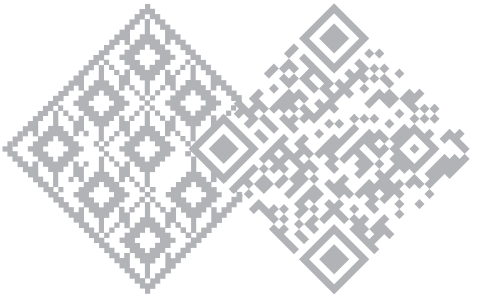
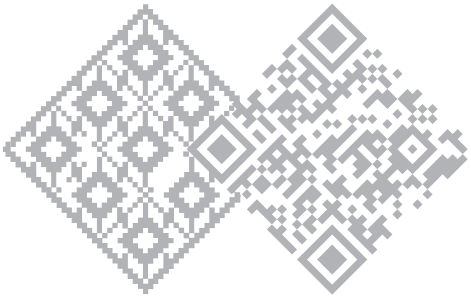

Latvija
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LATVIA AND LATVIANS

Collection of scholarly articles

LATVIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
RIGA



LATVIA AND LATVIANS

Volume II

LATVIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
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Articles of Volume II of the collection of scholarly articles Latvia and Latvians are thematically grouped into two parts. The first one (Part III) traces the ancient history of Latvians and seeds of early statehood in the territory of Latvia long before the proclamation of the State of Latvia. The second part (Part IV) analyses the foundation and development of the State of Latvia and survival of the nation during the times of Latvia's occupation. The authors of the papers are mostly historians who have studied the respective themes in the course of a number of years. The collection largely reflects the findings of modern history and contemporary historians about the problems handled in the papers. It is meant for readers in Latvia and abroad, including those whose knowledge of Latvian history hitherto has been scarce.

LETONIKA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part III. LATVIANS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE LATVIAN STATE

The Pre-History of Latvia (10 500 BCE – 1200 CE). *Andrejs Vasks* 9

The Balts and the Baltic Finns. *Antonija Vilcāne* 40

Latvian Folklore Studies and Mythology. *Beatrise Reidzāne, Sandis Laime* 91

An Insight into the History of the Latvian Language (from its Origins up Until the 20th Century). *Ojārs Bušs, Ilga Jansone* 128

Evolution of the Traditional Cultural Landscape of Latvia from the 16th Century to the First Half of the 20th Century. *Muntis Auns* 168

Issues Concerning Early Development of Statehood on the Territory of Latvia. *Guntis Zemītis* 200

Livonia and Latvians. *Muntis Auns* 243

Statehood on the Territory of Latvia during Early Modern Times: The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia. *Mārīte Jakovļeva* 280

Abolition of Serfdom and Organisation of Civil Parish Communities. *Jānis Lazdiņš* 312

The New Latvians. *Vita Zelče* 347

The 1905 Revolution in Latvia. *Līga Lapa* 377

The Latvian Riflemen. *Valdis Bērziņš* 406

Part IV. LATVIANS AND THE STATE OF LATVIA (1918–1990)

Military Processes Which Led to Latvia's Statehood (1918–1920). *Ēriks Jēkabsons* 445

The Authoritarian Regime of Kārlis Ulmanis (1934–1940): Politics, Ideology, Economics. *Aivars Stranga* 476

Latvia During the Second World War (1939–1945). *Inesis Feldmanis* 512

Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, 1918–1940: Similarities and Differences. *Ēriks Jēkabsons* 558

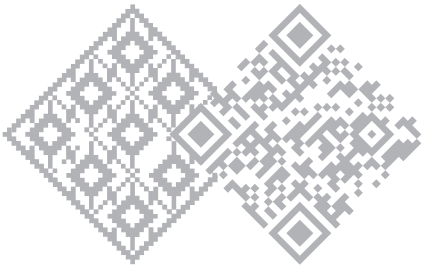
The Sovietisation of Latvia in the Context of the Baltic States. *Daina Bleiere* 593

The Political Surveillance Role Played by the Committee for State Security (*KGB*) of the Latvian SSR, 1940–1991. *Aldis Bergmanis, Indulis Zālīte*. 630

Latvia — a Military Base of the USSR and Part of the Soviet Military-Industrial Complex. *Tālavs Jundzis, Ilgonis Upmalis* 670

Resistance to the Soviet and Nazi Regimes in Latvia, 1940–1985. *Tālavs Jundzis, Zigmārs Turčinskis* 710

Latvians Around the World, 1945–1991. *Kristīne Beķere* 751



PART III

LATVIANS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE LATVIAN STATE

Andrejs Vasks

THE PRE-HISTORY OF LATVIA (10 500 BCE – 1200 CE)

This article is based on archaeological sources to describe the earliest historical period in Latvia — prehistory from the 11th millennium BCE to the 12th century CE. The first inhabitants, reindeer hunters, arrived in the 11th millennium BCE in the territory of Latvia, followed by Stone Age hunters-gatherers-fishers, Bronze Age early forms of farmers, including cattle-breeders and their associated way of life in households, and also the development of an agrarian society during the Iron Age is described in this article. The origin and development of the Balts and the Baltic Finnish tribes are explained. The pre-history of Latvia terminated as a result of expansion of German crusaders whereupon a new era began — the Middle Ages.

Keywords: the territory of Latvia, Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, hunters-fishers, animal husbandry, farmers, households, social relations, Balts, Baltic Finns.

The Stone Age (10 500 – 1800 BCE)

The history of any country starts with the arrival of people in its territory. In the territory of Latvia this happened approximately 12 500 years ago, i.e. in the middle of the 11th millennium BCE, which was coincident with the retreat of the glaciers. Following archaeological definitions this was at the end of the Late Palaeolithic Era (10 500 – 9000 BCE)[1]. The Baltic Ice Lake formed in the Baltic Sea depression once the edge of the glaciers had retreated as far as the southern part of contemporary Finland. Weather in the territory of Latvia at the end of the Ice Age, like in other areas adjacent to glaciers, may be characterised as a cold and dry sub-arctic climate. Vegetation cover only started to form. The sparse cover nevertheless attracted some animals — the Eastern Baltic region witnessed the arrival of reindeer that were adapted to the severe ecological and climatic conditions.

[1] Dates quoted in this article are based on results from radio-carbon dating calibrated using the programme OxCal 4. 2. (Bronk Ramsey, C. Bayesian Analysis of Radiocarbon Dates. *Radiocarbon*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2009, pp. 337–360), accessible at https://c14.arch.ox.ac.uk/oxcal/OxCal.html (site last visited 12.03.2015); in this way the approximate age of objects has been attributed during the period before the Common Era.

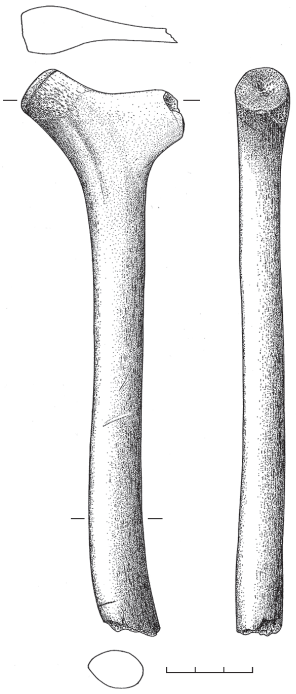


Fig. 1. Antler-axe of Lyngby type, found in one of the Venta River Basin rivers. 10 478–10 166 BCE. (Zagorska, I. Pirmā liecība par ledus laikmeta nobeiguma posma cilvēku Kurzemē. *Ventspils muzeja raksti, VII*. Ventspils: Ventspils muzejs, 2012, Fig. 2.)

In their search for pastures, reindeer also attracted hunters. The arrival of reindeer hunters in the territory of Latvia was determined by radiocarbon dating of the left antler of a reindeer found at a depth of 3 m in a peat bog at Olaine, as occurring 10 980 – 10 750 BCE.[2] An important detail of this finding was that the antler was still attached to part of the skull, which indicates that it had not been shed, but, according to paleo-zoologists, the animal had been hunted.[3] The finding of a Lyngby type antler-axe in the Venta River basin in southern Latvia points to the presence of humans at that time (Fig. 1)[4].

The hunters have also left behind tools made of flint, antler and bone; these identified locations of their settlements, as well as the three directions followed by arrivals to the territory of Latvia: from the south-east along the Daugava River; from the south, coming from the territory of modern Lithuania, from the upper reaches of the Lielupe River; and from the south-west, from the upper reaches of the Venta River. The most detailed investigations have been made at the Laukskola settlement near Salaspils.[5] Neither the reindeer nor the hunters remained there all year long, but they returned to their wintering settlements in the south of Latvia with the approach of winter.

Flint tools found at various settlements are similar to those found in Swiderian culture settlements that were scattered during the 11th–9th millennia BCE in the territories of Poland, Lithuania and Belarus. The influence of Ahrensburg culture, which was widespread over the territories of Poland and Germany, may be seen in a number of flint items, for example, in arrow-heads. Both the origin of the flint itself, and similarities in the design of flint items indicate that hunters could have reached the territory of Latvia from territories presently in north-west Poland, the Russian region of Kaliningrad, and southern Lithuania.

As the glaciers continued to melt the level of Baltic Ice Lake rose inexorably until, reaching a critical level, lake waters broke through Central Sweden to reach the North Sea. The lake also exchanged water with the salty North Sea.

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[2] Ukkonen, P., Lõugas, L., Zagorska, I., Lukševica, L., Lukševics, E., Daugnora, L., Jungner, H. History of the reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*) in the eastern Baltic region and its implications for the origin and immigration routes of the recent northern European wild reindeer populations. *Boreas*, Vol. 35, 2006 (May), p. 227, Table 2. The authors quote a time 12 930 – 12 700 years before today.

[3] Zagorska, I. *Senie ziemeļbriežu mednieki Latvijā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2012, 46. lpp.

[4] Zagorska, I. Pirmā liecība par ledus laikmeta nobeiguma posma cilvēku Kurzemē. *Ventspils muzeja raksti, VII*. Ventspils: Ventspils muzejs, 2012, 12.–28. lpp.

[5] Zagorska, I., Winiarska-Kabacińska M. A first glimpse of the organisation of space in the Late Palaeolithic of Latvia. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2012, 5.–18. lpp.

The result was the Yoldia Sea that remained in existence for approximately 1000 years.[6] The onset of the so-called Pre-Boreal climate period followed, initially somewhat cool and dry, later becoming warmer and more humid.[7] Forest cover began to form. This environment no longer suited reindeer and they disappeared from the territory of Latvia — most likely they died out. Their place in the forests was taken by elk, who were the principal animal most hunted throughout the Stone Age (up to 92% of all that were hunted). Beavers began to appear in the forests, as did wild boar, bears, does, wolves, foxes, hares. The number of fish species increased in the waters, pike, bream, tench and perch.

Along with changes in the environment — the flora and fauna — hunting and fishing strategies also changed, leading to new kinds of settlements. These are associated with the beginning of the Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age (9000–5400 BCE). Starting then, and through to the end of the Neolithic, people chose to live in lakeside settlements and along the banks of rivers flowing into lakes, as such locations were best suited for hunting and fishing. Stone Age settlements of hunters and fishermen have been discovered at many lakes in Latvia. The areas around two such lakes — Lake Burtnieks and Lake Lubāns — have been examined extensively. Given that such settlements often were inhabited over several millennia, a thick layer of deposits formed which reflect a range of Mesolithic and Neolithic cultures. The Mesolithic Period spanned 3500 years, during which step-changes occurred in culture, and is subdivided into the Early (9000–8300 BCE), Middle (8300–6000 BCE) and Late (6000–5400 BCE) Mesolithic.

Up to now three Early Mesolithic settlements have been found: Sūļagals and Kvāpāni II settlements at Lake Lubāns and Zvejnieki II settlement adjacent to Lake Burtnieks. Flint tools found at these settlements were fashioned from low-quality flint pebbles washed out by melting glaciers, although tools fashioned from high-quality flint were also found at the Zvejnieki II settlement.[8] Evidently seasonal migration of hunters from regions where high-quality flint was in abundance to the territory of Latvia had diminished at the beginning of the Mesolithic, eventually ceasing altogether. On the other hand, the lack of high-quality flint led to development of the production of bone and antler implements.

Life continued on at the Zvejnieki II settlement during the Middle Mesolithic, with a burial-ground established adjacent to the settlement where the dead were interred up until the Late Neolithic. In all, 329 burials have been studied[9] which makes this site, in terms of the numbers buried, to be the largest known Stone Age burial-ground in Northern Europe. The burials found at this site have provided broad insight into local cultural features, in addition to their burial rituals, beliefs, and social

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[6] Āboltiņš, O. *No ledus laikmeta līdz globālajai sasilšanai. Dabas vides pagātne un tagadne Latvijā*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2010, 71.–77. lpp.

[7] Segliņš, V. *Holocēna nogulumu stratigrāfija Latvijā un to starpreģionālā korelācija*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 2001, 130. lpp., 7. tab.

[8] Zagorska, I. The Mesolithic in Latvia. *Acta Archaeologica*, Vol. 63, 1992, p. 100.

[9] Zagorska, I. Arheoloģiskie izrakumi Zvejnieku kapulaukā 2009. gada augustā. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2008. un 2009. gadā*. Rīga: Nordik, 2010, 28. lpp.

relations.[10] Settlements that correspond to the Mesolithic ones have been discovered in Western Latvia, located at bays along the shoreline of Lake Ancylus (that had formed in place of the Yoldia Sea) — Vendzava at Užava, Celmi at Užava, and Priednieki at Ziras as well as inland, at Košķēni near Lake Usma. As the climate improved, the dominant pines began to be displaced by various broad-leaved tree species;[11] whereas among animals hunted, elk remained predominant, with a rise in the relative numbers of wild boar being hunted.[12] There is evidence for the use of hunting dogs from the Early Mesolithic onwards.[13] Birds also were hunted. Bird bones found at the Vendzava settlement at Užava point to duck-like and other water fowl being taken.[14]

Similar climate and environmental conditions, including availability of resources, throughout the Eastern Baltic and adjacent territories determined a similar way of life for groups of fishermen and hunters. At this time new Mesolithic cultures formed that have been named as the Kunda culture, given that the first discoveries occurred at the site of an island in a dried-up lake in Northern Estonia. This culture was wide-spread throughout the territories of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and their adjacent territories, including Southern Finland[15].

New changes in the environment and hence in the way of life of hunters-gatherers-fishermen began some 8000 years ago. According to archaeological categories this corresponds to the Late Mesolithic. At the end of the Boreal climate period water from Lake Ancylus began to reach the North Sea via the Danish Straits with corresponding reverse flow of salt water into the lowland occupied by Lake Ancylus forming the Littorina Sea. A rise in sea-level of the oceans meant that the Littorina Sea flooded most of the lower reaches of rivers in Latvia as well as part of the seashore. Fall of the water level left a number of lagoons close by the seashore, their locations today marked by residual lakes: Pape, Liepāja, Engure, Kaņieris, Babīte, Jugla, and other lakes located inland of the seashore. The climate continued to become warmer and more humid — average annual temperatures rose by 2–2.5 degrees, and the average yearly total precipitation reached 200 mm, comparable to values today.[16] The mild and humid North Atlantic Climate period set in and persisted for approximately 3300 years, giving the most favourable climate conditions during the entire post-glacial (Holocene) era.

Broadleaf tree species began to predominate in forests, i.e. oaks, flattering elms, lindens, alders, all reached their maximum extent at this time. The number of oaks had increased fourfold and even formed groves. Hornbeams grew in Western Latvia. Water chestnuts grew in warming lakes and became a substantial food resource. Wild boars

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[10] Zagorskis, F. *Zvejnieki (Northern Latvia) Stone Age Cemetery*. Transl. from the Latvian by V. Bērziņš. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2004, pp. 78–93 (BAR International Series, 1292).

[11] Segliņš, V. *Holocēna nogulumu stratigrāfija Latvijā un to starpreģionālā korelācija*, 55. lpp.

[12] Zagorska, I. Mezolīts. 7600.–4500. g. pr.Kr. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g.t. pr.Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 45. lpp., 1. tab.

[13] Zagorska, I. The Mesolithic in Latvia, Table 1.

[14] Bērziņš, V. Mezolīta apmetne Užavas Vendzavās. *Ventspils muzeja raksti*, II. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2002, 39. lpp.

[15] Girininkas, A. *Akmens amžius*. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2009, p. 83–86 (Lietuvos archeologija, t. 1).

[16] Āboltiņš, O. *No ledus laikmeta līdz globālajai sasilšanai: Dabas vides pagātne un tagadne Latvijā*, 79.–84. lpp.



Fig. 2. Landscape view of the Mesolithic and Neolithic settlement at Zvidze. Photograph by Andrejs Vasks

became most widely hunted animals, although other animals were also hunted. Water fowl continued to be taken, mostly various species of duck. Pike were the predominant fish caught with individual fish being up to 140 cm long and weigh up to 25 kg. Other fish caught included sanders, perch, crucian carp, bream, and catfish.[17] Fish comprised an important part of human diet during the Mesolithic and the following Early Neolithic. This has been convincingly demonstrated through analysis of the stable isotopes carbon ^{13}C and nitrogen ^{15}N found in bones taken from the burial-ground at the Zvejnieki settlement. This showed that fresh-water fish formed a very large part of the daily diet during the Mesolithic and Early Neolithic.[18] The situation during the Late Mesolithic has been best investigated at the Osa, Zvidze, and Kvāpāni II settlements at Lake Lubāns (Fig. 2)[19] and at the Zvejnieki settlement by Lake Burtnieks.[20]

The Neolithic Period or Early Stone Age (5400–1800 BCE) is characterised by the first appearance of clay pottery. The distinction between various Neolithic sub-periods Early (5400–4100 BCE), Middle (4100–2900 BCE) and Late Stone Age (2900–1800 BCE) is determined by changes in material culture, reflected in ceramic types. During the Early Neolithic, Narva culture predominated in the Eastern Baltic Region, this culture first uncovered at Narva in Estonia and its environs; later this culture spread to other parts of the Eastern Baltic Region. This culture is typified by large pots (mouth opening 30–40 cm in diameter) with a pointed base as well as shallow bowls (Fig. 3). The material of these pieces contained some organic material, and once this material disappeared the shards became highly porous. First examples of such ceramics in Latvia were discovered at Osa settlement, whence they are known in Latvia as being of the Osa type. The technology for producing ceramics came to the Eastern Baltic Region from the Upper Volga cultural region where it was known earlier.[21] No

[17] Zagorska, I. The Mesolithic in Latvia, p. 109.

[18] Eriksson, G., Lõugas, L., Zagorska, I. Stone Age hunter-fisher-gatherers at Zvejnieki, northern Latvia: radiocarbon, stable isotope and archaeozoology data. *Before Farming*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2003, p. 64.

[19] Лозе, *И. Поселения каменного века Лубанской низины. Мезолит, ранний и средний неолит*. Рига: Зинатне, 1988, с. 18–25.

[20] Zagorska, I. The Mesolithic in Latvia, pp. 109–115.

[21] Piezonka, H. Neue AMS-Daten zur frühneolithischen Keramikentwicklung in der Nordosteuropäischen Waldzone. *Estonian Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 12 , No. 2, 2008, p. 106.

changes are evident in the range of items produced from bone and antler; their production continued to be based on traditions established during the Late Mesolithic. Settlements previously established continued to be occupied, with new ones appearing, for example that at Zvejsala and Iča (by Lake Lubāns).

A new culture, the Pit–Comb Ware Culture, appeared and spread during the Middle Neolithic in the Eastern Baltic Region, Finland, and North-West Russia. The presence of Pit–Comb Ware Culture has been discovered at nearly 50 settlements in the territory of Latvia. The spread of this culture indicates that numbers of residents increased as well as the density of settlements. A number of important changes took place in material culture. These first of all show up in ceramic ware — kettle-shaped pots appeared with a rounded bottom, with the material of this ware including an admixture of gravel in place of the organic material previously used. The surface of pots featured decorations mode by impression of comb-like implement as well as indentations. In addition a number of tools made out of high-quality flint became widespread as well as products made out of slate all of which testify to contacts for barter. The last are best illustrated by the spread of amber ornaments throughout Eastern Europe. Regular changes of the level of the Littorina Sea meant that amber was washed up along its southern shores, in particular deposits of amber have been found on the Sembia Peninsula (Kaliningrad). Wind and sea currents were responsible for pieces of amber to be washed ashore over a long coastline where it was gathered up and made into various pendants, beads and small figurines. A high degree of craftsmanship was developed in the use of amber, and, given the large number of items produced, one may even speak of the existence of a specialised amber industry. This was concentrated in a few centres, at Šventoja, Sārnate, and, in particular, at settlements around Lake Lubāns.[22] From here finished products, in exchange for flint and slate, spread widely throughout the north-eastern territories of Europe.

In addition to the new Pit–Comb Ware Culture the Middle Neolithic is characterised by another culture, one that developed during this period based on the existing Osa type pottery dating from the Early Neolithic. This culture was first discovered at the Piestiņa settlement located near Lake Lubāns and has been accordingly named as the Piestiņa type pottery. Subsequently evidence for it were uncovered in a number of Middle Neolithic settlements in Eastern Latvia. Piestiņa type ceramic pots and bowls were prepared from material that contained traces of organic materials. Ornamentation of these wares had become more diverse when compared with Early Neolithic products, although decorations still appeared only on the top part of the wares. Settlements where such pottery are found are also characterised by the presence of items produced from high-quality flint and slate, and also amber ornaments.

During the Middle Neolithic, as earlier, the predominant form of food supply derived from fishing, hunting, and gathering of wild vegetation. It is noteworthy in terms of the development of hunter and fisher households that the first examples of domesticated animals and cultivated crops appeared during the Middle Neolithic. Evidence for this are bones of domesticated animals found at Zvidze settlement. Out of a total of

[22] Bliujienė, A. *Lietuvos priešistorės gintaras*. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2007, pav. 114.

551 animals, 49 were domesticated animals.[23] The first signs of farming date from this time. Thus, half of a carbonised grain of barley was found near the hearth at Kreiči settlement. Barley pollen has been found at Zvidze settlement. Hemp pollen was also found there. Hemp in the form of fibres was used to produce cords for fishing nets and for other uses.



Fig. 3. Early Neolithic pottery imitations (replicas) based on Osa settlement materials. (Radiņš, A. Arheoloģisks ceļvedis latviešu un Latvijas vēsturē. Rīga: Neputns, 2012, Fig. 21)

The Late Neolithic began around 2900 BCE when the new Corded Ware culture (CWC) spread throughout the Eastern Baltic Region. The name of this culture reflects two of its characteristic features, namely clay wares decorated with twisted cord impressions, and polished stone axes that, when viewed from the side, had the appearance of a boat. CWC is also characterised by flint tools — wedge-shaped axes, triangular or heart-shaped arrowheads, scrapers, and small knives. Little material evidence has survived to characterise this culture. Only five settlements with a "pure" set of relics have been found on the territory of Latvia, i.e. settlements where no relics are present from other cultures (Celmi at Užava, Tojāti and Drubazas at Matkule, Rutenieki at Garoza, Lejasbitēni at Aizkraukle). All of these settlements had a thin layer of deposits, and therefore, no evidence was uncovered for buildings at these sites, nor the types of household. Evidently the locations were briefly occupied without leaving behind a thick layer of deposits. It is likely that there were few individuals living at these sites and they may be viewed as single households, a form of settlement that characterised the Bronze Age.

However, evidence for the presence of members of CWC has been found in settlements that had been established during the Middle Neolithic, or even earlier, and whose inhabitants, hunters, fishers and gatherers, continued to practice their Piestiņa type cultural traditions. In the case of more than 15 such settlements the quantity of corded ceramic shards has been very slight, only a few percent of the total number. All of the other shards were remnants of porous Piestiņa type pottery.

Individual burials also characterise CWC, wherein bodies are buried placed on their sides in a bent position, together with stone boat-axes and decorative antler plates suitable for a man's belt, wedge-shaped axes, flint tools, and corded pottery.

[23] Лозе, И. *Поселения каменного века Лубанской низины: мезолит, ранний и средний неолит*, табл. 22, с. 114.

These burials are typically isolated, i.e. not part of a larger group, hence their discovery is a matter of chance, usually due to physical use of the land. In all 36 such bodies in a bent position have been found at 13 locations in Latvia. However, the inventory typical of CWC burials was found only in seven instances, i.e. shards of corded pottery, a boat-axe, or antler plates.[24] The association with CWC of the remaining burials without any inventory remains an open question.

Due to the scarcity of data available about households among CWC tribes, for reasons stated previously, their strategy for survival is unclear. Judging by the extent to which boat-axes have been found by chance, farming activities during the Late Neolithic began to go outside of the ecological zones associated with hunter-fisher households, i.e. the near shore region of lakes. This is well illustrated by the topography of boat-axes and stone hoes, as these indicate regions where their owners lived during the Late Neolithic. The majority of boat-axes have been found on moraines, alluvial or glacier luminal sand deposits, i.e. on mother rocks that were suitable for the development of farming. Thus the Late Neolithic was a time when there was an active search for ecological regions that would allow development of farming and animal husbandry.[25]

Overall it appears that a situation developed during the Late Neolithic whereby two strategies co-existed, the older one well described by archaeological materials, the hunter-fisher-gatherer approach, and a newer one, wherein a role was played, unfortunately the extent of which is currently difficult to assess, by animal husbandry and farming, supplementing hunting. Each of these approaches were followed under ecological conditions that favoured one of the other.[26] During the Late Neolithic, the older strategic model continued to be followed close to the sea shore or the shores of inland lakes, including along associated river banks, but the newer strategic model, judging by the dispersion of boat-axes and other implements, was associated with moraine mounds and river valleys.

The origin of the CWC remains in dispute. Previously the view was taken that its appearance in the Eastern Baltic Region reflected migration of new inhabitants from the south-west or south-eastern direction. The view also was current that the newcomers were Indo-Europeans who practiced farming and animal husbandry.[27] Another more current opinion holds that this culture appeared as a result of internal social development of those already living in the area, with changes in survival strategy and way of life. Great importance is attached to contacts with near-by and distant con-

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[24] Gerhards, G. Saliektie apbedījumi Latvijā no antropoloģiskā viedokļa. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 21. laid. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 120. lpp., 1. tab.

[25] Vasks, A., Kalniņa, L. Apdzīvotība un zemkopība Rietumlatvijā agro metālu periodā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 23. laid. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2006, 290. lpp.

[26] Grasis, N. Žucevas kultūras izcelšanās un attīstība apmetņu kontekstā: retrospektīva un perspektīva. *Latvijas arheoloģija. Pētījumi un problēmas: Rakstu krājums*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2002, 73. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 8).

[27] See, for example: Balodis, F. *Senākie laiki. Latviešu senvēsture*. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1938, 45. lpp. (Latviešu vēsture, I sēj. 1. d.); Moora, H. *Pirmatnējā kopienas iekārta un agrā feodālā sabiedrība Latvijas PSR teritorijā*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1952, 27., 44. lpp.; *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, 88. lpp.

tacts as a result of trade and through marriage. Presently there is considerable doubt as to a large-scale migration taking place.[28]

In a typical hunter-fisher-gatherer society relations are usually described as egalitarian. Nevertheless changes took place in this respect over the millennia. If the mobile hunter groups during the late Palaeolithic and Early Mesolithic may be considered as socially egalitarian, ones where there was no social polarisation, territorial thinking and conflict,[29] then later, particularly during the Neolithic, the situation had changed. Long-standing hunter-fisher settlements appeared during the Middle and Late Neolithic, and stable places of residence, an increase in numbers meant that a single settlement might comprise several tens of individuals. Social relations became more complex with an increase in the number of residents. Signs of a hierarchical structure are not yet evident at this time. It is true that, as has been shown in a study of agglomeration of settlements in the Lubāns Lowland, even in certain micro-regions, thanks to favourable geographic locations and environmental conditions, settlements were more closely integrated into communication networks and were quicker to appreciate new technologies and raw materials. Therefore, these societies could well have been more advanced economically and socially. Social development was influenced from the Middle Neolithic onwards by a rapid increase in inter-regional trade and also with more distant regions. Individuals involved in trading ensured the circulation of exotic materials (amber, copper), in this way gaining an elite position with respect to the ordinary members of society. On the other hand, those who wore such ornaments had a higher social position in society than the average individual. The desire to acquire prestige goods and products (including domesticated animals) became the basis for competition between members of a community as well as between communities. Further competition was stimulated by trade in items with inter-regional value as well as by collective feasting and religious festivals led to greater social differentiation, and the appearance of certain hunter-fisher communities that one may describe as trans-egalitarian, i.e. those where former egalitarianism has disappeared but formal "political" leaders and a stable ordering of society have yet to appear.[30]

The Bronze Age (1800–500 BCE)

The beginning of the Bronze Age is taken to be the time when bronze artefacts, and skills in their manufacture locally, first appear in any particular territory. This happened, in the case of the territory of Latvia, during the first half of the 2nd millennium BCE. The appearance of the first bronze products did not produce any apparent

[28] See, for example: Lang, V. Some aspects of the Corded Ware Culture east of the Baltic Sea. *The roots of peoples and languages of Northern Eurasia*, I. Julku, K., Wiik, K. (eds.). Turku, 1998, pp. 84–104.

[29] Zagorska I. *Senie ziemeļbriežu mednieki Latvijā*, 152. lpp.

[30] Zvelebil, M. Mobility, contact, and Exchange in the Baltic Sea basin 6000–2000 BC. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, Vol. 25, 2006, p. 185.



Fig. 4. Vīnakalns hill-fort at Ikšķile in 1967. Photograph by Jānis Graudonis

changes in daily life — tools continued to be made as before from stone, bone, antler, and clay. The importance of bronze artefacts as exotic items and high prestige lay in their social value akin to the role played by gold and silver in later periods. Given that important changes in economic, social, and ideological structures did take place, it is customary to sub-divide the period into the Early (1800–1100 BCE) and Late (1100–500 BCE) Bronze Age.

The sub-boreal climate of the 2nd millennium BCE was followed by the sub-Atlantic climate period that continued into the Iron Age. The weather grew cooler and more humid, which led to a water level rising in river basins, and many settlements located near lakes, previously inhabited by hunters-fishers, had to be abandoned. The climate changes also diminished the rate at which forest animals, birds, and fish renewed their populations, thereby reducing the food supply base for survival of the hunter-fisher societies. Consequences followed in terms of how the population was distributed — exploitation of ecological zones densely inhabited during the Stone Age greatly diminished and a new era began of cultivating new territories more suited for farming and animal husbandry. This process took place most visibly in the Daugava river basin. During the middle of the 2nd millennium, most settlements located in the Lubāns Lowland were abandoned, while at the same time new settlements appeared in the Daugava River Valley. New burial-grounds at Kalnieši, Raganukalns, Ķivutkalns, Reznas, Vējstūri testify to people settling the area, as well as stray finds of bronze objects dating from the first half of the Bronze Age. The way of life pursued by these people is practically unknown. Evidently there were small settlements with a few inhabitants each and they have left no imprint behind.[31] The new burial-grounds mentioned above together with stray finds of a few bronze objects only point to a few locations along the Daugava but do not reflect a complete picture of settlements in the Daugava river basin. The latter is better seen from the distribution of axes used for work, i.e. stones with a hole suitable for use as an axe. During the Bronze Age, such stones were used in farms located in forest clearings to clear trees and underbrush. These objects are also stray finds, but they demonstrate that during the Bronze Age there were settlers not only in the Daugava River Valley but also throughout the entire river basin.[32]

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[31] Vasks, A. *Brikuļu nocietinātā apmetne: Lubāna zemiene vēlajā bronzas un dzelzs laikmetā (1000. g. pr.Kr. – 1000. g. pēc Kr.).* Rīga: Preses nams, 1994, 66. lpp.

[32] Vasks, A. Akmens darba cirvji Daugavas baseinā: apdzīvotības raksturojums. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 2002, 39.–40. lpp.



Fig. 5. Place where a building of wooden posts stood together with a hearth, Brikuļi hill-fort. Photograph by Andrejs Vasks

A number of Late Neolithic settlements continued to be inhabited through the first half and mid 2nd millennium BCE. The most detailed study of these has been carried out for the Lagaža settlement in the Lubāns Lowland, which was inhabited over the time period of 1700 to 1300 BCE. Fragments of a crucible suitable for bronze casting were uncovered at this site, presently these are the oldest finds of this type in Latvia.[33] At the same time, the households at this settlement continued to rely upon Late Neolithic style hunting and fishing as the principal ways to ensure a food supply. Bones of domestic animals made up only a small fraction — 1.9%.[34]

A new form of settlement — hill-forts — appeared mid-way during the Bronze Age signalling the beginning of the Late Bronze Age. Sites were chosen with limited access and great natural defences, such as tongues of land at the confluence of large rivers, edges of uplands, the brow of a hill and even isolated hills. Some of these hill-forts were converted into fortifications by digging moats, steepening natural slopes, raising ramparts and building wooden stockades.

Approximately 100 hill-forts on the territory of Latvia date from the period of the second half of the Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. The most extensive excavation of hill-forts has taken place at sites along the banks of the Daugava where 16 hill-forts have been studied, out of which three — Ķivutkalns, Vīnakalns (Fig. 4), and Mūkukalns — were fully examined. The Brikuļi hill-fort beside Lake Lubāns (Fig. 5) has also been intensively studied.[35] A number of small open settlements continued to be used in parallel with the appearance of hill-forts; these were located across the land without any visible sign of fortification. Such settlements, in contrast to hill-forts, were sited on open level areas in the countryside. Approximately 60 such settlements have been identified in the Daugava river basin, an area that has been better investigated in comparison with other regions of Latvia; these field settlements date from the Late Bronze Age and even earlier periods.[36]

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[33] Лозе, И. Стоянка Лагажа (Лубанская низменность). *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 6, 1972, 63. lpp.

[34] Лозе, И. А. *Поздний неолит и ранняя бронза Лубанской равнины*. Рига: Зинатне, 1979, с. 125, табл. 13.

[35] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions. *Inside Latvian archaeology*. Jensen, O. W., Karlsson, H., Vijups, A. (eds.). Göteborg, 1999, pp. 34–35 (Gotarc Series A, Vol. 2).

[36] Vasks, A. Apdzīvotība, saimniecība un sabiedrība Daugavas baseinā bronzas un senākajā dzelzs laikmetā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 1994, 58.–60. lpp.

Excavations at hill-forts have produced a wealth of materials about the economy of the Late Bronze Age. These demonstrate that the economy was complex, with the chief role played by animal husbandry and farming, with hunting and fishing playing a minor supporting role. A study of bones found at excavations of hill-forts shows that an average of 75% originate from domesticated animals — cattle, pigs, and sheep/goats.[37] A significant fraction were bones of horses, these animals being used both for food and for work and transport purposes. The latter is demonstrated by parts of a harness made out of antler and found at Mūkukalns and Brikuļi. Farming developed mostly in forest clearings, but traces of ploughed furrows were found beneath the rampart of Dievukalns hill-fort showing that it had previously been a farmed field.[38] Seeds of weeds found among samples of seeds that have been discovered indicate that fields could be cultivated over a long period of time. Farming was particularly well developed in the lower reaches of the Daugava, where, for example, two-handed grindstones were found at Ķivutkalns. Wheat, barley, millet, peas and beans were among the cultivated crops grown in the lower reaches of the Daugava.[39] Hunting and fishing no longer was the major source of food, but they undoubtedly still contributed a part. Elk, wild boar, does, deer, also bears, hares and wild oxen were hunted for their meat. Beavers were intensively hunted for their fur, and their meat was also eaten. At Ķivutkalns beaver bones were 40% of all bones from hunted animals, and at Vīnakalns they formed 68%.[40] It is likely that beaver fur was used in trade, in exchange for bronze.

Fish also contributed significantly to the daily diet — fish remnants have been found in several layers close to hearths. At least 14 varieties of fish were taken in the Daugava River, mussels were also eaten and their shells often formed compacted deposit layers.[41]

Production of implements made of stone, bone, antler, and clay as well as clothing was a feature of hill-fort settlements. Highly developed use of bronze was carried out in many hill-forts. Fragments of clay crucibles and clay moulds have been unearthed although the number of bronze pieces is rather small.[42] Approximately 220 objects from the Bronze Age have been found in Latvia. These are stray finds or were discovered at settled places. Metal objects are rarely found in these graves. Six hoards of bronze objects have been found on the territory of Latvia, comprising weapons and ornaments. This shows that bronze was used mostly to produce objects with high prestige value.

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[37] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, p. 36.

[38] Zariņa, A. Atradumi nocietinātā apmetnē Lielvārdes Dievukalnā. *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 5, 1982, 68–69. lpp., 10. att.

[39] Graudonis, J. *Nocietinātās apmetnes Daugavas lejtecē*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1989, 72.–73. lpp.

[40] Ibid., 10. tab.

[41] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, p. 37.

[42] Граудонис, Я. Я. Культура позднего бронзового века Прибалтики и лесной полосы Европейской части СССР. *Эпоха бронзы лесной полосы СССР.* Москва: Наука, 1987, с. 121–123 (Археология СССР); Vasks, A. Bronzas apstrādes centri un bronzas priekšmeti sabiedrisko attiecību sistēmā agro metālu periodā Latvijas teritorijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 22. laid. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2005, 89.–90. lpp.



Fig. 6. Reconstructed boat-shaped stone setting (crypt), "The Devil's Boat" at Lubes Bīlavas. Photograph by Andrejs Vasks

Bronze reached Latvia from the south-eastern near-coastal areas of the Baltic Sea located between the Visla and Nemunas rivers, as well as from the West across the Baltic Sea. The influx of bronze to the south-eastern near-coastal areas of the Baltic Sea was stimulated by trade in amber with Central Europe. During the Neolithic, trade in amber occurred in the north-easterly direction, but with the onset of the Bronze Age, trade in amber was directed in the southern direction. It is for this reason that amber ornaments dating from the Bronze Age are rarely found on the territory of Latvia.[43] Communication routes linking the territory of Latvia with the regions where amber was found had been established during the Neolithic. During the Bronze Age, thanks to the so-called Amber Route, the inhabitants of Latvia became connected to a wider network. The Daugava was the most important communications route in Latvia, and it was particularly important in contact with suppliers of bronze. Hill-forts appeared along the Daugava and the Daugava River basin in which bronze was processed. A number of sea routes also developed. The existence of these routes has been inferred from the so-called "Devil's Boats", burials with distinctive boat-shaped stone settings in the Courland Peninsula. In all, 12 such boats have been found at seven locations in Talsi Municipality, close to the shore of the Littorina Sea (Fig. 6). The bodies of the dead were cremated and the ashes placed in clay urns to be interred inside a stone boat that was set in an underground stone vault. Similar burials are found around the Baltic Sea close to the shore, but the largest number are located on islands in the Baltic Sea, Gotland, Bornholm, and Åland. The form of the clay urns found in the Courland (now Kurzeme) boat burials correspond to the Scandinavian type, i.e. Bronze Age ceramics, decorative surface scratches on some indicate the influence of local ceramic traditions. Evidently individuals buried this way had been involved in shipping and maintained contacts between the regions around the Baltic Sea.[44] The hoard of bronze items found at Ventspils Staldzene cliffs provide ample testimony for contacts across the Baltic Sea. The total weight of the hoard was 5.6 kg, and this is the largest find of Bronze Age antiquities that has been found up to now in the Eastern

[43] Vasks, A. Dzintars bronzas un senākajā dzelzs laikmetā Latvijas teritorijā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2015, 28.–47. lpp.

[44] Vasks, A. Latvia as part of a sphere of contacts in the Bronze Age. *Archaeologia Baltica*, Vol. 13: At the origins of the culture of the Balts. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla, 2010, pp. 156–157.



Fig.7. Stone constructions, the Barrow 7, Pukuļi burial ground. Photograph by Andrejs Vasks

Baltic region. The articles were bronze ornaments typical for Northern Europe, and not for the Eastern Baltic region, and, furthermore, many items were broken, or showed signs of wear. It is likely that these objects had been collected somewhere in Scandinavia (possibly in Gotland) and were being transported over the sea as raw products to be treated locally by bronze craftsmen.[45]

Changes during the Bronze Age also influenced social relations, including religious beliefs and mythology. In terms of social relations, these led to a differentiated way of life, when hill-forts appeared in parallel with existing open settlements. Bronze processing occurred at many of the former, including production of bronze weapons and ornaments, and maintenance of their trade with distant parts indicates the high social standing of the residents of these hill-forts.[46] Evidence for greater social differentiation compared to hunter-fisher societies comes from changes in burial customs. Dedicated burial-grounds appeared during the Bronze Age, namely barrows. That barrows were sited at some distance from inhabited places, leads to the supposition that the "communal" space for the living is separate from the mythological sacred space, the home of ancestors. A symbolic home, possibly even a settlement, was created by making these barrows out of earth, stones, and possibly, wood constructions, for the departed. A stone circle, usually 10–15 m in diameter, was at the base of the barrow, with a centrally placed coffin, with subsequent burials around this centre (Fig. 7). In attempting to reconstruct the social model of the time of these burials, we may conclude that society was already quite differentiated. Opinions have been expressed, given the large effort of manpower and resources to create barrow (burial mound) when compared with simple interment, that not all members of society were buried in barrows, only the leading members. Demographic analyses of barrow burial fields in Northern Europe point to this possibility.[47] Archaeological materials themselves provide scant clues that would allow as-

[45] Vasks, A., Vijups, A. *Staldzenes bronzas laikmeta depozīts = Staldzene Bronze Age hoard*. Rīga: Fobo Prints, 2004.

[46] Vasks, A. Bronzas apstrādes centri un bronzas priekšmeti sabiedrisko attiecību sistēmā agro metālu periodā Latvijas teritorijā, 92.–93. lpp.

[47] Seger, T. On the structure and emergence of Bronze Age society in Costal Finland: A system approach. *Suomen Museo*, No. 88, 1981, pp. 35–36; Harding, A. *European societies in the Bronze Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 96.

sessing the ethnic belonging of the inhabitants.[48] It has been postulated that Finno-Ugric tribes lived in Northern Latvia, but tribes of Balts, in the southern part.[49]

The Iron Age (500 BCE – 1200 CE)

The Iron Age that followed on to the Bronze Age is typically sub-divided into various periods: Pre-Roman (500–1 BCE), Early (1–400), Middle (400–800) and Late (800–1200) Iron Age. During the **Pre-Roman Iron Age** (in Northern Europe, but in Central Europe it corresponds to the La Tène culture period), the first iron artefacts appeared: few in number, they are presumed to have been imported. More substantial appearance of iron items and associated changes happened later, when, at the beginning of our era, local manufacture of iron products was started.

During the **Early Iron Age** (1–400; in Northern Europe this period corresponds to the Roman Iron Age), Western Latvia, Northern Courland in particular, was sparsely settled, judging by the number of hill-forts, settlements, and burial places, and by the small number of stray finds. In Eastern Latvia people lived mostly in the river basins of the Daugava and Gauja, although even in these regions there were areas sparsely or not at all settled. Habitation spread to the Central Vidzeme Upland during the Early Iron Age; previously this area had barely been settled. Globally, when comparing with the previous period, and judging by the number of archaeological sites of interest, the population grew both in the western and eastern regions of Latvia.

If a decrease was evident in the numbers of people living in hill-forts, then the reverse was true for settlements on the land. The increase in their numbers, and spatial distribution covering regions of Latvia previously uninhabited, is reflected indirectly by the location of burial grounds. The extent of these settlements is presently only partially known, but a number of examples indicate that they were situated close to burial grounds. Extended investigations have been carried out so far on the settlements, Spietiņi at Sēlpils[50], Kerkūzi at Saliena[51], and Kivti at Zvirgzdene[52]. The remnants of construction found at these sites show that two types of buildings were put up during the Early Iron Age: log houses with a rectangular plan, and round, or oval huts. If most of the log houses were used as living quarters, then huts, with their bottom edge dug into

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[48] Vasks, A. Baltu izcelsme un agrīnā vēsture – uzskatu plurālisms vai metodoloģijas krīze? *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2000, 58.–61. lpp.

[49] Graudonis, J. Agro metālu periods. 1500.–1. g. pr.Kr. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g.t. pr.Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 182.–184. lpp.

[50] Atgāzis, M. Sēlpils Spietiņu apmetne un tās laiks. *Pētījumi sēļu senatnē: Rakstu krājums.* Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2006, 11.–27. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 11).

[51] Vasks, A. Agrā dzelzs laikmeta apmetne Kerkūzos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 16. laid. Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 46.–64. lpp.

[52] Šnore, E. Celtniecības liecības Kivtu apmetnē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 12. laid. Rīga: Zinātne, 1978, 52.–75. lpp.

the ground, had a variety of practical uses. There was a palisade-style fence surrounding the settlement at Kerkūzi, and indications of the presence of a fence were also found at Kivtu settlement. We are led to believe that similar protective/defensive fences were typical for all open settlements.

Materials uncovered at these sites show that farming predominated during the Early Iron Age, facilitated by the introduction of iron implements. The settlement at Spietiņi deserves special mention in that a furnace was found there used for smelting iron dating from the 1st–4th centuries. Waste from iron smelting has been found at other similar sites and this demonstrates that, already during the Early Iron Age, practical skills of how to produce iron were widespread. During this time the practice of farming in forest clearings was increasingly supplemented by permanent cultivation of open fields. The process is associated with further development during the Iron Age of ploughing with a hook typical of the Bronze Age. Furrows resulting from this kind of ploughing have been found beneath deposited occupation layers of settlements at Indrica and Sloboda on the right bank of the Daugava, approximately 15 km east of Krāslava.[53] Indirect evidence for more or less permanent cultivation of field is given by the discovery of seeds of biennial and perennial weeds.

As previously barley was the principal cultivated grain that was grown. Significant quantities of wheat were grown, as well as millet. Wild oats were grown as these were typically found together with emmer or hard red wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*). The oil-bearing grass, false flax (*Camelina sativa*), and flax (to produce linen) were also cultivated.[54]

In Eastern Latvia large iron sickles were used to gather grain crops. In the western region of Latvia and in the river basin of the Lielupe scythes were used in place of sickles to gather grain crops and to mow hay to feed livestock. These were only 25–30 cm long, and it is supposed that they were attached to a short stock. Judging by their placement in graves, sickles were used by women and scythes by men. Grains were ground by means of a single-handed grindstone, but two-handed grindstones also began to appear.

