. (In comparison, dissatisfaction with various aspects of economic life as a factor affecting the identification with Latvia reaches 70%.) "DNB Barometer" also recorded a high rate of respondents who consider themselves patriots of Latvia: 77% of those who speak Latvian at home and 51% of Russian speakers. Thus, in the mid-2000s, approximately 70–75% of citizens perceived themselves as patriots of Latvia. Among non-citizens, this figure was at about 40% (Par Latvijas patriotiem … 2005, p. 2). Nor public demonstration of symbolic behavior, for example, "celebratiing state events", is considered to be the most important criterion of patriotism (it turned out to be important for 37% of Latvian-speaking and 25% of Russian-speaking respondents). Thus, the celebration of "The Independence Day" "in the family circle" was reported by 39% of Latvian-speaking and 18% of Russian-speaking respondents (DNB Latvijas barometrs 2014, p. 12 –16). These and other statistics indicate that at the level of mass consciousness and behavior of Latvia's ethnonational majority and ethnic minorities there are no fundamental differences in the cultivation of their social memory.

Furthermore, there is no big difference between the main ethno-linguistic groups in Latvia in assessing the role of the main institutions of patriotic education for children (i.e. schools and family). If among

the Latvian-speaking respondents the leading role of school in this pro-
cess is recognised by 27% and family by 25%, then among the Russian-
speaking respondents – by 23% and 29% correspondingly (Laba skola ...
2013, p. 8). In some cases, the attempts of ultra-right politicians and
journalists to demonise the Soviet period in the history of Latvia meet
considerable resistance in Latvian community. For instance, according
to a nationwide survey conducted in 2013, 71% of Latvian-speaking
and 84% of Russian-speaking respondents consider the USSR educa-
tion system to be "very good" and "rather good" (Laba skola ... 2013,
p. 28). Simultaneously, national polls indicate the growing need to pre-
serve some Soviet holidays in Latvia, for example, 8 March. Thus, by
the mid-2000s, such a wish was expressed by 92% of Russian-speaking
population and 71% of Latvians (80% iedzīvotāju uzskata … 2005, p. 2).

In Latvia, there has not yet been conducted a nationwide study re-
vealing the relationship between social memory actualization by ethnic
groups, its public demonstration and the level of interethnic harmony.
To fill this gap, in 2010, one of the authors of this article performed a
study on the attitude of ethnic groups towards public discussions of
problematic aspects of their joint history. The object of the study was the
three largest ethnic groups (Russians, Latvians and Poles) of Daugavpils,
the second biggest city in Latvia ("Antagonism and reconciliation in
multicultural regions" is a representative study of ethnic, age, and gen-
der characteristics of respondents. The total number of respondents is
578. The project director is Professor Jacek Kurczewski (University of
Warsaw)). Part of the survey questions concern the respondents' attitude
to public discussion of social memory issues. The obtained data show
that the majority of respondents in each of the interviewed ethnic groups
try to avoid any open discussion of these issues. The strongest urge to
refuse to discuss issues of social memory publicly was registered among
Russian residents of Daugavpils (76.2–78.7%), for Poles the figure was
lower (56.3–63.3%). It is interesting that even Latvians of Daugavpils did
not express a particular wish to discuss the history of Latvian-Russian
relationships in public (70.9%).

On the one hand, these data show that for many respondents open
discussions of social memory of various ethnic groups can only damage
the interethnic relations practiced in places of their permanent residence.
For example, only 8.5% of the Russian residents of Daugavpils consid-
ered Latvian-Russian relations in Daugavpils as "bad" and "very bad",
whereas in relation to Latvia as a whole this indicator reached 49.1 %.

It is obvious that to a large extent the interethnic relations in Latvia are reassessed because of the unceasing juxtaposition of ethno-historical symbols and interpretations of the past, the opposition deployed by the efforts of "ethnic entrepreneurs" and addressing Latvia as an "imaginary community" (B. Anderson). On the other hand, one cannot fail to see the weakness of uderdeveloped Latvian public sphere as an arena for free exchange of opinions and search for socio-political compromises, including issues of interethnic relations and social memory (Volkov, Kurczewski 2013, p. 67).