Farming in forest clearings greatly decreased the areas under forest cover; thus, animal husbandry profited from grazing on open fields. Herds of cattle were most to be found, followed by herds of pigs, sheep, and goats. The horse had a special place among domesticated animals. Horses were used as draft animals, as well as for food.[55]

As to the Early Iron Age, it is easy to identify through their different burial customs the areas inhabited within the territory of Latvia by Balts (southern region) and by Baltic Finns in the northern part.[56]

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[53] Zariņa, A. Indricas un Slobodas agrā dzelzs laikmeta apmetnes ar apdzīvotību arī viduslaikos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 18. laid. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1996, 191.–211. lpp.

[54] Rasiņš, A., Tauriņa, M. Pārskats par Latvijas PSR arheoloģiskajos izrakumos konstatētajām kultūraugu un nezāļu sēklām. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 14. laid. Rīga: Zinātne, 1983, 152.–176. lpp.

[55] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 123. lpp.

[56] Vasks, A. The cultural and ethnic situation in Latvia during the Early and Middle Iron Age (1st – 8th century AD). *Humanities and Social Sciences. Latvia*, No. 3 (16), 1997, pp. 49–62.

A new society formed during the Early Iron Age, one whose characteristics were determined by changes in landownership relations, a new ideology and new social relations. With the system of permanent cultivation of fields, the relationship of certain households with particular pieces of arable land ensuring continued fertility of cultivated land became a constant preoccupation. Gradually a piece of arable land became the property of a single household. The forests, grazing land and water remained available for common use by a family. Establishment of the rights of a family to arable land was a slow process, one that might have begun during the previous period. Division into households of one or a few families, taming of new regions led to decentralisation of previous territorial structures and relations between equal partners. On the other hand, this was the beginning of increasing competition between families and family elders for leadership in a district.[57]

During the **Middle Iron Age** (400–800), which covers both the Migration Period (450–550) and the Pre-Viking Period (550–800), many established settlements continued to be occupied, but new settlements arose. Construction of hill-forts set in. New fortifications were made at a number of established hill-forts (those at Ķente, Koknese, Dignāja, and elsewhere), and new hill-forts were established (at Obzerkalns in Dzelzava, the Mežmalu hill-fort near Pļaviņas, and others). Settlements formed at the base of hill-forts. The Ķente hill-fort and a settlement covering 2 ha in their entirety dates from this time. Excavations have brought to light evidence about crafts, in particular metal-working was found at Ķente hill-fort and its settlement showing that this was an important centre for activities at that time.[58] The development of hill-forts as centres for economic activity, and, possibly, even as administrative centres occurred not only in the river basin of the Daugava, but also that of the Lielupe and in Western Latvia. The Tērvete and Kamārde hill-forts were the centre in the river basin of the Lielupe. There have been less studies carried out on hill-forts in Western Latvia, but there is no doubt that a number of them began to strengthen their defences during the Middle Iron Age. One example is the Belte hill-fort by the Venta River.[59] Ordinary settlements existed in addition to hill-forts and settlements at these sites. These have not been studied as extensively, but data indicates that a number of old sites continued to be inhabited (for example, the Spietiņi settlement) and new ones were established, in particular on the banks of the Daugava. Many of these settlements continued to exist in the succeeding Late Iron Age and in time grew into hamlets with a larger number of inhabitants. However, a number of single-family households continued to exist, in addition to the hamlets. One such site has been found at Daugmales Vedmeri on the left bank of the Daugava. The site consisted of a single building of approximately 20 m², set slightly below ground level together with a hearth.[60]

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[57] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, pp. 54–55.

[58] Stubavs A. *Ķentes pilskalns un apmetne*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1976, 143 lpp.; il.

[59] Vasks, A. New data on hill-forts of North-Western Latvia. *Archaeologia Lituana*, 12. Vilnius: Vilnius University, 2011, pp. 64–71.

[60] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 142.–143. lpp.

A novel implement for tilling the soil, the iron ploughshare, appeared in Western Latvia. An example of such a ploughshare with an oar-like extension was discovered in a 5th century grave in the burial ground at Vērgales Ošenieki.[61] Excavations show an increase in the number of seeds of weeds, particularly perennial weeds from the period indicating that farming of permanently cleared fields increased in relation to farming in wood clearings.

Barley was the principal grain crop. Soft wheat began to be grown more widely. Peas and beans continued to be grown, with turnips as a newcomer.[62] Cattle had the greatest importance in animal husbandry, with pigs in second place. Judging by the large number of bones, horses were used both as working animals and for food.[63] The first evidence for a cat and chickens was found at the Middle Iron Age hill-fort at Ķente. The number of bones of hunted animals differs from place to place, but their presence indicates hunting to have played a supporting role. Elk were the most hunted animal, with beavers in the second place, the latter for their valuable fur.

Among the crafts blacksmithing and jewellers developed the quickest. Demand for weapons and various ornaments rose with the appearance of a new elite. It is noteworthy that as of the 5th century silver ornaments, some even gold plated, appeared in Latvia alongside bronze ornaments.[64] Specialisation of crafts was associated with hill-forts strengthening their positions, as these became the principal centres for craftsmen to ply their trade.

The cultural-ethnic situation changed during the Middle Iron Age from the 5th to the 8th century; this was particularly evident in the eastern part of Latvia. Ethnic groups emerged at that time to be recorded in writing during the period of the 9th to 13th centuries (Fig. 8). Cultural traditions formed earlier persisted in the south-west of Latvia, and Couronians are first mentioned in writing in the 9th century Chronicle of Rimbert. A separate episode comprises the presence of Scandinavians from 650 to 850 at Grobiņa and the surrounding district. All traces of this Scandinavian presence at Grobiņa disappeared during the 9th century[65]. In Northern Courland cultural traditions were kept from previous times in that the dead continued to be buried in stone grave cemeteries typical of the Baltic Finns.[66] In the Lielupe river basin, beginning with the 5th century, the former tradition of burial in stone grave cemeteries was supplanted by the new custom of inhumation of the dead in flat burial grounds, placing in graves bronze and silver ornaments, iron weapons, and tools. These burial grounds were in use until the 11th–12th centuries, at which time written records describe the

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[61] Virse, I. Par dažiem atradumiem Vērgales Ošenieku kapulaukā. *Latvijas arheoloģija. Pētījumi un problēmas: Rakstu krājums.* Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2002, 193. lpp., 1. att.: 2 (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 8).

[62] Rasiņš, A., Tauriņa, M. Pārskats par Latvijas PSR arheoloģiskajos izrakumos konstatētajām kultūraugu un nezāļu sēklām, 152.–176. lpp.

[63] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, p. 59.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Nerman, B. *Grobin–Seeburg: Ausgrabungen und Funde*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1958.

[66] Vasks, A. Akmeņu krāvuma kapulauki Kurzemē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 21. laid. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 141.–152. lpp.

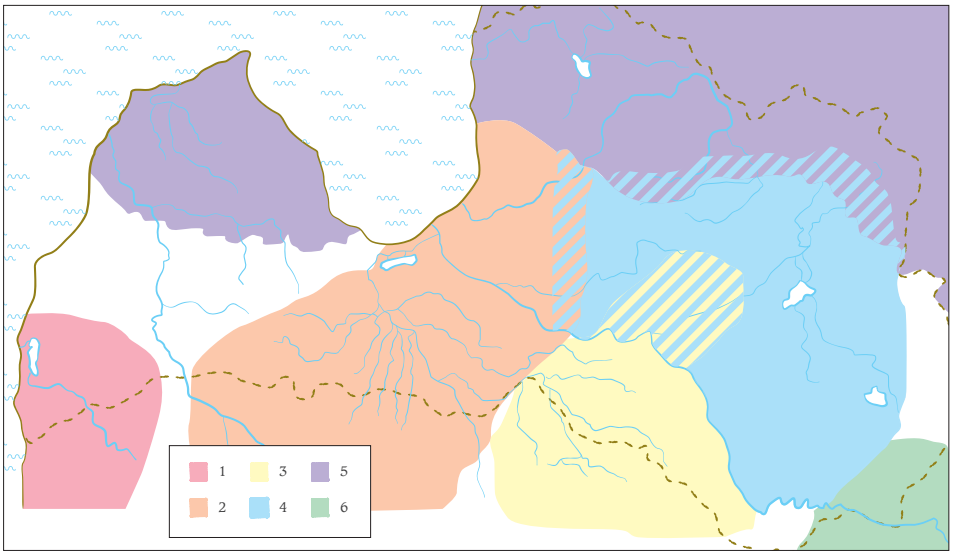


Fig. 8. Cultural-ethnic groups, 5th–8th cent.: 1 – Couronians/Cours, 2 – Semigallians, 3 – Selonians, 4 – Latgalians, 5 – Baltic Finns, 6 – Balts from the Tushemla-Bantserov culture (Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, Fig. 3)

inhabitants as Semigallians. The new type of flat burial ground was particularly widespread in the previously sparsely inhabited central and eastern regions of the Lielupe river basin, which may be explained by an influx of new inhabitants from the territory of Lithuania.[67] At the same time, the tradition persisted in south-west Vidzeme, up until the 7th century, to bury the dead in barrows. As these barrows and the inventory of articles found in graves are similar to what formerly was the case for the Lielupe River basin, those buried are considered also to be Semigallians,[68] or a related group.[69]

Complex cultural-ethnic processes took place during the Middle Iron Age in the eastern part of the territory of Latvia as regards the ethnic genesis of Latgalians. Latgalian culture began to develop along the right bank of the Daugava in regions to the west of the Aiviekste when flat burial grounds appeared widely from the 5th/6th to the 7th century wherein inhumation was the norm. New arrivals from Central Lithuania as well as Semigallians from the Lielupe River basin contributed to this process. This type of burial ground appeared further east in Latvia at the end of the 6th century and throughout the 7th century, notably in the river basin of the Dubna, the basins of rivers

[67] Deņisova, R. Baltu cilšu etniskās vēstures procesi m. ē. I gadu tūkstotī. *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 12, 1989, 20.–36. lpp.

[68] Atgāzis, A. Vidējais dzelzs laikmets. 400.–800. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g.t. pr.Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 282. lpp.

[69] Ciglis, J. Zemgaļi Vidzemē? *Pētījumi zemgaļu senatnē: Rakstu krājums.* Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures muzejs, 2004, 42. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 10).

flowing into Lubāna ezers (the Iča, the Rēzekne, and others), reaching Lake Ludza in the 8th century.[70] Latgalians penetrated northwards into regions formerly inhabited by Baltic Finns with their distinctive stone grave cemeteries. The Selonians as a separate cultural-historical group formed during the Late Iron Age along the left bank of the Daugava and in north-east Lithuania; the material culture of this group had many features in common with Latgalians.[71]

This period may be characterised as one wherein a number of minor centres competed with one another to gain power over a larger territory and was one of many clashes and wars. The arrival of newcomers mentioned above in Eastern Latvia led to more warlike events. In terms of archaeological materials the process of militarisation of society is reflected in fortification of hill-forts, in burial customs, where interment of men was accompanied by articles dominated by weapons[72].

All of the available data taken together — creation of new strongly defended hill-forts, their coming into prominence as regional centres, increase in the number of weapons found in graves and hoards, more elaborate ornaments, the appearance of items made of precious metals — indicate that chiefdoms formed during the Middle Iron Age, particularly during the second-half, characterised by nobles and leaders chosen among nobles, as well as a broad layer of ordinary farmers who served as soldiers[73].

Archaeological data is supplemented by some written records during the **Late Iron Age** (800–1200), one that consisted of the Viking Age (800–1050) and the beginning of the Middle Ages (1050–1200). From the 9th century onwards, Latvia and events associated with its inhabitants are ever more frequently mentioned in writings of the Catholic priest of Northern Europe, as well as in Scandinavian sagas and Chronicles of Ancient Russia[74]. The Late Iron Age ended with the arrival of the German crusaders. Independent development of the local people was interrupted and a new period began in the history of Latvia — the Middle Ages.

Quantitative and qualitative changes in the population of the territory of Latvia took place during the Late Iron Ages. The first change was an increase, possibly multifold, of the number of inhabitants. Evidence for this has been provided by an increase in the number of cemeteries, for example, in Western Latvia between the Venta River and the Baltic Sea, also in the uplands of Latgale, and elsewhere. Another changes were related to greater economic and social differentiation at settled places. Several

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[70] Radiņš, A. *10.–13. gadsimta senkapi latgaļu apdzīvotajā teritorijā un Austrumlatvijas etniskās, sociālās un politiskās vēstures jautājumi*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 1999, 155.–165. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 5).

[71] Ciglis, J. Sēļu etnoģenēze Austrumbaltijas etnokultūrvēsturisko procesu kontekstā. *Pētījumi sēļu senatnē: Rakstu krājums.* Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2006, 29.–40. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 11).

[72] Vasks, A., Vaska, B., Grāvere, R. *Latvijas aizvēsture. 8500. g. pr.Kr. – 1200. g. pēc Kr*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 1997, 147.–149. lpp.

[73] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, pp. 65–66.

[74] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotajām zemēm: 9.–13. gadsimta hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2015; Kursis, A. *Mīti un īstenība: Ziemeļnieku sāgas par seno Latviju un latviešiem*. 2. labotais un papild. izd. Stokholma: ARAR, 1998.

centres formed on the territory of Latvia comprising a hill-fort, with an adjacent large settlement, burial places, often also a port. Some of these centres developed from previously settled places, others were new. At the same time, a number of places previously settled were abandoned.



Fig. 9. Tērvete hill-fort in 2012. Photograph by Andrejs Vasks

The most extensive excavation of large centres located in Western Latvia was carried out at Talsi hill-fort. This strongly fortified hill-fort was situated in the northern part of territory inhabited by the Couronians, a region where the lands of the Couronians and the Baltic Finns were in contact. This first hill-fort was built in the 10th century with weak defences. Substantial alterations were made in the 11th century, when the defensive ramparts were raised much higher with steeper sides. Until the Talsi hill-fort ceased to exist in the 14th century, it had been burned down several times and reconstructed, with ever stronger defences.[75]

There are quite a number of hill-forts of the Couronians that have not been investigated by archaeologists; these were strongly fortified judging by their surviving ramparts, and traces of adjacent settlements. Extensive ancient towns and burial grounds are typical of these sites which were important centres for the district. Examples are the hill-fort at Veckuldīga on a plateau of 1 ha, the hill-fort at Kazdanga with a plateau of 0.8 ha, as well as hill-forts at Vārtāja, Embūte, Dzintare, and others, with large adjoining ancient towns; at least 20 hill-forts in Courland possessed adjoining ancient towns, each covering 0.5–5 ha. Written records indicate that several hundred people may have lived in these towns.[76]

During the Late Iron Age, ten hill-forts were inhabited in the territory of the Semigallians lying in the river basin of the Lielupe. The most important were those at Mežotne and Tērvete. The hill-fort at Mežotne was located on the left bank of the Lielupe on a corner of land that possessed along its eastern edge a 16 m high bank of the Lielupe, and along its northern edge an equally deep ravine with a flowing stream. This hill-fort was fortified along its western and southern edges with two gullies and ramparts. The first hill-fort at Mežotne was built in the 9th century. Subsequently it was burned down and renewed ten times up until the 13th century when it was laid waste by the crusaders. Particularly strong defences were built in the 12th century, when the

[75] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, pp. 67–68.
[76] Ibid., p. 68.

rampart was covered by a thick layer of clay, some 15 000 m^3 of clay being used for this purpose. An ancient town covering 13 ha surrounded the hill-fort. There were two cemeteries at Mežotne — one was situated on the left bank of the Lielupe, some 400 m from the hill-fort and the other, on the right bank of the Lielupe directly in front of the hill-fort. There was also a port at this hill-fort.[77]

The hill-fort at Tērvete was the second largest centre in Semigallia (now Zemgale). It was located on the right bank of the Tērvete River on a 17–19 m high promontory that had a ditch dug through it throwing up a 7–8 m high rampart (Fig. 9). First habitation dates from the Late Bronze Age; however, the site continued to be inhabited later. New defences were built in the 10th century. In the same way as for other hill-forts there were workshops for craftsmen at Tērvete. The remnants of a granary have been uncovered. A respectable amount of grain — approximately 18 t — was found stored in another building on the plateau. A castle forepart was built in the eastern part of the plateau, it was fortified and covered 2900 m^2. Buildings related to upkeep of the castle were located in this area, over and above some inside the hill-fort. The plateau for the forepart comprised a rectangular plateau surrounded by a rampart made of and wooden walls. An ancient town 9.5 ha in extent was located adjacent to the hill-fort.[78]

With the development, during the Late Iron Age, of trade both with the West and the East the Daugava became an important avenue for trade. A number of important centres sprang up along its banks. Jersika sited on the right bank of the Daugava was one of these centres. Jersika castle was strongly fortified, its forecourt had a dense mass of buildings. An ancient town approximately 15 ha in extent, as well as a cemetery, appeared in the vicinity of this hill-fort. The Livonian Chronicle of the early 13th century in describing the devastation of Jersika mentions that there were churches in Jersika.[79]

Koknese and Aizkraukle are among the important centres located along the banks of the Daugava, with an extensive ancient town and a cemetery together with the hill-fort in both cases. The lower reaches of the Daugava were an advantageous region for local and international trade, as well as for the development of crafts. Agglomeration of settled places led to formation of precursors of cities as a result of the rise in population density from the 10th century onwards. Daugmale with a hill-fort on the left bank of the Daugava, an ancient town covering 2 ha, a port and two cemeteries, became the principal regional centre during the 10th and 11th centuries. In addition, two Liv villages arose at Laukskola on the right bank of the Daugava, each 4 ha in extent and separated by a 6 ha cemetery. The complex Daugmale–Laukskola became an important administrative and trading and crafts centre that may be likened to a city type of settlement, that arose in coastal areas around the Baltic Sea during the Viking Age (Hedeby, Birka, etc.). Daugmale and Laukskola were destroyed in the mid-12th century, mostly likely following an attack. A group of four villages located at the top end of Dole Island formed a regional centre (Salaspils, Holme, Rauši, Vampenieši). Holme or Mārtiņsala

[77] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, p. 68–69.
[78] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 204.–209. lpp.
[79] Vilcāne, A. *Senā Jersika*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004.

was the main village and Germans built a brick church and castle at the end of the 12th century.[80]

Lake settlements, a unique form of fortified settlement, disappeared during the Late Iron Age. These dwellings, for evident security reasons, had been built in shallow parts of lakes or on islands. In Vidzeme they are known to have existed in ten lakes. Three-quarters of one such dwelling site dating from the 9th–10th centuries has been studied at Lake Āraiši. With a rise of water level, the dwelling appeared to sink into the lake. The damp environment served to preserve the wooden buildings, and their parts as well as other objects. Therefore, it was possible to uncover unique construction materials, as well as evidence for economic activities by the residents. This is one of the most outstanding ancient monuments in Latvia; for this reason it was decided to rebuild it as an open-air museum (Fig. 10).[81] The lake dwelling site at Āraiši was built in the 9th century, but it was destroyed 100 years later. During the time that it was inhabited the lake dwelling was rebuilt five times, increasing living space on each occasion.

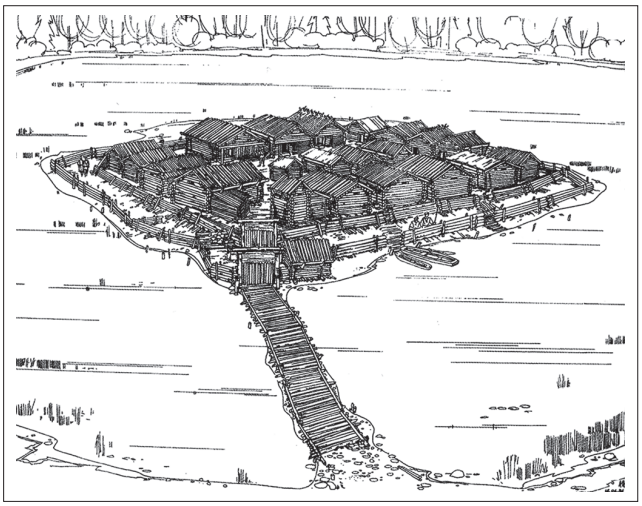


Fig. 10. Reconstruction of the lake dwelling at Āraiši. Authors: archaeologist Jānis Apals and architect Dzintars Driba. Perspective view by Dz. Driba. (Āraišu arheoloģiskais muzejparks. Ceļvedis. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, figure at p. 82).

Villages appeared alongside castles, ancient towns, and lake dwellings. The Liv villages in the lower reaches of the Daugava have been thoroughly studied at Vampenieši, Rauši, Laukskola, Ikšķile, and at Mārtiņsala (Holme) in particular.[82] Extensive excavations have been carried out in Zemgale, at Vedgas in Jaunsvirlauks.[83] The sites of a number of villages are known in Kurzeme (Birzmales at Turlava, Robežnieki at Dunalka, Rači at Kalēta, Sauši and elsewhere). Evidently small settled places existed in addition to villages as the text of the *The Rhymed Chronicle of Livonia* (*Livländische Reimchronik*) states about the Latgalians "… they did not live in a crowd, but built individual homes in the forest", and this to imply scattered households.[84]

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[80] Caune, A. Rīgas loma Daugavas lejteces apgabalā 10.–12. gs. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa*, Nr. 3, 1992, 4.–13. lpp.

[81] Apals, J. Rekonstruktion der befestigten Inselsiedlung des 9. Jh-s. in Araisi (Lettland). Vorbericht. *Experimentelle Archäologie: Bilanz 1994*. Fansa, M. (Hrsg.). Oldenburg, 1995, S. 97–110 (Archäologische Mitteilung aus Nordwestdeutchland, Beiheft 8).

[82] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Viduskaiku ciems un pils Salaspils novadā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008.

[83] Graudonis, J. Jaunsvirlaukas Vedgu apmetne. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 16. laid. Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 65.–80. lpp.

[84] *Atskaņu hronika*. V. Bisenieka atdzejojums no vidusaugšvācu valodas; Ē. Mugurēviča priekšvārds; Ē. Mugurēviča, K. Kļaviņa komentāri. Rīga: Zinātne, 1998, 344.–345. rinda.

New technologies, new tools, and new working methods began to be employed during this period. The wooden plough, together with an iron ploughshare, became the principle tools employed in farming to till the land. The introduction of winter crops did much to consolidate farming in the 8th and 9th centuries. Winter rye became the principal crop in the 10th century. Oats began to be cultivated in the 11th century. Rotating hand mills were a significant technical advance of the 11th century. These replaced grindstones previously in use. Pork was the main meat eaten with about equal quantities eaten of beef and sheep/goat meat. Horse meat was consumed less than in earlier times, since the animal was mostly used to carry out farm labour and for fighting.[85]

Fur-bearing animals were more frequently hunted since fur became an important part of clothes worn by nobles and there was demand for it both in the Western and Eastern markets. Furs played the role as a means of payment and their equivalence against silver was fixed. [86]

Bee-keeping acquired special importance during this period. Honey had long been used as a sweetener and for medicinal purposes. With the arrival and expansion of Christianity there was a rapid rise in demand for wax that was widely used to make candles for religious purposes. Bees made their nests in hollow trees and a special device was employed to climb trees; examples of these devices were found at Āraiši, Koknese, and Talsi.

Specialisation took place among craftsmen. The work of blacksmiths became more diverse — they worked, when required, both with ferrous and non-ferrous metals, decorating iron ornaments with bronze and silver layers. Blacksmiths produced items from carbon steel, as well as mastering production of the so-called Damascus steel.[87] The most accomplished master craftsmen worked at castles and produced items for the elite — luxurious clothes, armour, and weapons (Fig. 11). Local features began to disappear from the production of weapons, and forms of armour typical of Northern Europe spread widely. Two-sided swords were imported from Western countries, mostly from the Rhine lands, but local craftsmen at least fitted some of these with handles.[88]

Rotating devices have already been mentioned in respect of hand grinders. The next sector to benefit from rotating devices was pottery. A rapidly rotating potter's wheel appeared in the second half of the 10th century, raising the production by craftsmen of clay dishes to a new level. The oldest known examples of ceramics produced with the help of a potter's wheel have been found at large centres along the Daugava. This again demonstrates the important role played by the Daugava in the dissemination of new imports.

Trading activities picked up quickly during the beginning of the Viking Age and the inhabitants of the Eastern Baltic region joined in. The chief communications and

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[85] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, p. 73.

[86] Urtāns, V. *Senākie depozīti Latvijā (līdz 1200. g.)*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1977, 91.–92. lpp.

[87] Антейн, А. *Дамасская сталь в странах бассейна Балтийского моря.* Рига: Зинатне, 1973.

[88] Tomsons, A. Kuršu (T1 tipa) zobenu ornaments 11.–13. gs. *Pētījumi kuršu senatnē: Rakstu krājums.* Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2008, 96. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 14).

transport route on the territory of Latvia was the Daugava the use of which was controlled by local elites up until the 13th century. With the increase of activities on the Baltic Sea, a number of other waterways of Latvia acquired a greater importance, notably the Venta, Lielupe, Gauja, and their tributaries. In parallel, land routes increased in importance. Eastern and Western imports reached Latvia along these routes. Silver coins (dirhams) were the main import from the East. Glass beads, brocade and silk fabrics, finely woven chain mails were imported from the East and Byzantium.[89]

Western coins began to appear in Latvia at the end of the 10th century. Most of these, as is the case for dirhams, have been discovered in hoards. Most coins are form German and Anglo-Saxon counties, coins from other countries, Denmark, Hungary, Bohemia are rarely found. The influx of coins practically ceased at the end of the 11th century, and the 12th century may be deemed as a period without coins in circulation.[90]



Fig. 11. Inventory of items found in the grave of a Curonian warrior, 11th cent., Laivju burial-ground (sword, battle-axe, spearheads, horse harness, etc.). (*Kuršiai. Genties kultūra laidosenos duomenimis. Baltų archeologijos paroda. Katalogas / The Curonians. Tribe Culture According to the Burial Data. Baltic Archaeological Exhibition.* Catalogue. Vilnius, 2009, p. 259)

After the 1130s, once no new Arab dirhams appeared, the West became almost the only source for silver. Silver during the 11th century circulated in the form of wrought or cast bars. Approximately 200 bars have been discovered on the territory of Latvia. Gradually an appreciable quantity of silver accumulated in Latvia. Evidence for this is a three-fold increase of silver in graves when compared with findings dating from the Middle Iron Age. Written records show that the Order of the Brothers of the Sword during its first 30 years of activity in Eastern Latvia and in Estonia requisitioned 9000 kg of silver.[91]

[89] Мугуревич, Э. *Восточная Латвия и соседние земли в X–XIII вв.* Рига: Зинатне, 1965, с. 115–116.
[90] Берга, Т. М. *Монеты в археологических памятниках Латвии IX–XII вв.* Рига: Зинатне, 1988, с. 29–36.
[91] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, p. 76.

Local traders, locals engaged in trade, appeared in Latvia during the 10th century. Collapsible balances and counterweights found in graves provide evidence for this.[92] These burials tend to have a richer than average collection of items including axes, spears, daggers, swords. Without any doubt traders were part of the social elite who now also controlled commerce. It is noteworthy that the presence of a balance in a burial did not necessarily mean that a trader was buried, but also might be an item that showed the individual to have the right to use common property, to sit in judgement and exercise other administrative functions.

It is more difficult to understand what was exported from Latvia. This might have been furs, wax, and honey. It is possible that local traders might have exported items made by craftsmen. Ornaments of a design typical for Couronians, Semigallians, Livs, and Latgalians have been discovered in Scandinavia, principally in Gotland, but also at Hedeby in Denmark, i.e. silver and bronze spiral bracelets, neck rings, and horseshoe fibulas, etc. [93]

Written texts start to mention the ethnic groups of Latvia with increasing frequency during the Late Iron Age. Rimbert, Archbishop of Bremen and Hamburg, noted the existence of the Couronians during the 9th century. The Couronians and Courland are subsequently mentioned in Scandinavian rune-stones and sagas. Semigallians and Semigallia are first mentioned in Scandinavian sources of the 11th century. Latgalians are first mentioned in the ancient Russian Chronicle, *The Tale of By-gone Years*, at the beginning of the 12th century. Livs, Couronians, and Semigallians, are also mentioned as having paid tribute to the Russians.[94] The most extensive records of the ancient peoples of Latvia are to be found in German Chronicles and legal documents of the 13th century.

Comparing this information with archaeological materials, particularly those recovered from cemeteries, allows identification of the common and separate aspects of material culture and traditions of the ancient peoples of Latvia, as well as outlining the territories that they inhabited and changes thereof (Fig. 12).

Regions inhabited by the Couronians in the north-west of Lithuania and the south-west of Latvia during the first part of this period are characterised by flat cemeteries with inhumations. A change took place in burial customs during the 10th century, when there was a transition to cremation burials. This type of burial became the dominant form and only disappeared during the 14th and 15th centuries.[95] Cemeteries featuring cremation burials and objects buried alongside quickly spread northward from the 11th century onwards from the region of the Tebra River, where in previous times stone barrows predominated. This may be explained by the expansion of Couronians into lands occupied by Baltic Finns. Previously these Baltic Finns living in Cour-

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[92] Мугуревич, Э. *Восточная Латвия и соседние земли в X–XIII вв.*, с. 31–34.

[93] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions, c. 84–85.

[94] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Rakstīto vēstures avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā). *Latvieši un Latvija*, I sēj.: Latvieši. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 45.–50. lpp.

[95] *Финно-угры и балты в эпоху средневековья*. Седов, В. В. (отв. ред.). Москва: Наука, 1987, с. 407 (Археология СССР).

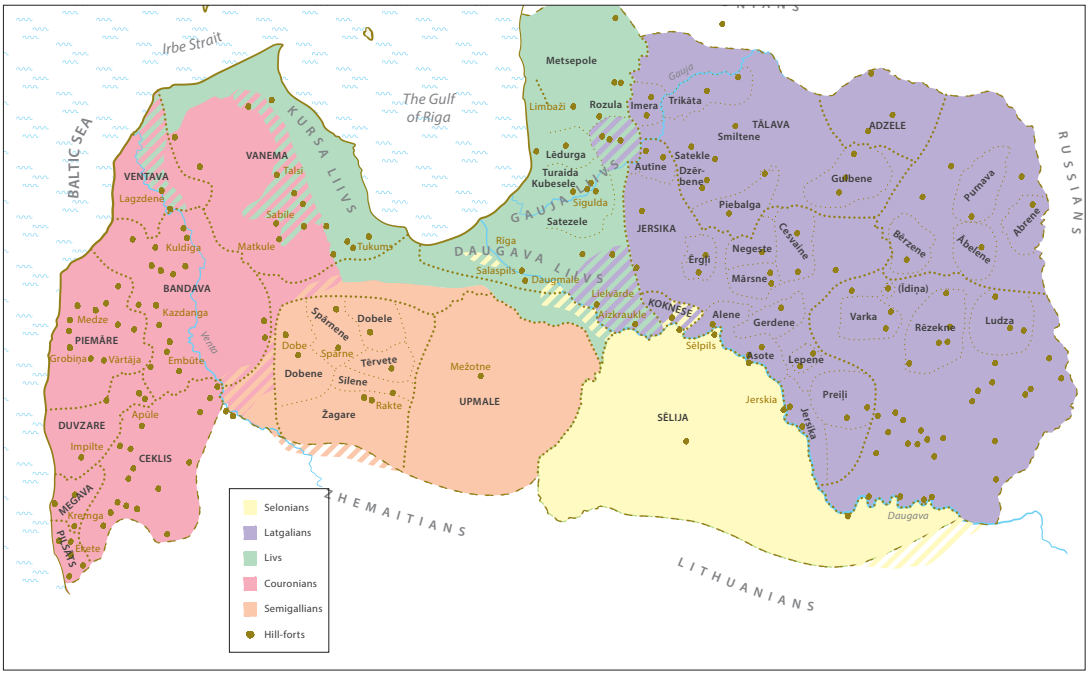


Fig. 12. Ethnic groups, lands and hill-forts on the territory of Latvia in the 12th century. (*Latvijas vēstures atlants.* Otrais, pārstrādātais izdevums. Rīga: Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta, 2005, map at p. 12)

land were considered to be Livs living in Courland; however, recent studies show that they rather were Vends.[96]

Written records indicate that Semigallians were present in Semigallia (Zemgale), in the river basin of the Lielupe; like previously, bodies were buried in flat graves in burial grounds that had appeared earlier. Typically men and women were buried with their head oriented in opposing directions, usually north–south, or a close approximation. The inventory of items found in graves feature ornaments that differ from those typical of other groups. Similar Semigallian cemeteries are found widely in northern Lithuania, but disappeared from south-west Vidzeme where they had been widespread in earlier periods.[97]

Latgalians lived in Eastern Latvia and were the largest single ethnic group on the territory of Latvia. Their dead were buried in flat cemeteries, but in Eastern Latvia, in barrows; the bodies were buried intact, not after cremation, although a few cremation burials have been discovered. The bodies of the dead were scrupulously oriented towards cardinal points, men with their heads pointing east, women, west.

[96] Vasks, A. Vendu jautājums Latvijas aizvēsturē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 26. laid. Rīga: Zinātne, 2012, 105.–112. lpp.

[97] *Финно-угры и балты в эпоху средневековья*, с. 372–373.

Judging by the distribution of burial-grounds Latgalians had come into territories formerly occupied by Baltic Finns in the north-east direction approximately reaching the present-day border between Estonia and Latvia. The local Finnish inhabitants slowly transformed into Latgalians, leaving an impression on Latgalian culture and also local speech. Written records place the Selonians along the west bank of the Daugava, who are difficult to differentiate from Latgalians as regards their material culture and burial customs. Similarly as with Latgalians, the dead in the Selonian territory are buried without being cremated both in flat cemeteries and in barrow cemeteries, with the orientation of the bodies of men and women in opposing cardinal directions.

According to written records, Livs inhabited Western Vidzeme during the Late Iron Age: Metsepole, the lower reaches of the Gauja (Gauja Livs) and the lower reaches of the Daugava (Daugava Livs). The Gauja Livs have been more extensively studied[98], as have the Daugava Livs, the latter in particular[99]. Few remains have survived from Metsepole, i.e. the north-west of Vidzeme, and it may be inferred that this was a thinly populated area covered by forests.

The Gauja Livs are recognised from their barrow cemeteries, although they also have left behind a number of flat cemeteries. Most of the barrows found in the lower reaches of the Gauja are concentrated in a small territory around Krimulda, Sigulda, and Turaida. The number of barrows in any cemetery differed, from a few tens to a few hundreds. The Daugava Livs, on the other hand, lived along the right bank of the Daugava as well as along a part of the left bank, from Koknese and Aizkraukle as far as Rīga. Several of their cemeteries have been discovered by the Mazā Jugla and Ogre rivers. Flat cemeteries are typical for the Daugava Livs, although a few barrows have been found, with both cremation burials and those containing skeletons.[100]

Liv cemeteries appeared by the Daugava in the 10th century, and by the Gauja in the 11th century. No similar cemeteries are known to have existed in these regions previously, i.e. in the 8th and 9th centuries, whereas in earlier periods, during the Early and Middle Iron Ages, barrows have been found, associated with the Semigallians. A number of differing views have been expressed concerning the sudden appearance of a brilliant and unique Liv culture in the lower reaches of the Daugava and Gauja. The recent view deserves mention that with the advent of international trade along the Daugava a number of ethnic groups coalesced (Scandinavians, Baltic Finns, Balts) and formed a new identity, that of the Livs.[101]

In addition to archaeological evidence, social relations in the 9th–12th centuries have been described in written records. Thus, Rimbert, Bishop of Bremen, wrote around 875 that the Kingdom (*regnum*) of the Couronians comprised five states (*civitates*), which might have been five counties.[102] Given the scarcity of detailed informa-

[98] Tõnisson, E. *Die Gauja-Liven und ihre materielle Kultur (11. Jh. – Anfang 13. Jhs): Ein Beitrag zur ostbaltischen Frühgeschichte.* Tallinn: Eesti raamat, 1974.

[99] Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2006.

[100] *Финно-угры и балты в эпоху средневековья*, с. 27–31.

[101] See in detail: Vasks, A. Vendu jautājums Latvijas aizvēsturē, 106.–107. lpp.

[102] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotajām zemēm: 9.–13. gadsimta hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri*, 10.–18. lpp.

tion available it is difficult to speak about the structure of this kingdom. It is possible that the formation was a proto-state, based on a chiefdom, whose five counties were ruled by an accomplished elder, a war-lord. During the Late Iron Age, from the 10th century onwards, there is a tendency for larger centres to advance whereas individual former centres — hill-forts — to vanish. This is evidence for power to become centralised, both in Western and in Eastern Latvia.

Written records about Eastern Latvia, and Semigallia, in contrast to what obtains for Western Latvia, begin only from the time of the invasion by Germans at the end of the 12th century and in the 13th century. Jersika, together with two castle districts, was the most influential state in Eastern Latvia at the beginning of the 13th century. Visvaldis of Jersika is the only leader of the Latgalians to be consistently described as king (*rex*) in the *Livonian Chronicle*.[103]

The first records of the arrival of Christianity to the territory of Latvia date from this time. Christianity arrived from two directions: Catholicism from Denmark at the end of the 11th century to Western Latvia, and Orthodoxy from the Kievan Rus to the lands of the Latgalians in Eastern Latvia. Adam of Bremen recorded the first church to have been built in Courland at the end of the 11th century. It is possible that the site was in Northern Courland, since Scandinavian-type Baptismal crosses have been found there, together with a transition from burial after cremation to interment of the whole body with arms folded, a pose that has been interpreted as a sign of Christianity. However, the persistence of pagan burial rituals suggests that the influence of the Church was slight. Somewhat later Orthodoxy from the Kievan Rus took root in the lands inhabited by Latgalians. According to the Livonian Chronicle there were churches in Jersika and Koknese, and, together with the number of Orthodox Baptismal crosses that have been found in graves, it is credible that the Church was more influential among the top layer of society, whereas the majority held to their traditional pagan customs. Mass baptising of the population of Latvia only began with the arrival of German missionaries at the end of the 12th century and continued during the 13th century, when baptism was made compulsory.[104]

Analyses of the inventory of items found in graves in Eastern Latvia allow identification of a number of socially differentiated categories of person, these categories not being evident during earlier periods. Belonging to the highest level of society is demonstrated by objects such as a two-handed sword, small scales, richly decorated belts, pieces of clothing with bronze ornaments, etc. It is possible to identify soldiers graves in burial grounds for large settlements (Koknese, Jersika), as these contained an axe, a spear and a knife, in addition to rich clothing. The average grave, the most numerous, contained weapons, an axe or a spear, occasionally a decorated belt, even a few ornaments, but held no items that were expensive or decorated. These persons may be identified as being free farmers. The graves of individuals who were not free, or

[103] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki). 800.–1200. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g.t. pr.Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 367. lpp.

[104] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Kristīgās ticības izplatība Latvijas teritorijā 11.–12. gs. un katoļu baznīcas ekspansijas sākums. *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 5, 1987, 10.–27. lpp.

slaves, contain few items, for example a single knife, or none at all. The number of such graves is quite small.[105] The social structure of any society is a dynamic system and the structure sketched above formed no earlier than in the 10th century. From what has been discovered at settlements and hill-forts social differences were less pronounced in daily living conditions — the size of houses, their quality and furnishings, implements for daily use etc.

All indicators show that a number of political territorial entities had formed by the Late Iron Age on the territory of Latvia each with a pronounced social hierarchy, none of which held sway over a territory inhabited by one people. There is no consensus in Latvian historiography concerning the socio-political situation on the territory of Latvia prior to arrival of the crusaders, i.e. can they be classed as an early form of states[106], or, in particular with respect to Eastern Latvia, were they well-developed chiefdoms (societies simply following a strong leader).[107]

Summary

The history of Latvia began at the very end of the Palaeolithic, in the mid 11th millennium BCE, when the first inhabitants arrived here from the south, reindeer hunters following their prey. A warming climate during the Mesolithic (9000–5400 BCE) meant that a hunter-fisher economy developed, one that developed further during the Neolithic Period (5400–1800 BCE). People made their homes at locations that were favourable for hunting and fishing, notably close to lakes (Lubāns, Burtnieku, Ludzas, and other lakes) as well as beside rivers that flowed into these lakes. Although the residents of the territory of Latvia were acquainted with cultivated crops and domesticated animals already during the Middle Neolithic (4100–2900 BCE) hunting, fishing, and gathering of plants growing wild remained the principal food source up until the Bronze Age.

A transition began during the Bronze Age (1800–500 BCE) to relying on farming and animal husbandry, and this process was complete by the middle of the Bronze Age. A new form of fortified settlement appeared at this time — hill-forts. Bronze working took place at many of these settlements, in particular, in the lower reaches of the Daugava, turning out implements with prestige value, weapons, and ornaments. These hill-forts also were trading centres. A number of changes became evident in burial customs — purpose-built burial mounds (barrows) appeared and the tradition took root of cremating dead bodies. Both the appearance of hill-forts and changes in burial traditions indicate that greater social differentiation was present during the Bronze Age than was the case previously.

Farming and animal husbandry began rapidly to develop with the appearance of iron tools and weapons during the Iron Age (500 BCE – 1200 CE), and agrarian socie-

[105] Apals, A., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki). 800.–1200. g., 368.–369. lpp.
[106] Apals, A., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki). 800.–1200. g., 368. lpp.
[107] Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*. Rīga: Intelekts, 2002, 369. lpp.

ties developed given also the rise in population. During the Early Iron Age (1–400) country-side settlements were the principal type of settled places (Spietiņi, Kerkūzi, Kivti etc.). Social differentiation increased during the Middle Iron Age (400–800) and armed conflicts became more frequent giving greater importance to hill-forts. Ethnic groups also began to be more clearly identifiable during this time — Couronians, Semigallians, Latgalians, Selonians, and Baltic Finns, all mentioned in written records from the 9th to the 13th centuries. During the Late Iron Age (800–1200), in particular from the 11th century onwards, larger centres began to form, based on a strongly defended hill-fort, including small towns, cemeteries, places of religious worship, ports (Talsi, Tērvete, Mežotne, Daugmale, Jersika, etc.). A number of political entities formed on the territory of Latvia each with a pronounced social hierarchy, none of which held sway over a territory inhabited by one people. A new chapter in the history of Latvia began with the expansion of the crusaders — the Middle Ages when the territory of Latvia was coupled to the European culture space.

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Antonija Vilcāne

THE BALTS AND THE BALTIC FINNS

This article is based on evidence unearthed at archaeological excavations and old written records to elucidate various issues related to the Baltic ethnolinguistic community and the origin of the Baltic Finns, to describe the material and cultural characteristic traits of the small Baltic ethnic groups living on the territory of Latvia (Latgalians, Selonians, Semigallians, Couronians) and the Baltic Finns (Livs, Vends), to demonstrate the uniqueness of each of these ethnic groups, describe ethnic processes and changes in the territory inhabited by these ethnic groups, as well as the consolidation process of the Latvian people during the Middle Ages.

Keywords: Indo-Europeans, Finno-Ugric peoples, Baltic and Balto-Finnic tribes, information in written sources, archaeological finds, origin, ethnic processes, culture, the territory of Latvia

People speaking two very different languages, the Balts and the Baltic Finns, have lived in the Eastern Baltic from very ancient times. The Balts are an ethnolinguistic community which belongs to the Indo-European language group. Today, Latvians and Lithuanians are the only two peoples speaking a Baltic language and live along the eastern coastline of the Baltic Sea; other Baltic tribes lived in this area in the past: the Old (Baltic) Prussians, the Galindians, Yotvingians, Skalovians, Couronians, Aukstaitians, Samogitians, Semigallians, Latgalians, and Selonians. From words in Finno-Ugric and Slavic languages borrowed from Baltic languages, including hydronyms, linguists have inferred the existence of even more ancient Baltic languages. The Baltic languages, in parallel with other Indo-European languages (Slavic, Germanic, Romance, Celtic, etc.) originate from a Proto-Indo-European language, with initially a Western Proto-Baltic and Eastern Proto-Baltic language emerging, which later broke up into even smaller language groups.[1]

The term *Balts* has been employed since the mid-19th century following a recommendation by the German scholar Ferdinand Nesselmann. The justification offered for this term was the fact that these peoples lived by the Baltic Sea.[2] In turn, the term *Baltic Sea* (*mare Balticum*) was first mentioned in the chronicle, *Deeds of the Bishops of Hamburg*, written in the 11th century by Adam of Bremen, who claimed that this was

[1] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā.* 1. daļa. Daugavpils: Saule, 1998, 8., 16. lpp.
[2] Ibid., 3. lpp.

the name given to this sea by the local peoples.[3] Linguists have variously speculated about the origin and meaning of the term *Balts*, allowing that it could have originated as follows, "a gulf (lagoon) cut off from the sea by land = joma", which was a term used by the Old Prussians living by the sea.[4]

In turn, the *Baltic Finns* is a collective ethnolinguistic description of a group of small ethnic groups living along the Baltic coast who spoke Finno-Ugric languages: the Livs, as well as their northern neighbours the Estonians, Finns, Karelians, Izhorians, the Wot people, and the Veps. Today peoples who speak a Finno-Ugric language live in Western Siberia, the Urals and Pre-Polar Urals, the Volga region, the Baltic region, Scandinavia, as well as in Central Europe. The Finno-Ugric languages, together with the languages of the Samoyedic ethnic groups, constitute the extensive Uralic language group.[5]

The territories formerly inhabited by speakers of the Baltic and the Balto-Finnic languages have been identified thanks to hydronyms which have come down to us today. Linguists have discovered Baltic hydronyms in territories ranging from the south-eastern coast of the Baltic Sea (from the mouth of the Vistula River to that of the Daugava River), to the river basin of the upper course of the Volga in the east, stretching southwards to the western bank of the Seym River, encompassing the Polesie part of the Pripyat (Pripet) region, and in the southwest to the middle course of the Bug River (see Fig. 1). People who spoke Baltic languages lived in this territory for at least two millennia. Baltic hydronyms have also been found west, north and east of the basic territory where Balts are known to have lived, which can be explained by the migration of small Baltic groups, or their infiltration into lands where other peoples lived. Finno-Ugric hydronyms are found in the territory lying to the north of that of the Baltic ethnic groups, a territory which was not smaller in its extent. The Baltic-Finno-Ugric contact zone stretches from the Baltic Sea to Lake Beloye, reaching the basins of the upper courses of the Volga and Daugava.[6]

Research into the origin and culture of the Balts and the Baltic Finns has a long history, one in which linguists, archaeologists, bioarchaeologists, folklorists and ethnographers have taken part. Problems of interpreting evidence exist between these very different disciplines, to correlate archaeological cultural finds with belonging to a certain ethnic or language group and written records. Therefore, only hypothetical conclusions may be drawn. Linguists have created a language development model, while archaeologists can learn nothing about languages spoken by those whose culture is revealed through archaeology. Archaeologists can only point to changes in culture over time in a particular area. Scholars employ the retrospective method following the continuity of cultural elements of ethnic groups for which there is written evidence of

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[3] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. 1. daļa, 3. lpp.

[4] Ibid., 4.–6. lpp.; Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*. Rīga: Jāņa Rozes apgāds, 2000, 28.–30. lpp.

[5] Мокшин, Ф. Происхождение финно-угорских (уральских) народов. *Финно-угорский мир*, № 3, 2009, с. 42; Седов, В. В. *Финно-угры и балты в эпоху средневековья*. Москва: Наука, 1987, с. 5–7.

[6] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. 1. daļa, 6. lpp.; Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 40.–48., 174.–184. lpp.; Седов, В. В. Прибалтийские финны. *Финны в Европе VI–XV века. Прибалтийско-финские народы. Историко–археологические исследования*. Выпуск I. Москва, 1990, с. 9.

their presence in a given area. Most of the hypotheses advanced up to now about the origin of the Balts and the Finno-Ugric ethnic groups derive from application of this method.

The oldest written references to the Balts and the Baltic Finns

The first records about the territories and peoples living in the Northern Europe, including the Eastern Baltic region date from the 1st millennium BCE in works by authors of antiquity, when the inhabitants of the Mediterranean Sea region developed an interest in amber collected in the Baltic Sea region.[7] The establishment of a trade route for amber fostered engagement by Balts, including those living in the present territory of Latvia, in trade relations, for which the evidence consists of finds of bronze items originating in Roman provinces, and Roman money at archaeological sites in Latvia. Roman geographic interest in the Baltic lands was based on these trade relations and was expressed in accounts of travellers and other written records. Lands inhabited by the Balts were quite distant from areas familiar to the Greeks and Romans, therefore the authors of such accounts had very sketchy preconceptions of these territories.

Book IV of *Historia* written by the classic Greek historian Herodotus is considered the oldest surviving written source which mentions the Balts. In his description of the Scythian War fought in 512 BCE by Darius, King of the Persians, he gives the names of a number of neighbouring tribes — the Neuroi, Budinoi, Gelonians, the Androphagoi, Melanchlainoi etc. — who spoke various languages, and some of whom followed the Scythian way of life and observed their traditions.[8]

Scholars have sought, from the 16th century onwards, to identify the actual positions of geographical information given by Herodotus; today, these efforts also seek association with archaeological cultural finds. There is no consensus about the relationship of the tribes which were mentioned or specific ethnic groups.[9] Those tribes living in territories with identified Baltic hydronyms are considered to be related to the Balts, i.e. the Neuroi and the Budinoi. Scholars have identified the Neuroi as having lived in the upper river basin of the Dnieper between the river and the Pripyat marshes and related to the Milograd culture, while the Budinoi may have lived along the right bank of the Dnieper River and in the Jukhnovo cultural area.[10] Some scholars tend to the view that the Neuroi might be a generic term for the entirety of Eastern Baltic

[7] Spekke, A. *Senie dzintara ceļi un Austrumbaltijas ģeogrāfiskā atklāšana*. Stokholma: Zelta ābele, 1962, 3.–4. lpp.

[8] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Rakstīto vēstures avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā). *Latvieši un Latvija: akadēmiskie raksti.* 1. sēj.: Latvieši. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 31. lpp.; The History of Herodotus. Accessible at: http://classics.mit.edu/Herodotus/history.4.iv.html (site last visited 27.10.2016).

[9] Рыбаков, Б. А. *Геродотова Скифия. Историко-географический анализ*. Москва: Наука, 1979.; Доватур, А. *И. Народы нашей страны в «Истории» Геродота*. Тексты, перевод, комментарии. Москва: Наука, 1982, с. 231–232.

[10] Седов, В. В. *Славяне Верхнего Поднепровья и Подвинья*. Москва: Наука,1970, рис. 2; Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 52.–53. lpp.

tribes.[11] Scholars have noted an archaic layer of Baltic hydronyms in the territory of the Neuroi.[12] The term the *Neuroi* is also associated with an ethnonym *Neroma* found in an ancient Russian Chronicle dating from the 16th century and referring to North-Western Russia.[13]

Contradictory opinions are held about the other tribes mentioned by Herodotus; some (e.g. the Melanchlainoi) were located in the Baltic region, and associated with ancestors of the Estonians.[14]

Five centuries later, the Neuroi are mentioned in the work *Naturalis Historia* written by Pliny the Elder, a scholar and politician of the Roman Empire, wherein he refers to the gathering of amber from the Baltic Sea, and its purchase for the use of Roman nobles.[15]

During the 1st century CE, in his work *Germania,* Cornelius Tacitus describes the Aesti tribes (*Aestiorum gentes*), who lived by the Suabian (Baltic) Sea and who collected and traded amber, remarking on their primitive state of development, superstition, and lack of iron weapons, noting, however, their dedication to growing cereals.[16] One opinion holds that the term *Aeisti* refers to the Balt tribes.[17] Finnic tribes are described as particularly backward: "they possess no weapons, nor horses, nor home deities; they eat grass, their clothes are animal skins, the bare earth — their beds",[18] which is in contradiction with archaeological finds.

Several European ethnic groups are mentioned in the 2nd century CE text on geography, *Geographia* by the Egyptian scholar, astronomer, and geographer Claudius Ptolemy**,** which included maps (the surviving copies date from the 12th and 13th centuries), which served as a reference text on geography throughout Europe.[19] Ptolemy's perceptions of geographical distance have been difficult for later scholars to interpret.[20] Lithuanian scholars have employed spherical methods of geography to locate and to associate 12 ethnic groups listed by Ptolemy with 2nd century cultures. Five of these are Western Balts (Galindae, Venedi, Sudini, Veltae, Sali), three are ethnic groups (Gossi,

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[11] Седов, В. *Славяне Верхнего Поднепровья и Подвинья*, с. 36, 38; Mugurēvičs, Ē. Rakstīto vēstures avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā), 34. lpp.

[12] Топоров, В. Н. Еще раз о неврах и селах в общебалтийском этноязыковом контексте (народ, земля, язык, имя). *Из историии и.–евр.* neur-:* nour-* и **sel-*. *Onomastica Lettica*. 2. Rīga: Latviešu valodas institūts, 2004, с. 157–159.

[13] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Rakstīto vēstures avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā), 36. lpp.; Казанский, М. М. О балтах в лесной зоне России в эпоху великого переселения народов. *Археологические Вести*, № 6, 1999, с. 415.

[14] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Rakstīto vēstures avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā), 36. lpp.

[15] Zeids, T. *Senākie rakstītie Latvijas vēstures avoti*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1992, 6. lpp.

[16] Tacits, G. K. *Ģermānija. Par Ģermānijas atrašanās vietu un tautām* (Gaius Cornelius Tacitus. *Germania. De origine et situ Germannorum*). No latīņu val. tulkojis Jānis Endzelīns. Rīga: Vēstures izpētes un popularizēšanas biedrība, 2011, XLV, 162.–165. lpp.; Germania. Accessible at: http://www.ourcivilisation com/smartboard/shop/tacitusc/germany/chap1.htm#Aesti (site last visited 27.10.2016).

[17] Gimbutas, M. *The Balts*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1963, p. 22.

[18] Tacits, G. K. *Ģermānija. Par Ģermānijas atrašanās vietu un tautām*, XLVI, 166.–167. lpp.

[19] Ļaviņš, I. *Skandināvijas un Austrumeiropas reģiona attēlojums viduslaiku arābu un persiešu vēstures avotos*. Promocijas darbs. Rīga, 2013, 59. lpp.

[20] Zeids, T. *Senākie rakstītie Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 6. lpp., Dini P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 54. lpp.

Carboni, Careoti) associated with the Baltic Finns, and four are ethnic groups (Stavani, Pagiriti, Savari, Boruski) associated with the Eastern Balts.[21]

The Aeisti were again mentioned four centuries later in chronicles written in Western Europe during the Middle Ages. In one compilation of the correspondence of Theoderic the Great, King of the Ostrogoths, Cassiodorus included an appreciation by the king (composed around 523–526) sent to the Aesti for the gift of amber presented by their envoy.[22] Several years later, Cassiodorus wrote a history of the Goths, *Historia Gothorum*. These references indicate that the Aeisti were skilled at using the Goth language as well as their desire to strengthen their own influence through diplomacy.[23]

Jordanes relied on the works of Cassiodorus in writing his own work, *The Origin and Deeds of the Goths* (551).[24] According to Jordanes, it appears that the Aesti inhabited a substantial part of Eastern Europe, from the estuary of the Vistula to the mid-course of the Oka River. A hypothesis has been advanced that Balts enjoyed close relations with the Goths during the reign of Hermanarich, King of the Goths, and that some of them migrated, together with the Goths, as far as the Black Sea and the Dnieper region, but after the Hun invasion they were caught up in the period of the great migrations.[25] Three centuries later, the Aesti are mentioned together with the Venedians in the biography of Charlemagne (*Vita Caroli Magni*)[26] compiled by Eginhardus (770–840), a courtier of the period, as living along the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.

At the end of the 9th century, their name and detailed information about the Aesti (*Estum*) is found in the account by Wulfstan of a journey from Hedeby to Truso, near the mouth of the Vistula River. The account states that *Estmare* belongs to the *Esti*, whose territory *Eastland* was extensive, with numerous castles, each with its own ruler. The Esti tribes were characterised as very warlike, who had many specific funeral rituals, organised horse races, brewed mead, and had the ability to freeze items during the summer. Scholars consider the place name *Eastland*, to have been invented by the voyager himself, based on the location of the territory, i.e. to the east.[27]

The term *Aeisti* continued to be used in written sources throughout the entire 1st millennium. Most scholars agree that the Aeisti may be equated with the Balts, but opinions differ as to which particular Balt people this term refers. These authors have used the term *Aeisti* to apply to different communities. It is possible that Tacitus used the term to describe the Old Prussians who lived in the southern part of their territory, while Ptolemy used the same term to describe the entire community of Baltic ethnic groups, Jordanes meant the inhabitants of the southern coast of the Baltic Sea to the east of the estuary of the Vistula River. In turn, during the Middle Ages, this term

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[21] Jovaiša, E. *Aisčiai.* II knyga: Raida. Vilnius: Edukologija, 2014, p. 262.

[22] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Rakstīto vēstures avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā), 39. lpp.

[23] Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 57. lpp.

[24] Zeids, T. *Senākie rakstītie Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 7. lpp.

[25] Biļkins, V. Kasiodora, Jordāna un Einharda ziņas par aistiem. *Ceļa Zīmes*, Nr. 38, 1959, 42.–47. lpp.

[26] Zeids, T. *Senākie rakstītie Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 8. lpp.

[27] Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 58. lpp.; Dunsdorfs, E. *Senie stāsti: Latvijas vēstures lasāmgrāmata*. Melburna: Austrālijas Latvietis, 1955, 17.–18. lpp. Accessible at: http://www.historia.lv/tags/aisti (site last visited 27.10. 2016).

changed meaning to refer instead to the Baltic Finns — the Estonians *(Eesti)*. Thus, scholars have used the term the Aesti to refer to a Germanic tribe, as well as the Old Prussians, their neighbours the Couronians, and also the Finns.[28] Recent literature expresses the view that Aesti refers to the community of Western Balts, who at the time of Tacitus lived in the estuary region of the Vistula, the Semba–Natanga and the coastal region of Lithuania in the estuary of the Nemunas River.[29]

Both the Western and the Eastern Balts were associated with the ethnic genesis of the small Balt ethnic groups living in Latvia, hence these ancient references are significant to the history of the Balts who lived in the territory of Latvia, although they do not apply directly to all of the ancient residents of Latvia.

More concrete and reliable information about the Balts appeared during the 9th–13th centuries. Western European written records explicitly mention by name a number of places and peoples who lived along the south and south-eastern coast of the Baltic Sea (Old Prussians, Couronians, Semigallians, Lithuanians, etc.). Pagan peoples do not usually deserve mention by authors outside of their number.[30] Thus, every reference to tribes living on the territory of Latvia is a fact worthy of mention.

The Couronians are the first Baltic people mentioned by name, in a chronicle by Rimbert, Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen (865–888), as well as being the most frequently mentioned Baltic people.[31] Rimbert wrote a history of Saint Ansgar *(Vita sancti Anscarii)* in which a description is given about how the territory inhabited by the Couronians *(Chori)* was divided into five lands *(civitates),* and two most significant towns Apūle and Seeburg (Grobiņa), as well as describing battles between the Couronians and Scandinavian invaders, the silver hoards in their towns, which is partially verified by archaeological excavations.[32] The wealth of the Couronians and their horses were extolled by Adam of Bremen (around 1075–1076), who noted that the Couronians followed pagan traditions and were a ruthless tribe, in comparison with the most humane and helpful of peoples — the Old Prussians.[33] The persistence of Couronian pagan traditions is reflected in sources dating from the 15th century.[34]

The residents of the territory of Latvia and place names therein are found in several Scandinavian sagas, although their credibility is not that high. These sagas were written down only around the 12th–13th centuries, but recount events which occurred much earlier. Furthermore, sagas contain elements typical of folklore in terms both of

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[28] Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 55.–56. lpp.; Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rakstīto avotu senākās ziņas par baltu tautām (ģeogrāfiskā un ģeopolitiskā skatījumā),* 38. lpp.

[29] Jovaiša, E. *Aisčiai*. I knyga: Kilmė. Vilnius: Edukologija, 2012, pp. 7, 307, 335.

[30] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2015, 9. lpp.

[31] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti = Fontes historiae Latviae medii aevi.* Izd. A. Švābe. 2. burtn. (1238.–1256. g.). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgādiens, 1940, 5. dok. (Latvijas vēstures avoti, 2. sēj.).

[32] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri,* 10.–18. lpp.; Zeids, T. *Senākie rakstītie Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 8. lpp.

[33] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13.g.s. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri,* 28.–34. lpp.

[34] Spekke, A. Brēmenes Ādamu lasot ar latviešu tautas vēsturnieka acīm. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 1937, 11.–66. lpp.; Spekke, A. *Latvieši un Livonija 16. gs.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1995, 95. lpp.

style and content. The Scandinavian sagas and the *History of the Danes* (*Gesta Danorum*), written by Saxo Grammaticus, are partially sheer invention; they describe fighting between the Couronians, Sembians, and Estonians against the Danes, including their tactics and weapons.[35] These accounts are in tune with *Knitlinga Saga*, which describes events between the mid-10th century to the 13th century, and recounts raids by Couronians in the South-eastern part of Sweden ruled by the Danes.[36] Furthermore, the saga of Egill Skallagrímsson, written around 1230, describes the land of the Couronians in the 10th century. The description of a homestead located in a village owned by "a rich and powerful man" with several buildings is particularly impressive.[37] The oldest reliable mention of the Semigallians dates from the 11th century.[38] The Saga of Yngvar the Far-Travelled describes a voyage by two Swedish mariners to the Semigallians, ostensibly to collect tribute in the name of King Olof Skötkonung (reigned 994–1022). Scholars dispute the fact of collecting tribute.[39]

Geographical names from Northern Kurzeme (Courland), Zemgale (Semigallia), and the land of the Livs have been discovered carved in Swedish rune stones.[40]

It is possible that several centres inhabited by Couronians and Semigallians and references to the Daugava River are found in accounts of their voyages by Arab travellers.[41] The Baltic Sea was also well-known to the Arabs by reason of it being the origin of amber, and information was recorded about its location, environs and inhabitants of the littoral. Scholars have studied in particular an account, *The Book of Roger* (*Kitāb Rugā),* by Abu Abdallah ibn Mohammed al Idrisi (1100–1165), where several lands along the coast of the Baltic Sea are named, and, possibly, some places located on the territory of Latvia today. The author al Idris himself had not visited the Baltic region, but gathered information from travellers and traders. These remarks appearing in Arab texts are significant in understanding the nature of trade by the local peoples.

With the exception of the Selonians, all ethnic groups living in Latvia and in the neighbourhood, who each spoke their own language (*свой язык имуще)*, are mentioned in the early 12th century Old Russian Chronicle, *The Tale of Bygone Years*.[42]

A considerably broader portrayal of events which affected the history of the Eastern Baltic ethnic groups appeared in the 13th century, and also in later chronicles and

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[35] Kursis, A. *Mīti un īstenība*. Stokholma: ARAR, 1997, 38.–41., 49.–59. lpp.; Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri,* 35.–43. lpp.; Baranauskas, T. Saxo Gramaticus on the Balts. Saxo and the Baltic region. A symposium. [Odense]: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004, pp. 63–79. Accessible at: http://viduramziu.istorija.net/en/vikings.htm (site last visited 27.10.2016).

[36] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri,* 44.–49. lpp.

[37] Ibid., 50.–57. lpp., Kursis, A. *Mīti un īstenība*, 38.–39. lpp.

[38] *Zemgaļi senatnē = Žiemgaliai senovėje*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2003, 9. lpp.

[39] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri,* 57.–63. lpp.

[40] Мельникова, Е. А. *Скандинавские рунические надписи*. Москва: Наука, 1977, с. 78, 96–97.

[41] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki) 800.–1200. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture 9. g. t. pr. Kr.– 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 295. lpp.

[42] *Полное собрание русских летописей*. Том 1. Москва: Издательство Восточной литературы, 1962, с. 4, 11.

documents; these are invaluable sources for resolving historical geographic issues, as well as being useful retrospectively in explaining ethnic and social political processes. Firstly, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* and the *Rhymed Chronicle* deserve mention,[43] wherein all small ethnic groups living in Latvia are noted, including also the Selonians. Fragmentary information is to be found in a number of other 13th century Western European Chronicles and other texts, extracts of which have been collated by Ē. Mugurēvičs.[44] Significant information characterising the Balts and the Baltic Finns, their beliefs and traditions are found in the writings of the Franciscan monk Bartholomew the Englishman in his reference work, *On the Properties of Things,* and in Roger Bacon's work, *The Greater Work*, as well as in the works of Peter of Dusburg, a Brother of the German Order, who wrote *The Chronicle of the Land of the Prussia*, and the geographical text *Depiction of Lands* etc.

Hypotheses about the origin of the Indo-European and Finno-Ugric peoples. Issues related to the origin of the Balts and the Baltic Finns

Regarding the ancient segments of the ethnic history of the Balts and the Baltic Finns, one of the most complex issues touches upon two aspects — the origin of the Baltic and Balto-Finnic languages, and the origin of the ethnic groups speaking these languages, as mentioned in written records. Archaeological finds can only point to spatial and temporal changes of culture, but cannot provide information about the language spoken by individuals involved in these changes.[45] Difficulties arise in trying to understand what historical processes are related to changes in culture, i.e. whether it is a case of a change in physical material aspects of culture, preserving a linguistic heritage, a physical change of residents and language spoken, social, ethnic or other processes. The search for the historical roots of ethnic culture are based on written records and the study of modern ethnic groups, and retrospective study of continuity in cultural elements in archaeological finds from the distant past.

Many hypotheses have been formulated concerning the origin of the Balts and the Baltic Finns. Scholars who have studied the ancient history of the Baltic Finns traditionally relate it to the Pit–Comb Ware Culture. This culture appeared in Latvia at the beginning of the Middle Neolithic period (4100–2900 BCE). Evidence for the presence of this culture has been discovered in some 50 settlements located close to lakes (Lubāns, Burtnieks, Ludzas, etc.) and along the coast of the Curonian Lagoon of the

[43] *The Rhyme Chronicle*. V. Bisenieka atdzejojums no vidusaugšvācu valodas; Ē. Mugurēviča priekšvārds; Ē. Mugurēviča, K. Kļaviņa komentāri. Rīga: Zinātne, 1998; *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. Ā. Feldhūna tulkojums, Ē. Mugurēviča priekšvārds un komentāri. Rīga: Zinātne, 1993.

[44] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri*, 64.–127. lpp.

[45] Клейн, Л. С. Древние миграции и происхождение индоевропейских народов. Санкт-Петербург, 2007, с. 6–8. Accessible at: http://www.archaeology.ru/Download/Klejn/Klejn_2007_Drevnie_migratsii.pdf (site last visited 27.10.2016).

Baltic Sea (at Sārnate, Ģipka, Pūrciems, etc.). These cultural deposits have been found at both newly founded sites, as well as those which were re-used.[46] Their characteristic feature was round-bottomed pottery decorated with bands of comb-shaped imprints and rows of surface pits. Pit–Comb Ware Culture was transmitted by hunter-gatherers who lived in buildings constructed from vertical tree trunk walls plaited together and with dual-pitched roofs. Flint tools were made from high-quality flint obtained as trade goods originating in the Valdai Volga Upland region. Tools were also found made out of bone or wood, together with ornaments made from amber and slate. Certain features of the burials had ritual significance, namely death masks, amber discs covering the eyes, offerings and ochre. Images of water fowl, elks, bears, and fish played an important role in the ideological notions of these cultures.[47] Water fowl also play a significant role in the later mythology of Finnic peoples.

Pit–Comb Ware Culture also covered the territory of modern Finland, Karelia, the north-western region of Russia, and the Eastern Baltic region. It appears to have spread over this area more or less at the same time. One opinion holds that this culture originated in the region between Lake Ladoga and the Valdai Uplands.[48] The Finno-Ugric peoples are thought to have been the bearers of this culture.[49]

The first hypotheses about the origins of the Finno-Ugric languages were formulated during the 19th century by linguists who developed a model for the evolution of the Uralic family of languages (language tree), the migration theory which dominated linguistics and archaeological study for a long time. This theory included the notion that the Finno-Ugric were members of the Mongoloid race and came to Europe from further east. The territory of their origin was determined based on linguistic palaeontology, including the distribution of ancient names for flora and fauna, which pointed, according to various versions, to an area between the Altai and the mid-course of the Volga River. Archaeologists and linguists supported the "Eastern Theory", the former pointing to evidence for the migration of the Western Finns during the 1st millennium CE. They portrayed the climate-change-driven westward movement of the Finno-Ugric ethnic groups towards the coastal region of the Baltic Sea, traversing a sparsely populated forested zone.[50]

The dominant hypothesis of linguists up until the 1920s, that the homeland of Finno-Ugric ancestors was located in Southern Siberia in the foothills of the Altai, was due to the Finnish linguist Eemil Setälä, who traced the roots of the Finno-Ugric

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[46] Vasks, A. *No medniekiem un zvejniekiem līdz lopkopjiem un zemkopjiem. Latvijas aizvēstures senākais posms (10500.–1. g. pr. Kr.).* Rīga: Zinātne, 2015, 42.–43. lpp.

[47] Loze, I. Neolīts. 4500.–1500. g. pr. Kr. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g. t. pr. Kr.–1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 108.-112. lpp.

[48] Янитс, Л. Ю. К вопросу об этнической принадлежности неолитического населения территории Эстонской ССР. *Вопросы этнической истории эстонского народа*. Сб. ст. под. ред. Х. Моора. Таллин: Эстонское государственное издательство, 1956, с. 156–157.

[49] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, 41. lpp.

[50] Кочкуркина, С. И., Косменко, М. Г. Проблемы изучения этнической истории бронзового века — раннего Средневековья в Карелии. *Проблемы этнокультурной истории населения Карелии (мезолит — Средневековье)*. Петрозаводск, 2006, с. 174–175.

ethnic groups in the forest zones of Eastern Europe.[51] His scenario saw the community of Finno-Ugric language speakers remaining intact up until 2500 BCE, with the Finno-Ugric homeland located in the region of the upper and middle courses of the Volga River, in the river basins of the Oka and the Kama. Subsequently, one by one, the Ugric, Permic, Volga-Finnic, and Saami languages separated from this community. During the 1st millennium BCE, Balto-Finnic languages also separated from the Volga group, and their speakers reached the Baltic Sea coastal area, where a single Balto-Finnic language came into being which, in turn, broke up into the languages of the Balto-Finnic tribes around the 8th century. Many scholars concurred with the hypothesis formulated by E. Setälä for quite a few decades, ignoring the fact of archaeologists' inability to align the linguists' model either with the diverse nature of Neolithic Pit–Comb Ware Culture widespread over the area, or with cultures of more recent periods.[52]

Hypotheses based on the eastern migration concept were beset by a number of internal contradictions. The assumption of an uninhabited forested zone turned out to be incorrect. In addition, there was no archaeological support for the fact of migration. Internal contradictions were present within the Uralic language tree, as the existence of archaic elements which were found in the Balto-Finnic and Saami languages failed to fit into the theory of an eastern origin. The multitude of racial types within the population speaking the Finnic languages was problematic, since this contradicted the idea of the Uralic language tree as the basis for linguists' and archaeologists' preconceptions of an eastern origin of the Finnic ethnic groups. West Finnic ethnic groups are predominantly of the Caucasian type, and, thus, scholars were forced to concede that at least some local ethnic groups were part of the process whereby the Finno-Ugric ethnic groups came into being.[53]

In the absence of archaeological evidence for significant migration away from the Volga region, scholars have looked for a homogeneous culture which could have been the basis for formation of the Balto-Finnic ethnolinguistic community. The Pit–Comb Ware Culture was identified as possibly this basis, since during the Middle Neolithic this culture was found spread over the Baltic region, Finland, and as far as Lakes Ilmen and Ladoga, i.e. it included the entire area later inhabited by Balto-Finnic ethnic groups.[54] This hypothesis, however, could not account for the ancient community of the Baltic Finnic and the Volga Finnic languages. The Estonian archaeologist H. Moora identified the bearers of Pit–Comb Ware Culture as ancestors of the Baltic Finns, and

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[51] Моора, Х. А. Вопросы сложения эстонского народа и некоторых соседних народов в свете данных археологии. *Вопросы этнической истории эстонского народа*. Сб. ст. под. ред. Х. Моора. Таллин: Эстонское государственное издательство,1956, с. 50; Седов, В. В. Прибалтийские финны. *Финны в Европе VI–XV века. Прибалтийско-Финские народы. Историко-археологические исследования*. Вып. I. Москва, 1990, с. 9.

[52] Моора, Х. А. Вопросы сложения эстонского народа и некоторых соседних народов в свете данных археологии, с. 51–52.

[53] Кочкуркина, С. И., Косменко, М. Г. Проблемы изучения этнической истории бронзового века – раннего Средневековья в Карелии, с. 176–177.

[54] Седов, В. В. *Финно-угры и балты в эпоху средневековья*. Под общей ред. акад. Б. А. Рыбакова. Москва: Наука, 1987, с. 13.

identified the Baltic Finns as the bearers of the Textile-Impressed Pottery Culture, who moved through the Finno-Ugric area, came to the Baltic region from the east and brought with them the linguistic features which are common to the Baltic Finns and the Volga Finns.[55]

Yet another hypothesis was advanced based on the notion that formation of the Balto-Finnic ethnolinguistic community was the result of regional cultural interaction between the Textile-Impressed Pottery Culture and the Scratched Ware Culture.[56] Textile-Impressed Pottery shows features common over the entire region where it is found, including the region between the Volga and Oka Rivers, and the Valdai Uplands (the Djakovo culture).[57] Textile-Impressed Pottery Culture persisted from the mid-1st millennium BCE until the first century CE. At sites in the Baltic region, deposits of this pottery are always found together with Scratched Ware items, and this is taken as evidence for Baltic infiltration or migration. Contact between the Finnic and Baltic languages has been studied both phonetically and in terms of grammar. The Estonian linguist Paul Ariste highlighted the great influence exerted by Baltic languages on the formation of Balto-Finnic languages.[58] Through a regional interaction with local inhabitants the bearers of Scratched Ware Culture developed a community of Balto-Finnic languages, whereby a gap opened up between these languages and the Volga Finnic languages.

Investigators today increasingly reject the idea of culture appearing due to migration; they doubt the possibility that extensive migration took place, since no causes for such migration have been identified, and there is no archaeological evidence for such migration to have taken place.[59] Scholars are increasingly focusing on communication, and the existence of communication routes for transmission of innovations.[60]

The picture of ethnic history resulting from this approach is as follows. During the Late Palaeolithic era, the people of the Urals, or the proto Finno-Ugric people, lived close to the edges of glaciers, a zone that stretched from the Rhine in the west, to the Danube and the Black Sea in the south, and the Pechora River in the east. With the retreat of the glaciers, these persons fanned out to live throughout Northern Europe. Around 6000 BCE, farming and animal husbandry began to spread throughout Europe from Asia Minor. As a result of these processes, the Indo-European language speakers transmitted their culture and, by force of numbers, their language became that of inter-ethnic communication (*lingua franca*). In moving northwards, Indo-European farmers assimilated the Finno-Ugric hunters, who remained as a substrate among Germanic and Baltic-Slavic language speakers. It was only in the northern part

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[55] Моора, Х. А. Вопросы сложения эстонского народа и некоторых соседних народов в свете данных археологии, с. 61–64.; Седов, В. В. Прибалтийские финны, с. 13.

[56] Седов, В. В. Прибалтийские финны, с. 13.

[57] Cimermane, I. Latvijas tekstilā keramika un tās sakari ar Djakovas kultūras apgabalu. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija,* 8. laid., 1965, 53. lpp.

[58] Аристе, П. А. Формирование Прибалтийско-финских языков и древнейший период их развития. *Вопросы Этнической истории эстонского народа*. Сб. статьей под. ред. Х. Моора. Таллин: Эстонское государственное издательство,1956, с. 5–27.

[59] Клейн, Л. С. *Древние миграции и происхождение индоевропейских народов,* с. 8–9.

[60] Vasks, A. *No medniekiem un zvejniekiem līdz lopkopjiem un zemkopjiem*., 43.–44. lpp.

of the forested areas that the Finno-Ugric languages survived, albeit under a strong Indo-European influence.[61] However, the interaction of various old ethnic cultures and adaptation processes have not been adequately studied or fully worked out, nor has the time evolution of racial changes been quantified.[62]

The newest investigations about the European roots of the contemporary speakers of the Balto-Finnic and Saami languages are oriented toward acquiring their genetic, anthropological, and linguistic data, which are then projected backwards to the Stone Age. Genetic studies show that, among the Finns in particular, less so among the Saami people, maternal genes are found similar to those of a European population, while the cranometric indices of the Finns are much closer to those of the Palaeolithic population than is typical of other European peoples.[63] Molecular genealogy studies have confirmed the hypothesis of Paleo-Asiatic origins of the Finno-Ugric population.[64] However, while genetic studies may point to the homeland of a particular population, and its theoretical migration route, they cannot provide information about its language.

Another no less complex question is that of the origin of the Balts, which is closely related to the search for the homeland of the Indo-Europeans, and the time and place where the Baltic languages emerged. It is asserted in the literature that the Balts emerged as an ethnolinguistic community during the 3rd millennium BCE in the forested zone of Eastern Europe, on the basis of extensive migration to this area of Indo-Europeans bearing the Corded Ware and Battle-Axe Culture, and who later intermingled with the indigenous Neolithic residents.[65] The appearance of this culture is considered to mark the start of Indo-Europeanisation of the residents of the forested zone of Europe, as well as the spreading of a new model of a productive economy — animal husbandry and farming. The Corded Ware Culture was widespread throughout Europe, from the Rhine in the west to the mid-course of the Volga River in the east, from Southern Finland in the north to the Alps and Outer Carpathians in the south.[66] There was some resemblance during the early period of the spreading of these cultures in the form and decoration of clay pottery, in funeral practices, and working implements, while the process led to the creation of more than 20 related groups which, independent of local differences, produced clay pottery decorated with cord-like impressions, or with imitation cord decorations, together with polished shaft-hole boat-shaped axes.

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[61] Кочкуркина, С. И., Косменко, М. Г. Проблемы изучения этнической истории бронзового века — раннего Средневековья в Карелии, с. 181.; Wiik, K. Who are the Finns? *SKY Journal of Linguistics*, Vol. 19, 2006, pp. 97–108. Accessible at: http://www.linguistics.fi/julkaisut/SKY2006_1/1FK60.1.9.WIIK.pdf (site last visited 27.10.2016).

[62] Кочкуркина, С. И., Косменко, М. Г. Проблемы изучения этнической истории бронзового века — раннего Средневековья в Карелии, с. 181.

[63] Ibid., с. 179.

[64] Назарова, А. Ф. Генетика и филогенез финно-угорских популяций. Электронное научное издание Альманах Пространство и Время, Т. 4. 2013, Вып. 1: Система планета Земля. Accessible at: 2227-9490e-aprovr_e-ast4-1.2013.61(site last visited 27.10.2016).

[65] Gimbutiene, M. *Balti aizvēsturiskajos laikos. Etnoģenēze, materiālā kultūra un mitoloģija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 46.–62. lpp. (this is a revised and updated version of the book by the same author, *The Balts*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1963).

[66] Sedovs, V. *Balti senatnē.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1992, 9. lpp.

In the Eastern Baltic the Corded Ware and the Battle-Axe Culture interacted with the Narva and the Nemunas agrarian cultures, resulting in the appearance of the Rzucewo Culture. In turn, in the district of the Upper Dnieper River and the Upper Volga River, the Middle Dnieper and Fatjanovo cultures resulted from assimilation of the earlier Dnieper-Donets Culture (5th –3rd millennium BCE) and the Volosovo Culture (4th–3rd millennium BCE).

There are more than 20 hypotheses and variants thereof about where the Indo-European community originated. The only consensus is that their origin is located somewhere in the eastern region of central Europe, where it came into contact with the inhabitants of the steppes. Research into the origins of Indo-Europeans is dominated by migration hypotheses. From the 18th century onwards, linguists have attempted to reconstruct the Proto-Indo-European language and to look for their homeland. The study of hydronyms was an important part of this effort. It was discovered that Baltic hydronyms are not only found over a wide area of Eastern Europe, and that most have correspondences with Proto-Indo-European terms, but also that they are ancient terms (etymologically related to water).[67]

Linguists have looked for the Indo-European homeland northwards of the Black, Caspian, and Aral Seas, in the area of the Southern Urals and further east, as well as in central Europe east of the Rhine River.[68] V. Georgiev and I. Diakonoff have argued for the Indo-Europeans to have lived in the Balkans, in the Carpathian region. Here the inhabitants adopted the model of a production economy during the 5th–4th millennium BCE, reaching a high level of working with metal. This hypothesis has not been supported by archaeological finds, and some of the linguistic data is contradictory.[69]

The hypothesis formulated by the linguists T. Gamkrelidze and V. Ivanov is considered to be better founded; they site the Indo-European homeland in the Middle East, i.e. in Eastern Anatolia and Mesopotamia.[70] Indo-European groups migrated through Central Asia along the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea to the lower course of the Volga River, and to the northern coast of the Black Sea, which then became the location of the "second homeland" of the Indo-Europeans, from which the next wave of migration of Old Europeans moved further in a westerly direction.

In the 1920s, the English archaeologist Gordon Childe proposed significant improvements in resolving this problem and his ideas were developed by the American scholar of Lithuanian origin Marija Gimbutienė. Her hypothesis about the homeland of the Indo-Europeans to be in an area north of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, in a region of mixed steppes and forests, was for a long time considered to be well founded. This hypothesis included the idea of a steppe tribe of wandering herders undergoing three waves of migration over the period from the 5th to the 3rd millennium BCE. These

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[67] Gimbutiene, M. *Balti aizvēsturiskajos laikos. Etnoģenēze, materiālā kultūra un mitoloģija.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 20.–24. lpp.; Dini, P. U. *Baltu valodas*, 39.–40. lpp.

[68] Gimbutiene, M. *Balti aizvēsturiskajos laikos. Etnoģenēze, materiālā kultūra un mitoloģija,* 44.–45. lpp.

[69] Sedovs, V. *Balti senatnē*, 15. lpp.

[70] Гамкрелидзе, Т. В., Иванов, В. В. *Индоевропейский язык и индоевропейцы. Реконструкция и историко-типологический анализ проязыка и протокультуры.* Тбилиси: Издательство Тбилисского университета, 1984.

tribes, who buried their dead in mounds (kurgans), were familiar with horses and carts, lived in small patriarchal groups, and constituted, according to M. Gimbutienė, the original Indo-Europeans, whose expansion led to the Indo-Europeanisation of part of the population of Europe and Asia. Local peoples were assimilated by the newcomers, and moved northwards (including to the Eastern Baltic regions and central Russia). The early phases in the development of Corded Ware Culture, which emerged based on the Globular Amphora Culture, may be traced to the region between the lower course of the Vistula River and the Šventoja River in Western Lithuania (the Baltic Littoral culture). M. Gimbutienė regarded this culture to form the core of the Western Balt culture. Somewhat later M. Gimbutienė studied cultures with similar antecedents present in the region between the middle courses of the Dnieper and Volga rivers, i.e. the Dneiper, Fatjanovo–Balanovo culture (in the upper and middle course of the Volga River), which the scholar associated with the origin of the Eastern Balts.[71]

The English archaeologist Colin Renfrew questioned whether mass migration had occurred and advanced. During the 1980s, a hypothesis that the Indo-Europeanisation of Europe was related to the spread of farming and cattle breeding. Livestock and plant cultivation spread from the Balkan peninsula of Asia Minor during 6500–6000 BCE, with small groups of people migrating who spoke an Indo-European language. The new cultures and elements of homesteading spread gradually through infiltration and diffusion. In this way small groups of farmers-herders had Indo-Europeanised most of Europe by 3000 BCE. Numbers of farmer communities grew faster, in this way the Indo-European language coming to dominate. The scholar allows that the hunters-gatherers might themselves have adopted new methods while retaining their former language.[72]

Ideas of autochthonous origin appeared during the second half of the 20th century, and these have gained increasing support in recent studies. The Lithuanian archaeologist Algirdas Girininkas has sought to substantiate this hypothesis since the 1990s. He is of the opinion that proto-Indo-Europeans lived in the forested foothills of the Carpathians, Alps, and in the Pyrenees and the Balkan Peninsula, during the last glaciation of the Northern Hemisphere, and also that following the retreat of the glaciers, they came to inhabit the northern regions of Europe. These individuals transmitted the Late Palaeolithic Magdalenian and Swidry cultures, and, additionally, the Middle Stone Age Kunda, Maglemose, and Nemunas Cultures. Subsequent development of the Balts was associated with the Narva culture during the Neolithic period (5400–1800 BCE) and with the Scratched Ware Culture during the Bronze Age (1800–500 BCE). Girininkas substantiates this sequence of culture succession over the period from the Middle Stone Age to the Bronze Age by data produced from genetic studies, which demonstrate the biological link between contemporary residents of Europe and the ancient population of Europe.[73]

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[71] Gimbutiene, M. *Balti aizvēsturiskajos laikos. Etnoģenēze, materiālā kultūra un mitoloģija,* 42.–62. lpp.

[72] Renfrew, C. *Archaeology and Language. The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 31.

[73] Girininkas, A. *Lietuvos archeologija.* I: Akmens amžius. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2009, pp. 317–318.

Clay pottery decorated with impressions made by braided cords as well as polished shaft-hole axes whose contour resembles the shape of a boat, dating from the early Neolithic Age (2900–1800 BCE) have been found to be widespread in the territory of modern Latvia. Items made of flint, such as splitting axes, heart-shaped arrowheads, scrapers, and little knives, manufactured using new technologies (e.g. polishing), also characterise this culture. The form of vessels, as well as pottery imprinted throughout by cords, represent a local variation in the development of Corded Ware Culture. Centres appeared for working with amber using the latest techniques. Amber was bartered.

Evidence for the presence of Corded Ware Culture in Latvia has been found at 15 sites settled during a previous period and at five new settlements, with finds at places along riverbanks not previously settled. The relatively meagre layer of deposits at these sites has not provided sufficient evidence for any extensive characterisation of these households.[74]

Extensive burial fields were not typical of this culture. The deceased were buried with bodies laid on their side in a folded position, in individual graves, in barrow burial fields, or settlements.[75] Grave goods include stone boat-shaped axes, flint axes without butts, ornate plates made from antlers, clay amphorae and beakers, tools for daily tasks, ornaments made out of amber beads, and pendants of animal teeth. Animal bones recovered from graves point to certain death rituals. Ideological views are reflected in zoomorphic bone and antler items, as well as in sculptures reflecting gender.

Radiocarbon dating of archaeological finds permits following development of the Corded Ware Culture and Battle-Axe Culture in Latvia up until 2330–2050 BCE.[76] The previously accepted view that the Corded Ware Culture arrived as a result of migration by members of the Indo-European-Proto-Baltic herder-farmer culture, is now refuted by the most recent studies. Evidence has accumulated which demonstrates that animal husbandry and farming was practiced in Latvia before the appearance of the Corded Ware Culture.[77] One opinion holds that the earliest samples of corded pottery might have been produced in a local environment.[78]

The archaeologist Andrejs Vasks, in acknowledging the views expressed by C. Renfrew, expressed his opinion that in the Eastern Baltic, production economic practices were introduced through contacts without any attendant change in language spoken. Pottery fragments typical of the Funnel Beaker Culture have been found at the Zvidze settlement located in the lowlands around Lake Lubāns which testify to contacts with the herders-farmers of Northern Central Europe during the Middle

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[74] Vasks, A. *No medniekiem un zvejniekiem līdz lopkopjiem un zemkopjiem,* 60.–61. lpp.

[75] Loze, I. Auklas keramikas kultūras pētniecības aspekti Latvijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija,* 21. laid., 2003, 94.–103. lpp.; Loze, I. Late Neolithic Burial Practices and Beliefs in Latvia. *Archeologica Baltica*, Vol. 1, 1995, pp. 33–42.; Gerhards, G. Saliektie apbedījumi Latvijā no antropoloģiskā viedokļa. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 21. laid., 2003, 118.–130. lpp.

[76] Loze, I. Auklas keramikas kultūras pētniecības aspekti Latvijā, 102. lpp.

[77] Vasks, A. *No medniekiem un zvejniekiem līdz lopkopjiem un zemkopjiem,* 65. lpp.

[78] Loze, I. Neolīts. 4500.–1500. g. pr. Kr. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g. t. pr. Kr.–1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 114. lpp.

Neolithic period. The appearance of animal husbandry and the cultivation of crops on the territory of Latvia are associated with barter trade and other contacts. Changes in language spoken are explained by the researcher through creation of pidgin and then a creole language as a means of communication in areas of contact between hunter-gatherers and farmers, and later, in more extensive territories. The transition to a productive economy took several millennia, and a *lingua franca* appeared through contacts with farmers and herders, first in the form of a hunter-gatherer pidgin, which in the process of creolisation acquired either Indo-European features (in Lithuania and the south of Latvia), or retained the underlying features of the autochthonous language (in Northern Latvia and in Estonia).[79] As regards changes in the language spoken, a number of possible models are mentioned in the literature: demographic expansion, domination by the elite, social strategy, etc.[80]

Archaeological evidence shows that the productive economy only became predominant during the Bronze Age, hence the Indo-Europeanisation of the Eastern Baltic region might have concluded only during this period.[81]

Cultural ethnic processes during the Bronze and Early Iron Ages (1800–1 BCE)

Important cultural ethnic processes took place in the economic, social and ideological spheres of the Eastern Baltic during the Bronze and Early Iron Age, which were promoted by developments in the productive economy and learning to work with metals. During the mid-2nd millennium BCE, the residents of the territory of Latvia had learned about bronze, while during the mid-1st millennium BCE, they learned about iron. The new economic model facilitated changes in the choice of where there were settlements and closer internal communication, while knowledge about metals promoted barter arrangements and contacts with distant peoples. With the help of archaeological evidence, it is possible to follow developments in the denser populated areas of the lower reaches of the Daugava River, in the basin of the Lielupe River, and in the southern part of the Latgale Uplands, etc. Hill-forts became a characteristic form of settlement from the mid-Bronze Age onwards and these held a monopoly on working with bronze and also trade.

Pottery decorated in various ways typical of the Early Bronze Age gave way during the last quarter of the 2nd millennium BCE to pottery decorated with surface scratches. Some vessels began to be made with smooth surfaces, and textile-impressed pottery also appeared, but the relative share of the latter type was small. Scratched Ware items are found over the entire area of the Narva and post-Narva culture which comprises the reach of Baltic culture.

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[79] Vasks, A *No medniekiem un zvejniekiem līdz lopkopjiem un zemkopjiem,* 154.–155. lpp.

[80] Loze, I. Indoeiropieši Austrumbaltijā arheologa skatījumā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 1997, 22. lpp.; Zvelebil, M. The agricultural transition and the origins of Neolithic society in Europe. *Documenta Praehistorica XXVIII*. Ljubljana: Ljubljana University Press, 2001, p. 2.

[81] Loze, I. Indoeiropieši Austrumbaltijā arheologa skatījumā, p. 2.

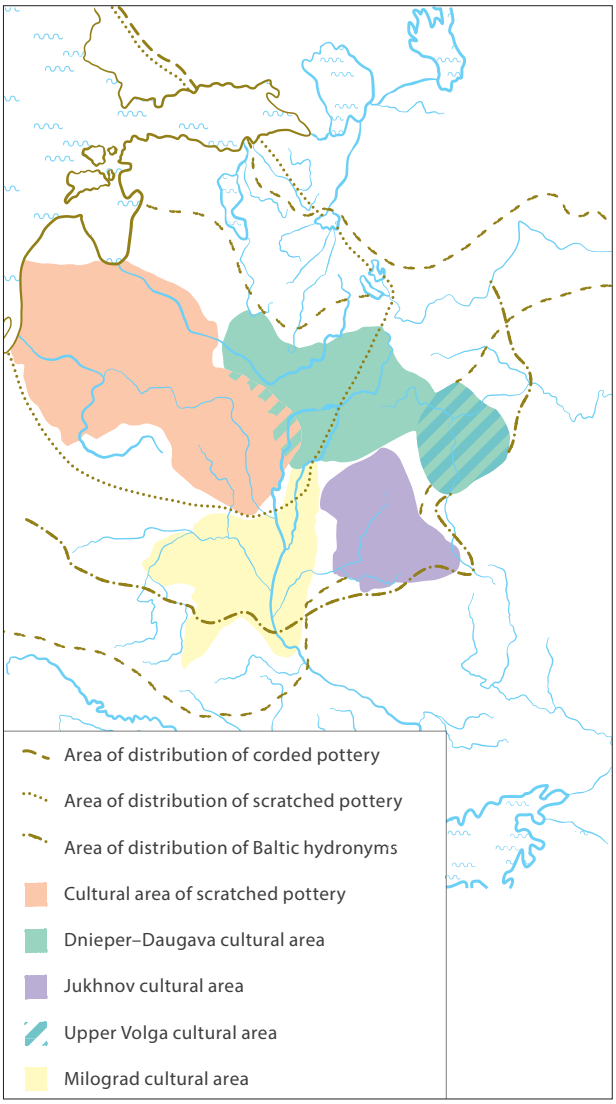


Fig. 1. Cultural ethnic areas in the forested zone of Europe during the Bronze and Early Iron Age (Graudonis, J. Agro metālu periods. 1500. –1. g. t. pr. Kr. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g. t. pr. Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, Fig. 136)

From the end of the 2nd millennium BCE onwards, a number of districts within the area where scratched pottery is encountered show different local pottery types, as well as distinct funeral traditions (see Fig. 1). In the western part of Latvia, in the territory between the Venta River and the sea, predominantly scratched pottery items are found at settlements.[82] Examples of early plastered pottery are typically found in this area, pottery which was previously (5th millennium BCE) known in Southern Europe, later in Central and in Northern Europe. The appearance of this pottery type in Western Latvia is evidence for contacts between this area and the region between the Vistula and Nemunas rivers, which is associated with the formation of Western Balt Culture in this area.