"Guidelines on *National Identity*, *Civil Society and Integration Policy* (2012–2018)" postulate the existence of a split of Latvian society in relation to the history of Latvia in the twentieth century. But the attitude to the historical past in Latvian society and, what is really important, among Latvians themselves, is much more complex. For example, the data obtained in the research project "Monitoring of Latvian Social Memory" (2013) do not confirm stereotypes spread by nationalist politicians, journalists and researchers about the original ethnic conflict – and primarily Latvian-Russian one – in interpreting the events of Latvian history. Thus, "Monitoring" ascertains an increase in the consensus among representatives of all ethnic groups in recognizing the value of the democratic period in the history of Latvia (1918–1934). 82.8% of respondents estimated the fact of the foundation of the Republic of Latvia as a positive development, and the share of Russian-speaking respondents who similarly evaluated the formation of independent Latvia was very high (73.2%). Among the surveyed Russian-speaking youth, the percentage is even higher – 80.9%. No absolute ethnic demarcation was registered in the assessment of the Soviet period in the history of Latvia. As "good" this period was marked by 73.4% of Russian-speaking and 45.4% of Latvian-speaking respondents, which was even a bigger part than the share of Latvians negatively assessing the Soviet period (37.9%) (Kaprans, Procevska 2013, p. 4, 6). Incidentally, it confirms another observation, that is, in comparison with the Russian-speaking population, the Latvian-speaking community is significantly more polarised in their perception of the Soviet period in the history of Latvia.

"Monitoring" records the greatest difference between Latvians and Russians in assessing some pages of the history of World War II, for example, in recognition of nationwide importance of the commemoration of Holocaust in Latvia (51.4% of the Russian-speaking respondents and 25.6% of the Latvians). But in relation to the events of this war, some

assessments of Latvians and Russians were close. It manifested "silent memory" of Latvians of different ethnic identities, the memory partially incorporating the memory of the Other, provided that the nature of the events of World War II is silenced and their "own memory" in the context of Latvia stays glorified. So, about a third of both Russian and Latvian respondents consider as war victims those Latvian citizens who participated in it on the side of Nazi Germany. However, in Latvian historical consciousness, the inner consensus in relation to certain events and symbols of war is manifested to a lesser degree than for the Russian-speaking inhabitants. Thus, the proposal of nationalists to officially celebrate the day of the *Latvian SS Volunteer Legion (Waffen-SS)* was voted "for" by 55.0%, and "against" by 30.8% of the Latvian-speaking respondents. The proposal to add May 9 to the holiday calendar is approved by 34.3% of Latvians ("against" – 53.2%), with 75.3% of support from ethnic minorities. Simultaneously, the value of the Monument to the Liberators of Riga is recognized both among the overwhelming majority of Russians (80.8%) and a significant part of Latvians (50.0%) (among Latvians, the negative attitude towards this monument was expressed by 15.0%, and 29.8% did not have an opinion). In comparison with the period of ten years ago, the negative assessment of the Soviet period by Latvians has been replaced by "neutral and pragmatic" (Kaprans, Procevska 2013, p. 18, 19, 25, 45).

Common points in the historical memory of Latvians and Russian population of Latvia are revealed when it comes to the role of democratic and liberal values in the history of Latvia, the rejection of state and political totalitarianism, military violence as factors that have affected Latvian society. However, nationalist politicians and publicists are not inclined to take into account elements of such interethnic consensus in the historical memory of various ethnic groups in Latvia. On the contrary, they constantly cultivate the myth about the perennial opposition, even disloyalty and hostility of Latvian Russians in relation to Latvian culture and Latvian statehood.