During the aforementioned period, there was recourse both to flat graves and barrow burials in the territory of Latvia. The remains of the decreased were either buried (inhumation), or first cremated before burial (see Fig. 2). Burial fields with a large number of graves appeared only in the third quarter or in the last quarter of the 2nd millennium BCE. These differed both in terms of layout and associated funeral traditions.

In the south-west of Latvia, the dead were buried in mounds of sand, at the base of which various stone constructions have been discovered. Certain mounds contained urns with cremated remains (at Dārznieki, Bašķi), as well as barrow burials without urns (at Pukuļi), together with instances when inhumation graves were found at the base level of a barrow, with cremation burials in the

[82] Васкс, А. *Керамика эпохи поздней бронзы и раннего железа Латвии*. Рига: Зинатне, 1991, с. 26–34.

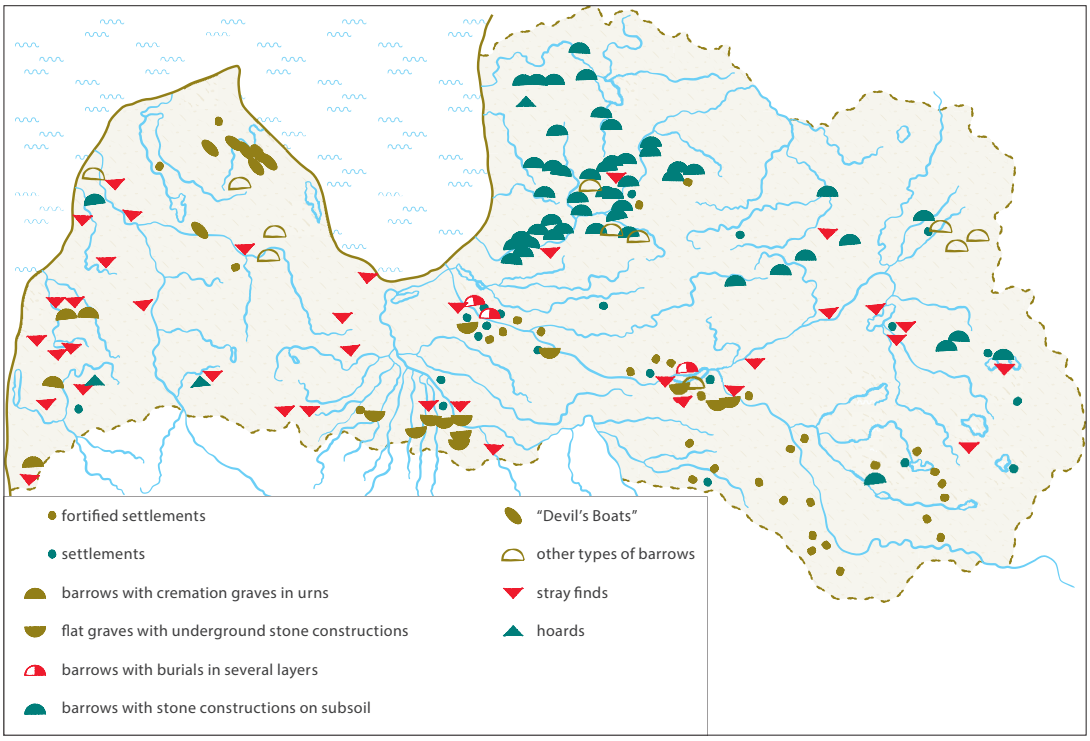


Fig. 2. Settlements and ancient burial fields of the Bronze and the Early Iron Age on the territory of Latvia (Graudonis, J. Agro metālu periods. 1500.–1. g. pr. Kr., Fig. 83)

mound above (at Pukuļi).[83] Inhumation was practiced during the early Bronze Age, while cremation of the deceased began during the middle of this period. Placing the cremated remains in urns made of clay was practiced during the latter half of the Bronze Age. The area in which these funeral traditions were practiced coincided with the territory in which the Western Balt cultures were in the process of forming.

A different district may be identified with the area encompassing the basins of the Daugava and Lielupe rivers, as well as the eastern part of Lithuania. The relative share of Scratched Ware Culture remains at sites of habitation in this territory (at Ķivutkalns and Vīnakalns) is 90%, although pottery with smooth surfaces is also found. Some scanty deposits of textile-impressed pottery are found at sites in the basin of the Daugava River. During the middle of the Bronze Age, flat burial fields were widespread in this area. Investigations have been made of such fields located close by the Daugava River (at Ķivutkalns) and in the basin of the Lielupe River (at Ziedoņskola) with these sites dating from 800–500 BCE. These burial fields are situated on high ground close to the water's edge, in the same way as the settlements of this period.[84] At Ķivutkalns,

[83] Vasks, A. Bronzas laikmeta kapulauks Pukuļos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 20. laid., 2001, 100.–103. lpp.
[84] Graudonis, J. Agro metālu periods. 1500.–1. g. pr. Kr., 146. lpp.

the deceased were buried in oak log coffins. In addition to the inhumation burials, a number of cremation burials were found, the remains also interred in a log coffin, with such burials happening at later times than the inhumations. The funerary rituals included a layer of sand laid beneath the deceased, stones placed beside the remains, filling in the grave with red clay, rectangular wooden structures within the pit of a grave, and offerings of animal teeth.[85]

Some of these customs can be followed over a wide area, in particular in districts where the Corded Ware Culture appeared. A variety of customs followed in burials found at a single graveyard reflect both older practices associated with the Corded Ware Culture (e.g., scattering the graves with sand), and newer practices associated with a herder-farmer society (cremation graves, burial of bodies laid on their backs, stone structures, etc.). During the second half of this period, in the region close by the Daugava River the dead began to be buried in barrows (at Kalnieši, Vējstūri, and Rēzna). The graveyard at Rēzna, which was in use from the last quarter of the 2nd millennium BCE until the middle of the 1st millennium BCE, illustrates changes in funerary traditions over this period. The oldest burials in this barrow comprised inhumations in stone coffins, while above these there is a layer of cremation burials in little oval or round pits. In turn, the remains interred in the top three layers are either cremated remains, or inhumations in stone coffins. Barrow burials are not found in the basin of the Lielupe River.

Barrow burials with stone coffins are typical in the western part of Vidzeme (at Buļļumuiža, Bukte, etc., see Fig. 3). A circle of standing stones was set up at the base of a barrow, with a central coffin made of large stones, whose floor was covered with small stones. This coffin is covered with stones. The coffins contain calcined bones. Some of the coffins are empty, possibly since the bones therein have crumbled. At the end, the entire complex of buried remains was covered with sand and a dense layer of stones. This form of a floor made out of small stones has also been found at Rēznas cemetery, which shows that burial traditions are not unique to any locality.

It is noteworthy that this transition from flat burial fields to barrow burials occurred in a wide European region around the Baltic Sea.[86] This has been explained by the existence of a hierarchical society which is typical of new societies which tend to demonstrate explicitly their social strategy.[87]

The northern part of Western Latvia, where the so-called "Devil's Boats" have survived, stands out with a unique form of burials, i.e. interment in a structure similar to a boat. Cremated remains in clay urns were placed in these structures.[88] The dates of these burials are 1398–1112 cal BC (Ua42247) and 972–807 cal BC. Similar monu-

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[85] Денисова, Р. Я., Граудонис, Я. Я., Гравере, Р. У. *Кивуткалнский могильник эпохи бронзы*. Рига: Зинатне, 1985, с. 46–57.

[86] Ibid., с. 58–71.

[87] Vasks, A. Baltu izcelsme un agrīnā vēsture — uzskatu plurālisms vai metodoloģijas krīze? *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2000, 60. lpp.

[88] Vasks, A. Latvia as part of a sphere of contacts in the bronze age. *Archaeologica Baltica*, Vol. 13, 2010, pp. 156–157.

ments have been discovered in Scandinavia and Gotland.[89]



Fig. 3. Grave structures in Barrow 4-A at Buļļumuiža (Dravnieki). 1965. Photograph by J. Graudonis (from Institute of Latvian History, University of Latvia, Repository of Archaeological Materials)

Opinions differ concerning cultural ethnic process during the Early Metal Period. Some ideas have been put forward about consolidation of the Balto-Finnic and the Balt ethnic groups. Finnic tribes lived in the northern part of the territory of Latvia, while the Balt tribes lived in the southern part. Their line of contact in Kurzeme runs along the Venta River – Abava River – Lapmežciems at the coast of the Gulf of Rīga, while in Vidzeme from the mouth of Pēterupe in the Gulf of Riga, then along the southern edge of the Vidzeme Upland to south of Lake Lubāns. The use of stone coffins in all areas inhabited by Finnic tribes is regarded as evidence for a common culture. In turn, the fact of various types of burial in the Baltic lands is taken as evidence for additional differentiation among the Balts.[90] There is also the view that ethnic groups within an ethnic category were still quite amorphous during this period.[91]

The cultural ethnic districts of Latvia during the Early and Middle Iron Age (1–800 CE)

Great changes took place in the Baltic world during the first half and mid-1st millennium. Contacts by the Western Balts with the ancient world flourished thanks to the Amber Road, promoting economic development, changing both social structures and settled territories, and creating the conditions for the emergence of a new culture. There was an increase in information exchange thanks to trade contacts with the Romans, including knowledge of other tribes, the territory which they inhabited, and trade opportunities. Cultural changes in the Western Balt territory along the lower reaches of the Vistula River, in Samland, in Masuria, and in the coastal areas of Lithuania were possibly stimulated by the flourishing trade with the Romans, which also may have led to migration by the Western Balts in all directions, and the spread of new social relations, ideology and funeral traditions. Scholars agree that in addition to gaining skills in working with ferrous metals, this migration resulted in the Western Balt communities acquiring adequate quantities of non-ferrous metals, a process abetted by the Amber Road.[92] Pressure exerted by tribes bearing the Przeworsk

[89] Wehlin, J. Östersjöns skeppssättningar-monument och mötesplatser under yngre bronsålder = Baltic Stone Ships — monuments and meeting places during the Late Bronze Age. *Gotarc Serie B. Gothenburg Archaeological Theses,* Göteborgs universitet, Vol. 59, 2013, p. 198.

[90] Graudonis, J. Agro metālu periods. 1500.–1. g. pr. Kr., 182.–184. lpp.

[91] Vasks, A. Baltu izcelsme un agrīnā vēsture – uzskatu plurālisms vai metodoloģijas krīze?, 59. lpp.

[92] Jovaiša, E. *Aisčiai.* II knyga: Raida, pp. 259–260.

(2nd century BCE – 4th century CE; central Poland) and the Oksywie (2nd century BCE – 1st century CE; Southern Poland, and the lower course of the Vistula River) cultures provoked migration of the Western Balts.[93]

The Balt and Balto-Finnic tribes living in Latvia were indirectly involved in Western Balt contacts with the provinces of the Roman Empire. Evidence for this includes Roman coins and bronze ornaments (disk fibulas, glass necklaces, etc.) found throughout the territory of Latvia, as well as copies of the design of certain metal objects (axes, spearheads, and ornaments), as well as the unique Balt designs of ornaments which were influenced by the Hallstatt and La Tene cultures.[94]

Even greater changes in the territories of peoples and tribes in Europe occurred during the period of the Great Migration between the 4th and 7th centuries. Recent investigations have reconsidered the earlier standard model of this period, in that Balts living in the Eastern Baltic region did not take part in these global processes, the Balts were only involved in a few local migrations and discontinued recourse to burial fields, or gaps in use of settlements, were usually associated with socioeconomic changes, epidemics or climate change. Artefacts recovered at sites were considered to be traded items. Lithuanian archaeologists have found that fighters from the Mid-Danube area, who were part of the Great Migration, and who played an important role in the formation of Balt tribes and their later consolidation, appeared in the lower course of the Nemunas River during the second half of the 5th century.[95] Funeral traditions typical of nomadic tribes appeared in central Lithuania and along the lower reaches of the Nemunas River.

The Great Migration period also did not take place in a smooth continuous manner in the territory of Latvia. New forms of ornament (zoomorphic forms of the North Germanic type, etc.) spread widely throughout the Baltic lands as did technologies (engraving, stone carving, metal casting, etc.). Several types of fibulas are only recovered from the burials of men, such as the unique crossbow fibulas with heads of animals as motifs, and necklaces as symbols of authority, which testify to concentration of power and authority in the hands of a few. In the opinion of scholars, conflicts between tribes are reflected by war booty dating from the end of the 4th century to the mid-6th century deposited in wetlands after important victories (e.g., at Kokmuiža). This was also practiced among the North Germanic peoples.[96] This testifies to regional conflicts involving the Eastern Balts, i.e. struggles over control of a route of regional significance in the territory between the Mūsa–Lielupe and Daugava rivers and to control access to the Baltic Sea. Here rapid advances set in during the 5th century and these accelerated during the 6th century. Shifts in the social, ideological, and world view are reflected in changed funeral traditions, i.e. the appearance of buried offerings.

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[93] Sedovs, V. *Balti senatnē*, 96. lpp.

[94] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 126. lpp. Vasks, A. Agrais dzelzs laikmets. 1.–400. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g. t. pr. Kr.–1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 212.–214. lpp.

[95] Шименас, В. Великое переселение народов и балты. *Археология и история Пскова и Псковской земли.* Тезисы докл. научно-практ. конф. Псков, 1990.

[96] Bliujiene, A., Vasiliauskas, E. People from the crossroads of the Mūša-Lielupe river basin in the Eastern Baltic region during the Late Roman and Migration Periods. *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt,* Jahrgang 42, Heft 1, 2012. Accessible at: http://www.academia.edu/11772970/ (site last visited 28.10.2016).

During the Iron Age, the different areas inhabited by the Balt and Finnic ethnos which had formed in the previous period remained unaltered on the territory of modern Latvia Iron Age, and within each of these areas there were several districts with different material culture and funeral traditions which overlapped into neighbouring territories. Scholars associate the creation of these territories with closer economic, social, religious, administrative political, etc. links, which promoted the creation of unique cultures and were also associated with ethnic differences.[97]

Flat burial fields with stone circles are found in south-west Latvia and north-west Lithuania, in an area beside the Baltic Sea stretching from the lower reaches of the Nemunas and the Minge rivers in the south, to the Tebra and Venta rivers and Lake Plateliai in the east, but during the 3rd–4th centuries, also in the upper reaches of the Jūra River. Bodies were buried in pits dug in the ground, with a ring of standing stones 4–6 m in diameter surrounding these; in the 5th–6th centuries, these enclosures were rectangular. Previously, from the 2nd century BCE until the 1st century CE, there was cremation of the dead and burial in urns placed in collective mounds with a circle of standing stones at their base, typical of the so-called Western Balt barrows.[98]

Chronologically these flat burial fields with stone structures relate to a period from the 2nd century to the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century. Excavations at the Kurmaičiai burial field in Lithuania, which was in use from the 1st millennium BCE until the 3rd century CE, show that there were no interruptions in the funeral customs, which leads to the conclusion that these burials were done by descendants of those who created the barrows in the first place.

In the case of flat inhumation burials with a circle of standing stones, tools that were put in the grave were placed near the head of the body, but ornaments have been found in places where it was worn in life. Bronze necklaces, fibulas, bracelets, rings, ornaments made of glass and amber beads, spindle-whorls, and iron knives are goods found in the graves of women. In turn, the inventory of goods in a man's grave might include iron socketed axes and spearheads, scythes, knives, harnesses, and rather fewer ornaments. Typical additional items were miniature clay vessels which were specially made for funeral rites, Roman coins, as well as items placed near the head (ornaments, etc.). There were no preferred orientations of the body.

Fire rites were an important part of funeral traditions. The complex mix of unique cultural features which constituted funeral traditions, the form of interment and inventory of grave goods is best observed in the district of Klaipeda. The south-west of Latvia is on the periphery of this cultural area.[99] It is thought that those who followed these funeral traditions were caught up in the processes of the Great Migration. Some of these individuals moved in the 3rd–4th centuries to the Sambia Peninsula and the lower reaches of the Vistula River, and later returned to the Lithuanian coastal area, no longer a homogeneous ethnic group, augmenting funeral traditions with new visible

[97] Vasks, A. Agrais dzelzs laikmets. 1.–400. g., 214. lpp.
[98] *Kurši senatnē = Couronians in Antiquity*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2008, 38. lpp.
[99] Ibid., 39. lpp.

features.[100] The deceased began to be interred in flat burial grounds without the presence of stone structures. At graveyards which were extensively studied (at Zīverti and Mazkatuži) the dead are seen to have been laid out with their head pointing either north or south, and bodies were buried in rows. Miniature items (little axes, little weaving boards, little spindles, little knives, etc.) are found in such graves dating from the 8th–9th centuries.

From the 7th century, iron socketed axes placed in graves were replaced by shaft-hole axes. During the Middle Iron Age, one ornament found throughout the entire coastal region was a silvered filigree bronze tutulus with granulations decorated with blue glass pieces, as well as silver-plated owl-fibulas, crossbow fibulas with snake heads and necklaces (see Fig. 4).[101]

It must be noted that certain material cultures and elements of funeral traditions persisted in the coastal regions of Latvia and Lithuania until the 9th century, when written records mention the Couronians as living in these regions. It has been suggested that the radical transition from burial of the remains of cremated bodies in collective mounds to individual inhumations within a circle of standing stones, points to a split in the community within the area inhabited by the Western Balts and the emergence of ethnic consciousness, i.e. this marks the beginning of Couronian culture. In turn, the disappearance of circles of standing stones and the advent of several nuances in funeral traditions, the appearance of new burial fields and discontinued use of old burial fields, which occurred during the second half of the 6th century to the 7th century, reflects economic, ideological and territorial changes.[102]

A culture of burial fields consisting of a barrow with a circle of standing stones spread during the first half of the 1st millennium throughout Southern Latvia, the eastern part of Kurzeme Uplands, Upper Latvia (Augšzeme), South-Western Vidzeme, and partly also in the territory of present-day Latgale. The area of this cultural feature also included Northern Lithuania and the central and northern parts of modern-day Žemaitija (Samogitia).[103]

The aforementioned culture featured barrows containing inhumation burials. The dead were buried beneath a mound of sand which was located within a circle of standing stones. As many as 100 barrows have been counted in a single burial field in Northern Lithuania.[104] In Latvia there were fewer barrows in burial fields, the number in any one field did not exceed 30 (at Īle, at Zante), and often there were only 1–2 barrows in a burial field.[105] Barrows typically were around 1 m high and 3–20 m in

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[100] Žulkus, V. *Kuršiai Baltijos jūros erdvėje*. Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2004, p. 36.

[101] *Kurši senatnē = Couronians in Antiquity*, 46.–47. lpp.

[102] Ibid., 48. lpp.

[103] Михелбертас, М. Заселение территории культуры курганов Жемайтии, Северной Литвы и Южной Латвии в римский период. *Pētījumi zemgaļu senatnē: rakstu krājums.* Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures muzejs, 2004, 67. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija un antropoloģija, Nr. 10).

[104] Ibid., 68. lpp.

[105] Vasks, A. Daži agrā un vidējā dzelzs laikmeta uzkalniņu kapulauku sociālās interpretācijas jautājumi. *Cauri gadsimtiem: rakstu krājums, veltīts Valdemāram Ģinteram (1899–1979).* Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2000, 45. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija un antropoloģija, Nr. 7); *Zemgaļi senatnē = Ziemgaliai senovejė*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2003, 29. lpp.

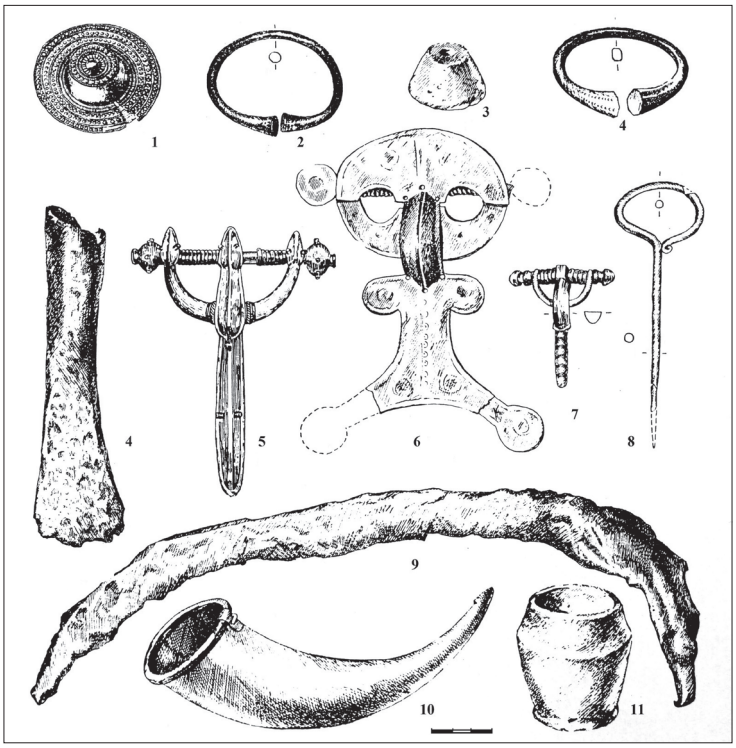


Fig. 4. Couronian 5th–9th century ornaments: 1 – a bronze tutulus fibula (at Ģeistauti, 1. k.), 2, 4 – bronze bracelets (by Užava River in Alsunga, stray find, at Embūtes Vībiņi, stray find), 3 – an amber necklace (at Ģeistauti, Grave 15), 4 – an iron socketed axe (at Ķezēni, stray find), 5, 7 – bronze crossbow fibulas (at Grobiņa, Ģeistauti, Grave 5), 6 – an owl fibula (near Liepāja stray find), 8 – a crook-shaped pin (at Ģeistauti, Grave 7), 9 – an iron scythe (at Ģeistauti, Grave 11), 10 – a drinking horn (at Tīras marsh in Rucava), 11 – a miniature clay vessel (at Ģeistauti, Grave 13) (Urtāns V. Etniskās atšķirības apbedīšanas tradīcijās un kapu inventārā Latvijā 5.–9. gs. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija,* 9. laid. Rīga: Zinātne, 1970, Fig. 2)

diameter. A pyre was first lit and allowed to burn out ahead of creating the barrow with the remains, usually those of a man, buried at the centre of a circle of standing stones, oriented either in the W–E or in the NW–SE direction. Important aspects of the funeral ritual included stones placed beside the grave, as well as grave goods (weapons, work tools, and ornaments). In literature these are labelled as collective barrows, in that usually more than one set of remains was buried is found within (even 28 sets at Īles Gailīši), but there are barrows with only a single grave.[106]

Barrows found in the basin of the Lielupe River and in South-Western Vidzeme are counted as examples of the western group of barrows, while those located in Upper Latvia and in South-Eastern Vidzeme (the basin of the Aiviekste River) — of the eastern group. The differences between the two types of barrows are subtle; they mostly concern the number and type of grave goods. In the case of the western group of burials of men these goods include shafted axes and spearheads, occasionally chisels, and, starting with the 5th century, also scythes. In turn, burials of men in the eastern group of barrows are accompanied by narrow-bladed shaft-hole axes, while a sickle was placed in the grave of a woman. There are no substantial differences in the decorative ornaments found in graves. Both men and women wore necklaces with conically

[106] Vasks, A. Kultūretniskā situācija agrajā un vidējā dzelzs laikmetā Latvijas teritorijā (1.–8. g.s.). *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 1998, 9. lpp.

shaped (mushroom) ends, and bracelets, while clothes were clasped together with decorative pins, which in the case of women included little chains. Fibulas have been found in the western group of barrows.

In all, 240 such sites have been discovered over the area of Barrow Culture, and of these around 100 are on the territory of Latvia.[107] The oldest barrow burial fields date from the 1st century, and are found over the western part of this area. During the second half of the 2nd century and the early 3rd century, the area where barrows were located crossed the Daugava River and reached the right bank of the lower reaches of the Gauja River. In the mid-3rd century, many new barrows appeared widely throughout the entire area; this trend diminished later, starting in the 4th century.[108] Scholars hold different views concerning the relationship of barrows with a circle of standing stones and ethnic belonging. Barrows of the western group are associated with Semigallians or individuals of Semigallian ancestry.[109] In turn, barrows of the eastern group are viewed as constructed by individuals with Latgalian and Selonian ancestry, or with Selonian ancestors only; this view is justified by the form of inherited material culture, and the approximate coincidence of the area where these barrows are found and the area of Selonian dialects.[110]

Some scholars consider the area over which barrows are found to be an undifferentiated cultural space in which the Samogitian, Semigallian, Selonian and Latgalian cultures started to emerge during the Middle Iron Age.[111] The culture of barrows with a circle of standing stones is genetically associated with the Western Balts, through the latter interacting with the Eastern Balts (Scratched Ware Culture) who previously lived in this region. Gradual advance of these barrows from the west towards the east and north-east, as well as the readily identifiable influence of Western Balt culture at sites constituting the western group of barrows, has permitted scholars to formulate a hypothesis that barrows with a circle of standing stones are evidence for immigration by Western Balts from the coastal region of Lithuania, which movement may have been instigated by an upswing in trade with the Roman world, and an increase in the wealth of Balt communities, and which led to formation of an elite. The Western Balts were described as one of the most prosperous tribes in the "barbarian" environment.[112] In this way the Western Balt tradition of interring their dead in mounds fully corresponds to scholars' views of these mounds as an expression by families, or members of a socially structured community, demonstrating their

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[107] Михелбертас, М. Заселение территории культуры курганов Жемайтии, Северной Литвы и Южной Латвии в римский период, с. 67.

[108] Ibid., с. 70–73, рис.1–5.

[109] Vasks, A. Agrais dzelzs laikmets, 219. lpp.; Атгазис, М. Вопросы этнической истоии земгалов. *Из древнейшей истории балтских народов по данным археологии и антропологии.* Рига: Зинатне, 1980, с. 92.

[110] Šnore, E. *Agrā dzelzs laikmeta uzkalniņi Latvijas austrumu daļā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1993.

[111] Atgāzis, M. Vidējais dzelzs laikmets. 400.–800.g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture 9. g. t. pr. Kr.– 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 279. lpp.

[112] Михелбертас, М. Заселение территории культуры курганов Жемайтии, Северной Литвы и Южной Латвии в римский период, с. 72–73; Šimėnas, V. Vakarų ir ritų baltu ribos kaita archeologijos duomenimis. *Vakarų baltai: etnogenezė ir etninė istorija*. Vilnius: Lietuvos Istorijos institutas, 1997, p. 54. Jovaiša, E. *Aisčiai.* I knyga: Kilmė. pp. 341–342; Jovaiša, E. *Aisčiai.* II knyga: Raida, pp. 295–296.

standing, and rights to their territory by setting up these burial areas in uninhabited or sparsely settled areas.[113]

Barrows with a circle of standing stones located in this region during the 4th–5th centuries are different. The first inhumations took place in mounds of the western group, with graves located either alongside a barrow, or in the top material layer of the barrow, and during the 6th century barrows were no longer being piled up. There was a transition to interment in flat burial grounds, the spreading of which was linked to use of plastered pottery,[114] which also points to an influx of new residents from the territory of Lithuania, which led to a rise in the intensity of settlement in Southern Latvia during the Middle Iron Age. The tradition of burying the dead in barrows of the western group was gradually replaced by interment in flat burial grounds and this is linked to emergence of the Semigallian ethnic community.[115]

Interment in barrows of the eastern group diminished from the 5th century onwards. This process may be explained by an influx into this area of Eastern Balts coming from Eastern Latgale and from the border region with modern Belarus who kept to their former funeral traditions. The presence of Eastern Balts is signalled by the design of grave goods, as well as by the presence both of plain pottery and examples of pottery decorated with twisted cord motifs. At the end of the 6th century and in the early 7th century, transition occurred to burial in flat fields, which in Vidzeme and in the basin of the Aiviekste was accompanied by the appearance of plastered ceramic wares.[116] One view based on the dispersion of eastern group of barrows dating from the Early Iron Age, holds that Selonian culture was formed during the Middle Iron Age through interaction with the Eastern Balt and Semigallian cultures, located along the left bank of the Daugava River, where the dominant form was burial in barrows with a circle of standing stones cultures; the Latgalian culture emerged during the 6th–8th centuries along the right bank of the Daugava River and in the basin of the Aiviekste, where the influence of Eastern Balts was more pronounced. The process of how the Selonian and Latgalian cultures came into being explains the similarity of certain of their cultural elements with Semigallian culture, as well as the great similarity between Selonian and Latgalian cultures themselves.[117]

At the beginning of the 1st millennium, the region of South-Eastern Latvia, the eastern parts of modern-day Latgale and Upper Latvia, constituted an area of Scratched Ware Culture. The legacy of two different cultures notwithstanding, the result exhibited novel features, such that it earned a new designation, the Late Scratched Ware Culture. Features which linked it to the previous culture were covering

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[113] Vasks, A. Daži agrā un vidējā dzelzs laikmeta uzkalniņu kapulauku sociālās interpretācijas jautājumi, 45.–49. lpp.

[114] Vasks, A. Apmestās keramikas izplatība Latvijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija,* 18. laid., 1996, 150.–151. lpp.

[115] Таутавичус, А. З. Балтские племена на территории Литвы в I т. н. э. *Из древнейшей истории балтских народов по данным археологии и антропологии*. Рига: Зинатне, 1980, с. 87.

[116] *Sēļi un Sēlija = Selonians and Selonia*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2005, 33.–36. lpp.

[117] Vasks, A. The cultural and ethnic situation in Latvia during the Early and Middle Iron Age (1st–8th century AD). *Latvian Ethnic History. Humanities and Social Sciences. Latvia*, No. 3, 1997, p. 67; Ciglis, J. Sēļu etnoģenēze Austrumbaltijas etnokultūrvēsturisko procesu kontekstā. *Pētījumi sēļu senatnē: rakstu krājums*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2005, 37. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija – antropoloģija – etnogrāfija – folkloristika, Nr. 11.).

pottery with scratches, a lack of burials, a certain similarity in the choice of settled place and style of dwellings. Iron implements are present as grave goods in place of stone and bone implements. The area covered by the Late Scratched Ware culture included part of the north-western and the eastern part of modern Lithuania, and the western and central portions of Belarus.[118] Clay vessels with pronounced surface scratches are a characteristic feature of this culture. At the same time, vessels were in use with smooth and polished surfaces. Clay pots typically had a pronounced base. Preparation of raw material for this pottery followed two recipes: the addition of rock crystal grains as per the previous tradition, or that characteristic of the Iron Age — addition of organic materials to make the clay mixture leaner.[119]

Items of the Late Scratched Ware Culture have been found at settlements at Kerkūzi, Sloboda, Indrica, and Vilmaņi, and at the hill-forts at Dignāja, Stupeļi, and Madalāni.[120] The settlement at Kerkūzi, which was established during the 1st millennium BCE and inhabited until the 5th century, featured a stockade made of vertical tree trunks, the aboveground log buildings with an earthen floor were heated by hearths encircled by a bank of clay or by stone hearths. Evidence was obtained at this settlement about activities associated with agriculture, obtaining iron, working with non-ferrous metals, etc.[121]

Textile-impressed pottery has been found at settlements in South-Eastern Latvia, which has not been the case at sites in Eastern Lithuania, where scratched pottery was replaced by plastered pottery.[122] This indicates a split within the cultural region and different development directions.

Surface-scratched vessels have been found dating from the Early Neolithic period onwards; these are also found dating from the Bronze Age. Scholars have identified the area of Scratched Ware Culture during the Early Iron Age; hence the inhabitants of South-Eastern Latvia and eastern Lithuania during the Early Iron Age are considered to be the descendants of previous inhabitants of these areas. The ethnonyms of these tribes are not known. Scholars have no evidence to suggest that these ethnonyms refer to peoples named in descriptions of the region due to writers of antiquity. The changeable nature of cultural processes on this territory precludes associating these with later cultures mentioned in written records. The majority of scholars view the Scratched Ware Culture to be linked with the Eastern Balts, which reflects a close kinship with culture development processes in the forested zone of Eastern Europe.[123] The historical fate differed of those who transmitted the Late Scratched Ware Culture after disappearance of the Scratched Ware Culture in various territories. Scholars assume that the tribes with Late Scratched Ware Culture as a substrate took part in the emergence of Selonian, Latgalian, and Lithuanian culture; archaeological material only weakly attests to such a link. Lithuanian researchers have found that a massive influx of Western

[118] Егорейченко, А. А. *Культуры штрихованной керамики*. Минск: БГУ, 2006, с. 119.
[119] Vasks, A. Agrā dzelzs laikmeta apmetne Kerkūzos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 16. laid., 1994, 61.– 62. lpp.
[120] Vasks, A. Kultūretniskā situācija agrajā un vidējā dzelzs laikmetā Latvijas teritorijā (1.–8. gs.), 12. lpp.
[121] Vasks, A. Agrā dzelzs laikmeta apmetne Kerkūzos, 46.–64. lpp.
[122] Ibid., 62. lpp.
[123] Лухтанас, А. К вопросу об исчезновании культуры шрихованной керамики в бассейне Нерис (городища и селища в Кярнава). *Archaeologia Lituana*. 2. Vilnius: Vilnius universiteto leidykla, 2001, с. 27.

Balts is observed to have occurred in Eastern Lithuania during the 3rd century, which brought with it the barrow tradition and plastered pottery, and who assimilated the local Scratched Ware Culture inhabitants to form the barrow culture of Eastern Lithuania.[124] In turn, there was a noticeable decline in Scratched Ware pottery used at settlements in the territory of Belarus during the 2nd–3rd centuries, which was related to a changed climate and, also, to parts of this territory being assimilated by people from the Tushemla (Bantserov) Culture.[125] Smooth pottery dominates in south-east Latvia, with plastered pottery not making an appearance there. Textile-impressed pottery dating from the first centuries BCE is found mostly in Northern Latvia, and is evidence for relations with regions to the north.[126]

During the Early and the Middle Iron Ages, there existed a very different culture area in Northern Latvia. This form of burial was common in the territory of Western Kurzeme from the earliest period of the Iron Age and persisted through to the Late Iron Age. Based on artefacts found in graves these burials in Northern Vidzeme are dated with the middle or second half of the 1st century.[127] This type of burial is found in territories to the north of Latvia, i.e. in Estonia and Southern Finland.[128]

Usually there were one or two cairns, only occasionally more, at a particular site. There are approximately 80 known burial fields with this feature. Cairns were made starting with large stones laid in a rectangle whose major axis was oriented north–south. New enclosures were built in one or both directions, forming a structure stretched in the east–west direction, which *in situ* took the form of a slightly raised elongation. The number of enclosures differed, and cairns have been found with up to 15 enclosures. The size of such structures in the north–south directions varied from 9.6 m (at Kalnaslavēkas) to 18 m (at Branti Kaugars), and as much as 46 m in the east-west direction (at Kalnaslavēkas).[129]

The individuals found buried within the enclosures were either cremated (in Northern Vidzeme and in Northern Latgale), or were inhumations (mostly in Western Kurzeme). The remains of the deceased were covered with a layer of earth 0.4–0.6 m thick, or by a mound of small stones. The transition from burial in cists placed in mounds to burial in stone mounds took place at the beginning of the Early Iron Age (500–200 BCE) in Western and Northern Estonia. In Latvia this transition has been followed in North-Eastern Latgale (at Salenieki), where a stone rectangular enclosure was found at the base of a mound.

Stone cairns were extended up until the 4th–5th centuries; later the remains of the deceased were dug into existing cairns, or at the edge of cairns, covering them with

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[124] Лухтанас, А. К вопросу об исчезновании культуры шрихованной керамики в бассейне Нерис (городища и селища в Кярнава), с. 25–27.

[125] Егорейченко, А. А. *Культуры штрикованной керамики*, с. 111–112.

[126] Vasks, A. New Data on Early Iron Age Settlement in south-eastern Latvia. *Archaeologica Baltica*, Vol. 1, 1995, pp. 57–80.; Vasks, A. Agrā dzelzs laikmeta apmetne Kerkūzos, 46.–64. lpp.

[127] Ciglis, J. The origin of burial sites in eastern Latvia consisting of typical stone graves. *Archaeologica Baltica*, Vol. 19, 2014, p. 104.

[128] Lang, V. *The Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Estonia*. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2007, p. 170. (Estonian Archaeology, 3).

[129] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 106. lpp.

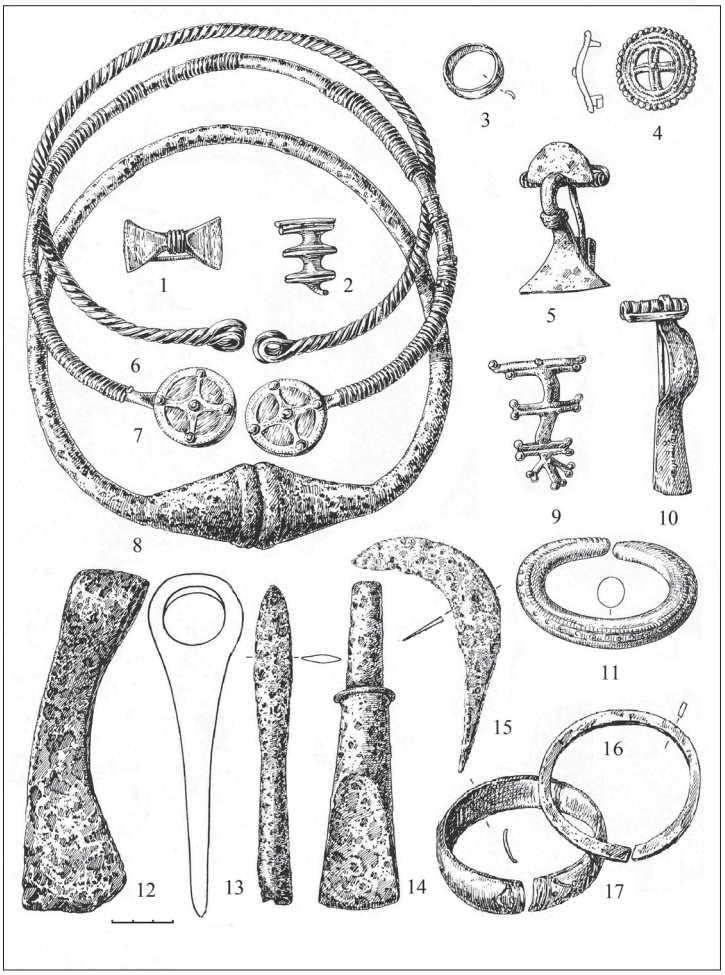


Fig. 5. Bronze ornaments, iron weapons and work tools from Early Iron Age graves in stone cairns: 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10 – fibulas (at Salenieki, at Slavēka), 3 – rings (at Slavēka), 6, 7, 8 – necklaces (at Saulieši, at Libirti, and at Salenieki), 12, 14 – axes (at Lazdiņi), 13 – a spearhead (at Salenieki), 15 – a bush-knife (at Kivti), 11, 16, 17 – bracelets (at Slavēka and at Lazdiņi) (*Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, Tables 33, 34)

stones.[130] Typical ornaments as grave goods included: fibulas, necklaces, in rare cases, pins (mostly crook-shaped pins) (see Fig. 5). Typical inventories of grave goods found at these sites comprised a string of glass beads, less often, of enamel beads, or amber beads, bronze beads on a wire, bracelets, and a unique form of tin-covered bronze ring. Work tools were also deposited in graves (narrow bladed, socketed, and palstave axes, bush-knives, and drawknives) and weapons (spearheads, rarely, single-edged swords), and drinking horns (see Fig. 5). The tradition of putting weapons and work tools alongside the remains disappeared in the 3rd century, and subsequently grave goods comprised mostly ornaments.[131] Unlike in Northern Kurzeme, stone cairns in Northern Vidzeme and Northern Latgale have been found to contain shards of

[130] Vasks, A. Agrais dzelzs laikmets, 225. lpp.
[131] Ibid., 226. lpp.

bucket-like vessels with smooth or polished or textile-imprinted surfaces. Similar pottery wares are found at settlement sites at this time (at Kivti, at Kalnapilis). Most wares at such sites are textile-impressed pottery (around 70%), which first appeared in the Eastern Baltic during the Late Neolithic Age; this form disappeared during the Bronze Age, to reappear during the Early Iron Age. This renaissance of pottery has only been observed in South Eastern Estonia, and in Northern Vidzeme and Latgale. Scholars associate this fact with a possible migration of the inhabitants from the upper reaches of the Daugava River and the Volga–Oka area.[132]

Individuals buried in stone cairns are considered to have been Baltic-Finns — ancestors of the later Estonians and Livs. If stone cairns in Northern Kurzeme may unequivocally be associated with the so-called Livs of Kurzeme, who have been equated in recent studies with the historically mentioned Vends, then in Vidzeme the distribution of stone cairns over the territory of Vidzeme does not coincide with the territory over which Liv culture emerged and developed during the 10th–11th centuries.[133]

The Baltic and the Balto-Finnic peoples during the Late Iron Age (800–1200 CE)

The Late Iron Age was important in terms of progressive changes in the economy, in social and political relations, in ethnic development and with increased communication between ethnic groups in the Baltic region. These developments were closely related with processes ongoing in Europe. At the beginning of this period (800–1050), progress in the Baltic region was given strong impetus by the Vikings — seafarers, astute traders and raiders, and participants in the creation of new states. During the second half of this period, developments were no less strongly impacted by formation of the Old Russian State. The trading interests of Russia and its political activities brought a new ideology to the region, i.e. Christianity in its Byzantine form, or Russian Orthodoxy, and imposed the status of fiefs on the Latgalians and Livs. The Late Iron Age ended with the start of German expansion into the Baltic.

The area inhabited by the Balts contracted substantially at the beginning of the Late Iron Age (see Fig. 6). At this time, the Eastern Slavs came to live in Eastern Baltic areas (located to the east of present-day Latvia), while isolated groups of Balts survived for some time in this territory. The Western Slavs were the southern neighbours of the Balts, while to the west were the North Germanic tribes. Balto-Finnic ethnic groups continued to live north of the area inhabited by the Balts; Slavs had also penetrated their territory. During the Late Iron Age, regrouping also took place of small ethnic groups living on the territory of modern Latvia; northward movement by Balt ethnic

[132] Vasks, A. Agrais dzelzs laikmets, 229. lpp.

[133] Ibid.; Spirģis, R. *Bruņrupuču saktas ar krūšu važiņrotām un lībiešu kultūras attīstība Daugavas lejtecē 10.–13. gadsimtā.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 375.–377. lpp.



Fig. 6. Inhabited territories of the Balts at the end of the late Iron Age: 1 — populated areas of the Baltic ethnic groups, 2 — territories of the eastern Balts, where influxed eastern Slavs. (Pēc: Apals J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki) 800.–1200. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture 9. g. t. pr. Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, Fig. 201)

groups was evidently an attempt to expand the area they inhabited to the detriment of areas inhabited by the Baltic-Finns (Livs and Estonians).

The *Couronians* lived in the western area of Latvia. The ethnonym *Couronians* is considered by a majority of linguists to mean "an infertile land", allowing a hydronym to be a possible alternative origin.[134]

The Couronians are the small ethnic group most often mentioned in written sources.[135] At one time they substantially expanded their inhabited territory northwards. During the time of the Crusader invasion, they were already living north-east of the upper reaches of the Dundaga and Abava rivers, as well as in land across the Venta River sparsely settled by the Semigallians.[136] Chronicles note that expulsion of the Vends involved armed clashes.[137] Weapons and harnesses placed in graves testify to the importance of military activities in the life of Couronians and show them to have been well-armed fighters.[138]

The Couronians were also fearless seafarers at a time when the Viking domination of the Baltic Sea had ended. They had developed excellent tactics for fighting at sea and on land, as well as small, mobile, well-armed and disciplined units which raided and wreaked havoc in Denmark and Sweden; they attacked the crusaders near Gotland, as well as tried to capture Riga.[139]

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[134] Bušs, O. Par etnonīmu *kurši* un *zemgaļi* cilmi. *Onomastica Lettica*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1990, 86.–91. lpp.

[135] Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Rietumeiropas hronikas par baltu apdzīvotām zemēm. 9.–13. gs. cent. hroniku fragmenti, tulkojumi un komentāri,* 11.–16. lpp.

[136] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki) 800.–1200. g., 299. lpp.; Asaris, J. Arheoloģiskie izrakumi Rīgā un Sāraju senkapos. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu un etnogrāfu 1988. un 1989. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1990, 30.–34. lpp.

[137] *Indriķa hronika*, X, 14.

[138] Asaris, J. Vīriešu apbedījumi Sāraju senkapos. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu 1992. un 1993. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 16.–17. lpp.

[139] Kursis, A. *Mīti un īstenība*, 38.–39. lpp.; *Indriķa hronika*, VII, 1, XIV, 1, 2, 3, 5.

The Couronians lived in fortified hill-forts and in settlements adjoining the walls. Written sources note that they also lived in villages.[140] Cult areas were located adjacent to settled places.[141] The hill-fort of the Couronians located at Apūle (in the territory of Lithuania) was one of the most powerful hill-forts and archaeologically the extensively investigated site. During the 11th century, the Couronians had a strong, well-defended position at Talsi hill-fort with earthworks, terraces and wooden defensive walls.[142]

A transition took place during the 10th century in the territory of the Couronians from inhumation to cremation of the deceased. They were cremated on a pyre which also included items to be buried. What remained from the pyre was buried in a hole in the ground of 2–3 m^2, including all the clay vessels used at the funeral feast and drinking horns used during the ritual.[143] Funeral rites were very important to the Couronians. After their assault on Riga, the Couronians "burned their dead and lamented over them for three days".[144]

One of the factors which encouraged this change in Couronian funeral traditions may have been their close links with Scandinavians.[145] The laws of Odin as given in the Ynglinga Saga decree that all dead men must be burned, that all their belongings be placed on the pyre, and that the ashes be cast into the sea or buried.[146] This change in funeral traditions might also have been made by the Couronian warriors as an affirmation of a new social identity, similar to that of the Old Prussians. It is significant that cremation burials appeared already at the end of the 8th century in the southern part of Couronian territory.[147]

Raiding and fighting allowed the Couronians to acquire booty, fame, and glory, which are reflected in grave goods. In parallel with traditions inherited from the previous period, it is thought the Couronians were influenced by the Scandinavians, in placing in graves items which have been deliberately damaged; this tradition has, in fact, much in common with ancient Indo-European customs.[148]

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[140] Kursis, A. *Mīti un īstenība*, 38.–39. lpp.

[141] Urtāns, J. *Latvijas senās svētnīcas*. Rīga: Latvijas enciklopēdija, 1993, 17.–19. lpp.

[142] Karnups, Ā. Izrakumi Talsu pilskalnā 1936. g. *Senatne un Māksla*, 4, 1936, 67.–86. lpp.; Karnups, Ā. Izrakumi Talsu pilskalnā 1937. g. *Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 2, 1938, 78.–84. lpp.

[143] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki) 800.–1200. g., 299. lpp.; Bebre, V. Dzeramie ragi kuršu apbedījumos. *Ventspils muzeja raksti*. 2. sēj. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2002, 96., 114. lpp.; Šturms, E. Chroniku un senrakstu ziņas par baltu tautu bēru paražām 13. un 14. gs. *Pagātne un tagadne*. Rīga: Vēstures skolotāju biedrība, 1936, 84.–114. lpp.

[144] *Indriķa hronika*, XIV, 5.

[145] Riekstiņš, H. *Latviešu cilšu tipi un apbedīšanas parašas dzelzs laikmetā*. Rīga: L.Ū. Studentu padomes grāmatnīcas izdevums, 1935, 57. lpp.

[146] Šturms, E. Vilkumuižas ezera atradumi. *Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 2, 1936, 84. lpp.; Zemītis G. Kuršu reliģiskie priekšstati pēc rakstītajiem avotiem un arheoloģiskajām liecībām (10.–15. g.s.). *Ventspils muzeja raksti*. 2. sēj. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2002, 92.–93. lpp.

[147] Žulkus, V. *Kuršiai Baltijos jūros erdvėje*. Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2004, p. 254.

[148] Zemītis, G. Kuršu reliģiskie priekšstati pēc rakstītajiem avotiem un arheoloģiskajām liecībām (10.–15. gs.), 84.–85., 92.–93. lpp.; Zemītis, G. Apbedījumi ar speciāli bojātu inventāru. Zemītis, G. *Ornaments un simbols Latvijas aizvēsturē*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 81.–83. lpp.

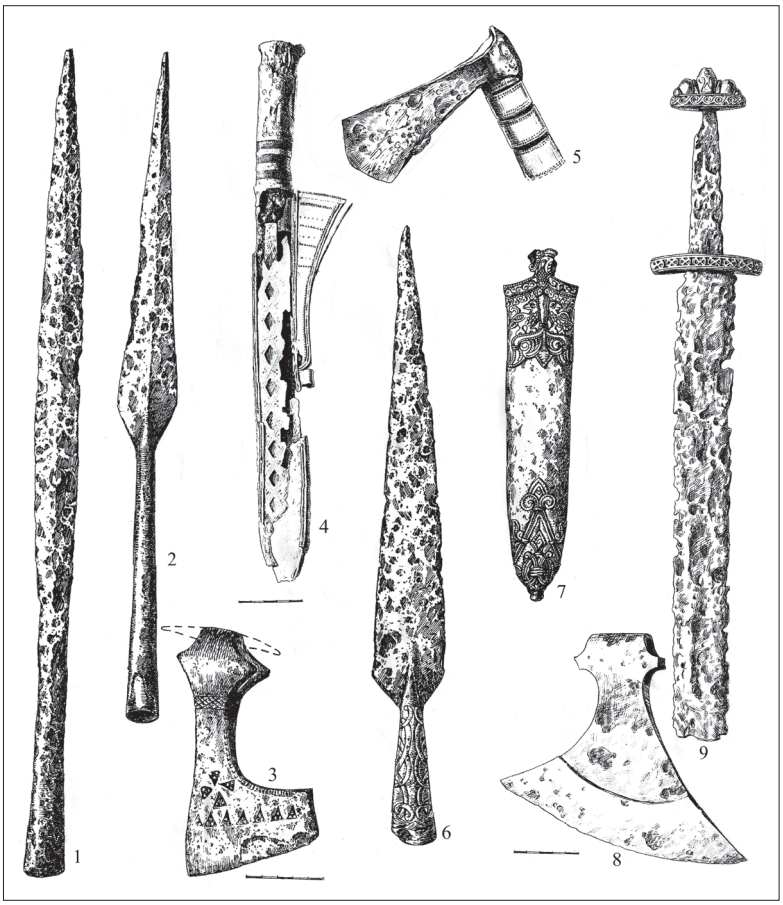


Fig. 7. Late Iron Age weapons of the Semigallians, Latgalians, Couronians and Livs: 1, 2, 6 – spearheads (at Ciemalde, Rūsīši–Debeši, Salaspils Jaunzemji), 3 – a broad-blade axe (in Auce), 4 – a single-edged sword in a sheath (at Pļaviņu Radzes), 5 – a narrow-blade axe with bindings on the stock (at Pildas Nukši), 7 – the end-binding of a sword sheath (at Turaidas Pūteļi), 8 – a battle axe (at Lake Vilkumuižas), 9 – a double-edged sword (at Silmalciems). (*Latvijas PSR arheoloģija.* Rīga, 1974, Tables 47, 51, 54, 60)

Couronian culture featured battle axes, which were in use from the 11th century onwards, also spears and double-blade swords[149] (see Fig. 7: 8). The ancient Couronian burial field (at Sāraji, at Durbes Dīri, at Pasilciems) has produced unique finds such as an armoured helmet and evidence for the use of armour made of metal plates. Folded scales in a bronze box were also found at this site.[150]

Couronians wore necklaces, silver plated pins with a cruciform head, ribbon-like bracelets, shield-shaped rings, horseshoe fibulas and crossbow fibulas. The most important evidence about clothing was found in a deposit at Tīra Marsh (from the 9th century).[151]

[149] Atgāzis, M. Āvas cirvji Latvijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 19. laid., 1997, 1. att., 55., 62. lpp.; *Indriķa hronika*, XV, 3; Atgāzis, M. Dzelzs iedzītņa šķēpu gali ar atkarpēm Latvijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 11. laid., 1974, 163. lpp.

[150] Berga, T. Saliekamie svariņi Latvijā (10.–13.g.s.) *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 18. laid., 1996, 55. lpp.

[151] Žeiere, I. Par Tīras purva depozīta tekstilmateriāliem. *Pētījumi kuršu senatnē: rakstu krājums*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2008, 130. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija, Nr. 14).

In the Late Iron Age, the Semigallians lived along the banks of the Lielupe River and its tributaries and partly in the basin of the middle course of the Venta River. The Semigallian culture area also extended into the northern part of modern Lithuania.[152] In Vidzeme the Semigallians had been assimilated by the Latgalians and Livs; however, the Semigallian language was still spoken there at the beginning of the 15th century,[153] and traces of this language are evident in the Latvian language in the 20th century.[154]

Scholars consider that the ethnonym *Semigallians* (*zemgaļi* in Latvian) derives from the root *ziem-/žiem*, meaning *winter* or *north*. Alternatively it might originate from the Lithuanian *žeme*, or the Latvian term *zeme*, both meaning *land*.[155]

In the Late Iron Age, the Semigallians continued to bury their dead in flat graves, with the graves arranged in rows. At the beginning of this period, the orientation of burials resembled those followed by the Latgalians, whereas from the 11th century onwards, the orientation of bodies of men was N–S with that of women diametrically the opposite. Goods in the graves of men include spears (see Fig. 7: 1, 2), knives, axes, scythes, chisels, bridle bits, spurs, ornaments and belts decorated with bronze fittings (see Fig. 8), and, occasionally, necklaces.[156]

A spear (occasionally even 3–5 spears) was always placed in Semigallian graves beside the deceased with the tip of the spear by his head.[157] Broad single-edged swords are found in graves from the 9th–10th centuries, while later narrow single-edged swords are found instead. Items such as double-bladed swords and drinking horns, as well as folded scales were found in the graves of well-off members of society.[158]

The goods found in the graves of women typically included a hoe placed at the feet, a sickle, and instead of a belt an awl and a knife. The set of ornaments for a Semigallian woman included a bronze crown and necklaces.[159] Typical grave goods during the second half of the period also included various decorative pins joined together by long fine chains.[160] They also wore crossbow fibulas, and flat fibulas, whose form was similar to a pin with a cruciform head, which showed these fibulas to be ornaments made by Semigallians themselves. Horseshoe fibulas constituted the most varied category of Semigallian fibulas during the Late Iron Age, akin to what is the case for the

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[152] Vaškevičiūtė, I. *Žiemgaliai V–XII amžiuje*. Vilnius: VPU leidykla, 2004, pav. 29; *Zemgaļi senatnē = Žiemgaliai senovėje*, pp. 26–28.

[153] Spekke, A. *Latvieši un Livonija 16. gs.*, 96. lpp.

[154] Vasks, A., Vaska, B., Grāvere, R. *Latvijas aizvēsture. 8500. g. pr. Kr. – 1200. g. pēc Kr*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 1997, 187. lpp.

[155] Bušs, O. Par etnonīmu *kurši* un *zemgaļi* cilmi, 86.–91. lpp.

[156] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija,* 211.– 217. lpp.

[157] Atgāzis, M. Dreņģeru-Čunkānu 241. kaps un šķēpu līdzdošanas tradīcija 8.–9. gs. zemgaļu apbedījumos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 17. laid., 1994, 29., 34.–38. lpp., 2., 3., 8. att.

[158] Jērums, N. Vienasmens zobeni zemgaļu apdzīvotajā teritorijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 25. laid., 2011, 45., 47. lpp.; Bebre, V. Ornamentēto dzeramo ragu atradumi Latvijā 8.–12. gs. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 18. laid., 1996, 45., 47. lpp.

[159] Zariņa, A. *Apģērbs Latvijā 7.–17. gs.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1999, 60. lpp.; *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 213.–214. lpp., 56. tab.: 2, 3, 4.

[160] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 214. lpp., 57. tab.: 1–10.

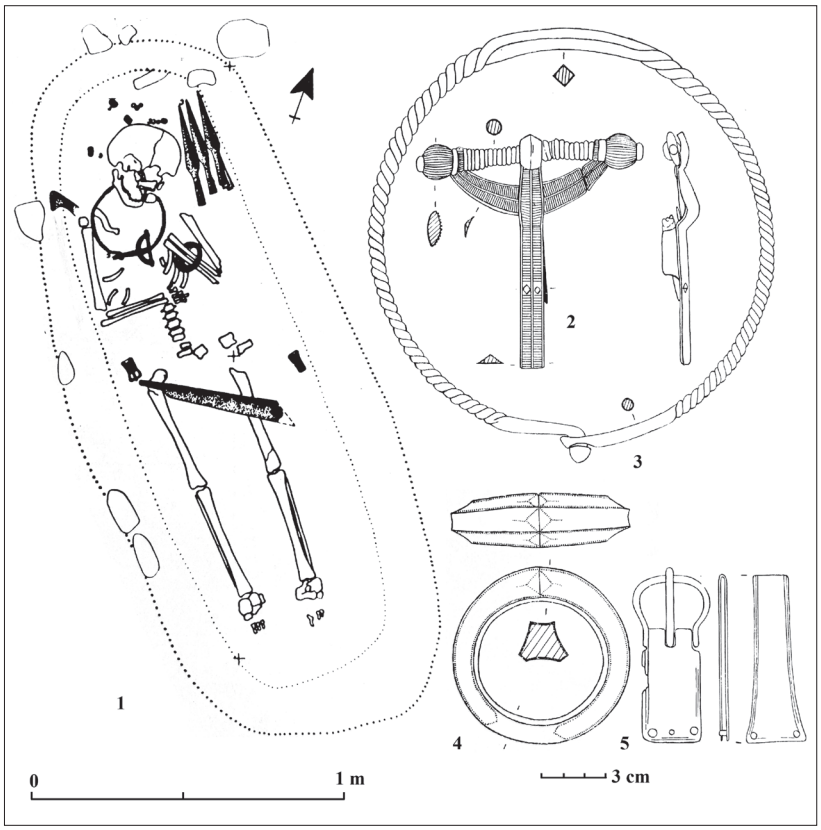


Fig. 8. The layout of a Semigallian man's grave and ornaments. Grave 241 at Čunkāni-Dreņģeri. 1– the layout of the grave, 2 – a bronze crossbow fibula, 3 – a bronze necklace, 4 – a bronze warrior's bracelet, 5 – a bronze belt buckle and binding (Atgāzis, M. Dreņģeru-Čunkānu 241. kaps un šķēpu līdzdošanas tradīcija 8.–9. gs. zemgaļu apbedījumos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija.* 17. laid., 1994, Figs. 2, 4)

other Balt peoples.[161] Bracelets and rings were part of the range of Semigallian ornaments.[162] Very little evidence has survived about Semigallian clothing.[163]

Semigallians largely lived in settlements, a choice dictated by geographical circumstances.[164] There were a number of hill-forts with large adjoining settlements (up to 13 ha in extent). The hill-fort layout comprised a semi-circular defensive system (a wall with horizontal logs, with towers at intervals) with a single high rampart, terraces on the slopes, and the fore-part of the castle close by. Their strongest hill-forts were located at Tērvete and Mežotne.

Historically there was a link with the lower reaches of the Daugava River (there is evidence for Semigallian culture at Daugmale until the 11th century) which facilitated their active engagement in regional trade around the Baltic Sea. This explains mention of the Semigallians in contemporary written records. Scandinavian items found in Semigallian lands are evidence for this as are the Semigallian ornaments found in

[161] Brīvkalne, E. Tērvetes saktas. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 11. laid., 1974, 131.–136. lpp.
[162] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 214. lpp., 57. tab.: 1–10.
[163] *Zemgaļi senatnē = Žiemgaliai senovėje*, 50.–51. lpp.
[164] Ibid., 38. lpp.

Gotland, etc.[165] A considerable number of folded scales, counter-weights, as well as silver coins, silver sticks and substantial collections of silver items, have been found at Semigallian sites (at Salgales Rijnieki, etc.).[166]

The *Selonians*, whose ethnonym is based, according to linguists, on the hydronyms *Sel-iupis, Sel-iupys*, which in turn follows from a term signifying *to flow*, lived east of the Semigallians.[167] Written records indicate Selonians (*Selones, Selen*) to have lived in the vicinity of Koknese, in the neighbourhood of Riga, as well as along the west bank of the Daugava River, where during the Late Iron Age they inhabited territories from the forests of Jaunjelgava and Taurkalne as far as the Apašča and Rovēja rivers.[168] Part of the land inhabited by the Selonians was located in modern North-Western Lithuania.[169]

Barrows are a feature unique to Selonian burials. The largest Selonian barrow burial field is located at Sēlpils Lejasdopeles (63 barrows).[170] The dead were buried in flat graves as well as in barrows. Aside from the ritual of creating barrows there are no substantial differences in both funeral traditions.

Evidence of Selonian culture and funeral traditions shows great similarity with Latgalian equivalents. Cultural similarity is explained by the important role that Selonian culture exerted on the formation of Latgalian culture. In older studies the two cultures were considered as a single culture, that of the Latgalians.[171] Mention of Selonians in 13th century written records shows that they had largely retained their distinct cultural identity, which can also be seen, albeit weakly, in archaeological materials.[172] Linguistic nuances are still encountered today over the former area of Selonian culture, the most evident being rising speech intonation.[173]

A tradition existed among the Selonians of placing a set of tools at the feet of buried women[174] (see Fig. 9: 1). It is possible that there was a certain role of burying horses as part of Selonian funeral rituals.[175] Clothes ornaments are known to contain decorative elements from those found among Livs, as well as elsewhere in Europe and in Scandinavia.[176]

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[165] Thunmark-Nylen, L. Gotland — neighbour between the West and the East. *Die Kontakte zwischen Ostbaltikum und Skandinavien im frühen Mittelalter*. Stockholm: Centre for Baltic Studies, 1992, Fig. 1, pp. 157–158.

[166] Berga, T. Saliekamie svariņi Latvijā (10.–13. gs.), 57.–58. lpp.; Urtāns, V. *Senākie depozīti Latvijā (līdz 1200. g.)*. Rīga: Zinātne, 216. lpp.

[167] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. 1. daļa, 78. lpp.

[168] *Indriķa hronika*, XI, 6, 9; XII, 1; XVII, 5; XXIX, 5; *Atskaņu hronika*, 144., 337., 341., 646., 6677. rinda.

[169] *Sēļi un Sēlija = Selonians and Selonia*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2005, 50. lpp.

[170] Šnore, E. Lejasdopeļu kapulauks senajā Sēlijā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 19. laid., 1997, 64.–65. lpp.

[171] Zemītis, G. Sēļu aizvēsture arheoloģisko pētījumu gaismā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2001, 5.–19. lpp.

[172] Vilcāne, A. Latgaļu un sēļu kultūru mijiedarbība vēlajā dzelzs laikmetā (9.–12. gs.). *Pētījumi sēļu senatnē: rakstu krājums*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2006, 134. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 11).; *Sēļi un Sēlija = Selonians and Selonia*, 13.–14. lpp.

[173] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. 2. daļa. Daugavpils: Saule, 1999, 27.–28. lpp.; see also Bibliography: *Sēļi un Sēlija = Selonians and Selonia*, 30. lpp.

[174] Vilcāne, A. Latgaļu un sēļu kultūru mijiedarbība vēlajā dzelzs laikmetā (9.–12. gs.), 130. lpp., 4. att.

[175] Šnore, E. Beteļu kapulauks Augšzemē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 15. laid., 1987, 78. lpp.

[176] Šnore, E. Lejasdopeļu kapulauks senajā Sēlijā, 76.–77. lpp.; Zariņa, A. Apģērba fragmenti Lejasdopeļu kapulaukā. Pētījumi sēļu senatnē. Rakstu krājums. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2006, 141. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 11).

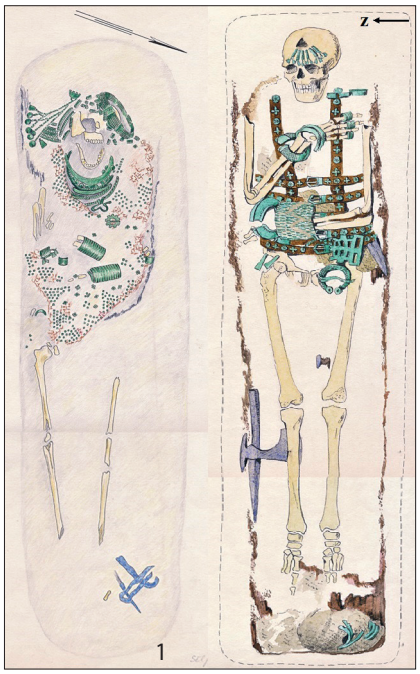


Fig. 9. Layout of a woman's grave, at Barrow 2, grave 17 (12th century), and the grave of a man, at Barrow 5, Grave 1 (11th century), at Lejasdopeles. Drawing by E. Krastenberga (UL ILH Repository of Archaeological Material)

Some graves contain luxurious items which characterise Selonian society and the social environment at the end of the period of prehistory.[177] Graves have yielded a splendid 11th century shoulder strap and belt set[178] (see Fig. 9: 2) and, additionally, unique black-and-white and red-white paintings on wood (decorated shields or cists).[179]

Selonians created fortified settlements on isolated hills.[180] The defensive system of these hill-forts was unique in that it included terraces surrounded by fences. There were also settlements adjoining most Selonian hill-forts.[181] As was the case of other peoples with a barrow culture, Selonians also lived in rural settlements. The unique aspect of Selonian culture was the presence of cult places at their settlements.[182]

One of the largest Selonian hill-forts was located at Stupeļi, with an adjacent ancient town, where crafts played an important role. It is possible that the hill-fort at Strupeļi, which was sited in a densely populated region, close to roads, was the principal centre of the Selonians.[183] At the start of this period, the hill-fort at Dignāja was a densely inhabited agrarian and crafts centre, but it later faded in importance with the rise of Jersika.[184] The Daugava River as a transport route promoted the rise of Sēlpils. Iron ore was found in the area and was also worked into metal form.[185]

According to specialists, the *Latgalian* ethnonym is a hydronym based on the Proto-Baltic root, **lot*-, **let*-.[186] In the Late Iron Age, the Latgalians expanded their territory at the expense of the Baltic-Finns. The appearance in Vidzeme of lake dwellings during the 8th–10th centuries is associated with an influx of

[177] Šnore, E. Beteļu kapulauks Augšzemē, 76. lpp.
[178] Šnore, E. Lejasdopeļu kapulauks senajā Sēlijā, 77. lpp.
[179] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 78. tab.
[180] Urtāns, J. *Augšzenes pilskalni*. Rīga: Nordik, 2006, 7. tab.
[181] Stubavs, Ā. Arheoloģiskie pētījumi Ritē (1976.–1979. g.). *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu un etnogrāfu 1979. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1980, 93., 95. lpp.; Šnore, E., Zariņa, A. *Senā Sēlpils*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1980, p 123.–148. lpp.
[182] Stubavs, Ā. Stupeļu arheoloģiskās ekspedīcijas darbs 1978. gadā. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesiju materiāli par arheologu un etnogrāfu 1978. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1979, 67.–68. lpp.; Stubavs, Ā. Arheoloģiskie pētījumi Ritē (1976.–1979. g.), 95. lpp..
[183] Simniškyte, A. Sėlos kraštas VI/VII–XIII/XIV amžiais: teritorinė struktūra ir hierarchija. *Lietuvos Archeologia*, 27. Vilnius: Diemedžio Leidykla, 2005, p. 39, pav. 3.
[184] Vasks, A. Dignājas pilskalna apmetne 1989. un 1990. gada izrakumu gaismā. *Pētījumi sēļu senatnē: rakstu krājums*, 116. lpp.
[185] Šnore, E., Zariņa, A. *Senā Sēlpils*, 171. lpp.
[186] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. I. daļa, 78.–79. lpp.

Latgalians into mid-Vidzeme.[187] A number of Latgalian graveyards were established alongside Baltic-Finn graveyards and settlements there.[188] Latgalian efforts to establish their presence were unsuccessful along the lower reaches of the Daugava River.[189] At the end of this period the territory of the Latgalians was the largest in comparison with those of the other small ethnic peoples of Latvia. Their territory encompassed the eastern part of Vidzeme, Latgale, and some areas along the eastern border of Latvia on the territory of neighbouring countries.

Flat burial fields characterised the Latgalians. The bodies of the dead were consistently oriented with the head of men towards the east, and women towards the west. The remains were buried in graves on a layer of bark, wooden planks, in a log-canoe, and at the end of the period in wooden cists. Fire rituals were a part of funerals. In addition to inhumations, there was the sporadic occurrence of cremation graves. The dead were buried in their festive clothes together with grave goods, a set of ornaments, and weapons for men. A few cases have been discovered of women's ornaments placed at the foot of a man.[190]

The complex cultural development process on-going in territories inhabited by Latgalians is reflected in the appearance of barrow burial fields in the eastern region of their territory at the end of the 10th century. Approximately 50 barrow burial fields have been identified with a total of some 4000 mounds. A mound may contain one, occasionally two burials. In terms of funeral traditions and type of grave goods these mounds are similar to flat graves, which may point to the presence of Eastern Balts displaced westwards by Slav expansion, as well as indicate the presence of Scandinavians who travelled along the Velikaya River as part of the route between Ladoga–Pskov and Polotsk.[191]

Latgalian women wore bronze wreaths on their heads. In addition to necklaces (the favourite versions had flattened ends), women wore arched chain holders with chains, cowrie shell and glass bead ornaments. Horseshoe fibulas were used to clasp together items of clothing. The most popular Latgallian women's ornaments were spiral-form bracelets, hollow and cuff-shaped bracelets, as well as bracelets with animal figurines (starting with the 11th century). The most luxurious element of Latgalian women's garb (see Fig. 10) was a deep blue shawl adorned with bronze ringlets.[192]

During the Late Iron Age, Latgalian men wore shirts, coats fastened with a belt, trousers and a hat (see Fig. 11). A man's set of clothes also included a cape, foot-cloths, hand-cloths or hand-bindings, and leather footwear. The most splendid element in a

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[187] Apals, J. Klāstu mītnes Latvijas PSR teritorijā. *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 5, 1965, 49., 56. lpp.

[188] Vilka, A. Arheoloģiskie pētījumi Skripstu senkapos. *Cēsu novada vēsture: Zinātniskas publikācijas, Cēsu muzeja materiāli*. Cēsis: Cēsu muzeja apvienība, 1995, lpp.; Ciglis, J. Baltijas somu un baltu attiecības Austrumlatvijā 1. gadu tūkstotī. *Pa somugru pēdām Baltijas jūras krastā. Starptautiskās zinātniskās konferences materiāli, 2009. gada 23. aprīlis, Turaida*. Rīga: Turaidas muzejrezervāts, 2009, 35. lpp.

[189] Stubavs, Ā. *Ķentes pilskalns un apmetne*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1976, 50. lpp.

[190] Vilcāne, A. Latgaļu un sēļu kultūru mijiedarbība vēlajā dzelzs laikmetā (9.–12. gs.), 129. lpp., 5. att.

[191] Radiņš, A. *10.–13. gs. senkapi latgaļu apdzīvotajā teritorijā un Austrumlatvijas etniskās, sociālās un politiskās vēstures jautājumi*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 1999, 35.–52. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija, Nr. 5).

[192] Zariņa, A. *Apģērbs Latvijā 7.–17. gs.*, 54. lpp., 23. att.



Fig. 10. Latgalian woman's clothes and ornaments from the 11th century. Kivti cemetery, Grave 157. As reconstructed by A. Zariņa, drawing by E. Krastenberga (Šnore, E. *Kivtu kapulauks.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1987, Fig. 6)



Fig. 11. Latgalian man's clothes from the 10th century. Kivti cemetery, Grave 99. As reconstructed by A. Zariņa, drawing by E. Krastenberga (Šnore, E. *Kivtu kapulauks.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1987, Fig. 6).

Latgalian man's attire was a coat which had ringlets woven into it, decorated with a cross-bow-fibula, owl fibula or a horseshoe fibula used to clasp the coat together. The typical collection of Latgalian men's bracelets consisted of a warrior's bracelet, a massive bracelet and a bracelet with animal head decorations. Spiral rings and rings with a flattened middle were worn on fingers.[193]

Men were buried with an iron axe placed at their feet. Latgalians occasionally wound a bronze ribbon on an axe handle (see Fig. 7: 5). Until the 10th century, swords with a wide single-edged blade were used extensively, but these were replaced during the 11th century by narrow swords with a single-edged blade. From the early 10th century onwards, a double-edged sword in a decorated sheath was placed in some graves, with the sword always laid by the right side of the deceased. Latgalians also used spears which were laid beside the body with the tip by the feet. A local custom in the Dubna basin was to include in grave goods the iron parts of a bridle, iron bells and whips, which, possibly, constituted symbolic burial of a horse, and shows the rise in importance of mounted warriors in Latgallian military units.[194]

During the Late Iron Age, Latgalians lived in lake dwellings, hill-forts and other settlements. Chroniclers noted in their accounts the individualism of Latgalians and their tendency to live in single homesteads.[195]

The lake dwelling complex at Āraiši contains well-preserved examples of construction techniques of the times, building layout and interior planning. This site was abandoned during the 10th century, possibly during the formation of a larger castle region.[196]

Latgalians mostly selected natural defensible locations with steep slopes to build their wooden castles. The hill-forts at Koknese, Oliņkalns, Asote, and Jersika are the most studied sites. The defences of hill-forts included walls made of horizontal logs or

[193] Zariņa, A. *Apģērbs Latvijā 7.–17. gs.*, 72.–87. lpp.

[194] Vilcane, A. Findings of harness items and cult of the horse in Latgallian and Selonian territories. *Archaeologia Baltica, 11: The Horse and Man in European antiquity (worldview, burial rites, and military and everyday life).* Klaipeda: Klaipeda University Press, 2009, pp. 257–258.

[195] *Atskaņu hronika*, 344.–345. rinda.

[196] Apals, J., Apala, Z. *Āraiši senlaikos*. Rīga: Āraišu ezerpils fonds, 2005, 27. lpp.

by defences consisting of wooden chambers by earth walls. Jersika was one of the strongest Latgalian centres by the Daugava River. The adjoining ancient town occupied an area of 10–12 ha.[197]

According to written sources dating from the 13th century, the *Livs* lived along the lower reaches of the Daugava and Gauja rivers, Metsepole and Idumeja.[198] Archaeological evidence shows that the Liv culture appeared along the lower reaches of the Daugava River in the 2nd half of the 10th century, and a century later it can be discerned in the area of the lower reaches of the Gauja River. The Livs are characterised by flat and barrow burial fields where both inhumation and cremation burials were practiced. Approximately 1400 graves have been investigated in flat and barrow burial fields located along the lower reaches of the Daugava River. Some 16 burial fields with approximately 800 mounds containing individual burials have been found on the territory of the Gauja Livs.[199]

The Livs buried their dead with the head oriented in the north-western direction, while from the 12th century onwards — mostly northwards. Evidence for funeral rites is to be found in the carbonised areas found beside graves, from damaged goods, as well as pieces of plaster, eggs, ferns, and cereal grains placed in graves; a clay vessel with food was placed by a grave (see Fig. 12).[200] Dogs and horses had an important place in the mythological ideas and rituals of the Livs.[201] Stone cairns and enclosures feature in the Daugava Liv inhumation graves much the same as in Kurzeme.[202]



Fig. 12. Layout of a woman's grave (No. 191) at Laukskola. Drawing by E. Krastenberga (UL ILH Repository of Archaeological Materials)

The most striking jewellery worn by Liv women was a chain ornament with tortoise fibulas. Decorative pins, strings of glass beads and cowrie shells, hollow bracelets made of bronze or silver, and spiral rings (see Fig. 13) were also worn.

Silver encrusted axes and spearheads have been discovered in the graves of men from the top layer of Liv society (see Fig. 7: 6), as well as swords in sheaths clad with bronze (see Fig. 7: 7), drinking horns, folded scales, and a leather belt clad with bronze. Horseshoe fibulas were used to pin men's apparel together; however, they did not favour wearing either bracelets or rings.

The Livs used decorative strips sewn onto their apparel as ornamentation, with clusters of spirals at the end of these strips; these decorations, possibly, had ritual meaning. Unlike the other Baltic peoples, Livs decorated almost every part of their

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[197] Vilcāne, A. *Senā Jersika.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004.

[198] *Indriķa hronika*, see the entry, "Līvi" 438. lpp.; *Lībieši senatnē = The Livs in Antiquity*. Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures muzejs, 2001, 5. lpp.

[199] *Lībieši senatnē = The Livs in Antiquity*, 16.–20. lpp.

[200] Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2006, 18.–27. lpp.

[201] Šnore, E. Daugavas lībieši Doles salā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 18. laid., 1996, 127. lpp.; Brūzis, R., Spirģis, R. The Ogresgala Čabas cemetery and horse sacrifice. *Archaeologia Baltica*, Nr. 11, Klaipeda: Klaipeda University Press, 2009, pp. 289–293.

[202] Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*, 27. lpp.



Fig. 13. Clothing and ornaments of a Liv woman. Grave 480 at Laukskola. First half of the 12th century. As reconstructed by A. Zariņa, drawing by E. Krastenberga (UL ILH Repository of Archaeological Materials)

apparel. At the end of this period, men's clothing adopted certain European features (buttons for coats, brocade ribbons).[203]

There is no consensus opinion among scholars concerning the origin of the Livs.[204] They cannot be viewed as the direct descendants of those who bore the Balto-Finnic culture of stone cairns, as the Livs appeared outside the area encompassed by this culture. Initially, their culture had many elements in common with Balt cultures, and it was only during the second half of the 11th century that Liv culture began to be dominated by its unique features, many of which evidently were borrowed from other cultures. Materials recovered from the graveyard at the top end of Doles Island point to an ethnically mixed environment.[205]

Scholars have sought to explain the origin of Liv culture through association with districts in Estonia, from Saaremaa, and elsewhere.[206] The archaeologists Elvīra Šnore and Anna Zariņa have identified three fundamental aspects in regard to materials recovered from graveyards in the lower reaches of the Daugava River, namely those relating to the Balts, the Livs of Kurzeme, and Scandinavians; they also believe that kinship was established with distant Finnish tribes.[207] Ēvalds Mugurēvičs associates the beginning of the emergence of Liv culture with migration of Scandinavians and Baltic Finns living in Kurzeme to the lower reaches of the Daugava River, driven by the Couronian expansion of their territory in Kurzeme as well as economic considerations.[208] Tangible evidence for the idea of a migration is the fact that a collection of ornaments specific to the Livs emerged at the end of the 9th century in the lower course of the Venta and Abava rivers, which was a cross roads for cultural influences by the Couronians, Semigallians, the Livs of Northern Kurzeme, and Scandinavians.[209] This also helps explain the multitude of cultures seen in the lower reaches of the Daugava River.

The Livs lived in hill-forts and in villages. The Daugava Livs lived mostly along the right bank of the Daugava River over an area which stretched from Aizkraukle to the

[203] Zariņa, A. *Lībiešu apģērbs 10.–13. gs.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1988, 86.–87. lpp.

[204] Spirģis, R. *Bruņrupuču saktas ar krūšu važiņrotām un lībiešu kultūras attīstība Daugavas lejtecē 10.–13. gadsimtā.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 375.–377. lpp.

[205] Ibid., 374. lpp.

[206] Tõnisson, E. *Die Gauja-Liven und ihre materielle Kultur (11. Jh.–Anfang 13. Jhs.)*. Tallinn, 1974, S. 15–20; Šturms, E. Zur Vorgeschichte der Liven. *Eurasia Septentrionalis Antiqua*, X. Helsinki: K. F. Puromiehen Kirjapaino O.Y., 1936, S. 47–51.

[207] Šnore, E. Daugavas lībieši Doles salā, 127. lpp.; Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*, 318.–319. lpp.

[208] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Lībiešu izcelsmes un kultūras veidošanās problēmas. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 2006, 30.–31. lpp.

[209] Spirģis, R. *Bruņrupuču saktas ar krūšu važiņrotām un lībiešu kultūras attīstība Daugavas lejtecē 10.–13. gadsimtā*, 379. lpp.

Gulf of Riga. Written records from the 13th century identify the Livs as living in Riga, Salaspils, Ikšķile, Lielvārde, and Aizkraukle, as well as in the sparsely populated basin of the Ogre and Jugla rivers.[210] The strongest hill-forts along the Daugava River were located at Daugmale, Lielvārde, and Aizkraukle. The hill-fort at Daugmale was built on the left bank of the Daugava River. The site comprised ramparts with a defensive wall of horizontal logs and a ditch.[211] Evidence of Liv culture beginning to dominate at Daugmale dates from the 11th century; it is counted as an example of a city-like settlement, i.e. the Northern European settlements known as vici.[212] The residents of such settlements were typically ethnically mixed and they played a significant role in international trade. The largest collection of items associated with trade has been unearthed at Daugmale (coins, counterweights, and folded scales)[213] as well as imported or copied items, such as local copies of Western European coins.[214]

The commercial activities at Daugmale were facilitated by the formation of a densely populated area along the opposite bank of the Daugava River, where groups of villages with differing densities of habitants and importance were located. The largest of these was at Laukskola, with two villages (10 ha) and a graveyard.[215] Crafts are thought to have been the dominant activity in some of these villages (production of iron, working with non-ferrous metals and bone) and commerce.[216] The Livs practiced the custom of placing offerings beneath a hearth, or under the foundations of the walls of a building.

Ikšķile was not one of the largest villages of this area, but at the end of the 12th century it became a centre for Western Christian missionaries and the Bishop's seat and the site of his palace, with the first church built on the territory of Latvia with stone walls.[217] At the end of the 12th century, the Germans built a castle with stone walls above the village of Holme, mentioned in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*.[218] The

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[210] *Indriķa hronika*, IX, 1, 3; X, 13, 14; XVI, 13 (lielvārdieši); X, 14 (aizkraukliešu); I, 7, 11; II, 7; X, 7, 9, 12; XIV, 5; XVI, 3 (salieši); VII, 1; VIII, 2; X, 3, 6, 8 etc. (rīdzinieki); Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus). *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūts, 1999, 71. lpp.

[211] Zemītis, G. Senā Daugmale (2. g. t. p. m. ē. – m. ē. 12. gs.). *Daugavas raksti: No Aizkraukles līdz Rīgai*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1991, 130.–136. lpp.

[212] Zemītis, G. Daugmale (10.–12. gs.) – senākā pilsētveida apmetne Daugavas lejtecē un Rīgas priekštece. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 7, 1993, 39.–43. lpp.

[213] Berga, T. Daugmales pilskalna monētas (8.–12. gs.). *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 17. laid., 1994, 41.–46. lpp.

[214] Radiņš, A. Daugavas ceļš un Daugmale. *Cauri gadsimtiem: rakstu krājums, veltīts Valdemāram Ģinteram (1899–1979)*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2000, 110. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija un antropoloģija, Nr. 7).; Berga, T. 11. gs. Rietumeiropas monētu atdarinājumi Latvijā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 1993, 22.–28. lpp.

[215] Zariņa, A. Krāsnis Salaspils Laukskolas lībiešu 10.–13. gs. ciemu vietās. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 12. laid., 1978, 76., 87. lpp.; Daiga, J. Izrakumi Lipšu ciemā un kapulaukā. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu, un etnogrāfu 1975. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1976, 39.–46. lpp.

[216] Šnore, E. Raušu ciems Doles salas augšgalā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 6, 1991, 69.–87. lpp.

[217] Graudonis, J. Ieskats Ikšķiles vēsturē. *Daugavas raksti: No Aizkraukles līdz Rīgai*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1991, 66.–76. lpp.

[218] *Indriķa hronika*, I, 5–9; Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Viduslaiku ciems un pils Salaspils novadā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 53. lpp.

ordinary Liv villages in the territory of Riga were joined at the beginning of the 13th century by a German settlement which grew into the city of Riga.[219]

The Gauja Livs, who were described in the 13th century as the Livs of Turaida, lived in the districts of Sigulda, Kubesele, and Lēdurga.[220] Their most important castle was that of Kaupo, located at Turaida (built during the 2nd half of the 11th century).[221] The castle at Satezele on the left bank of the Gauja River was also built at this time.[222]

The first area settled by the Baltic-Finns along the seacoast of Vidzeme to the mouth of the Salaca River was sparsely settled and bore the name of Metsepole.[223] This is the only area settled by the Livs whose culture is based on the earlier Finnic culture of stone cairns. Idumeja was located in the vicinity of modern Straupe, and it was a region which the Livs shared with Latgalians.[224] One view holds that the residents of Idumeja differed from Livs not merely in cultural terms but also ethnically.[225] Both the territory of Metsepole and Idumeja have been only slightly investigated by archaeologists.

A wide variety of burial traditions have been discovered over the areas in Western Kurzeme settled by Baltic Finns, which scholars have interpreted as belonging to the culture of the Kurzeme Livs, of Livs partially assimilated by the Couronians, and of the Vends.[226] It is known that Vends from Northern Kurzeme, after their expulsion by the Couronians, lived temporarily at Senais kalns (Ancient Hill, *Mons antiquus*) in Riga,[227] and, afterwards, at Vendekula village not far from Turaida. The largest colony of Vends was located beside the Latgalian settlement at Riekstu Kalns in Cēsis, and was inhabited over the period 11th/12th–13th centuries.[228]

Evidence of Vend cultural features has been found in the study of burial fields not only in Kurzeme[229] and in Cēsis,[230] but also along the lower reaches of the

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[219] Caune, A. Rīgas loma Daugavas lejteces apgabalā 10.–12. gs. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 3, 1992, 10.–13. lpp.

[220] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 72. lpp.

[221] Graudonis, J. Kaupo lielā pils. *Gaujas lībieši Latvijas kultūrvēsturē: apdzīvotības problēmas. 1998. gada 29. augusta konferences materiāli*. Rīga: Nordik, 1999, 11.–13. lpp.

[222] Zemītis, G. Izrakumi Sateseles pilskalnā 2006. gadā. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2006. un 2007. gadā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2008, 90.–93. lpp.

[223] *Indriķa hronika*, X, 14; XI, 2, 3; XIV, 10, 12; Mugurēvič, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 73. lpp.

[224] *Indriķa hronika*, X, 15; XII, 2; XVIII, 2; XVI, 5; XVII, 4, 6; *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti = Fontes historiae Latviae medii aevi.* Izd. Arveds Švābe. 1. burtn. (līdz 1237. gadam). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgādiens, 1937, Document 46. (Latvijas vēstures avoti, 1. sēj.).

[225] Мугуревич, Э., Зариня, А., Тыниссон, Э. Ливы. *Финны в Европе VII–XV века. Прибалтийско-финские народы: Историко-археологические исследования*. Вып. I. Москва: Институт археологии, 1990, с. 138.

[226] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Arheoloģiskie pētījumi Ventas lejteces apgabala dzelzs laikmeta un viduslaiku pieminekļos. Izrakumi Zlēkās. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 20. laid., 2000, 76. lpp.; *Lībieši senatnē = The Livs in Antiquity*, 19.–20. lpp.

[227] *Indriķa hronika*, X, 14; *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*. 1. burtn., 46. dok.

[228] *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* XV, 3; Apals J. Vendi un Cēsu Riekstu kalns. *Senā Rīga: Pētījumi pilsētas arheoloģijā un vēsturē*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1998, 140. lpp.

[229] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Arheoloģiskie pētījumi Ventas lejteces apgabala dzelzs laikmeta un viduslaiku pieminekļos. Izrakumi Zlēkās, 76. lpp.

[230] Мугуревич, Э. Проблема вендов в период раннего феодализма в Латвии. *Berichte über den II. Internationalen Kongress für Archäologie*. Bd. II. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1973, S. 297; Spirģis, R. Pārbaudes izrakumi Cēsu dzelzceļa stacijas senkapos. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2002. un 2003. gadā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 37. lpp.

Daugava River.[231] Bodies buried by the Vends were interred without being cremated with the head pointing north or north-west. The range of grave goods discovered includes necklaces, bronze beads on a wire, glass necklaces and cowrie ornaments, decorative pins, chains with pendants, and ornamented sheaths for knives (see Fig. 14). Clothes featuring bronze decorative elements woven into the fabric, shawls with large end decorations, and fan-shaped decoration of jackets, are characteristics of Vend women's apparel. Chronological dating of burials indicates that the Vends began to leave Northern Kurzeme (Courland) during the 10th century.[232]

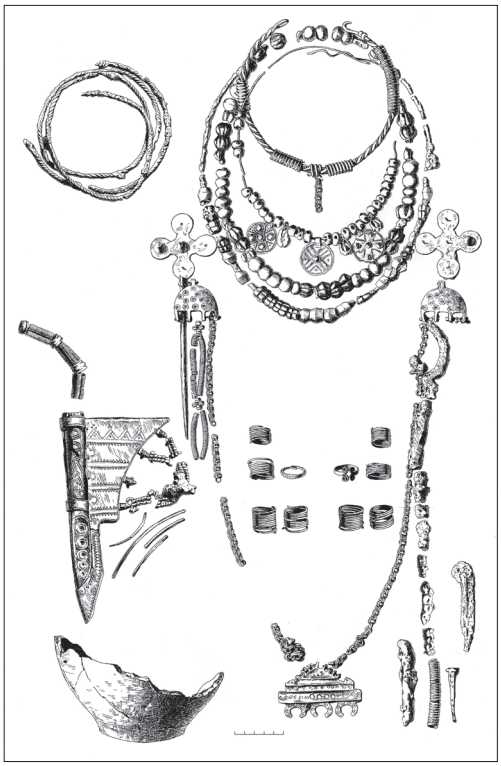


Fig. 14. Ornaments of a Vend woman. The inventory of Grave 191 at Laukskola burial field. 11th century. Drawing by E. Krastenberga (UL ILH Repository of Archaeological Materials)

The issue of the ethnic belonging of the Vends, their interaction with the Livs, and the genetic links of the inhabitants of Northern Kurzeme with the earlier Balto-Finnic culture has been at studied for over two centuries.[233] The Vends have been considered to be Livs, or Livs partially assimilated by the Couronians, as Balts (Semigallians or Couronians), Wots or even Western Slavs. A more reasonable conclusion might be that they were a Balto-Finnic group, who left the area of the Venta River under the pressure of Couronian expansion.

Burial in stone cairns is associated with the presence of the Baltic Finns in Western Kurzeme. These burial fields have a certain resemblance with burials in Northern Latvia and Estonia; however, they also show differences which may be due to influence by Couronian and Semigallian cultures.[234] The designations, the "Livs of Kurzeme" and the "Couronised Livs" reflect archaeological finds concerning the differences between the residents of Northern Kurzeme and the Livs of Vidzeme, the latter so labelled in written records from the 13th century. Indications of the Livs residing in Kurzeme only appeared during the 14th century, while the presence of Vends is no longer mentioned in later sources. The traveller Guillebert de Lannoy noted meeting Livs in Kurzeme during the 15th century.[235]

[231] Šnore, E. Daugavas lībieši Doles salā, 127. lpp.: Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*, 318. lpp.; Spirģis, R. *Bruņrupuču saktas ar krūšu važiņrotām un lībiešu kultūras attīstība Daugavas lejtecē 10.–13. gadsimtā*, 373. lpp.

[232] Zariņa, A. 11. gs. vendu sievietes apģērbs. *Etnogrāfs profesors Dr. habil. hist. Saulvedis Cimermanis. Biobibliogrāfija, darbabiedru veltījumi 70 gadu jubilejā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 229.–236. lpp.

[233] Мугуревич, Э. Проблема вендов в период раннего феодализма в Латвии, с. 291–292.

[234] Vasks, A. Kurši un Baltijas somi Kurzemē 1. gadu tūkstotī. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2004, 9. lpp.

[235] Spekke, A. *Latvieši un Livonija 16. gs.*, 95. lpp.