Social memory research in Latvian sociology

In Latvian sociology, studies analysing social memory appeared comparatively recently, namely, in the research in folklore, ethnology, cultural studies (Bula 2000) and sociological and politological research (Zepa et. al. 2006; Muižnieks 2011) of the first half of the 2000s. The

main subject of ethnological and cultural analysis became performative practices of the Latvian national movement of the 19th century, song festivals and the activities of the Riga Latvian society and the press of the national movement. Works on the history of social memory in the twentieth century are mainly devoted to the history of the memory of the Soviet period (1944–1990) and Stalinist deportations of the 1940s, the biographical discourse of the post-Soviet period (Zelče 2010) and the restoration of Latvia's independence from the perspectives of public leaders of the end of perestroika. As the most influential narrative filling the content of the mutually exclusive discourse of the collective memory of ethnic majority and minorities in modern Latvia, it is necessary to single out the narrative of the Second World War and its outcomes for Latvia. Latvian researchers of collective memory claim that it is this event of European history that circulates in Latvian society as the main traumatic topos and mnemonic watershed (Kaprans, Procevska 2013, p. 32, 35, 37). A major research project on the analysis of the content of the social memory of Latvian population, including the memory of ethnic minorities, was the interdisciplinary project "Belligerent Memory", which centred on the commemoration of injuries of the Latvian nation. (Muižnieks, Zelče 2011). Recent studies focus on the interpretation of the burial sites of Soviet soldiers in Latvia as "places of remembrance" that help preserve and reproduce the collective identity of ethnic minorities as well as strengthen the linking of this identity to the identity of Russian citizens (Ločmele et. al. 2011, p. 125; Berdnikov, Hanov 2013, p. 359–375). The analysis of the history of Latvia in the twentieth century, including the authoritarian regime between 1934–1940, in view of social memory theories, is also conducted by Western scholars (Pourchier-Plasseraud 2015; Platt 2012, p. 131–152; Wezel 2008, p. 147–158).

Sociological research of social memory was largely included in the widespread studies of national identity and social integration, which aimed to show how the historical values of Latvians, the official interpretation of memorable dates are close to the Russian-speaking population. Multiple data, as well as conclusions of sociologists, demonstrated the absence of a serious value conflict in the national identity of Latvians and Russians, the absence creating conditions for a reasonable compromise between the values of the social memory of Latvians and the Russian-speaking population of Latvia (Zepa et al. 2006, p. 72, 73, 80; Muižnieks 2011, p. 11–13). It could be aided by the "dialogue of historians about contradictory assessments of recent history" (Dribins 2007, p. 52), as

well as by the recognition by Latvians of the importance for the Latvian Russians symbols of their historical collective memory, for example, the Victory Day on 9 May (Ločmele et al. 2011, p. 123).

However, the difficulty in recognizing the values of the social memory of ethnic minorities lies in the fact that some Latvian researchers consider the increase of the number of this population in Latvia after the Second World War in the context of a national historical trauma (Kaprāns, Strenga 2016, p. 124). In February and March 2014 one of the authors of the article conducted a focus group of experts from the research community to determine the relevance of Latvian collective trauma. This study revealed the polar views of the expert community on the issue, which reflects the situation with the public opinion in Latvia as a whole. Some scholars supported the need to enshrine additional guarantees for Latvian ethnic culture, an official interpretation of the history of Latvia in the twentieth century, and the reference to the national traumatic experience in the Constitution. Their opponents pointed to the strengthening risk of ethnocentrism in society (Daija, Hanovs, Jansone 2014, p. 29–31, 34, 36).

One of the central tasks in the study of social memory is the need to interpret the differences in social memory of Latvian ethnic minority groups in comparison with Latvians. As a rule, liberal sociologists explain the differences in the perception of Latvian public holidays by insufficient historical knowledge of the Russian-speaking population, their lack of understanding of the symbolic meaning of some festive days, a different interpretation of historical events, and not by the antagonism of the historical memory of Latvian Russians and Latvians. The authors of the study "We. Holidays. The State (2008)" quote the statements of Russian-speaking respondents, some of which differ from the statements of Latvians in interpreting the significance of public holidays (Zepa et. al. 2008, p. 4, 8–9, 20–23, 66–68, 70–72). Some of them contain less detailed information than give Latvians. But the statements show no disdain and hatred to state symbols.