There is a difference of opinion about whether the people living in the coastal regions of Kurzeme and Vidzeme saw themselves as members of the same ethnic group.[236] Judging by material culture alone it is possible to differentiate between the residents of Kurzeme of Finnic origin from the Daugava Livs. In turn, there is not enough material evidence available to distinguish between the Vends who lived in the district of Ventava from other Baltic Finns living elsewhere in Kurzeme; quite the contrary, the most recent studies at Mežīte and Padure[237] have unearthed evidence for similarities with the culture of the Vends. Therefore, some scholars tend to believe that the "Vends" mentioned in 13th century sources actually refer to Baltic Finns from Kurzeme, i.e. those who had not departed and who had become Couronians.[238]

Consolidation of the Balt and the Baltic Finn ethnic groups as the Latvian nation

The ethnic groups living on the territory of Latvia during the Late Iron Age had reached a certain degree of ethnic and political consolidation. Each group had a different culture and kept to their own distinctive funeral traditions.

The movement towards a state by the Couronians, Semigallians, and Latgalians is alluded to in written records which describe rulers (or their equivalent) of areas occupied by the above mentioned ethnic groups, despite their sway not extending over all of the territory occupied by any one group. In 1253, there were nine lands (*terra, land*) occupied by the Couronians, including reference to a ruler (*rex*) named Lamekins of the land of the Couronians located along the lower reaches of the Venta River.[239] Written records indicate there were seven lands within Semigallian territory.[240] Tērvete was the principal political centre of the Western Semigallians, with Viestards described as noble by birth (*maior natu*) and a leader (*dux, princeps*), with the castle belonging to Nameisis described as that of a ruler (*houbetman*).[241] The hill-fort at Mežotne, in turn, was the site of the strongest castle of the Eastern Semigallians.[242]

The territory inhabited by Latgalians is identified in 13th century written records as being divided into entities which are variously described as states *(regnum)* — Kok-

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[236] Šturms, E. Talsu novada aizvēsture. *Talsu novads*. Rīga: Talsu un Tukuma studentu biedrība, 1937, 44. lpp.; Tenisons, Ē. Arheologu domas par lībiešu izcelsmi. *Lībieši*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 29.–30. lpp.

[237] Vasks, A. Kurši Padurē? *Pētījumi kuršu senatnē: rakstu krājums*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2008, 153.–165. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija, Nr. 14); Guščika, E., Vasks, A. Pētījumi Mežītes arheoloģisko pieminekļu kompleksā 2008. un 2009. gadā. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2008. un 2009. gadā*. Rīga: Nordik, 2010, 40.–44. lpp.

[238] Zemītis, G. Vendu jautājums un arheoloģijas avotu iespējas tā risinājumā. *Akadēmiskā Dzīve*, Nr. 46, 2009, 98.–99. lpp.

[239] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*. 2. burtn., 357.–361. dok.; Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 57.–65. lpp.

[240] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*. 2. burtn., 394., 423. dok.

[241] *Indriķa hronika*, IX, 2; XII, 2; XXIII, 4; XXXIX, 4; see also comment by Ē. Mugurēvičs, 360. lpp. (IX, 3. piezīme); *Atskaņu hronika*, 8666. rinda, sk. šķirkli "Tērvete, tērvetieši" 379. lpp.

[242] Brīvkalne, E. Rakstītās ziņas un arheoloģiskās liecības par 9.–13. gs. Mežotni. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 2. laid. Rīga: LPSR Zinātņu akadēmijas izdevniecība, 1960, 72.–73. lpp.

nese and Jersika — as well as lands *(provincia, terram)* — Tālava and Atzele.[243] The south-eastern part of Latgalian territory is associated with Latigola, mentioned in written documents.[244] The small territory of Koknese was ruled by the Russian Orthodox ruler (*regnum)* Vetseke.[245] In turn the territory of Jersika *(regnum Gerceke*) comprised areas between the Daugava and Gauja rivers, the union of ten castle districts.[246] Visvaldis is mentioned as the ruler of Jersika *(rex)*, who had inherited title to these lands and who had been baptised into the Russian Orthodox faith. The territory of the Selonians was also divided into several lands.[247]

There were several districts within the territory of the Livs, with each ruled by an elder who exerted greater or lesser influence. The greatest influence wielded by an elder among the Daugava Livs was that of Ako of Mārtiņsala (*princeps ac seniorum)*, who sought unsuccessfully to organise resistance to the Crusaders not only by the Livs, but also by Lithuanians and the Polotskians.[248] The most influential individual among the Gauja Livs was Kaupo, leader of the castle districts of Turaida and Krimulda, who was likened to a king (*quasi rex*).[249]

In contrast with Lithuania, where during the period 1230s–1250s a section of the inhabitants were consolidated into a single state under the leadership of King Mindaugas, the ethnic groups living within Latvia were unable to form a single state. The internal understanding of political events and self-organisation of the ethnic groups was insufficient for them to unite when faced by an external threat.

The natural development processes within the Balt and Balto-Finnic ethnic groups resident in the territory of Latvia were stopped at the end of the 12th century and in the 13th century as a result of expansion by German crusaders. Subjugation of these ethnic groups was complete by the end of the 13th century, with the formation of the Livonian Confederation which consisted of the domains of the Livonian Order and the Bishoprics. In their struggles the ethnic groups suffered large loss of life, their castles were devastated or left to decay, and the inhabitants had to accept foreign rule and ideology. The ethnic territories were divided up, and administrative boundaries changed during the period of struggle between the bishops and the Order, which did not promote retention of ethnic community sentiments among the ethnic groups. Thus, part of the land of the Couronians was joined in the 14th century to the territory of Prussia ruled by the German Order, and another part went to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.[250] It is possible that the southern territories of the Selonians came under the sphere of influence of the Lithuanian ruler Mindaugas.[251]

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[243] *Indriķa hronika*, XI, 7, XVIII, 3, XX, 5; *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*. 1. burtn., 106. dok.; Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 74.–84. lpp.

[244] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. g.s. – 16. g.s. vidus), 82. lpp.

[245] *Indriķa hronika*, IX, 10; XI, 8, 9.

[246] Ibid., VII, 5; XIII, 4.

[247] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*. 2. burtn., 394., 423. dok.

[248] *Indriķa hronika*, I, 5–9.

[249] Ibid., IV, 4; VII, 3; X, 10; XXV, 3.

[250] Kurši senatnē, 150. lpp.

[251] Ciglis, J. Senās Sēlijas vēsturiskās ģeogrāfijas problēmas. *Latvijas arheoloģija. Pētījumi un problēmas*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 2002, 11. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 8).

Whereas the Crusaders were able to conquer rather quickly the Latgalian and Liv lands, the Semigallians and Couronians resisted throughout almost the entire 13th century. Some of the Semigallians left their territory after their defeat.[252] Evidence dating from the 13th–14th centuries for the presence of Semigallian culture has been found in hill forts where they sought refuge and also in graveyards in several districts of Lithuania, also in Western Kurzeme and along the lower reaches of the Daugava River dating from the 13th–14th centuries.[253] The lack of archaeological sites in the territory of the Semigallians dating from the 14th–15th centuries is striking, which points to a substantial change in the population density. During the 14th–15th centuries, the Semigallians were the target of repeated attacks by the Samogitians and Lithuanians whereupon the Order often moved the inhabitants to less populated areas. At the same time people from elsewhere moved to Semigallian lands. Thus, during the mid-15th century a group of Wots (in Latvian, *krieviņi*, or 'little Russians') from Ingria in north-west Russia were settled in the vicinity of Vecsaule.[254]

The homes of the local inhabitants were destroyed as a result of aggression by the Crusaders, which has been noted in written records and substantiated by archaeological evidence.[255] In Eastern Latvia, German stone castles were built on the site of the former wooden hill-forts, which compelled the inhabitants to live elsewhere. Archaeological studies show that the bronze ornaments typical of ethnic material culture disappeared, which evidently was the result of changes in trade as well as a decline in prosperity. Grave goods in all districts provide evidence for foreign influence which led to changes in apparel, ornament design and their traditional use (see Fig. 15). Changes in material culture in the territories inhabited by the ethnic groups, can be followed by means of archaeological finds through to the beginning of the 16th century.

Insight into the material culture of the Couronians has been obtained through finds at the extensively studied cemetery at Puzes Lejaskrogs, where some 90% of burials were found to have grave goods. A new fashion style of 15th century Couronian women was to wear many fibulas, a tradition which has been preserved in the traditional costumes of Southern Kurzeme.[256]

Semigallians wore chain ornaments as late as in the 13th century, while iron decorative pins replaced bronze decorative pins; older necklaces were replaced by ones made of glass beads or pendants made of coins.[257]

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[252] *Atskaņu hronika*, 9667–9680, 11403–11405, 1147–11420, 11499; Василяускас, Э. Миграции земгалов в конце XIII века. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 24. laid., c. 134–135.

[253] Василяускас, Э. Миграции земгалов в конце XIII века, c. 136–144.; *Zemgaļi senatnē*, 98.–103. lpp.; Muižnieks, V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gs. apbedīšanas vietu materiāla.* Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2015, 186. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti. Arheoloģija, Nr. 21).

[254] Jansone, I. Krieviņi un to atstātās pēdas Zemgalē. *Raksti. V Starptautiskās zinātniskās konferences zinātniskie lasījumi Ģ. Eliasa Jelgavas vēstures un mākslas muzejā.* (2007. g. 6.–7.dec.). Jelgava, 2008. 47.–57. lpp.

[255] *Indriķa hronika*, XIII, 4; XVIII, 4, 9.; Vilcāne, A. *Senā Jersika*, 27. lpp.

[256] Muižnieks V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gs. apbedīšanas vietu materiāla.* 188.–189. lpp.

[257] Ibid., 183.–186. lpp.

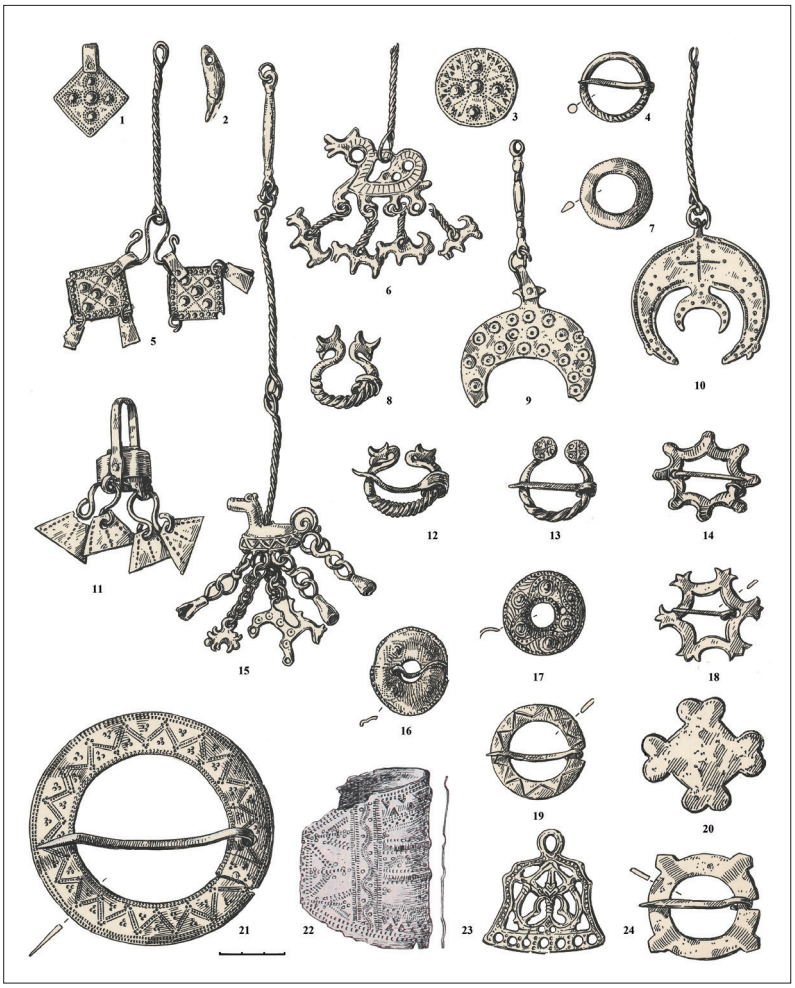


Fig. 15. 13th–16th century ornaments: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 15 – pendants, 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16–21, 24 – fibulas, 22 – a bracelet, 23 – a chain holder; 1–21, 23, 24 – at Mārtiņsala, 22 – at the cemetery of Jaunpiebalga. Drawing by M. Jāņkalniņa (UL ILH Repository of Archaeological Materials)

Latgalians introduced the wearing of wreaths made of fabric, glass beads, cowrie shell ornaments and various pendants. Bracelets typical of the Iron Age were replaced by thin bracelets made of tin, the wearing of which also became widespread among Balto-Finnic ethnic groups. External influences specific to the north-east of Latvia have been identified, i.e. "Zhalnikiki-type" burials typical of the Novgorod Slovenes and the Wots.[258] A Lithuanian presence along the banks of the Daugava River has been identified from study of the burial fields of the Upper Daugava region dating from the 14th–17th centuries.[259]

[258] Muižnieks V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gs. apbedīšanas vietu materiāla*, 191.–193. lpp.

[259] Berga, T. *Augšdaugavas 14.–17. gadsimta senvietas no Krāslavas līdz Slutišķiem*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūts, 2007, 159.–160. lpp.

Burials dating from the 14th and 15th centuries investigated at Sēlpils cemetery show that the Selonians favoured wearing glass bead necklaces and necklaces made of cowrie shells, and that, possibly, wreaths made of fabric were worn, which are found in later burials dating from the 17th–19th centuries.[260]

Chain ornament elements were retained by the Livs until the 16th century as well as many forms of pendants and necklaces made of glass beads.[261] Different sets of grave goods for women have been observed in areas inhabited by the Livs, which points to a multi-ethnic environment.

The lack of uniformity of the orientations of bodies in various 13th–15th century burial grounds possibly indicates the presence of newly arrived residents who retained their customs.

The introduction of Christian funeral norms promoted the disappearance of certain ethnic particulars. The construction of stone structures and formation of barrows covering burials ceased during the 13th century, while during the period of the 15th–18th centuries mounds from a previous time were used only exceptionally for burials. There were no new cremation graves in Eastern Latvia by the 14th century, or in Western Latvia by the 15th century. At the start of recorded history, the dead continued to be buried in established graveyards (these constitute 20% of all graves which have been investigated). Cemeteries consecrated for Christian use were usually established in areas which had not previously been used for burials.[262] The dead in Christian cemeteries were laid to rest conforming to Christian practice, with their heads facing west; gradually the practice of offering grave goods completely disappeared.[263]

During the 14th–15th centuries, more land became available for economic use, i.e. by means of an internal colonisation process which is evident from the distribution of archaeological sites.[264] The dynamics of this process have not been studied.

Analyses of archaeological evidence shows that significant changes may have occurred in terms of material culture and funeral traditions starting with the 16th century, when the cultures of the ethnic groups had almost completely lost their unique ethnic features.[265] Consolidation of ethnic groups is clearly identifiable from written records. Starting with the 15th century, the ethnonyms of ethnic groups disappear from written records, replaced by the names of territories derived from these ethnonyms. The chronicler J. Renner is alone in mentioning the Couronians at the end of the 16th century, remarking that they have their own language, but that they tend to use the Latvian language more often.[266] The fact of sermons preached in the Latvian language (they were also written down in Latvian), before the Reformation was significant.[267]

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[260] Muižnieks, V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gs. apbedīšanas vietu materiāla,* pp. 193.–195. lpp.

[261] Ibid., 189.–191. lpp.

[262] Ibid., 1. tab.

[263] Ibid., 99.–107., 279.–280. lpp.

[264] Ibid., 6. att.

[265] Ibid., 196. lpp.

[266] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Etniskie procesi baltu apdzīvotajā teritorijā un latviešu tautas veidošanās 6.–16. gs. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 1998, 26. lpp.

[267] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture. 1290–1500*. Rīga: Daugava, 1997, 62. lpp.

Many factors (archaeological studies can only identify a few of these, and the process is best seen through written records which have not been considered here due to the limitations of this article) led to consolidation by the 16th century of the ethnic groups living in Latvia to such an extent that one may speak of the existence of the Latvian people.

The origin of the name of Latvians for themselves, *latvieši*, is linked to the ethnonym for Latgalians.[268] The dominating presence of the Latgalian language and culture was an added factor for consolidation over and above economic, political, and other factors: Latgalian cultures infiltrating the Selonian land and to a lesser degree the lands of the Semigallians,[269] the presence of Latgalians in the Liv districts along the Daugava River,[270] and the colonisation of Northern Vidzeme[271].

Conclusions

Like the majority of peoples living in Europe, the Latvians are descended from the ancient community of Indo-Europeans. Finno-Ugric ethnic groups have played an important role in the ethnic history of the Latvian people. There are numerous hypotheses concerning the origin of the two ethnolinguistic communities, their language and relationship with archaeological cultures, and based on extensive migration; more recent hypotheses favour diffusion and infiltration models. The crux of the problem lies in the fact that the development of language and culture are different processes, i.e. the origin of certain aspects of culture can only hypothetically be linked to language. Archaeological finds characterise changes in the culture of a region in space and over time, but not changes in language.

Finno-Ugric groups on the territory of Latvia are traditionally associated with the appearance of Pit–Comb Ware Culture during the Middle Neolithic (around 4100 BCE), and in turn, the Balts — with the spread during the Late Neolithic of Corded Pottery and Boat-Axe Culture (around 2900 BCE). Hypotheses about the origin of the Finno-Ugric and Baltic peoples are contradictory.

Several culturally different regions are identifiable on the territory of Latvia during the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, but there is no consensus about their ethnolinguistic belonging, with some unresolved problems in the identification of a certain number of these ethnic groups.

Balt and Balto-Finnic ethnic groups (the Couronians, Semigallians, Selonians, Latgalians, Vends and the Livs), who are mentioned in written records from the

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[268] Bušs, O. Latvija un latvieši: vārdu cilme. *Latvieši un Latvija: akadēmiskie raksti.* 1. sēj.: Latvieši. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 19.–20. lpp.

[269] Atgāzis, M. Dreņģeru-Čunkānu kapulauks un zemgaļu senvēstures pētniecības jautājumi. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu 1992. un 1993. gada pētījumu rezultātiem.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 30. lpp.

[270] Vilcāne, A. Latgaļu senlietu atradumi Daugavas lejtecē un Rīgā (10.–13. gs.). *Senā Rīga: pētījumi pilsētas arheoloģijā un vēsturē.* Rīga: Latvija vēstures institūta apgāds, 1998, 59.–174. lpp.

[271] Atgāzis, M. Pētījumi Alsviķu ciema Asaru senkapos un arheoloģisko pieminekļu apzināšana Alūksnes apkārtnē. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu un etnogrāfu 1982. un 1983. gada pētījumu rezultātiem.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1984, 21.–26. lpp.

9th–13th centuries formed on the territory of Latvia during the Iron Age (1st millennium CE). Each of these ethnic groups spoke their own distinct language, lived in its well-defined territory, practised distinctive funeral practices, and wore unique ornaments which proclaimed their ethnic identity.

The Livonian political, economic, and cultural space, together with the new ideology (Christianity) promoted coalescence of the small ethnic groups. The Latgalian people played a determining role in this process, in that their culture and language had already come to dominate throughout Eastern Latvia in the previous period. By the 16th century, consolidation of the ethnic groups living in Latvia had reached such a stage that it allows us to refer to the existence of the Latvian nation.

About the author

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Beatrise Reidzāne, Sandis Laime

LATVIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES AND MYTHOLOGY

This article presents insight into the perception of Latvian folklore and how it has been studied over four centuries starting with the first records made by foreigners of such material, i.e. travellers or locally resident Baltic German clergymen. Until the 19th century, manifestations of the spiritual life of Latvians were considered in terms of their usefulness in strengthening the power of the civil and religious authorities; they stridently persecuted "pagan" beliefs, customs, and incantations, while more or less accepting proverbs and riddles, which aligned with the rational ideas of the age. The social changes of the 19th century as well as new educational opportunities allowed Latvians themselves to compile and create a national culture and values. Encouraged by the New Latvians, collection of folklore turned into a movement during the second half of the 19th century, which by the end of that century had produced a substantial body of folklore materials, i.e. folk songs, melodies, folk tales, and legends.
During the period of the independence of Latvia, the Archives of Latvian Folklore assumed responsibility for collecting, classifying, preserving, and publishing Latvian folklore.
In addition to written records from the 16th–18th centuries, folklore is a significant source for studying Latvian mythology. Latvian mythology is based on ancient Indo-European mythology, but since the arrival of Christianity it has fused with Christian beliefs, preserving archaic elements of the pre-Christian period. This study describes one segment of Latvian mythology — deities and spirits.

Keywords: Latvian folklore studies, period of the Enlightenment, romanticism and folklore, folk songs and Latvian identity, New Latvian activities in folklore studies, the Cabinet of Folksongs, Archives of Latvian Folklore, Latvian mythology, Indo-European mythology

Latvian folklore in the earliest records (16th century – second half of the 18th century)

Suppositions that we today deem to be proverbs and sayings, which are the basis for how a people think and are the deepest layer of language, came into being at some distant indeterminate time in the past. The perception of relationships between living things and people and its metaphoric expression derives from recourse to a very rich imagination, as a means of sharpening one's wits and proving ingenuity, and this takes

the form of *riddles*. *Legends* and *tales* are the link between the present and the past, as time and space are moved to a location more readily understandable by the listener, one full of "significant" objects (sacred and mythical). *Folk tales* are replete with a broad set of complex messages, highlighting agility of thinking and speech. *Folk songs* are the sublimation of ideas and feelings in short texts accompanied by multiple melodies. *Magic spells* and *magic* demonstrate that our ancestors related to the supernatural and to the sacred, which lies outside the real world, desiring to use words and actions to influence their own well-being (particularly regarding health), as well as that of their relations and their property. *Popular beliefs* and *customs* seek to regulate daily life, as well as to explain social and natural phenomena and their place in each individual's life. Melodies for music instruments serve to accompany dancing, while children are educated and entertained by *nursery rhymes* and *games*.

Since the mid-19th century, various branches of philology have considered folklore as a worthy subject of study, whereas until the mid-18th century, folklore was left to its own devices and its fate was in the hands of the civil and religious rulers of the land. For example, proverbs and sayings as well as riddles took pride of place in dictionaries complied by German Baltic clergymen during the 17th and 18th centuries, and were integrated into other texts, while magic spells as well as the names of those who uttered them are found in witches' trials during the Middle Ages and into the Age of the Enlightenment. Whence this favourable treatment of proverbs and sayings? The answer may lie in the shift of ideas between epochs, inasmuch as during the prehistoric study of folklore (from the first written records up until the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries) documentation of the very existence of Latvian folklore depended on the interpretation of folklore materials in an international (European) context.

The first publications of folklore materials date from the 17th century, and were written in the old Latvian orthography. The 16th century was a period of religious upheavals in Europe, as Lutheranism diverged from the common Western Christian Church, with the postulates of the latter continued by Roman Catholicism. Both churches resorted to missionary fervour and began to address "non-Germans", i.e. Latvians and Estonians. After the collapse of Livonia, competition set in during the second half of the 16th century between Catholicism and Lutheranism, with the outcome that the confessional geography of modern-day Latvia took shape. The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia remained an example of the success of the Reformation, notwithstanding that the Duke owing allegiance to the King of Poland; however, in Vidzeme and in Latgale the Polish authorities promoted an active Counter-Reformation movement. Lutheranism regained its position once Vidzeme came under Swedish rule after the war between Poland and Sweden, while Catholicism became entrenched in Latgale. (See the works by Arturs Ozols for details about the database of texts in Latvian from the Reformation and Counter-Reformation periods.[1]) Nonetheless, no choice of religion was given to the "non-Germans" themselves; as before, the principle applied that the choice of religion by their masters was applied to the Latvian peasants. However, this time of change facilitated preparation of spiritual literature in the

[1] Ozols, A. *Veclatviešu rakstu valoda.* Rīga: Liesma, 1965.

Latvian language, and this was impossible in the absence of a good mastery of the language. This activity was more pronounced in Lutheran regions, where several serious and comprehensive works were printed at the beginning of the 17th century.

During the 17th century, the philosophy of a new age underpinned the development of ideas characterised by both empiricism and rationalism amongst educated people in Europe, hence also in Germany and within the German cultural space. Therefore, those elements of Latvian folklore which were based on logical conclusions became acceptable in the eyes of Baltic German clergymen. The perfect match of proverbs with efforts by foreigners to learn to speak Latvian in a comprehensible manner led to their place in *speech*, inasmuch as they were integrated into ordinary conversations as an organic part; secondly, in a polished form, even with certain added rhythmic features, these permitted simple and compound sentences to be remembered readily during the process of learning the language; thirdly, they allowed for laconic passages, since in spoken form these picturesque, compact expressions replaced lengthy detailed descriptive presentations; fourthly, they were universal in their substance. In this way Baltic German pastors who prepared reference materials to address their need to learn Latvian — dictionaries and grammars — were forced to the conclusion that the folk culture that they tried to overcome undoubtedly contained valuable features, and also that a peasant who had never been schooled was able to draw unique philosophical conclusions. Riddles, which bore the hallmarks of the culture of antiquity, were recognised; according to conclusions drawn by Daina Zemzare, the first two such riddles are found in the manuscript of a dictionary prepared by Christoph Fürecker.[2]

The inclusion of proverbs and riddles in dictionaries did not decrease throughout the 18th century. Their compilers such as Jacob Lange and Gotthard Friedrich Stender (Fig. 1) were men of the Enlightenment and the ideas of this period were influenced by the French Enlightenment, as well as the German philosophers Christian Wolff and Johann Gottfried Herder. A considerable number of proverbs were collected; Pēteris Šmits has counted more than 90 proverbs in the dictionary due to J. Lange, which was compiled between 1773 and 1777,[3] while Ojārs Jēgens has found more than 1000 units in the dictionary due to G. F. Stender which was completed a decade later and published in 1789;[4] an addendum, *Catalogus proverbium* with 225 units, was part of the second edition of the grammar by G. F. Stender.[5] G. F. Stender included approximately 50 riddles in the three editions of his grammar[6] and in his collection of short stories *Pasakas un stāsti* (Folk Tales and Stories)[7]. Johann Jacob Harder, after considering this

[2] Zemzare, D. *Latviešu vārdnīcas (līdz 1900. gadam).* Rīga: LPSR ZA izdevniecība, 1961, 77. lpp.; Топоров, В. Н. 1685–1985. Памяти Фюрекера, Адолфи и Лангия. *Балто-славянские исследования. 1984.* Москва: Наука, 1986, с. 232–242.

[3] Lange, J. *Vollständiges deutsch-lettisches und lettisch-deutsches Lexicon.* Mitau, 1777. See also: Šmits, P. Langes latviešu vārdnīca. *Rīgas Latviešu biedrības Zinību komisijas rakstu krājums*. 16. krāj. Rīga, 1912, 55.–57. lpp.

[4] Stender, G. F. *Lettisches Lexicon.* Mitau: Steffenhagen, 1789.

[5] *Latviešu tautas mīklas, sakāmvārdi un parunas.* Straubergs, K. (red.). Kopenhāgena: Imanta, 1956, 264. lpp.

[6] Stender, G. F. *Lettische Grammatik.* 2. Aufl. Mitau: Steffenhagen, 1783.

[7] Stenders, G. F. *Pasakas un stāsti.* Tiem latviešiem par izlustēšanu un gudru mācību sarakstīti. Mitau: Steffenhagen, 1789.

compilation by G. F. Stender of Latvian riddles, rated these highly: "... we find these examples of true ingenuity expounded by an uneducated and coarse people, which would be worthy of the cleverest of peoples. Their riddles possess all of the requisite characteristics; some appear to have been composed in distant antiquity, thus they must have been inherited from their ancestors."[8] Andrejs Johansons has pointed out that J. G. Herder quoted this description of riddles by J. J. Harder in part two of his book *Volkslieder*.[9]

Magic spells, the third form of brachylogism, were in a most difficult situation, since, together with popular beliefs and folk customs, they were part of popular culture that the Christian church (both Lutheran and Catholic) sought to eliminate, starting already at the time of the introduction of Christianity on the territory of Latvia. These manifestations were considered to be the antithesis of a Christian way of life, and those who kept alive popular beliefs, customs and, especially, magic spells, were punished, even put to death, most frequently following the witches' trials held during the 16th and 17th centuries in both Catholic and Lutheran districts. Written records which have survived from this period — publications in German by Paul Einhorn in 1636 and 1649 about Livonia and Courland,[10] a book of sermons written in Latvian by Georg Mancelius in 1654[11] — refer to these aspects of popular lifestyle in a negative and disdainful manner, nevertheless setting out in detail what they sought to combat, in this way preserving valuable ethnographic material. Therefore, the principal sources for magic spells, starting with the 16th century when the wave of persecution of witches which encompassed all of Europe had also reached Latvia, comprise trial records of witches, protocols of parish visitations by Church authorities, and Church Chronicles. The clergy, civil authorities, city dwellers (usually these were craftsmen arrived from Germany), and peasants all believed in the power of incantations and magic spells, except that the first two of these groups considered this power to be that of the devil, which had to be suppressed with the most stringent of punishments. Magic spells constitute an aspect of folklore which was common throughout the cultural space of Europe during the 15th–18th centuries, and in Latvia they were shared both by the German "bringers of culture" (*Kulturträger*) and Latvian peasants.

A large proportion of the magic spells, as studied by Kārlis Straubergs, were introduced into daily usage in Latvia by the Baltic Germans themselves; for example, magic spells which contained Christian formulations; additionally, the use of hymnals and excerpts from the Bible in magic rituals; Kabbalistic letters and the so-called books of heaven appeared during the 18th century. Furthermore, K. Straubergs has found that the first trials in Latvia and Estonia of witches and warlocks during the 16th century involved local Germans: for example, the moulder of churns, Burkard Waldis of Riga,

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[8] [Harder J. J.] Untersuchung des Gottesdienstes, der Wissenschaften, Handwerke, Regierungsarten und Sitten der alten Letten aus ihrer Sprache. *Gelehrte Beyträge zu den Rigischen Anzeigen*, II. Stück, S. 9–16, V. Stück, S. 33–40, VII. Stück, S. 49–56, XII. Stück, S. 89–96. Riga, 1764.

[9] Johansons, A. *Latvijas kultūras vēsture. 1710–1800.* Rīga: Jumava, 2011, 419. lpp.

[10] Einhorn, P. *Reformatio gentis Letticae in Ducatu Curlandiae...* Riga, 1636; Einhorn, P. *Historica Lettica. Das ist die Beschreibung der lettischen Nation...* Dorpt, 1649.

[11] Mancelius, G. *Lang-gewünschte Lettische Postill...* Riga: Gerhard Schröder, 1654.

was tried in 1531, while in 1542 the wife of Hans Mex and her friend were burned at the stake in Estonia.[12] The first instances of defending this expression of folklore only occurred in the 18th century, in particular, during the second half of the century. Starting in 1774 and continuing thereafter, August Wilhelm Hupel published accurate descriptions of Latvian customs and popular beliefs, to the extent of drawing parallels with popular beliefs widely held by Baltic Germans,[13] while Christoph Harder, as noted by Arveds Švābe, was the only individual who during the second half of the 18th century systematically collected Latvian popular beliefs, translated them into German, and produced a manuscript which ran to 27 paragraphs.[14] A collection of more than two hundred popular Latvian beliefs written down in Kurzeme was published by Johann Georg Weygand in 1729, and these might also have included popular beliefs current in the Baltic German community. Such beliefs were contested during the Age of the Enlightenment, with the last individual who argued against them being G. F. Stender, who did so by means of an extensive addendum to his book, *Pasakas un stāsti* (Tales and Stories). A supplementary text bearing the title of *Blēņu ticības* (Nonsensical Beliefs) comprised ten chapters, each addressing a widely held popular belief, for example, celebration by setting work aside, of "the path taken by the sun" (after sunset), and the fifth night (Thursday evening), with many other popular beliefs noted in the closure of this text, which included the following recommendation: "He who has read carefully and thoughtfully the first ten nonsensical beliefs, shall reject all of this nonsense and will be ashamed to respect any of these beliefs in future."[15] Evidence for popular beliefs in Latgale must be looked for in annual records kept by the Jesuits, with the most extensive account found in the account of the life of Theophil Kwek (Queck), written in Latin, which was included in the Jesuit Annals of Daugavpils. An interesting finding by A. Johansons which merits further study is that "... some of the ancient beliefs of Latvians, in respect of aspects of religious worship, were present in Latgale during the 18th century in a more stable, and possibly in a more primeaval form, than was the case for other regions of Latvia".[16]



Fig. 1. Gotthard Friedrich Stender (Ambainis, O. *Latviešu folkloristikas vēsture*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1989)

[12] Straubergs, K. *Latviešu buramie vārdi*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Latviešu folkloras krātuve, 1939, 57.–58. lpp.
[13] Hupel, A. W. *Topografische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehstland*, I–III. Riga: Hartknoch, 1774–1782.
[14] Švābe, A. *Kāda mācītāja dzīve.* Stockholm: Daugava, 1958, 170. lpp.
[15] Stenders, G. F. *Pasakas un stāsti*, 382. lpp.
[16] Johansons, A. *Latvijas kultūras vēsture*, 381. lpp.

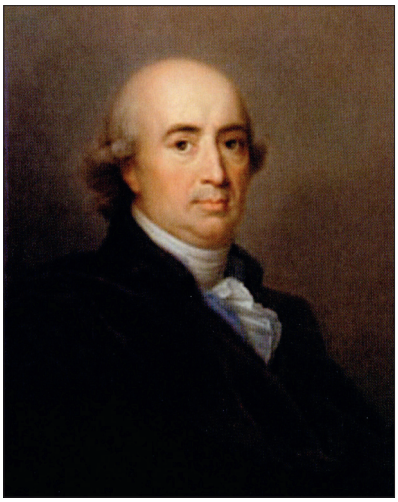


Fig. 2. Johann Gottfried von Herder (Ambainis O. *Latviešu folkloristikas vēsture*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1989)

Latvian folklore in the light of national romanticism (second half of the 18th century – second half of the 19th century)

Starkly differing assessments were made over the centuries about Latvian folk song lyrics and how they were sung. With few exceptions, up until the 1770s, popular singing and folk songs were actively persecuted. However, after the arrival in Riga in 1764 of the young German writer and philosopher J. G. Herder (Fig. 2), educated Baltic German circles in Riga accepted the ideas advanced by the philosopher Johann Georg Hamann concerning the historical development of language and folk singing and inclined to the national romantic view that the "spirit of the people" finds expression in peasant performances; thus the status of Latvian folk songs was raised to unprecedented heights, on a par with the songs of other peoples in Europe. Ludis Bērziņš, in his description of the period that Herder spent in Riga, asserted that: "... here in Riga, Herder developed a particularly significant contact with a people who had kept alive ancient, seemingly uncultured poetry traditions of their ancestors. (...) it was Latvian folk poetry which helped Herder to understand profoundly the nature of all folk poetry."[17]

Texts associated with magic activities were documented, and the first surviving text of this kind which researchers have associated with a classical quatrain is found in the records of an extensive trial held in Riga in 1584 for witchcraft, published by Kārlis Straubergs in the book *Latviešu buramie vārdi* (Latvian Magic Spells). The accused Ivan admitted that he had the ability "to blow upon salt" *(sāli pūst)*, which he learned in Russia. If he gave such sanctified salt to someone, the recipient could not be harmed by any *weapon*. His *words* are cited in the trial records.[18] Ludis Bērziņš, after analysing the extract from the trial record quoted by K. Straubergs, created a "song free of any imperfection", i.e. a verse which conforms to a classical quatrain, with every line consisting of two dipoles (eight syllables), each followed by a caesura:[19]

Dzelziniek, trumulniek,
Atslēdziet dzelzu vārtus!
Nosakliedze vanadziņi,
Veras vārti dārdēdami.[20]

[17] Bērziņš, L. *Greznas dziesmas.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2007, 91. lpp.

[18] Straubergs, K. *Latviešu buramie vārdi*, 61. lpp.

[19] For a description of metrics see: Krogzeme-Mosgorda, B. Literatūrzinātniskā pieeja folkloras izpētē: folkloras tekstu poētika. Metrika. *Latviešu folkloristika starpkaru periodā.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2014, 281.–296. lpp.; see also: Zeps, V. J. Metric Tendencies of the Latvian Folk Trochee. *Linguistics and Poetics of Latvian Folk Songs.* Vīķis-Freibergs, V. (Ed.). Kingston, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989, p. 249.

[20] Bērziņš, L. *Greznas dziesmas*, 45.–46. lpp.

The next record whose form is fault-free, and accompanied by the first record of a Latvian melody (Fig. 3), is found in a book, dating from 1632, *Syntagma de origine Livonorum* (Syntagma of the origin of the Livonians), by Friedrich Menius, Professor at Dorpat (Tartu) University, in which he describes Latvian singing and sense of melody, and notes the propensity of Latvians for spontaneous improvisation, giving the following quatrain as an example:

Manne Balte Mamelyt
Dod man weene Katkenyt
Man pelyte peejukus
Py ta sweeste bundeling.[21]


DE ORIGINE LIVONOR. 45
seu pausâ ſemibrevi ♀, gaudeant, hoc
modo: I. Vox.
Manne Balte Mamelyt/Dod mann weene
Katkenyt/ Mann pelyte peejukus/ Pyta
ſweeſte bundeling.
2. 3. 4. 5.
Hæc, quam dixi, Lettorum lingua
eſt. Utuntur eodem canendi, modo
in ſuo idiomate Eſthones. Frequentius
tamen hâc ſequenti, quæ utriq; genti
quaſi generalis fere eſt, non tantum
prædictum textum, ſed quosvis etiam
alios

Fig. 3. The first printed lyrics of a Latvian folk song in the book by Friedrich Menius, *Syntagma de origine Livonorum* (1632)

Thus, during the 17th century and early 18th century, folk songs, together with popular beliefs, customs, and magic spells, fell into the category of folk traditions that were to be suppressed, despite their being mentioned not entirely in a negative way by such eminent personalities of the period as P. Einhorn, G. Mancelius, and G. F. Stender. For example, P. Einhorn, in combatting pagan aspects of Latvian daily life provided a vivid picture of the importance for Latvians of songs and singing in their celebrations and seasonal festivities, adopting even a tolerant view of their *hymni deorum* — mythological songs.[22] The first dictionary of Latvian by G. Mancelius explained phrases and offered examples which were evidence for the author having a good grasp of this aspect of the Latvian language, while the book of sermons demonstrates not only his disdain for "nonsensical chanting", but also that he was quite familiar with the structure of Latvian songs and manner of singing. G. F. Stender played a special role during the 18th century, inasmuch as his dictionary issued in 1789, which was used for at least 60 years by Germans and Latvians in their study of the Latvian language, included fragments of Latvian folk songs to illustrate the meaning of certain words. G. F. Stender in both of his books of grammar used Latvian folk song lyrics to illustrate usage, as well as to demonstrate in detail the structure of Latvian folk songs and their content, relying on a substantial number of folk songs to do so.[23] This happenstance did not correspond to the desire of Stender to reduce the impact of folk poetry and the place which it occupied in the everyday life of the people, but his texts and astute comments drew the attention of other scholars to Latvian folk songs.

G. F. Stender was energetic in his literary activities; he was very conversant with the Latvian language and was a follower of the German theologian and philosopher Ch. Wolff, who saw the aim of Enlightenment as introducing texts (songs, legends) of

[21] Menius, F. *Syntagma de origine Livonorum*. Dorpat, 1632, S. 45.
[22] *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, II. Riga, Leipzig: Eduard Frantzen's Verlags-Comptoir, 1848, S. 614.
[23] Stender, G. F. *Lettische Grammatik*, S. 272–273.

a religious nature so as to displace from popular culture "nonsensical chanting" and "old wives tales". He translated songs by German poets and recast them into a local setting; these songs were principally examples of sentimental moralising love poetry. Melodies were introduced to accompany lyrics, and this effort has received the following assessment by Jēkabs Vītoliņš: "... judging by notations present alongside the lyrics, melodies were taken over from German songs of the mid-18th century, possibly from German musical comedies (*singspiele*)."[24] Some of these songs, recast into a local setting, became popular and today constitute a specific part of Latvian folklore, as songs known as *ziņģes*.

The 1760s, i.e. the period spent by J. G. Herder in Riga (1765–1769), is a decade which cannot be ignored by any scholar of poetry or folklore, and it has been extensively treated by many authors.[25] Herder was an integral part of the educated German intellectual elite who deeply appreciated poetry, such that they were able to discern the hidden values in the Latvian folk songs which were so vigorously combatted. For example, Herder was partially inspired by the views of the philosopher Johann Georg Hamann, who recognised the important role played by poetry in the life of the people, and considered that poetry was the mother tongue of humankind. He rated Latvian folk songs very highly, and, based on the characteristics of the metric of Latvian folk poetry, sought to explain the unity of Homer's metric. In his compilations of folk songs, Herder reproduced the views of J. G. Hamann.[26] In an article published in 1764, Johann Jacob Harder presented a solid scholarly analysis of the manner of Latvian singing and the aesthetic value of their songs, putting emphasis on the deep emotional effect resulting from the expression of natural peasant emotions.[27] This also powerfully influenced J. G. Herder, inducing ideas about the expression of the "popular spirit", and accordingly a new term comes into being for the most brilliant manifestations of this spirit — *folk songs*.[28] During the period of compiling his selection of folk songs, Herder appealed to his peers to send him folk song lyrics. Letters illustrating this cooperative effort were exchanged with August Wilhelm Hupel, whom he importunes to find assistants who would send him Latvian and Estonian folk songs.[29] The denigration of peasant culture which had lasted over many centuries in the Baltic began to abate;[30] calls were made with increasing frequency to begin to appreciate the lifestyle of the people, in particular, their poetry, and to collect and to compile it.

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[24] Vītoliņš, J., Krasinska, L. *Latviešu mūzikas vēsture*, I. Rīga: Liesma, 1972, 75. lpp.

[25] The folklore specialist Dace Bula has listed the following authors: von Siverss, Vegners, Stefenhāgens, Bērziņš, Švābe, Rozenbergs, Strods, Jaremko-Portere, Vīnkere-Pīpho. See: Bula D. Latvian Folksongs: Collected, Published and Studied. *Singing the Nations: Herder's Legacy.* Bula, D., Rieuwerts, S. (eds.). Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2008, p. 9.

[26] Hamann, J. G. *Kreuzzüge des Philologen.* Königsberg: Kanter, 1762.

[27] [Harder J. J.] Untersuchung des Gottesdienstes.

[28] Herder, J. G. *Volkslieder*, 1–2. Leipzig: Weigandschen Buchhandlung, 1778–1779.

[29] Schaudinn, H. Deutsche Bildungsarbeit am lettischen Volkstum des 18. Jahrhunderts. *Schriften der Deutschen Akademie*, 29. München: Ernst Reinhardt, 1937, S. 135.

[30] For an analysis of the ideas of this period see: Blumbergs, A. J. *The Nationalization of Latvians and the Issue of Serfdom: The Baltic German Literary Contribution in the 1780s and 1790s.* Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2008, [p. 320].

Romanticism in the sense defined by J. G. Herder marks the synthesis of traditional (rural culture) and modern elements (produced by development of elite culture), enriched by the uniqueness of the people's way of life, with an ethical and aesthetic richness which was reflected in the songs of the ordinary people performed in their native language — the folk songs. The politician and scholar Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga has summarised the pluses and minuses of Latvian cultural development over the following century, the 19th century, as follows: "On the one hand, the long period when Latvians were rooted in a peasant culture and its values could be seen as a deficiency, since Latvians had not at all been involved in the elite culture of Europe which had developed step by step in Western Europe from the time of Charlemagne (742–814) onwards. On the other hand, this historical isolation was not without a positive side since the traditional understanding of culture was still valid for Latvians as something living, universally accessible, where active participation was open to all. Furthermore, around about the time that the Latvian people began to take part, Western elite culture had historically begun its transformation from an aristocratic culture to that of civil society, or, in other words, it had become modern culture."[31]

The romantic concepts and ideas advanced by J. G. Herder and the intelligentsia of Europe, including by German scholars, accorded folk songs a special status, which set out the tasks for collecting and studying folklore during the 19th century; Baltic German literary figures set out to meet this challenge as members of *Lettisch-Literärischen Gesellschaft*, Latvian Literary Society, i.e. the Society of the Friends of Latvians, (1827–1940).

From the early 19th century, folklore materials were published as specialised books. Inspired by J. G. Herder, two clergymen, Gustav Bergmann and Friedrich Daniel Wahr, published in 1807 and 1809 three collections of folk song lyrics[32] with a total of 902 songs. The contribution by G. Bergmann consists of two collections of lyrics translated into German,[33] prepared for the benefits of a researcher into Scottish folk songs, Robert Jamieson, who had taken an active interest in Latvian folk songs during the time he spent in Riga (1805–1808). A small number of the translations due to G. Bergmann were included in a publication co-authored by Robert Jamieson, Henry Weber, and Walter Scott, *Illustrations on Northern Antiquities* (1814). Copies of both books by G. Bergmann, with R. Jamieson as intermediary, were deposited in the library of Walter Scott, and, subsequently in 1831, John Bowring, an English politician and translator, wrote an overview about Latvian folk poetry based on these books, including translation of a selection of folk song lyrics, which was published in *The Foreign Quarterly*

[31] Vīķe-Freiberga, V. *Kultūra un latvietība.* Rīga: Karogs, 2010, 25. lpp.

[32] Bergman, G. *Erste Sammlung Lettischer Sinngedichte*. Ruien, 1807, S. 60 [238 dz.]; Wahr, F. D. *Palcmariešu dziesmu krājums*. Ruien, 1808, 64 lpp. [412 dz.]; Bergman, G. *Zweyte Sammlung Lettischer Sinn=oder Stegreifs Gedichte*. Ruien, 1808, S. VIII+72 [252 dz.].

[33] See the manuscripts: *Erste Sammlung Lettischer Sinn=oder Stegreifs Gedichte, wŏrtlich übersetzt von dem Sammler Gustav Bergmann für Herrn Robert Jamieson 12. Juli* 1807; *and, Zweyte Sammlung Lettischer Sinn- oder Steg- reifsgedichte für Herrn Robert Jamieson von Gustav Bergmann in Ruien 24. August 1808* – the originals are in the British Museum with copies in the National Library of Latvia.