Instead of conclusion

A set of threads connects social memory to the identity of ethnic groups. However, one cannot help noticing that the actualization of the special interest in social memory in socio-political consciousness is often dictated by the logic of interethnic and even geopolitical con-

frontation, which is imposed by parties of interest. It is the differences in the social memory of ethnic groups that most often turn into ideological and value points of interethnic conflicts. In such a situation, it is appropriate to take advantage of the ideas of Georg Simmel, who advised to take a closer look at the internal differentiation of each of the groups that are in the state of or being pushed to mutual isolation. Recognizing such an internal differentiation of each of the interacting groups will make it possible to find more common traits between them than differences (Simmel 1996, p. 412–414). As demonstrated by many sociological studies in contemporary Latvia, the rigid opposition of the social memory of Latvians and ethnic minorities is largely a product of nationalistic fantasies and political technologies.

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Daina Jurika-Owen

"BELONGING AND SEPARATION IN ROMA, RUSSIAN AND LATVIAN LIFE STORIES": A REVIEW

The monograph "Belonging and Separation in Roma, Russian and Latvian Life Stories", published in 2017 in Riga, Latvia, presents the results of a large-scale research project in which more than a hundred people from three ethnic communities in Latvia shared their life stories with scholars of oral history from the University of Latvia. Its noteworthy contribution is the documentation of life stories not only from Latvians but also from individuals belonging to Russian and Roma minorities. These new voices add new perspectives to the overall life story and oral history narrative of Latvia.

This research, which analyzes and seeks to interpret "the other" in Latvian society and culture, is timely for Latvia as well as for other countries, given the current political climate worldwide in which demonizing "'the other" (be it "immigrants", "refugees", "Moslems" or any other ethnic, cultural or religious group) is often part of the official political discourse. By promoting mutual understanding and ethnic tolerance, the monograph perhaps will be of use not only to oral historians.

In the introductory chapter, Vieda Skultans, professor emeritus of Bristol University and the editor of this publication, lays out the philosophical framework by noting the sources it draws upon, such as

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the works of moral philosophers Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor, Bernard Williams and Isaiah Berlin, among others, and she also presents the tentative research results of the group as a whole. Covering themes such as belonging and the elusive phenomenon of identity and its relational character, aspects of freedom, issues of morality, the gains and losses revealed in life histories, Roma feelings of separation and of universal 'sameness', the monograph is rich in academic thought. As Skultans observes, "life histories open up opportunities for reflection and understanding, and can be of assistance to philosophy and to anthropology" (p.203). I would like to add that the knowledge resulting from the analysis of life stories from different ethnic communities also has the potential to be of use in public education and for influencing legislators and others in the position to set public policies.

Mara Zirnite, in the chapter "Interaction of Ethnic Cultures in Life Stories," reflects on the changed role of the interviewer (from that of an observer to a participant) and on the openness that results from a successful pairing of interviewers and interviewees by ethnic group and language. The author's consideration of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of cultural interactions during the telling of life stories especially resonated with me, particularly as people contemplate the significant loss of Latvia's population to job markets internationally and the consequences of children starting their lives outside of Latvia. How is this situation going to affect the small nation of Latvia and the future of the Latvian language?

As the chapter title suggests "Collective Memory and Past in Life Stories of Russians in Latvia" by Kaspars Zellis explores interpretations of the past among Russians. It reveals the complex nature of the individual experiences that often remain unknown to members of other ethnic groups, with the result that collective memories run on parallel wavelengths. This chapter calls for a new, more meaningful interpretation of the future for the Russian-speaking community in Latvia.

In "To See Yourself: Self-Reflection and Construction of Identity in Russian Life Stories", Nadezda Pazuhina contemplates the role of "significant others" in the process of self-reflection, memory and continuity. She dwells on the significance of 'imagined spaces' and how they serve as part of the construction of identity for the younger generation of Russians in Latvia.

"We are just like you: Romani Culture of Memory and Ethnicity" by Edmunds Shupulis thoroughly explores life histories of the Roma com-

munity. Raising the question of the Roma's often proclaimed "sameness" to the dominant cultural group, the author suggests that the downplaying of cultural differences could be a tool used to counter dominant stereotypes about the Roma or a means for constructing their ethnic identity.