Review (1831).[34] The transposition of folk songs into English was not particularly successful, and was roundly and harshly criticised by Baltic German literary figures.[35]

The most significant collection of folk songs[36] collected and published by Baltic German scholars during the first half of the century (1844) is due to Georg Büttner, a pastor from Kabile. Some 2854 folk songs were included in this collection out of 5324 folk songs collected from various regions of Latvia, which he evaluated from an aesthetic point of view, and sequenced following a topographical principle. Some 2470 folk songs remained in handwritten form, and these were later included in publications by Krišjānis Barons. In 1858, G. Büttner published an account in the Latvian press concerning dissemination of his collection — it was in great demand — and made the first appeal for Latvians themselves to continue the collection of folk songs.[37] At that time, G. Büttner had developed the thematic outline for a subsequent publication supplemented by more folk songs, and a pastor from Lugaži, Karl Christian Ulmann, engaged in this effort under the direction of August Bielenstein. In 1874 and 1875, two collections (notebooks) were published[38] consisting of 4793 folk songs; no further work took place as Latvians began themselves to publish collections of folk songs.

Among all Baltic German scholars of the 19th century, August Bielenstein (Fig. 4) deserves mention as the foremost Letonist[39]. As an investigator of the Latvian language, history, folklore, and ethnography, in 1861, he published an appeal[40] for information about the Latvian language and place names, collected folk tales, *ziņģes* and their melodies, riddles, proverbs, as well as information about religion, superstitions, and various traditions applicable to daily occurrences. He carried out important scholarly archaeological and ethnographic studies, making use in these of folk songs, riddles, and popular beliefs as examples, translating these into German, becoming thereby one of the most eminent translators and promoters of Latvian folklore.[41]

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[34] Bowring, J. Lettish popular Poetry. *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, 8.15, 1831, pp. 61–78.

[35] See: Ulmann, C. C. Ueber Lettische Volkslieder, mit Bezugnahme auf eine Anzeige derselben in the foreign quarterly review (Vol. VIII, No. XV, 1831, S. 61–78). *Dorpater Jahrbücher für Litteratur, Statistik un Kunst, besonders Russlands*. Riga, Dorpat, 1834, S. 393–407. For a detailed exposition see: Bērziņš, L. *Greznas dziesmas*, 150.–162. lpp.

[36] Buettner, G. F. *Latviešu ļaužu dziesmas un ziņģes*. Latviešu tautai un viņas draugiem sagādātas no Latviešu draugu biedrības. Jelgava: J. F. Stefenhagens un dēls, 1844 (Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettisch-Literärischen Gesellschaft, VIII Band).

[37] Büttner, G. F. Lūgšana Latviešiem Kurzemē un Vidzemē. *Latviešu Avīžu pielikums Baznīcas Ziņas*, Nr. 17, 1858, 1.–3. lpp.

[38] Bielenstein, A. *Latviešu tautas dziesmas*. Sameklētas un piecdesmitam biedrības gadam par piemiņu drukātas no Latviešu draugu biedrības. Leipciga: A.Th. Engelhardt, I – 1874, II – 1875.

[39] Stradiņš, J. Augusts Bīlenšteins un letonistika. (Ceļavārdi). *Augusts Bīlenšteins un latvieši*. Starptautiskas zinātniskas konferences "Dr. Augusts Bīlenšteins par latviešu kultūras pamatvērtībām – arī Eiropā" referātu krājums. Rīga: Latvijas Akadēmiskā bibliotēka, 2007, 3. lpp.

[40] Bielenstein, A. Latviešu valodas un tautas mīļotājiem ziņa un lūgšana. *Latviešu Avīzes*, Pielikums pie Nr. 41, 1861, 1.–3. lpp.; Bielenstein, A. Cienīgiem mācītājiem un skolmeistariem lūgšana. *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 41, 1862, 325.–327. lpp.; Nr. 42, 1862, 334.–335. lpp.

[41] Vīksna, M. Augusta Bīlenšteina ieguldījums latviešu folkloristikā. *Augusts Bīlenšteins un latvieši*. Rīga: Latvijas Akadēmiskā bibliotēka, 2007, 39.–45. lpp.

A. Bielenstein published a collection of riddles,[42] and he wrote down several hundred folk-tales, which he presented to Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis, the greatest collector and scholar of Latvian narrative folklore. In 1891, A. Bielenstein was the first person to support the establishment of folklore material archives, so as to store centrally all materials which were published in the press, to prevent their dispersal and for these to be readily available for researchers.[43]



Fig. 4. August Bielenstein (Ambainis O. *Latviešu folkloristikas vēsture*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1989)

From the middle of the century onwards, Latvians, moved by appeals from Baltic German scholars and the example of Estonian activities in folklore collection, began writing down and publishing their own folklore themselves, which marked the start of the New Latvians (Young Latvians) period in the appreciation of folklore. Jānis Cimze was one of the first educated Latvians to collect the melodies of Latvian folk songs and use them for educational purposes[44]; he founded and led the teachers' seminar of Vidzeme (widely known as the Cimze Teachers' Seminar, 1839–1881, held in Valmiera and Valka). The century-long experience of the Herrnhuter (Moravian) Brothers' Movement in Vidzeme[45] (from the 1730s to 1948) also stimulated interest in recording folk melodies and their harmonisation; furthermore, J. Cimze was inspired by his own experience of spending 1838 in Germany, furthering his musical education under the tutelage of Ludwig Erk. In 1858, several graduates of the seminar led by J. Cimze published five melodies and the lyrics of 54 Latvian folk songs.[46] J. Cimze published his own collection of melodies, *Dziesmu Rota* (A Garland of Songs) between 1872 and 1884,[47] which very considerably influenced the First All Latvian Song Festival in 1873. (Song Festival movements continue to be active in the Baltic, and have been inscribed in the UNESCO Register of World Memory.) It is noteworthy that, in addition to the harmonisation following German principles of numerous Latvian folk songs, *Dziesmu rota* also contained many

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[42] Bielenstein, A. *1000 Lettische Räthsel.* Mitau: Eduard Sieslack, 1881, S. 131.

[43] Āronu Matīss. *Latviešu literāriskā (Latviešu Draugu) biedrība savā simts gadu darbā*. Rīga, 1929, 55.–256. lpp.

[44] In 1842, an article by J. Cimze, "Űber lettische Schűlbucher", was submitted to the Latvian Literary (Friends of Latvians) Society; the article remained unpublished and its manuscript is held at the Academic (Misiņa) Library at the University of Latvia..

[45] See: Blumbergs, A. J. *Pietismus* and the *Herrnhuter Brudergemeine* in Livonia. *The Nationalization of Latvians and the Issue of Serfdom. The Baltic German Literary Contribution in the 1780s and 1790s.* Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2008, pp. 38–43. See also: Рыжакова, С. И. Гернгутерское движение и латышская национальная история. *Historica Lettica: Национальная история и этническая идентичность. О конструировании и культурном реферировании прошлого латышей.* Москва: Институт этнологии и антропологии, 2010, с. 247–248.

[46] *100 dziesmas un ziņģes ar notēm* no J. Kakting un J. Caunīt. Rīga: E. Plates, 1858.

[47] Cimze, J. *Dziesmu rota jaunekļiem un vīriem* [I–III d.]. Leipciga, Rīga, 1872–1874; *Dziesmu rota jauktiem koriem* [IV–V d., VII–VIII d.]. Rīga, 1875, 1884; *Dziesmu rota skolas bērniem* [VI d.]. Rīga, 1876. (II, III, IV, VI, VII daļa "Lauku puķes" – Latvian folk songs; I, V, VIII daļa "Dārza puķes" – German folk songs.)

German folk melodies and original melodies, a fact which led to considerable controversy in Latvian intelligentsia circles at that time.[48] Cimze's arrangements of folk songs and the choir traditions that he initiated have influenced individual collectors of folk song melodies and lyrics for over 150 years.

The New Latvians and extensive collection of folklore (from the first half of the 19th century to the early 20th century)

Subsequent collection and treatment of folklore during the second half of the 19th century was associated with the New Latvian' movement. Initially this was a group of students at the University of Dorpat (Tartu), who drew inspiration from Krišjānis Valdemārs (who studied there 1855–1858). Jēkabs Zvaigznīte, an instructor at the Cimze Seminar, responded to appeals and inserted in the almanac for 1860 titled *Sēta, daba, pasaule* (The Farmstead, Nature, the World), an extensive review article, "Par latviešu tautasdziesmām" (On Latvian folk songs), containing 132 texts of folk songs which he had collected personally.[49] Faced with resistance by the Baltic German nobility, all important activities by the New Latvians in the field of national culture took place outside of Latvia in the principal cultural centres of Russia, i.e. St Petersburg and in Moscow. The newspaper *Pēterburgas Avīzes (*St Petersburg News) (1862–1865), initiated by K. Valdemārs and K. Barons, published a mini-collection of folk songs in 1864.[50] After publication of this newspaper was halted in 1865, its staff including K. Valdemārs and K. Barons were forbidden to live in, or even to enter the territory of Vidzeme and Kurzeme.

In Russia, K. Valdemārs and other New Latvians collaborated with Russian scholars both at the St Petersburg Imperial Russian Geographical Society (K. Valdemārs became a full member in 1865), and with the Moscow-based Russian Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology, and Ethnography, whose leadership had tasked Russian ethnographers with taking an interest in the "borderland" peoples, their mutual relations, and their relations with the ruling Slavic — Russian — people. Slavophiles opposed Polonisation (in Lithuania) and Germanisation (in Latvia and in Estonia) in the Baltic governorates.[51] K. Valdemārs skilfully used opportunities held out by Slavophiles to familiarise Russian scholars with Latvian folklore. The first book useful in this regard[52] was published in 1868 in Vilnius by a convert to Russian

[48] Klnn. [Kalniņš] Dziesmas un dziedāšana. *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 42, 1872, 365.–366. lpp.; Baumaņu Kārlis. Dziesmu rota jaunekļiem un vīriem. Trešā daļa. No Jāņa Cimzes. *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 44, 1874, 343.–345. lpp.; [17 latvju skolotāji] Par latviešu tautasdziesmām. *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 2, 1875, 12.–14. lpp.

[49] [Zvaigznīte J.] Par latviešu tautasdziesmām. *Sēta, daba, pasaule*, III. Tērbata, 1860 [132 dz.].

[50] [Neimanis] Zūrenieku dziesmas. *Pēterburgas Avīžu Pielikums*, Nr. 24, 1864, 10.–12. lpp.

[51] Infantjevs, B. *Latviešu un krievu folkloristu sakari latviešu buržuāziski-nacionālās kustības laikā*. Rīga, 1950, 34. lpp. (This is one variation of the doctoral thesis by Boriss Infantjevs; all copies are held by the LFK.) Sk. arī: Инфантьев Б. Ф. *Балто-славянские культурные связи. Лексика, мифология, фольклор*. Рига: ВЕДИ, 2007.

[52] Спрогис, И. *Памятники Латышскаго народнаго творчества*. Вильна, 1868. (1857 song lyrics are printed using Russian letters, with a facing translation into Russian.)

Orthodoxy, Jānis Sproģis, who had in 1866–1867 collected Latvian folklore materials, acting on a suggestion by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. This collection contained 1857 songs, with the lyrics of the Latvian folk songs written in the Cyrillic alphabet, i.e. using Russian letters (a prohibition was in effect in Lithuania and in Latgale, instituted after the Polish uprising of 1863, forbidding printing text using the Latin alphabet; this affected book publishing over 40 years), with parallel text translation into Russian. The collection was ordered following the principle of grouping folk songs by the objects described therein — a principle not best suited to presenting the deeper message of folk songs. The book also included 52 riddles and three proverbs.[53]

In 1867, K. Valdemārs moved to Moscow, whereupon subsequent preparation of folklore collections was associated with the capital of the empire and with the Russian Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology, and Ethnography. Profits earned during the 1867 All-Russia Ethnographic Exhibition held in Moscow were intended for supporting ethnographic studies and trips, with a fixed amount (750 roubles) earmarked for an expedition to Latvia. A suitable candidate was found — Fricis Brīvzemnieks (Treilands) (Fig. 5) — an interesting, educated young Latvian, who had had no links with *Pēterburgas Avīzes*, and who was thus free to enter Latvia. After serious theoretical preparation, F. Brīvzemnieks spent the summer months of 1869 and 1870 travelling throughout Latvia, collecting a considerable quantity of valuable materials as well as leaving behind interested individuals as representatives to continue the work that he had begun. Several appeals by F. Brīvzemnieks for assistance published in the press[54] resulted by the end of 1870 in a variety of folklore materials flowing to Moscow. Following the expedition, F. Brīvzemnieks was able, in 1873, to constitute a collection of 1118 folk songs[55], which was published by the Moscow-based Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology, and Ethnography. Once again Latvian lyrics were printed using the Cyrillic alphabet, with a parallel translation into Russian. After that, F. Brīvzemnieks put into order materials of different genres, which had been collected, and the next publication was devoted to proverbs, riddles, and magic spells (in this case the text in Latvian was printed using letters of the Latin alphabet), with a total of 1707 proverbs, 1682 riddles, and around 700 magic spells and examples of folk medical advice.[56] F. Brīvzemnieks mentioned the names of 80 co-workers in the introduction to this publication. The 12 most industrious senders of materials were accepted into the Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology, and Ethnography, while the Society awarded a Silver Medal to this work. The first collections of folk tales and legends assembled by F. Brīvzemnieks

[53] Ozols, A. *Raksti folkloristikā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1968, 130. lpp.

[54] Brīvzemnieks, F. Zinātnības un tautas draugiem. *Latviešu Avīzes*, Nr. 38, 1877, 301.–302. lpp.; *Baltijas Zemkopis*, Nr. 37, 1877, 296.–297. lpp.; *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 37, 1877, 294. lpp.

[55] Бривземниекс, Фр. *Сборник антропологических и этнографических статей о России и странах ей прилежащих*, книга II. Москва: В. А. Дашков, 1873. (1118 folk songs printed using Cyrillic alphabet, sided by translation in Russian.)

[56] Бривземниекс, Фр. *Труды этнографического отдела. Книга VI. Материалы по этнографии латышского племени*. Москва, 1881.



Fig. 5. Fricis Brīvzemnieks (*Latviešu literatūras vēsture*, I. Latviešu folklora, literatūra līdz 19. gs. vidum. Rīga: LPSR ZA izdevniecība, 1959)

appeared in 1887: first a version in Russian containing 148 texts[57] and then, a Latvian version consisting of 27 texts.[58] In total, F. Brīvzemnieks, and, later Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis, together published approximately 1000 folk tales.[59] The first collections of different folklore genres were published over nearly 20 years, and F. Brīvzemnieks has been justifiably identified as the founder of Latvian folklore studies. Collecting folklore became a mass movement at the end of the 19th century thanks to his efforts, the attention that he paid to helpers, and his personality.

The collection of folk songs published in 1873 was only part of the extensive body of materials received, and, therefore K. Valdemārs recommended in 1878 that a selection be made of the most beautiful songs which would then be accessible to the Latvian reader and also would encourage supplementing what had already been collected. Valdemārs entrusted this task to K. Barons (Fig. 6). A selection of folk songs was published in 1888 by the school teacher, later journalist and scholar Āronu Matīss, in time for the 3rd Latvian National Song Festival;[60] this was done independently of the New Latvians in Moscow, thus, K. Barons had no need to rush to publish folk songs, but instead was able to consider how to deal with the totality of everything which had been collected, and which Brīvzemnieks had received (at that time 54 000 texts). To facilitate his work, K. Barons commissioned, and in 1880 a German craftsman carpenter in Moscow built, a special cabinet with 70 drawers designed to accept slips of paper with classical quatrains written on them. An important symbol of Latvian culture was thus created, which in 2001 was inscribed on the World list of Memory as the *Cabinet of Folksongs*.[61] Materials continued to arrive, and in the index to the 5th volume of *Latvju dainas* (*Latvian Folk Songs*)" (*LD*), under the entry "Alphabetical list of collectors, recorders, singers", Barons gave the names of some 900 co-workers, which provides insight into a broad, nationally minded segment of the nation.[62] During the preparation of the *LD* volumes for publication (1878–1915), Barons had to process 217 996 text records, as he received copies (not all of equal quality) of both major collections of folklore texts in Latvia: around 59 000 records from the

[57] Бривземниекс, Фр. *Сборник по этнографии*. Вып. II. Москва, 1887.

[58] *Mūsu tautas pasakas* F. Brīvzemnieka sakrātas, izdotas no RLB ZK Derīgu grāmatu apgādāšanas nodaļas. Rīga, 1887.

[59] Vīksna, M. Friča Brīvzemnieka pasakas Anša Lerha-Puškaiša un Pētera Šmita krājumos. *Letonica*, Nr. 20, 2010, 181.–189. lpp.

[60] *Mūsu tautas dziesmas*. Pa tēvijas kalniem un lejām lasitas un vaiņagā vītas. Rīga: Pūcīša Ģederta un biedra apgādība, 1888.

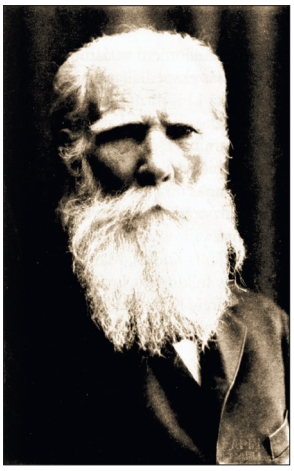
[61] Dainu skapis — Cabinet of Folksongs. *Memory of the World.* UNESCO, 2012, pp. 374–375.

[62] Vīksna, M. Tautas gara bagātību glābēji un sargātāji. *Paliekamdziesma. Krišjānim Baronam 150*. Rīga: Liesma, 1987, 55.–63. lpp. See also: Vīksna, M. Dziesmu krājēju — uzrakstītāju un dziesmu teicēju — dziedātāju alfabētiskais saraksts (Rādītājs). *No dainu skapja līdz "Latvju Dainām"*. Rīga: LU LFMI, 2015, 83.–366. lpp.

Knowledge Commission of the Riga Latvian Society (RLS) and around 19 000 records from the Literature Department of the Jelgava Latvian Society.

The method for identifying the typology of folk song texts developed by K. Barons allowed classifying 217 996 text records into 35 789 separate types, according to the phases of life of an individual, work and social relationships, the portrayal of annual customs and mythical themes. Henrijs Visendorfs (Fig. 7), a Latvian merchant living in St Petersburg, helped secure the resources for publication of so extensive a work. He personally financed publication of Volume 1 of the *LD* and was able to arrange for the remaining volumes to be published by the Printing House of the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences. H. Visendorfs also suggested replacing use of the term *folk song* (*tautas dziesma*) with the term *daina*, which was rarely used by Latvian language speakers, except in the regions adjoining Lithuanian areas (it was commonly used by Lithuanian speakers); thus the work was given the title of *Latvju dainas*.

Latvju dainas[63] became the first comprehensive scholarly publication of folk songs which encompassed all available collections of folk songs which had been published prior to 1912. In this way *Latvju dainas* was the culmination of the national romantic period of Latvian cultural history begun in mid-19th century. Collection of folklore, in particular folk songs, and its publication was one of the cornerstones of the cultural programme of the New Latvians movement. This was a national task — to demonstrate to the educated world that Latvians who lived under the aegis of Tsarist Russia and who had for a long time been subjected to a German nobility, were an independent people possessing a unique and ancient culture, whose



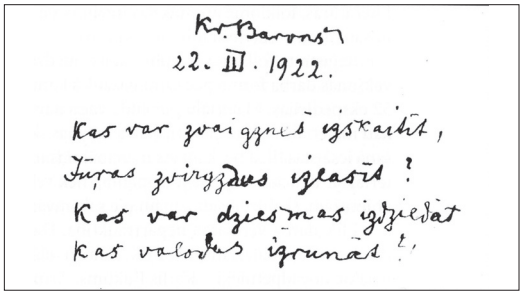
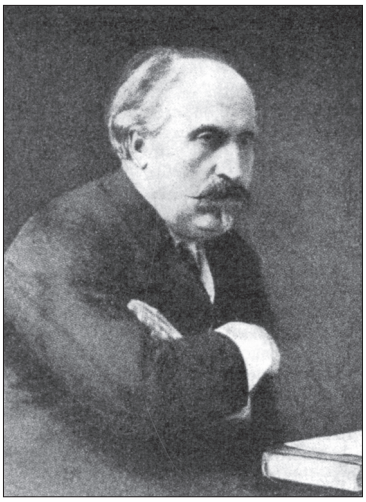


Fig. 6. Signature of Krišjānis Barons, 1922. (*Latvju dainas*. K. Barona kopojumā, 1. sēj. 2. iespiedums. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1922)



Fig. 7. Henrijs Visendorfs, Krišjānis Barons, and Fricis Brīvzemnieks in 1901. (*Krišjānis Barons.* Arājs, K. (sast.). Rīga: Zinātne, 1984, 107. lpp.)

[63] Barons, K., Visendorfs H. *Latvju Dainas*, I. Jelgava, 1894, II–VII, Pēterburga, 1903–1915.



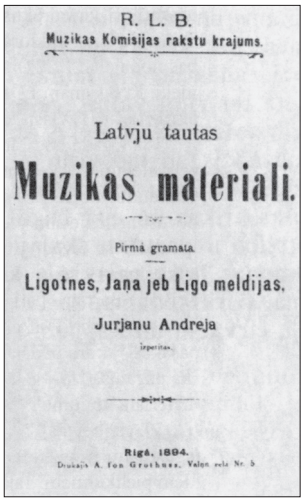
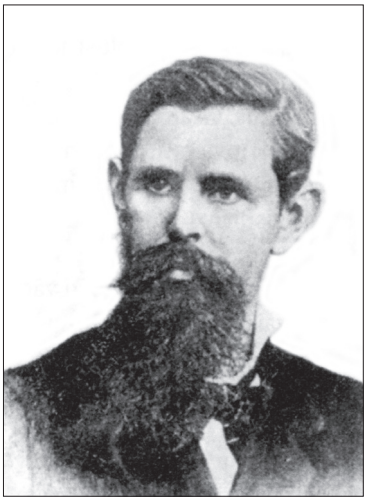


Fig. 8. Title page from the first book of *Latvju tautas mūzikas materiāli* (Latvian Folk Music Materials) compiled by Andrejs Jurjāns (1894) (*Krišjānis Barons.* Arājs, K. (sast.). Rīga: Zinātne, 1984, 94. lpp.)



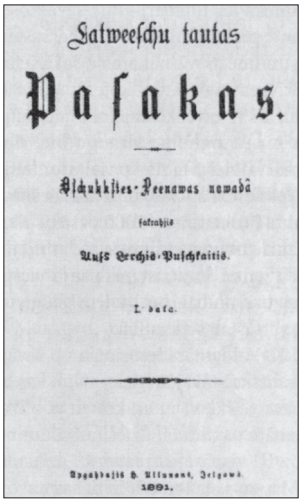


Fig 9. Title page of Part 1 of the publication edited by Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis, *Latviešu tautas pasakas* (Latvian Folk Tales) (1891) (*Krišjānis Barons*. Arājs, K. (sast.). Rīga: Zinātne, 1984, 94. lpp.)

language was particularly close linguistically to its original Indo-European stock,[64] as noted by the folklorist Dace Bula.

The work begun by J. Cimze in the field of folk music was continued by the Music Commission created in 1888 under the aegis of the RLS. The collection of melodies by individual correspondents was organised and led by Andrejs Jurjāns (1856–1922) (Fig. 8); the individual collectors were mostly rural school teachers and choir conductors, supplemented by short expeditions to verify recorded melodies and to collect new ones. The collection *Latvju tautas mūzikas materiāli* (Latvian Folk Music materials) compiled by Andrejs Jurjāns[65] (with circa 3000 melodies) started to appear in 1894 at the same time as Vol. 1 of the *LD*, and these were the first scientific publications and studies of folk music.

Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis (Fig. 9) continued with the collection and publication of folk tales in a seven-part work, *Latviešu tautas teikas un pasakas* (Latvian Folk Legends and Folk Tales),[66] which comprised around 6000 folk tales and legends (from 1891 to 1903). The first volume of the seventh part was published during the author's lifetime (in

[64] Bula, D. Priekšvārds. Barons K. *Latvju dainas = Latvian folksongs. Interlinear translation = Lettishe Volkslieder. Interlinearübersetzung = Латышские народные песни. Подстрочники*. 2. atkārt. un papild. izd. Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2012, 6. lpp.

[65] Jurjāns, A. *Latvju tautas mūzikas materiāli*, I–VI sēj. Rīga, 1894–1926.

[66] Lerhis-Puškaitis, A. *Latviešu tautas teikas un pasakas*, I–VII. Jelgava, Rīga, Cēsis, 1891–1903; Rīga: Atēna, 2001.

1903), while the second volume of the seventh part[67] was only published nearly 100 years later, in the 21st century.

We may conclude that the movement of collecting folklore of all kinds initiated by the New Latvians, in which members from different levels of society became engaged, resulted in three fundamental and cultural historical publications for Latvians: *Latvju dainas*, by Krišjānis Barons, *Latvju tautas mūzikas materiāli* by Andrejs Jurjāns, and the seven-part publication by Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis, *Latviešu tautas teikas un pasakas*.

Continued study of Latvian folklore — the Archives of Latvian Folklore (from 1924 onwards)

Along with the foundation of the independent state of Latvia, folklore studies were recognised to be an important national policy, and new state cultural and scientific institutions were established to this end: *Kultūras fonds* (Culture Fund), *Pieminekļu valde* (The Monuments' Board), and *Latviešu folkloras krātuve* (The Archives of Latvian Folklore, ALF). The ALF was established in 1924 as an autonomous entity within the Monuments' Board, with Anna Bērzkalne as its first director. She had graduated for Kazan University and studied folkloristics with Professor Walter Anderson in Estonia, before continuing her studies in Finland, Denmark, and Germany; she spoke 12 languages. While working at a school in the early 1920s, she had organised the collection of folklore by students. The first members of staff at the ALF were students of A. Bērzkalne who took stock of materials that had been received, produced systematic genre indexes, made copies and bound them into catalogues. At present the ALF holds 2175 collections.

More than 250 000 folk songs were collected during the first three years of the work of the ALF, and four volumes of folk songs with Pēteris Šmits as editor were published at the end of the 1930s to supplement the work *Latvju dainas* by K. Barons.[68] The first scientific works produced by the ALF consisted of studies of *Latvju dainas*; in 1926, Ernests Brastiņš compiled a guide to the mythological characters found in this publication; over several years, students at the University of Latvia compiled and systematised a list of nouns found therein (this list was digitalised and published in 1994[69]); and A. Bērzkalne compiled a list of the long folk songs in the *LD* collection (from 12 to more than 100 lines each) which was published in Finland in 1938.[70]

On the basis of the original *Latvju dainas* publication, two multi-volume compilations of folk songs were prepared using the "new orthography", i.e. the Latin alphabet:

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[67] *Latviešu tautas teikas un pasakas*, VII daļa, 2. sēj. Krājumu kārtojis un pēc vielas — sakarā ar iepriekšējām sešām daļām — iedalījis Anss Lerhis-Puškaitis. Rīga: Atēna, 2001.

[68] Šmits, P. (red.). *Tautas dziesmas. Papildinājums Kr. Barona "Latvju dainām"*, I–IV. Rīga: Latviešu folkloras krātuve, 1936–1939.

[69] *Krišjāņa Barona Latvju Dainu substantīvu rādītājs*. Rīga: Latviešu folkloras krātuve, 1994.

[70] Bērzkalne, A. *Typenverzeichnis lettischen Folkromanzen in den Sammlung Kr Baron's Latvju dainas*. Helsinki, 1938 (Folklore Fellows' Communications, Nr. 123).

one, edited by Ludis Bērziņš, bore the title, *Latvju dainas. Pamatdziesmas* (Latvian Folk Songs. The Core Songs), while the other work was edited by Jānis Endzelīns and compiled by Roberts Klaustiņš, with the title, *Latvju tautas dainas* (The Folk Songs of the Latvian People).[71]

Emilis Melngailis was the most renowned collector and scholar of folk music over nearly 50 years (his first arrangements date from 1902), during which time he wrote down 4600 folk melodies.[72] Many professional musicians have assisted the ALF in classifying recorded melodies and registering them by means of a phonograph; the authors of *ziņģes* have also been identified.

Pēteris Šmits successfully expanded the study of Latvian folk tales based on those collected by A. Lerhis-Puškaitis, editing and publishing a 15-volume work on folk tales and legends.[73] Pēteris Birkerts was a collector and scholar of proverbs, sayings, riddles, and anecdotes, i.e. examples of short-form folklore.[74] Folklore materials were also collected from among the minority peoples of Latvia.[75]

Scholars from Latvia took an active part in on-going European processes of the study of folklore, as well as being members of the communications network, "Folklore Fellows"; activities included participation in work of the *Commission Internationale des Arts Populaires* in 1928, 1929, and 1930, and attendance at the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences held in 1934 and in 1938. A recent overview by Latvian folklore specialists provides a detailed insight into the work of their colleagues during the inter-war period.[76]

The Archives of Latvian Folklore enjoyed close contacts with similar institutions in Europe, in particular those in Lithuania. The first ALF expedition to the Couronian Spit in Lithuania took place in 1931, in the course of which mostly linguistic materials were collected. During this period, a total of 2.3 million units of folklore were registered by the ALF.

Following Soviet occupation in the summer of 1940 and a radical change in political power, a number of decisions were adopted on the function of culture institutions. The Culture Fund was kept as a department within the People's Commissariat for Education, while the Archives of Latvian Folklore was subordinated to Board of Universities and Research Institutes. Work in progress at the Archives continued, for example the work, *Ievads latviešu tautas dzejā. I. daļa. Metrika un stilistika* (Introduction to Latvian Folk Poetry. Part I. Metrics and Stylistics) by Ludis Bērziņš was published, and

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[71] *Latvju dainas. Pamatdziesmas*, I–VI. L. Bērziņa sakopojumā. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1928–1932; *Latvju tautas daiņas*, I–XII. Endzelīns, J. (red.), Klaustiņš, R. (sakārt.). Rīga: Literatūra, 1928–1932.

[72] Melngailis, E. *Latviešu muzikas folkloras materiali*, I–III. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1951–1953.

[73] *Latviešu pasakas un teikas*, I–XV. Pēc A. Lercha-Puškaiša un citiem avotiem sakopojis un rediģējis P. Šmits. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1925–1937.

[74] Birkerts, P. (sast.). *Latvju tautas mīklas.* Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1927; *Latviešu sakāmvārdi un parunas*. Birkerts, P., Birkerte, M. (sast.). Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1927; Birkerts, P. (sast., red.). *Latvju tautas anekdotes*, I–IV. Rīga: Literatūra, 1929–1930.

[75] Vīksna, M. Folklore Materials of Ethnic Minorities in the Latvian Folklore Archives. *Journal of the Baltic Institute of Folklore*, Vol. 3, 2000, pp. 24–29.

[76] *Latvian Folkloristics in the Interwar Period.* Bula, D. (Ed.). Porvoo: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 2017, 281 pp.

the work compiled by Pēteris Šmits, *Latviešu tautas ticējumi* (Latvian Folk Beliefs) started to appear.[77]

After the death of K. Barons, the Cabinet of Folksongs and materials not published in *LD* were stored in a bank safe. When the Soviet authorities expropriated the contents of all banks in 1940, permission was granted to transfer handwritten materials to a research institute; the Archives of Latvian Folklore received these materials from the Barons' family, and also obtained from the Barons' family the archive of the Knowledge Committee of the Riga Latvian Society which they had saved, including the unpublished manuscript prepared by Ansis Lerhis-Puškaitis of Vol. 2 of Part VII of his compilation of folk tales (there were a total of 84 540 variants in this compilation), and the list of financial contributors to the Barons Society, linguistic materials, various documents, and, most importantly, the *LD* files of folk songs — the Cabinet of Folksongs.

During the German occupation, from 1941 to 1945, the Archives of Latvian Folklore was subordinated to the Directorate-General for Education and Culture. During extensive expeditions in the summers of 1942 and 1943 to various regions of Latvia, members of the ALF sought to record stories recounted by their parents and relatives living in these districts. A. Bērzkalne supervised microfilming during the winter 1942/43 of the contents of the Cabinet of Folksongs. Thereafter, the Cabinet of Folksongs, phonograph cylinders and part of the collection were locked in the basement safes of the Mortgage Bank and Savings Bank, while part of the collection of the ALF was evacuated in 1944 and was located at the end of the war in Džūkste and Irlava, inside the besieged Kurzeme Cauldron.

A number of eminent scholars became refugees, e.g. Arveds Švābe, Kārlis Straubergs, Ludis Bērziņš, and Edīte Hauzenberga-Šturma.

At the end of the war, the Soviet regime was renewed in Latvia. In Soviet Latvia, the Folklore Institute at the State University of Latvia was established in 1946 on the basis of the Archives of Latvian Folklore, and this was followed by links to various institutions, as well as by name changes: as part of the Institute for Ethnography and Folklore (1951–1956), and as part of the Language and Literature Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR (1956–1991), initially as the Folklore Sector, and later as the Folklore Unit.

The study of folklore was carried out under difficult conditions between 1946 and the mid-1950s, when the folklore specialists of Soviet Latvia were compelled to adopt the experience of how folklore (more precisely pseudo-folklore) was collected and studied in other Soviet republics, i.e. folklorists had to instruct folklore storytellers how to create appropriate texts about marvellous life in a kolkhoz, praising Stalin, etc.[78] The first expeditions to collect Soviet folklore materials were mounted in 1949 and 1950, and a small collection of Soviet folklore was published in 1950.[79]

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[77] Bērziņš, L. *Ievads latviešu tautas dzejā. I. daļa. Metrika un stilistika.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 1940; Šmits, P. *Latviešu tautas ticējumi*, I–IV. Rīga: Latviešu folkloras krātuve, 1940–1941.

[78] Kalniņa, I. Latviešu padomju folkloras konstrukcija. *Kultūra un vara.* Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2007, 30.–40. lpp.; Infantjevs, B. Latviešu padomju folklora, tās krāšanas metodes. *Letonica*, Nr. 11, 2004, 201.–207. lpp.

[79] *Latviešu padomju folklora. Izlase.* Rīga: LPSR ZA Folkloras institūts, 1950.

A complex expedition to the districts of Latvia was the principal form of collecting folklore after the Second World War, and, in all, 35 expeditions were made. The biography of each storyteller was very carefully noted, as well as the link between folk songs and customs; choreographic material was written down and studied, in addition to explanatory information about proverbs, storytelling and how variations were made.

During the Soviet period (from the mid-1950s to the end of the 1980s), folklore researchers sorted the folk songs which had been collected during the inter-war period, and started to prepare for publication a scholarly compendium in 15 volumes of folk songs; of these, five volumes (six books) were published.[80] As regards the study of folk tales, a type index which had been started by Alma Medne was completed and published.[81] There were also activities in the field of the minor forms of folklore, i.e. proverbs, riddles, as well as folklore for children.[82]

After the collapse of the USSR, the Institute of Literature, Folklore, and Art was established in Latvia in 1992, and the Folklore Unit regained its historical title, the Archives of Latvian Folklore.

Continuity of work has been evident at the ALF both in terms of collection of materials, for example, many staff members at *LD* have provided information and materials to the ALF (many local historians have collected folklore materials during their entire working lives)[83] — as well as in selecting relevant research topics. ALF collections are regularly added to.

Publication is ongoing of the extensive collection of folk songs. The next volume, the 11th in the series, *Latviešu tautas dziesmas* (Latvian folk songs) (Vols. 6–10)[84] is currently being readied for publication. Dace Bula, a researcher of folklore, has observed the following about the importance of folk songs for Latvian at various times: "That the New Latvians "discovered" precisely folk songs and made these into the feature which distinguishes Latvians was largely a continuation of the interest in folk poetry which J. G. Herder had encouraged in Europe. Interpretations were repeated and expanded upon, the purpose of which was to establish a link between the identity of the nation and folklore traditions.

Comparison of the three periods of national awakening demonstrates that there is an inherited element in the understanding of the essence of the people and their form of expression. National identity was symbolically connected to folk songs during the period of the New Latvians, as well as during the first years as an independent state, and also after the recovery of independence. The political and cultural context for each period has contributed different features to the self-image of the nation, but the inter-

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[80] *Latviešu tautasdziesmas*, I–V_2. Rīga: Zinātne, 1979–1984.

[81] Arājs, K., Medne, A. *Latviešu pasaku tipu rādītājs*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1977.

[82] Kokare, E. *Latviešu un lietuviešu sakāmvārdu paralēles.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1980; Kokare, E. *Latviešu un vācu sakāmvārdu paralēles = Lettische und deutsche Sprichwörterparallelen.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1988; *Latviešu bērnu folklora.* Greble, V. (sast.). Rīga: Zinātne, 1973; *Latviešu tautas mīklas.* Ancelāne, A. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas PSR ZA izdevniecība, 1954.

[83] See: Melne, E. (sast.). *Senos laikos Umurgā.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2006.

[84] *Latviešu tautasdziesmas.* Rīga: Zinātne. VI (1993), VII (2000), VIII (2006), IX (2008), X (2013).

action between the people and folk songs has invariably (often benefitting from inherited rhetoric) been linked with Latvianness, unity of the people, and the conceptual roots of the nation."[85]

Investigations corresponding to international directions in research are continuing regarding folk tales, as well as folk music materials.

The total number of folklore units registered with the ALF over 90 years exceeds 3 million variants, which number includes 36 000 variants of folk tales, approximately 58 000 legends, around 33 500 anecdotes, 19 500 stories, 545 000 riddles, 309 000 proverbs, 1 245 000 folk songs, 76 000 *ziņģes*, 73 000 children's songs, 14 000 album articles, 25 000 choreography materials, 389 000 popular beliefs, 47 000 customs, 30 500 melodies, 55 000 magic spells, 79 000 units of folk medical wisdom and other genres. This material cannot be valued highly enough as a source for research, publication and use in many sectors of intellectual life. With its storehouse of treasures, the ALF is relevant not only for Latvians and other residents of Latvia, but also for foreign researchers[86] and other interested parties, always remaining as the guarantor of a Latvian identity.

Latvian mythology

The term *Latvian mythology* covers two concepts which deserve closer attention. First of all, *mythology* (from the Greek μυθολογία — 'story telling') denotes both the set of myths and the research discipline oriented towards their study. In a narrower sense, myth is a genre of folklore, or a form of religious communication; various definitions of mythology depend on the standpoint of the researcher, which might be historical, sociological, psychological, etc.[87] Whereas there is no clearly identifiable genre of myth in Latvian oral tradition, mythical motifs, which may have been transformed in the past, are found in other genres of folklore, for example in folk songs. Elements of myths can be found in traditional customs, iconographic sources etc. The term *Latvian mythology* denoting a topic for research was first used in 1783 by the Baltic German pastor Gotthard Friedrich Stender; a supplement to his *Lettische Grammatik* bearing the title *Lettische Mythologie*, presented information about Latvian deities and spirts in a dictionary style, with less information given about annual customs.[88]

Secondly, to whom does the term *Latvian* refer in "Latvian mythology"? The Latvian language and, correspondingly, Latvians as a consolidated ethnos only emerged around the 16th century, through the melding of the Latgalian, Selonian, Semigallian, and Couronian ethnic groups who lived in the southern part of Livonia; these spoke

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[85] Bula, D. *Dziedātājtauta. Folklora un nacionālā ideoloģija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2000, 137. lpp.

[86] Grønstad, L. *Nordic and Baltic tradition archives: Summary of questionnaire responses.* Oslo: Norwegian Ethnological research, 2015. (An electronic document. Rita Treija contributed information about the LFK.)

[87] Dundes, A. (Ed.). *Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984.

[88] Stender, G. F. *Lettische Grammatik*, S. 260–271.

Baltic languages which differed to a lesser or greater extent from one another; in time assimilation occurred of the Livs who spoke a language belonging to the Finno-Ugric family of languages. The notion of *Latvian mythology* is taken to refer to a belief system inherited from the Baltic ethnic groups; hence, Latvian mythology is genetically linked to Indo-European mythology which has been reconstituted through historical comparative studies juxtaposing the mythological precepts of modern Indo-European peoples. The American archaeologist of Lithuanian origin Marija Gimbutas (also Gimbutienė) hypothesised that there were two distinct layers of Baltic religion: 1) the Old European, or pre-Indo-European, goddess-centered religion, which was formed at least around 3000–2500 BC, and which the incoming Indo-Europeans later took over, and 2) patrilineal Indo-European religion.[89] Gimbutas based her hypothesis primarily on an interpretation of Palaeolithic and Neolithic female figurines and images; however, this interpretation has been criticised as simplistic and overly tendentious, both by archaeologists and by historians of religion. This hypothesis has also not been particularly popular among researchers of Latvian mythology.

The Livs have left a certain influence on Latvian mythology, as they have on the Latvian language. Liv mythology, for which there remains scant and fragmentary evidence, is an entirely different research topic,[90] which will not henceforth be considered in this article. Thus, the term *Latvian mythology* not only covers Latvian mythology dating from after the 16th century, when Latvians had become an ethnos, but also includes the elements of Latgalian, Selonian, Semigallian, and Couronian belief systems. Although it is clear that the mythologies of these ethnic groups were partially common to those of the other Baltic peoples (Lithuanians and Old Prussians), there can be no doubt that they differed in nuances. There have been few scholarly attempts to reconstruct Couronian, Semigallian, Latgalian, or Selonian mythologies. Instead, numerous local traditions and beliefs which are possibly inherited from the aforementioned mythologies are compiled under the term *Latvian mythology* and attributed to the whole of the territory of Latvia, thus creating a belief system and a pantheon which, in fact, never existed. In-depth studies of local beliefs and their origins might be a productive field of research.

Another comment about the term *Latvian mythology* relates to its chronological framework. Theoretically this concept is not chronologically determined; however, in practice most scholars have sought to determine the mythology of the Ancient Latvians in the pre-Christian period. Although Christianity was officially accepted on the territory of Latvia at the beginning of the 13th century, up until the 18th century it was only superficially part of the religious life of the local people. The theologian Ludvigs Adamovičs points out that during the first centuries of Christianity, "it was not Catholic theology which determined the worldview of Latvians. To a certain extent it was influenced by Catholic magical cults, the miraculous legends of saints, and church practices. However, many elements of ancient Latvian religion were united with these

[89] Gimbutienė, M. *Senovės lietuvių deivės ir dievai*. Vilnius: Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 2002.

[90] See Loorits, O. *Liivi rahva usund. Mit einem Referat: Der Volksglaube der Liven*, I–V. Tartu: Eesti Keele Instituut, 1998–2000.

so that in the end, Catholicism during the 16th and even the 17th centuries was a truly Latvian Catholic mix or syncretism".[91] The confluence of pre-Christian and Christian beliefs was facilitated by the inclusion of several pre-Christian religious terms (for example, *Dievs* (God), *Velns* (Devil), *elks* (idol), *ragana* (witch) etc.) into the basic vocabulary of Christianity, and reinterpretation of these terms in line with the doctrines of Christianity and Christian demonology. Notwithstanding the essential layers of Christianity, many pre-Christian ideas and traditions, or their elements, were present in popular religion up until the 19th century.

With a few exceptions, the attempts made thus far to reconstruct the pre-Christian belief system have usually deliberately ignored the Christian layer of mythology.[92] This layer has even been regarded as a kind of rubbish, despite popular beliefs having been syncretic over the past seven hundred years. Additionally, this period witnessed essential developments in the beliefs of the Latvian people. It has to be borne in mind that almost all of the significant sources of Latvian mythology (written records, folklore, some archaeological findings), which are the sole evidence for Latvian mythology, date from this period. Consequently, syncretism and how it came about is one of the topics for future study of Latvian popular religion.

The sources of Latvian mythology

Archaeological sources provide evidence for the non-material culture and beliefs from the period predating written sources. This group of sources has been largely generated by archaeologists, since an archaeological artefact becomes a source of mythology only when a researcher interprets it as such. This group of sources which pertains to the time between the Mesolithic era (7600–4500 BC), to early modern times (until the 18th century) contains information about 1) ancient sacred places, their layout and the nature of activities which transpired there (sacrifices, cremation of the dead, etc.); 2) priests (holy men, shamans) and folk healers; 3) religious and magic items (zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figurines and amulets), magic symbols and ornaments; 4) burial traditions, which, in turn, are evidence for beliefs about the dead, the after-life and the world of the dead, etc. Occasionally it is possible to use folklore collected during the 19th–20th centuries to interpret archaeological sources.

Written records constitute another group of sources for Latvian mythology; however, they provide only a fragmentary and subjective insight into popular beliefs, inasmuch as these records were written by foreigners who were Christians, often priests. Their attitude towards Latvian popular beliefs was largely dismissive, and this questions their objective nature. Nevertheless, written sources provide significant information.

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[91] Adamovičs, L. Latviešu ieaugšana kristietībā. *Evaņģelija gaismā*. Rīga: Ev.-lut. Baznīcas virsvalde, 1939, 140. lpp.

[92] For example, Lielbārdis, A. Catholic Saints in the Latvian Calendar. *The Ritual Year 10. Magic in Rituals and Rituals in Magic*. Minniyakhmetova, T., Velkoborska, K. (eds.). Innsbruck–Tartu: ELM Scholarly Press, 2015, pp. 91–99.

The oldest written evidence for the mythology of the Baltic peoples, and, possibly that of peoples resident on the territory of Latvia are contained in passages by Cornelius Tacitus about the Aesti (*gentes Aestiorum*) in his work, *De origine et situ Germanorum* (written circa 98 AD), where it is asserted that they venerated "the mother of Gods" (*Matrem deum venerantur*).[93] More extensive written sources about the history of Latvia have survived from the 12th century onwards; however, the chronicles of that period (for example, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, and *The Rhymed Chronicle*) contain very sparse and fragmentary information about the beliefs of the indigenous people.

The most significant and extensive written data about the mythology of the residents of Latvia date from the 16th century onward. Quite detailed information may be found in the records of parish visitations. One of their purposes was to find out whether peasants continued to hold non-Christian beliefs, make offerings, and engage in casting spells. The first overall series of visitations in the Duchy of Courland took place in 1565, while visitations were carried out in Vidzeme under Swedish rule, after royal regulations for these were issued in 1633. Evidence about the mythology of the residents of the eastern part of Latvia during the 16th–17th centuries was included in yearbooks kept by the College of Jesuits. These documents contain the first mention of a number of deities and spirits (for example, about Ūsiņš, Laima, Dēkla, incubus, various mothers, etc.), as well as about sacred natural places and rituals performed there, about commemoration of the departed or feasting in their honour, etc.

Records of 16th to 18th century trials of witches, sorcerers, and werewolves constitute an important source of information on demonological beliefs and magic practices of the Early Modern Era. Persecution of witches on the territory of Latvia began in the 16th century and gradually petered out only during the first half of the 18th century. Court records of these trials illustrate how local beliefs mingled with the precepts of Christian demonology, which penetrated deeply into popular beliefs, and also provide copious evidence about witches and witches' Sabbaths, sorcerers and werewolves, black and white magic, folk healing, the fusion of the Christian Satan with the pre-Christian Devil (*Velns*), and other manifestations.