Dagmara Beitnere-Le Galla, in her chapter, "Self-Understanding and Seeking of Belonging in Russian Life Stories," considers the quest for belonging as revealed in interviews with Russian storytellers and also explores the phenomenon of "silence" within different storyteller families and the diverse reasons for that silence.

"Gains and Losses: Successes and Failures as Viewed through Life Stories" by Maruta Pranka concentrates on the gains and losses perceived and experienced by storytellers from different ethnic groups during major points of historic change, such as World War II or the 1990s, when the restored statehood of Latvia was accompanied by social and economic change. Pranka demonstrates how each ethnic community focuses on the particular 'gains and losses' that have affected them the most.

Ieva Garda-Rozenberga and Maija Krumina adeptly examine "freedom from" and "freedom to" in their chapter, "To Be Free: Identity and Multiplicity of Freedom in Ethnic Life Stories". The authors analyze the stories of people who were incarcerated or deported and thus lost their "freedom from" but sustained their "freedom to" by adhering to moral values and retaining their self-reliance.

Through recorded interviews and data analysis, "Belonging and Separation in Roma, Russian and Latvian Life Stories" offers valuable and abundant new information about the thoughts and feelings of ethnic minorities in Latvia. I would like to underscore the project's thorough implementation and its innovative character for academic thought in Latvia. It is an important step toward creating a better understanding of ethnic minorities in Latvia and it has the potential to facilitate a meaningful dialogue among Latvia's ethnic residents.

Sigma Ankrava

REVIEW OF "TEN CULTURES, TWENTY LIVES: REFUGEE LIVE STORIES" BY DAINA JURIKA-OWEN

The new book by folklore scholar Dr. Daina Jurika-Owen (*Ten Cultures, Twenty Lives: Refugee Life Stories,* Amaya Books, Abilene, Texas, 2018) has been published in the best time ever: it seems that the refugee issue as we experience it now has not been so urgent for our civilization since the Great Migration of Peoples after the fall of Roman Empire. Contemporary Europe is taken by surprise once again. It definitely could learn from the US how the refugee resettlement program has been organized there and apply their best practices.

The author of the book quotes the definition for the refugee status as given by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees " someone who is unable or willing to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. War and ethnic, tribal, and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries." (DJO, p. 7). As we see the refugee influx in Europe these days, we might add to this definition "people from geographic areas where the lack of water has made living conditions impossible". And this number seems to be growing because of the recent climate changes.

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Dr. Daina Jurika-Owen spent more than nine years working in the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Abilene office as an employment officer helping refugees find job in Texas. In her *Acknowledgments* she writes thanks to "the refugee resettlement agency that hired me thirteen years ago and gave me the chance to discover refugees. My life would have been different without it, and my refugee storybook would not have been written" (DJO, XI).

In her days at the IRC, Dr. Daina Jurika-Owen worked with numerous refugees. She approached some of her old contacts later, asking them to share their life stories. Not so many wanted to go public with their stories, and out of those who did, quite a few did not want their names and faces to be brought out. Human relations are delicate. And they have to be treated sensitively. The author of the book solved the problem by using pseudonyms for story-tellers who did not want their names to be disclosed and using photos of other people as representations of the storytellers' ethnic groups.

The life stories included in the book geographically come from Liberia, Congo-Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of Congo or ' the Big Congo', Rwanda, Bhutan, Nepal, Iraq, Cuba. The hand-drawn maps introducing every country represented by the story-tellers are quite helpful to the reader who, in many cases, had never reflected on its existence and problems. The refugee stories touch on these problems. But as it happens in cases of civil wars or ethnic clashes, both sides tell their side of truth. And it takes a listener like Dr. Daina Jurika-Owen to listen with empathy and understanding to both sides. The genocide in Rwanda made members of different ethnic groups flee for their lives. The war in Iraq stirred many locally brooding conflicts. And so on, and on, and on... In the times like ours when there are so many dramatic and even tragic conflicts taking place, there are so many heart-breaking life stories to be told and so few listeners. The author of the book has opened her heart and mind to the problems of the world as they come through these unsophisticated life stories of the refugees. Before each story the author writes a short introduction in the first person, about how she met the person first and what shared experiences they both had, conveying all the details that later make the stories told more believable. It should be noted that all the refugees saw America as the savior of their lives and were eager to learn the "American way of life" and "how things are done in America".

And here comes the second very important message to the readers: how the refugee admittance is organized in the US. This would be especially informative and interesting for European readers. The refugees in most cases have spent many years in displaced persons' camps or in countries away from their motherland. They arrive with practically no possessions, and very little knowledge of English and the culture of their new homeland. The government of the US provides funding to resettlement agencies throughout the country to take care of the newcomers in the initial stage. The agency first receives information about the new arrival, meets the refugee at the airport, brings the person to an apartment (previously found, furnished and provided with food). In the coming days the newcomer receives cultural and employment orientations, and is enrolled in language classes. Then the agency officer takes the refugee to eventual workplaces until the employment problem is resolved. The resettlement staff meets various difficulties and challenges in this process, which are nicely, and sometimes humorously, described in the book. Sometimes it does take courage and daring on both sides to cope with this task. But it is rewarding to later see how you have helped a human to start a new life, much better than the previous one.

This why it is only natural that many refugees keep in touch with the officers of the resettlement agency long afterwards, as the author of the book writes in Epilogue. They have become for those "new Americans" somebody like "mom" and "dad", like a family. And even in later years, if problems arise, they come to the agency for help.

This new book by Daina Jurika-Owen proves that she is deeply concerned with a most difficult subject: how to preserve humanity. She writes about refugees she has met, with tact. She invokes respect for human lives and love for humankind our age needs so much.

Ten Cultures, Twenty Lives: Refugee Life Stories is Dr. Daina Jurika-Owen's second book. The previous, written and published in Latvian in Riga, Latvia – *Salad Bowl of America: Cultural Cookbook (Amerikas "salātu trauks")* gave an insight into foodways of different American regions. Readers enjoyed not only new unusual recipes, but also author's comments on them and on the US culture. It proved the author to be a keen observer, ready to embrace new ideas and take on any challenges of this ever changing world.

It should be noted that the cover of the book is extremely well-designed: human hands, so different in shape and color and age meeting

over the imaginary globe. Also, the Index added to the book helps readers find the persons and places mentioned in the book.

I read the new book with double pleasure: first, the book reads well. The sad and funny sides of life are well balanced. The personality of the story-teller is alive and vibrant behind the lines. Second, I am delighted to see how one of the first students I tutored at the beginning of my own academic career became a PhD and a respected folklore researcher. I am sure, in good time we will read Dr. Daina Jurika-Owen's next book.

I would recommend *Ten Cultures, Twenty Lives: Refugee Life Stories* to be translated into languages of the European Union.

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Bibliography

Should be compiled according to the given samples:

Monographs (books, brochures):
Turner J. H. (1974) The Structure of Sociological Theory. Homewood (Illinois): The Dorsey Press.

Zepa B. (ed.). (2006) Integrācijas prakse un perspektīvas. Rīga: BISS.

Articles in collections:
Turner R. H. (1990) A Comparative Content Analysis of Biographies. – Oyen E. (ed.) Comparative Methodology: Theory and Practice in International
Social Research. London, etc.: Sage Publications.

Articles in magazines:
Masaļska J. (2005) Sabiedrības integrācija Baltijas valstīs: kopīgais un atšķirīgais. – Politikas zinātnes jautājumi. IV. Rīga: University of Latvia.

Articles in newspapers:
Strazdiņš I. (1999) Matemātiķi pasaulē un Latvijā. *Zinātnes Vēstnesis*, 8. marts. [March 8]

Materials from the Internet:
Niessen J., Huddleston T., Citron L. (2007) Migrant Integration Policy Index.
British Council and Migration Policy Group, September. http:www.integrationindex.eu. p. 104–109.

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