Folklore is the most comprehensive source for the study of Latvian mythology and the one which is most often referred to. A crucial shortcoming of folklore as a source for mythology is that it was systematically written down rather late, from the second half of the 19th century onwards, when a Christian worldview had been firmly established, therefore its usage in studying pre-Christian Latvian mythology is complicated.

The value of various genres of folklore is variable in respect of investigation into mythology. Folk songs have been the genre most extensively used in research carried out so far, to such an extent that the concept of "folk-song-based mythology" has been advanced: "... research into folk-song-based mythology has demonstrated a tendency to emerge as a distinct, independent branch of studies, with its own specific traditions,

[93] Tacitus C. P. *De origine et situ Germanorum*, chapter 45. Accessible at: http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/tacitus-germ-latin.html (site last visited 17.02.2016).

methods and research directions".[94] Thanks to the metric and stylistic canons of folk songs which can be regarded as a guarantee of the conservative nature of their content, evidence reflecting popular beliefs of historical and even pre-historical times has been retained in this genre.[95] Folk songs are the most important source for research into Latvian celestial gods and goddesses of fate.

Recourse to narrative folklore has been quite limited to date, as the opinion has prevailed that folk tales and legends largely reproduce international narrative motifs which are not related to the mythological beliefs of the particular region. Such an undifferentiated approach must be seen as unfounded — memorates (narratives reflecting the informant's own supernatural experience or that of a close individual) are an important source in the study of popular beliefs, as well as belief legends, which are related not only to the tradition of some specific supernatural being, but also to social reality, reflecting historical, religious and social factors linked to local customs, and, therefore, among all narrative genres, these best reveal national features.[96] The function of legends has largely been to regulate moral, ethical, religious, social, ecological, and other norms and therefore they usually contain portrayal of lower mythological beings — the guardians of various aspects of human life — and their interaction with people.

Studies of Latvian mythology

The most important compilations of written sources for Latvian mythology published thus far have been due to German scholar Wilhelm Mannhardt, who published during the first half of the 20th century,[97] and to the Lithuanian folklorist Norbertas Vėlius, whose extensive compilation covered written sources for Lithuanian mythology, supplemented selectively by sources of Latvian mythology.[98] Until now, the most comprehensive overviews of Latvian mythology have been published by folklorist Pēteris Šmits at the beginning of the 20th century[99], and by Elza Kokare at the end of the 20th century. Important studies of certain aspects of Latvian mythology were made following the foundation of the independent Republic of Latvia, as follows: by the theologian Ludvigs Adamovičs (the topography of the mythical world, the supernatural

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[94] Pakalns, G. Par Dieva namdurvīm tautasdziesmu mitoloģijā. *Latviešu folklora: Tradicionālais un mainīgais*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1992, 92. lpp.

[95] See for example: Kokare, E. *Latviešu galvenie mitoloģiskie tēli folkloras atveidē*. Rīga: Mācību apgāds NT, 1999, 10.–15. lpp.

[96] Jauhiainen, M. *The Type and Motif Index of Finnish Belief Legends and Memorates*. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia / Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1998, p. 19.

[97] Mannhardt, W. *Letto-Preussische Götterlehre*. Riga: Lettisch-literärische Gesellschaft, 1936 (Magazin der Lettisch-literärischen Gesellschaft, XXI).

[98] Vėlius, N. (ed.). *Baltų religijos ir mitologijos šaltiniai*, I–IV. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 1996–2005.

[99] Šmidts, P. *Latviešu mitoloģija*. Maskava: Latviešu rakstnieku un mākslinieku biedrība, 1918; Šmits, P. *Latviešu mitoloģija*. 2. pārstrādāts izdevums. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1926. Translated into Lithuanian, see: Šmits, P. *Latvių mitologija*. Vilnius: Aidai, 2004.

beings Jumis, the wealth-bringing spirit *pūķis*, etc.), Eduards Zicāns (studies of the celestial deities), the philologist Mārtiņš Bruņenieks (the dead and the goddesses of fate), the historian and folklorist Arveds Švābe (*Dievs* (God) and *Velns* (Devil), totemism), as well as by the folklorist Kārlis Straubergs, who continued his research of mythology after emigrating to Sweden during the Second World War (Latvian demonology, topography of the mythical world, and sacred places).

For ideological reasons, research into mythology was difficult during the 50 years of Soviet occupation of Latvia; nevertheless, a study about God and Devil in Latvian mythology by the folklorist Rita Drīzule, and extensive investigation of sacred places by the archaeologist Juris Urtāns, are noteworthy. However, research into Latvian mythology was continued between the 1940s–1980s by scholars who emigrated from Latvia during the Second World War. Kārlis Straubergs continued his studies of mythology after emigrating to Sweden. Monographs written by the theologian Haralds Biezais made a fundamental contribution to the research of Latvian celestial gods, the goddesses of fate, and *Dievs* and *Ūsiņš*. Liene Neulande who followed up on the work of Haralds Biezais wrote a monograph about *Jumis* in ancient Latvian religion, while Andrejs Johansons carried out studies of Latvian household and water spirits. The psychologist and folklorist Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga published numerous articles and books about Latvian mythology and specifically the many aspects of the Sun in Latvian folk songs.

Although the number of studies of mythological issues increased after restoration of Latvian independence in 1990, research is not proceeding with the same intensity as previously, and, furthermore, only folklorists are now involved in these studies. As mentioned above, an overview study of Latvian mythology has been published by Elza Kokare. Aldis Pūtelis has turned his attention to a critical analysis of the written sources of Latvian mythology. Investigations carried out by Janīna Kursīte have treated a wide range of topics from Latvian mythology, i.e. fate goddesses *Māra* and *Laima*, lower mythology, totemism, initiation and the myth of eternal return, etc., while the research of Guntis Pakalns deals with Latvian beliefs about the dead and the topography of the world of the dead. A monograph about the snake cult and dragons in Baltic, hence also Latvian mythology, has been produced by the German scholar Yvonne Luven. Gatis Ozoliņš has critically analysed the issue of totemism in Latvian folklore, while Rūta Muktupāvela has studied the elements of shamanism in Latvian folklore, and contemporary sacred places. Sandis Laime has explored the Latvian witchcraft belief system and its origins, and several types of ancient sacred places. During this period, Juris Urtāns has continued studying sacred sites. In their investigations, archaeologist Guntis Zemītis and art historian Baiba Vaska have analysed the symbolism of ancient ornaments and jewellery, while archaeologist Ilze Loze has studied Stone Age religious objects.

The philosopher and folklorist Toms Ķencis has published a monograph on the history of the study of Latvian mythology.[100]

[100] Ķencis, T. *A Disciplinary History of Latvian Mythology*. Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2012.

Latvian gods, goddesses and spirits

Elza Kokare has aptly pointed out that the Latvian "pantheon" of deities is not hierarchical, in that each deity and spirit operates in mostly autonomous fields, and there is little contact between deities.[101] For this reason, Latvian mythical beings cannot be ordered hierarchically or on the basis of their genealogy. Latvian deities and spirits have different regional distributions, and are characterised by a set of features which usually only become evident in their relations with people, but only rarely through their relationship with other mythical beings. The description of the features of some mythical beings (for example, *Dievs, Velns,* and *Pērkons*) tends to differ in different genres of folklore.

Kokare proposes classifying Latvian supernatural beings into seven categories: 1) celestial gods and goddesses — *Pērkons, Saule*, *Saules meitas*, *Dieva dēli*, *Mēness*, *Auseklis*; 2) a universal mythical being — *Dievs* (God); 3) female goddesses of fate (*Laima, Dēkla, Kārta, Māra*); 4) fertility deities and spirits with proper names (*Māra* and *Māršava*, *Ūsiņš, Tenis, Jumis*); 5) mothers; 6) lower supernatural beings — household spirits, guardians of the family, wealth-bringing spirits and demons (usually nameless spirits, guardians of the hearth, home, and household, wealth-bringing *pūķi*); 7) evil demons and ghosts (*ēni, ērmi, māži, ķēmi, spoki, lietuvēni, vadātāji*).[102]

The researcher notes that the lowest level of Latvian mythology has been the least studied.[103] This is also reflected in the scheme she offers for classification of mythical beings, which is readily applicable in classifying gods mentioned in folk songs, but is more difficult to apply to narrative folklore. The Devil or the various nature spirits, for example, do not fit into this classification scheme (they are not always evil demons), while the mothers, as a separate category of mythical beings, are grouped together by their morphological features, although in functional terms they ought to belong to different categories.

Janīna Kursīte has developed a classification system for the lower mythical beings, grouping spirits mentioned in various genres of folklore into three functional groups: 1) spirits who promote fruitfulness, fertility, and prosperity; 2) spirits who oversee a variety of natural features; 3) spirits who affect the fate of people and their vitality, and spirits who "disturb the peace".[104] By combining and slightly correcting the classification systems proposed by Kokare and Kursīte and taking functionality as the determining criterion, the following categorisation for Latvian gods, goddesses and spirits has been proposed:

1. The celestial gods and goddesses, which are personification of various natural phenomena and celestial bodies — *Dievs* (God, masculine), *Pērkons* (Thunder, masc.), *Saule* (Sun, feminine), *Saules meitas* (Daughters of the Sun), *Dieva dēli* (Sons of God),

[101] Kokare, E. *Latviešu galvenie mitoloģiskie tēli folkloras atveidē*, 26. lpp.
[102] Ibid., 25. lpp.
[103] Ibid., 191. lpp.
[104] Kursīte, J. *Latviešu folklora mītu spogulī.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1996, 320.–349. lpp.



Fig. 10. Visual representations of the sun and the moon carved into a sandstone cliff at Ramāti, dating from the 17th century. Photograph by Sandis Laime

Mēness (Moon, masc.), *Auseklis* (Morning Star, masc.), and *Ūsiņš* (masc.) — belong to the oldest layer of Latvian mythology, which is genetically related to Indo-European mythology. Archaeological objects related to solar and lunar symbolism have been found in Latvia dating from the Late Neolithic period (2100–1500 BC), when Indo-Europeans arrived on the territory of Latvia up until very recent times (Fig. 10).[105] Written records often contain standard formulations about the worship of various bright objects in the heavens, for example, Sebastian Münster wrote in his *Cosmographia* (1550) concerning peasants in Livonia, that there are among them "many who know nothing about God and his saints. One worships the sun, another — the moon, one chooses a beautiful tree to venerate, another — a stone, or something else which he fancies".[106]

One of the most popular deities in Latvian mythology is *Dievs* (God)[107] who is mentioned in all folklore genres, various sayings and also features in various mythical scenes. In a song cycle related to celestial gods, *Dievs* is depicted as the owner of a household on the Mountain of the Heavens. *Dievs* has sons who are married to the Daughters of the Sun. *Dievs* together with the female goddess of fate, *Laima*, determines the destiny of people, whereas in tales with the chthonic *Velns*, he is portrayed as the creator of the world, mankind, the animals and everything else. Initially the term *Dievs* meant "the heavens", and this term has many parallels in other Indo-European languages (for example, *deva* (god) and *dyauḥ* (heaven) in the Sanskrit, *deus* (god) and *dies* (day) in Latin etc.[108]). Starting from the Middle Ages, this term was used to refer to the Christian God, and this led to a confluence of the pre-Christian and Christian notions in the meaning of *Dievs*, to the extent that today the two ideas may be separated only with great difficulty.

In the earliest written sources, the principal god of the Baltic peoples is usually stated to be *Pērkons* (the Lithuanian *Perkūnas*, and *Percuni* of the Old Prussians, to be compared with *Perun* in the Slavic mythology, *Fjörgynn* in the Old Norse mythology, *Parjánya* in the Sanskrit, etc.) — a personification of the power of thunder, nature, and fertility. Sacred feasts laid on in honour of *Pērkons* were described in detail in 1610 by

[105] Zemītis, G. Solārās un lunārās simbolikas izpausmes Latvijas arheoloģiskajā materiālā. Zemītis G. *Ornaments un simbols Latvijas aizvēsturē.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 48.–58. lpp.

[106] Munsterus, S. *Cosmographei oder beschreibung aller länder.* Basel: Henrichus Petri, 1550, S. 929.

[107] Biezais, H. *Die Gottesgestalt der lettischen Volksreligion*. Stockholm, Göteborg, Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1961.

[108] Гамкрелидзе, Т. В., Иванов, В. В. *Индоевропейский язык и индоевропейцы: реконструкция и историко-типологический анализ праязыка и протокультуры*, 2. Тбилиси: Изд-во Тбилисского ун-та, 1984, с. 791.

Dean Dionysius Fabricius — a black calf, a black billy goat and a black rooster were sacrificed to *Pērkons* during an extended period of drought; after the sacrifice, a container of beer was carried three time in a circle around a bonfire, at the end the beer was poured into the fire. In the song cycle of heavenly wedding *Pērkons* acts either as suitor of the daughters of the Sun, or a relative of the bride. It is thought that *Pērkons* is identical with *debesu kalējs,* the "heavenly smith" mentioned in folk songs, considered to be the creator of the Sun in the Baltic mythology. In legends and beliefs *Pērkons* is the principal opponent and adversary of *Velns* and all chthonic spirits.



Fig. 11. A stone in Dzelzava civil parish — a sacred place of Ūsiņš. Photograph by Sandis Laime

Saule, the personified sun, is one of the most popular Latvian celestial female deities. The daily path followed by *Saule* is described in detail in folk songs — during the day she rises and gets into carriage or a sleigh and drives across the Mountain of the Heavens. In the evening coming to the shore of the World Sea, she floats across it in a boat to the East where the following morning she retraces the same route. In other variations of this song the route taken by *Saule* is symbolically related to the Tree of the Sun (the Latvian equivalent of *axis mundi*), which grows "alongside the path taken by Saule" — along which *Saule* dances or plays, but in the evening *Saule* leaves a belt hanging in this tree. As with *Dievs, Saule* also has a household on the Mountain of the Heavens, while the daughters of *Saule* are central figures in the myth of the heavenly wedding.

Haralds Biezais also includes *Ūsiņš* in the group of celestial gods as he is of the opinion that initially *Ūsiņš* had the role of a god of light in Latvian mythology, the bringer of springtime, who under the influence of Christianity merged with the image of St. George, becoming the patron of horses.[109] This assumption, it appears, might be substantiated by the sacred places related with *Ūsiņš* in the eastern part of Latvia (Fig. 11), which are associated with a complex of spring cycle traditions and the start of a new farming year, with the return of light and vegetation.[110]

The celestial gods play various roles in the proceedings of the mythical heavenly wedding reflected in folk songs. The essential part of this myth comprises the marriage of *Saule* or the *Daughters of Saule* with a male god, usually with *Auseklis*, less often with *Dievs*, the *Sons of Dievs*, or *Mēness,* or *Pērkons*. Latvian songs about the heavenly wedding have retained features of the wedding of the Asuras (daughters of the Sun God) as described in the Rigveda which testify to the ancient provenance of this myth.

[109] Biezais, H. *Lichtgott der alten Letten*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1976.

[110] Laime, S. Pirmās pieguļas nakts svinēšana un Ūsiņa kulta vietas Austrumlatvijā. *Letonica*, Nr. 18, 2008, 135.–159. lpp.

In comparison with other European peoples, the Latvian folk songs have retained the most comprehensive description of heavenly wedding.[111]

The theme in Latvian mythology related to activities of heavenly gods in the celestial bath house, mostly by the *Sons of Dievs* and the *Daughters of Saule*, is unique in comparison with other European peoples. A brief cycle of folk songs describes how the *Sons of Dievs* set up the bath house, in which they bathe afterwards and dance with the *Daughters of Saule*. Biezais has explained this episode by pointing to the great importance of bath houses in the daily life of Latvian peasants; the proceedings in the heavenly wedding's celestial bath house reflected and paralleled certain real episodes in the life of Latvian peasants.[112]

2. The goddesses of fate. Several Latvian goddesses are closely associated with the birth and destiny of individuals, and while mention is made in folk songs of *Laima*, *Dēkla*, and *Kārta*, as well as *Māra*, their popularity and regional distribution is very varied. Laima must without doubt be considered as the principal and oldest goddess of fate in Baltic mythology. A quantitative analysis of the folk songs contained in the publication *Latvju dainas* demonstrates this, i.e. *Laima* is mentioned in ~3100 folk songs, *Dēkla* in 165, *Kārta* in 13, while *Māra* is mentioned in ~800 folk songs. Of these deities, *Laima* is the only one to be equally popular throughout Latvia, as well as in Lithuania (*Laimė*), while the folk songs mentioning *Dēkla*, *Kārta*, and *Māra* were principally recorded in the western part of Latvia, in Kurzeme. Thus, the supposition popular during the 19th and early 20th centuries that Latvians, in the same way as the Greeks, the Romans and the Germanic peoples, had a trio of goddesses of fate, i.e. *Laima–Dēkla–Kārta*, must be discarded.

Laima is first mentioned in written records dating from the 17th century. Biezais notes that among other Indo-European goddesses of fate Latvian *Laima* has preserved the most archaic traits..[113] *Laima* is the protector of pregnant women, and when a child is born *Laima* determines the destiny of the new-born. The law as laid down by *Laima*, or the fate she has cast, could not be altered, including by *Laima* herself. Folk songs refer to a "weeping *Laima*", who is crying together with the person whom she has decided should lead a difficult life, since she is unable to change her decision. *Dievs* is also mentioned as someone who together with *Laima* could determine the life of an individual.

The functions attributed to *Māra* to a certain extent overlap with the responsibilities of Laima, but they are limited to guarding the health of wives and girls, as well as the well-being of children, while involvement in determining the fate of individuals is not explicitly mentioned in any text. There has been considerable debate over the origin of the character of *Māra* in Latvian mythology; on the one hand, she is seen as a Latvianised version of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who has some of the functions of

[111] Biezais, H. *Die himmlische Götterfamilie der alten Letten*. Uppsala: [Almqvist & Wiksells], 1972.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Biezais, H. *Die Hauptgöttinnen der alten Letten*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1955.

Laima, while on the other hand, she is regarded as a genuine Latvian goddess.[114] Although many powerful Christian influences are evident in the characteristic features of Māra, the proponents of the opposing view are able to marshal potent arguments.

3. *Velns* (Devil) is a supernatural being, whose characteristic features and functions have changed over time, including possessing very different capabilities under the influence of different ideologies. For this reason, the character of *Velns* comprises at least three layers:

1) *Velns* — an associate of *Dievs* in the creation of the world, its relief and the animals. These preconceptions feature most widely in cosmogonic and etiological tales, and only very slightly in folk songs.[115] *Velns* in this part of folklore material is portrayed as powerful, but not very quick-witted, and, therefore, both *Dievs* and people are usually able to fool him.

2) *Velns* — the opponent of *Pērkons* whom he persecutes — this is the principal subject of the so-called basic myth of Indo-European mythology as reconstructed by Vladimir Toporov and Vyacheslav Ivanov.[116] The fact of *Velns* having a chthonic origin, coming from the underworld, is explicit (he lives in caves, marshes, water, and underneath stones) and seeks to harm people during the hours of darkness; however, he cannot be seen as the incarnation of evil. Attempts have been made based on the etymology of the Latvian word *Velns* to show that he is associated with the dead and the world of the dead, but this view needs to be verified in greater detail.[117]

3) *Velns* — the anti-thesis of *Dievs*, evil incarnate. This understanding of *Velns* has come about under the influence of Christianity. Given that the term *Velns* was integrated into the terminology used by the Church, the image of *Velns* was infused with the characteristics of the Christian Satan. Over time, this term gained a more generalised meaning which referred to malicious or pagan spirits, whereupon the image of *Velns* was readily supplemented with features typifying supernatural beings of lower mythology.

Documents from 16th–18th century trials of witches and sorcerers offer an important source of information about the characteristics of *Velns*; in these documents, the features of a pre-Christian *Velns* are portrayed (for example in evidence about the abode of the Devil, i.e. hell, being located in certain marshes and lakes, which were the usual places of abode of the pre-Christian *Velns*), overlaid by features added during modern times, whereby the Devil is portrayed as a German noble, someone who recruits and teaches witches and sorcerers, with whom a contract is concluded, etc.

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[114] Biezais, H. *Die Hauptgöttinnen der alten Letten*; Kursīte J. *Latviešu folklora mītu spogulī*, 258.–315. lpp.; Zālīte, M. Pilna Māras istabiņa jeb tautasdziesmu Māras meklējumos. *Varavīksne*. Rīga: Liesma, 1985, 118.–155. lpp. u.c.

[115] Kursīte, J. *Latviešu folklora mītu spogulī*, 8.–31. lpp.

[116] Ivanov, V., Toporov, V. Le mythe indo-européen du dieu de l'orage poursuivant le serpent: Reconstruction du schéma. Pouillon J., Maranda P. (eds.). *Échanges et communications: Mélanges offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss à l'occasion de son 60ème anniversaire*. The Hague; Paris: Mouton, 1970.

[117] Biezais, H. Vēsture un struktūra baltu un slāvu folkloras un reliģijas pētniecībā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 10, 1990, 7.–28. lpp.

Despite the characteristics of *Velns* being amply reflected in a variety of sources (in practically all genres of folklore, records of witch trials of the 16th–18th centuries, records of parish visitations, texts of religious songs and sermons, toponymy, etc.), wide ranging studies have not been carried out about this mythological being. Several studies carried out at the turn of the 20th/21st century have analysed the places associated with *Velns* as mentioned in legends and toponyms, in this way trying to ascertain the cultural historical significance of these places.[118]

4. Spirits who promote the prosperity of households. This group of supernatural beings is rather large and varied, as these are linked to traditional Latvian peasant occupations, i.e. agriculture and live-stock farming. The associated spirits may be further classified into sub-groups by how they functioned.

1) House spirits. Although evidence has survived for house spirits in all districts of Latvia, their tradition survived the longest — up until the mid-19th century — in Northern Vidzeme. The remit of house spirits was the well-being of a holding — the fields, the beasts, the people — while the owner was obligated to feed them. The house spirits were fed either in a building (in a barn, bath house, or attic), or usually beside a large boulder (Fig. 12), tree, stone pile, or elsewhere within the boundaries of the holding, on certain feast days, while bringing in the harvest or when preparing a new meal, one which had not been prepared that year, of which the first morsel was offered to the spirits.[119] It is possible that in certain instances sacrifices made during building were associated with beliefs in house spirits, and evidence for such practice has survived from at least the Early Metal Period.[120]

2) The spirits of the hearth and fire. Although house spirits can sometimes be associated with the hearth and fire, there are several specific guardian spirits of fire and the hearth in Latvian mythology — notably, the *Uguns māte* (Mother of Fire), *kāsītis*, as well as, *Labrencis* (St. Lawrence), who was taken over from Catholic Christianity. In order to prevent buildings catching fire or clothes burning when set out by a campfire lit for a night-watch, offerings to these spirits would be made by casting these into the fire on certain days and under certain circumstances.

3) Guardian spirits of beasts whose well-being, health, and productiveness would thus be ensured, are of two kinds — those taken over from Catholic Christianity and those of local provenance. A guardian for swine, *Tenis*, or *Tanīss* (St. Anthony), a guardian of goats, *Bārbala* (St. Barbara), a guardian for sheep, *Anna* (St. Ann), and a guardian for calves, *Urbāns* (St. Urban) and their festive days were adapted from Catholic tradition. Through confluence with St. George, *Ūsiņš* acquired the characteristic of being the guardian of horses. *Māršava* might have been a popular guardian of cows; she is mentioned in the 1606 report by the Jesuit Joannis Stribingius as *Moschel.*

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[118] Urtāns, J. Velna vārds Latvijas vietās un vietvārdos. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 4, 1993, 55.–61. lpp.; Laime S. The Sacred Underworld. Cave Folklore in Latvia: Summary. Laime S. *Svētā pazeme: Latvijas alu folklora*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2009, 456.–459. lpp.

[119] Straubergs, K. Upurvietas un upurakmeņi latviešu māju un ģimeņu kultā. *Upuris: Reliģiju zinātne. Filozofija. Kristīgā prakse:* antoloģija. Rīga: LZA Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts, 1995, 47.–78. lpp.

[120] Johansons, A. Latviešu būvupuris. *Upuris: Reliģiju zinātne. Filozofija. Kristīgā prakse*, 91. lpp.

4) Spirits and deities promoting fertility. The deity related to fertility, *Jumis*, who promoted growth of vegetation, was mentioned in folk songs and ritual practice in a few districts in Latvia as late as the mid-20th century. It was believed that this partially anthropomorphised deity lived during the summer months in a corn field, under a rock, etc. In the autumn, while harvesting grain, a ritual was performed of catching or chasing *Jumis*. It was held that *Jumis* sought refuge in the last unharvested patch of corn or flax, which was then tied together, bent over against the ground with a rock placed on top, or was reaped to provide a wreath for the lady of the house. Often a feast would be held on the field after completion of this ritual.[121]

5) Wealth-bringing spirits. This category includes *pūķis*, *rudzu ruņģis*, *Gausa māte*, in the vicinity of Alūksne — *ragana*, in the vicinity of Vijciems — *vilce*.[122] These spirits bring goods to the benefit of a household, stealing grain, milk, butter, money and other items from others. The household is obliged to "feed" the spirit which brings such goods, i.e. by setting out food offerings at certain places and at certain times.



Fig. 12. Place of worship of house spirits in Ērģeme District. (Kruse, F. *Necrolivonica oder Alterthümer Liv-, Esth- und Curlands bis zur Einführung der Christlichen Religion in den Kaiserlich Russischen Ostsee-Gouvernements*. Dorpat–Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1842, Table 67, 1)

5. Nature spirits and deities. Deities and spirits associated with nature may be classified into two groups by their function and characterisation: 1) the guardians of various features of nature (forests, lakes, etc.) and 2) demonic "residents" within various natural objects. Guardians of natural objects are typical of communities whose existence is closely linked to hunting, fishing, or the gathering of wild crops, i.e. who rely on naturally occurring resources. The guardians of natural features hold sway over all resources within the object, i.e. *Meža māte* (the Mother of the Forest) oversees trees and wild animals, while *Ezeru māte* (the Mother of Lakes) and *Jūras māte* (the Mother of Sea) look after fish.[123] Exploitation of these resources would be coordinated through prayers and offering with the respective guardian of the natural feature. In Latvia, this type of nature spirit retained its relevance only in coastal regions where fishing was a particularly important occupation, while inland their mention in folklore was encountered comparatively rarely. Farmers perceived natural objects to be inhabited largely by demonic beings inasmuch as farming is not related to use of naturally occurring resources, and, consequently, forests and waters are not places where food was obtained, rather they are a threatening and alien environment. Natural features inhabited by demons familiar to farmers are often associated with another form of mythological

[121] Neuland, L. *Jumis, die Fruchtbarkeitsgottheit der alten Letten*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977.

[122] For more about the spirits which promote fertility see: Kursīte, J. *Latviešu folklora mītu spogulī*, 320.–328. lpp.; about *pūķis* see: Luven Y. *Der Kult der Hausschlange: Eine Studie zur Religionsgeschichte der Letten und Litauer*. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 2001.

[123] J. Kursīte has presented a broader characterisation of spirits who are associated with nature. See: Kursīte, J. *Latviešu folklora mītu spogulī*, 329.–340. lpp.

beings — the spirits of the dead. Several personifications of natural occurrences are found in Latvian folklore, namely, *Vēja māte* (the Mother of the Wind) and *lauskis* (the sound of wood soaked with water cracking under extremely cold conditions).

6. Souls of the dead and gods of the underworld. Supernatural beings related to the dead and the world of the dead in Latvian mythology are of the following kinds: 1) souls of the dead, and 2) deities of the underworld. Of the latter, the most popular is *Veļu māte* (the Mother of the Dead). She is the mother most often mentioned in folk songs, as someone who not only greets the dead at the cemetery, brings them in a narrow sleigh to the other world where she has prepared a bed for them, and burns the clothes of grief; she also announces the time to die, takes down the cradle of Laima and even fires a limekiln and bakes a honey biscuit to attract new souls. *Zemes māte* (the Mother of the Earth), holds the keys to graves and guards the bodies of the dead.

The categorisation of the souls of the dead is variegated, but basically these are 1) "souls of ancestors", and 2) "the restless souls". This division is related to the perception of a good and a bad death, since great emphasis is placed on the manner in which someone leaves this life. If an individual died "in his own way" (i.e. naturally, easily), in "his own time" (at the age set by the goddess of fate), "in his own place" (at home, among his relatives), and who had not sinned greatly during his lifetime, he entered the world of the dead and was not for the most part harmful to the living. In the past a significant annual ritual was the sacred feast in honour of the souls of ancestors held during the autumn (the time of souls), the purpose of which was to honour deceased ancestors and to gain their blessing and good will. The souls of the departed were fed in a barn, a granary, a bath house, in the attic, occasionally alongside boulders and trees, in cemeteries. An ancient tradition was that at the beginning of the time of souls, the head of the household would "bring" the spirits of the dead from cemeteries (their place of abode) to the feast in a horse drawn cart, and afterwards take them back. The tradition of holding a feast survived in some areas of Latvia until the mid-20th century.

Restless souls were believed to originate from 1) the souls of those who met a "bad end" or did not "die of their own accord" — who committed suicide, who were murdered, sentenced to death, who had drowned, died in accidents; 2) the souls of those who had not carried out an important obligation during their lifetime, or had "received their share" (for example, died before being christened, or before being married), and 3) the souls of those individuals who had transgressed during their lifetime some religious, social, or other norms (for example, sinners, murderers, debtors, and sorcerers). The view was held that, up until the time had come for them to die, or until they had undergone a purification process,[124] the souls of such persons had no status in the world of the dead, and that therefore they wandered among the living and harmed them. For example, *lietuvēns* — the soul of a child who died before being bap-

[124] Laime, S. Witches in Latvian Folk Belief: Night Witches. Summary. Laime S. *Raganu priekšstati Latvijā: Nakts raganas*. Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2013, 296.–302. lpp.

tised, of a suicide, a drowned person, of someone who had been murdered, or that of a sorcerer — would harass cattle during night time and torment people. Souls of those who have been murdered in a particular place, or who have committed suicide there strive to mislead people (*vadātājs)*. *Svētmeitas*, who infect people with illnesses and exchange unbaptised children, are the souls of tormented girls, old maids or women who have committed suicide.

7. Personified illnesses. Personification of illnesses is related to a need to explain the causes and spread of various illnesses and epidemics, as well as to lessen fear of these diseases, offering ways of avoiding these or being cured. *Mēris* (plague) was the most popular of personified illnesses. Magic could be used to guard against the plague, for example by laying around a farmstead during the time of a new moon a woven strand or other cord made by twisting flax, hemp, various animal and bird feathers. As late as the early 20th century records of folklore testify to peasants feeding the plague in the barn (i.e. leaving offerings) in order to avoid this disease. *Drudzis* (fever) and *kašķis* (scabies) were also occasionally personified.

8. Ficts. Fictional spirits are closely related to a specific category of folklore — ficts. From the standpoint of the teller these spirits are untrue assertions which are meant to be credible to a certain category of listeners (for example, children). These characters fulfil a social psychological function, namely that certain social, ethical, behavioural, or other norms are enforced. Typically, these characters appear in stories parents told their children to frighten them so as to prevent their trampling a field of cereals, approaching rivers, ponds, well, etc. The names of such characters might have been 1) invented (for example, *upes Juris, mamčuks, barabančiks, bubaks,* etc.), 2) have been derived from the names of traditional supernatural beings slowly disappearing from the tradition (for example, *velns, ragana*), or 3) borrowed from traditional supernatural beings of neighbouring peoples (for example, in Latgale these were *rusovkas*, which was a name based on the Russian and Belarusian *rusalka* (mermaid)).

Summary

The historical events of the 12th and 13th centuries ushered in a dramatic change in power, requiring complete renunciation of the previous model of spiritual life. This deprived Latvian culture of the possibility of continuing to develop undisturbed, a situation which lasted until the second half of the 19th century, at which time the first wave of Latvian intelligentsia was activated, leading in the beginning of the 20th century to the independent Latvian state. The Latvian language and folk wisdom were used in the interests of the rulers, i.e. language skills to promote Christianity, and the knowledge of folklore in order to eradicate previously held religious tenets, beliefs, and customs.

The 16th century schism in the Western Church led to greater attention being paid to educating the "non-Germans", i.e. teaching them how to read, as well as educating

Germans to speak Latvian so that feudal lords and the clergy might be able to converse intelligibly with their serfs and parishioners. Many written sources from the 17th century contain extensive descriptions of popular beliefs and customs that had to be combatted, although positive views of these are also found (Einhorn, Mancelius) in sermons and dictionaries such as proverbs, sayings, and riddles, as well as the first examples of "nonsense songs". During the 18th century, the attitude towards "peasant odes" and peasant culture underwent a radical reversal from disdainful disinterest to highly positive esteem (Harder, Hupel, and Herder).

The ideas of Romanticism current at the end of the 18th century and the societal changes at the end of the 19th century resulted in educational opportunities which allowed Latvians to create a national culture, to collect, preserve and study their national values, to become aware of their identity as heirs to a spiritually rich culture. The emergence of this ethnic self-awareness was a key factor in the process of founding an independent Latvian state early in the 20th century, when war and revolution shook and transformed the Russian Empire, as well as Imperial Germany.

Collection and publication of all forms of folklore materials has continued, benefitting from considerable enthusiasm in the independent state, such that currently the holdings of the Archives of Latvian Folklore include more than three million folklore units.

A rich trove of folklore is the most important source for research into Latvian mythology. Although systematic collection of Latvian folklore started only during the second half of the 19th century, evidence for even pre-Christian mythology is found in folk songs, due to the metric and stylistic canons of this genre of folklore. Valuable evidence for Latvian mythology is found in written records, in particular the protocols of official church visitations during the 16th–18th centuries, reports by Jesuits, and in court records of witch trials. Myths have not survived as a separate genre in Latvian oral tradition.

Beliefs inherited from Indo-European mythology constitute the fundamental layer underpinning Latvian mythology, while over time this basis has come to include some borrowings from Liv mythology, and, in particular, from Catholic Christianity. Despite Latvian mythology gaining certain syncretic features after official acceptance of Christianity on the territory of Latvia, pre-Christian mythological elements survived in oral tradition into the 20th century. Certain elements of Latvian mythology (for example, the heavenly wedding cycle in folk songs, certain aspects of the image of *Laima* the deity of fate, etc.) have, when compared with the beliefs of other European peoples, retained broader and more archaic correspondences with Indo-European mythology.

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Ojārs Bušs, Ilga Jansone

AN INSIGHT INTO THE HISTORY OF THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE (FROM ITS ORIGINS UP UNTIL THE 20TH CENTURY)

The oldest surviving printed texts in Latvian bear witness to our language in the 16th century; however, we may only judge as to what it was beforehand based on ancient place names, linguistic reconstruction and from surviving descriptions made by outsiders. At the beginning of the historical period (circa 1000), various languages were spoken by Baltic ethnic groups in Latvia — the Latgalian, Semigallian, Couronian, and Selonian languages, as well as the Liv language, which is a member of the Finno-Ugric family of languages. In the process of becoming the modern-day Latvian, one of these Baltic tribal languages absorbed over the centuries elements from all of the other languages spoken in Latvia. It is most likely that the direct precursor of the Latvian language was the Semigallian language; there are, however, arguments in favour of another view, namely, that the Latvian language of today derives from the ancient Latgalian language.

The first text that is definitively known to have been published in Latvian is dated 1550; however, there are indications that in 1525 a book was printed in Latvian, *The Lutheran Mass*. During the 16th, 17th, and, partially, the 18th centuries, most of the works printed in Latvian were religious texts. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1585) and parts of the *Lutheran Handbook* (1586) are the oldest surviving books written in the Latvian language. A complete text of the Bible was first published in 1694. Secular texts, such as dictionaries and grammar books, were inferior in terms of numbers of copies printed in comparison with religious texts. The first German–Latvian dictionary, *Lettus*, due to Georg Mancelius, was published in 1638, but the first grammar of the Latvian language, *Manuductio ad linguam Lettonicam*, by Johann Georg Rehehusen, was published in 1644. Up until the 19th century, practically all authors of texts related to linguistic issues were Germans, and the alphabet used for Latvian language texts was based on the then current German orthography, i.e. Gothic Fraktur typefaces were used, with palatalization and lengthening of letters achieved following German linguistic practices. The decision was made in 1908 to use the orthography for written Latvian which is close to that in use today. From 1753 onwards, historical facts applicable only to Latgale resulted in the emergence of a Latgalian written language, in parallel with development of the Latvian written language.

Keywords: Latvian, Latgalian, Semigallian, Selonian, Couronian languages of the ancient Baltic tribes, Latvian orthography, lexicography, grammar

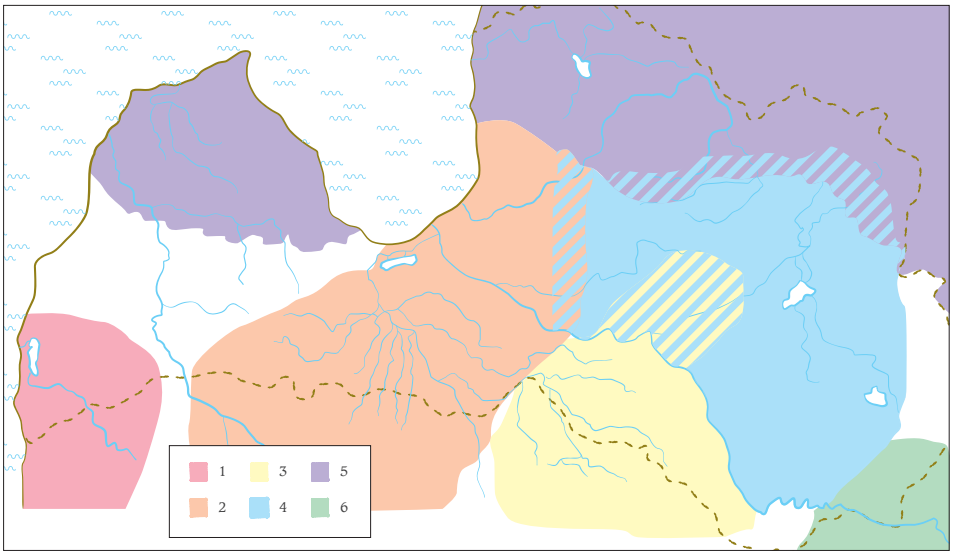


Fig. 1. Cultural ethnic groups during the 5th–8th centuries: 1 – Couronians/Cours, 2 – Semigallians, 3 – Selonians, 4 – Latgalians, 5 – Baltic Finns, 6 – Balts of the Tushemla–Bantserov culture[1]

We may infer something about the Latvian language prior to the first written records from ancient place names, linguistic reconstructions, and general descriptions (for example from notes made by foreign travellers), yet inescapably these conclusions are hypothetical ones. The history of any naturally occurring language does not begin suddenly with a precise date of its first use. Every language spoken today, including Latvian, has its precursors. At the beginning of the historical period (slightly before, or slightly after the year 1000) the ancient tribes or ethnic groups living in Latvia spoke the Latgalian, Semigallian, Couronian, and Selonian languages, which were members of the Indo-European family of languages; additionally the Livonian language was spoken (in a form not quite identical with the Livonian spoken by the Livs of Kurzeme in the 20th century), a member of the Finnic group of languages within the Uralic, or Finno-Ugric family of languages.

If we were to examine the precursors of the Latvian language even further into the past, in the same way that we investigate a family tree, we would arrive ultimately at the Indo-European proto-language that is at the dialects of the proto-language which later became the relatively closely related Baltic, Slavic, and Germanic languages.

Divergent views are evident in respect of the proto-language out of which there emerged what later became known as the Baltic languages. Some linguists are of the opinion that, after the proto-Indo-European language broke up, close ethnic relations were maintained between the Baltic, Slavic, and Germanic peoples up until the third millennium BCE, whereupon one group moved in a north-east direction and a second

[1] Vasks, A. Latvian archaeology: research and conclusions. *Inside Latvian Archaeology*. Gotarc Series A. Vol. 2. Jensen, O. W., Karlson, H., Vijups, A. (eds.). Gothenburg, 1999, Fig. 3.

group went to the north-west.[2] This movement in different directions has led to heated debate about the possible existence of a proto Balto-Slavic language. Some linguists, for example, Robert Beekes[3], are persuaded that originally the Baltic and Slavic languages were one common language, i.e. that there was common parent language, while others, for example, Antoine Meillet[4], maintain that the development of these languages followed parallel and independent paths. There are several other hypotheses about the transitional stages in the evolution of dialects of the proto Indo-European language until there emerged an Eastern Baltic and a Western Baltic parent language. According to a concept developed by Vladimir Toporov and archaeologist Valentin Sedov,[5] the most prominent of his supporters, the Slavic languages originated from a peripheral dialect of a Baltic parent language, or the Slavic parent language emerged from a Baltic (or Western Baltic) parent language.[6] There is also the view maintained by the Croatian linguist and specialist in Indo-European languages, Dalibor Brozović[7], that no single Baltic parent language ever existed and that the separate Eastern and Western Baltic parent languages developed directly from dialects of the proto-Indo-European language. Furthermore, the American linguist Harvey E. Mayer has described as myths the existence of a Balto-Slavic, or a Common Baltic language[8].

The proponents of the existence of a Baltic parent language characterise it to have been a dialect spoken in the northern part of the Indo-European area where there occurred a very particular form of satemisation[9]. In turn, the Baltic parent language, after it underwent changes associated with the Indo-European diphthong **ei*, is usually divided into the Western Baltic and Eastern Baltic languages. Pietro Umberto Dini has suggested adding to this division the Pomeranian Baltic language and the Dnieper Baltic language[10]. The Old Prussian, Western Galindian, Yotvingian or Sudovian, Scalovian, and Couronian languages are members of the family of Western Baltic languages[11]. Languages spoken by the Lithuanian, Aukštaitian, Samogitian, Latgalian, Selonian, and Semigallian tribes are all members of the family of Eastern Baltic languages. Today, all members of the Western Baltic languages are extinct, while the Latvian and Lithuanian national languages are the sole surviving members of the Eastern Baltic language family.[12]

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2 Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*. Vilnius: Vilnius University, 2014, p. 196.

3 Beekes, R. S. P. *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: An Introduction*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: J. Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995, p. 22.

4 Meillet, A. *Les dialectes indo-européens.* Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1908.

5 Sedovs, V. *Balti senatnē.* 2. papild. izd. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004.

6 Топоров, В. Н. Балтийские языки. *Языки мира: балтийские языки*. Москва: Academia, 2006, с. 19–20.

7 His views were presented in September 1983 in a report to the IX International Congress of Slavists held in Kiev.

8 Mayer H. E. Two linguistic myths: Balto-Slavic and Common Baltic. *Lituanus*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1981, pp. 63–68.

9 This is a phonetic process whereby the palatilised consonants of the proto-Indo-European language *k'*, *g'* were transformed into *š*, *ž,* and later into *s*, *z*.

10 Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*, pp. 77–79.

11 For a long time the Couronian language was considered to be a member of the family of Eastern Baltic languages. For details see: Bušs, O. Latvieši starp baltu tautām un ciltīm jeb latviešu valoda pirms latviešu valodas. *Latvieši un Latvija.* 1. sēj.**:** *Latvieši.* Jansone, I., Vasks, A. (atb. red.). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 166.–167. lpp.

12 Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. 2. daļa. Daugavpils: Saule, 1999 (also: Breidaks, A. *Darbu izlase.* 1. sēj. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2007).

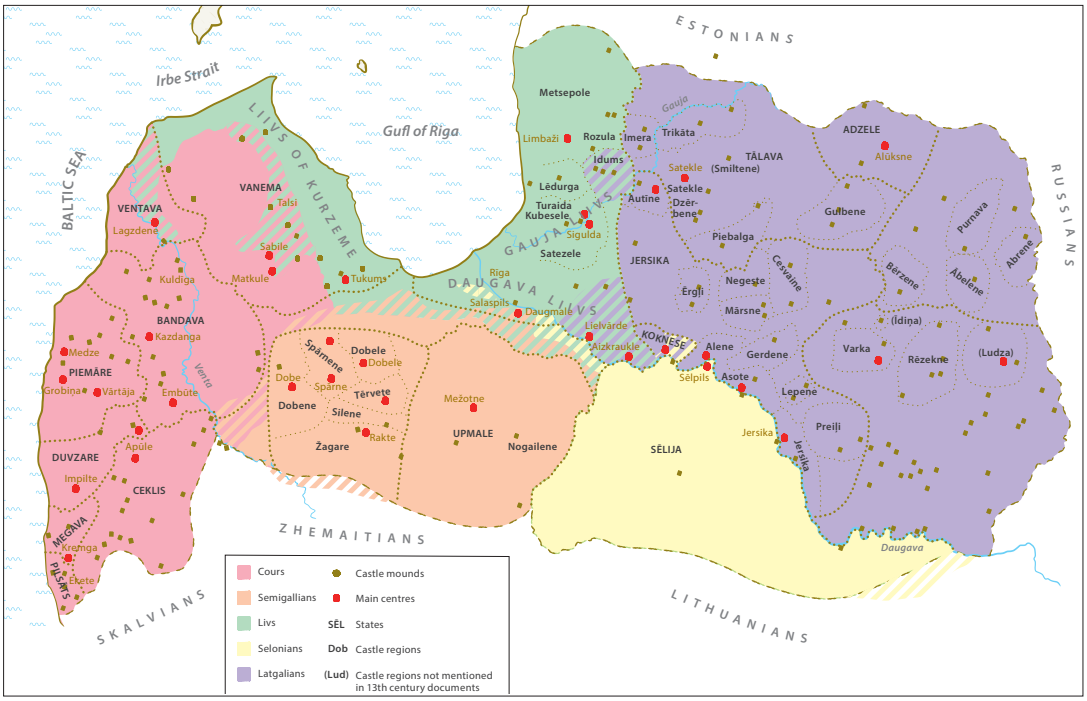


Fig. 2. The lands and peoples in Latvia at the end of the 12th century[13]

Conclusions which have been drawn about the parent languages of the Indo-European family and its sub-families are tentative. More concrete linguistic knowledge has been acquired about languages spoken by various ancient tribes, including the Baltic tribes (Latgalians, Semigallians, Cours, and Selonians) who lived on the territory of Latvia. It appears that the most complete overview of these tribal languages (excepting the Latgalian language) is due to V. Toporov, who wrote about the extinct Baltic languages[14]. The known unique features of languages spoken by the ancient Latvian tribes were characterised by Jānis Endzelīns[15], with a more complete and up-to-date systematic description of the unique features of these languages given by Antons Breidaks[16] and P. U. Dini[17]; a relatively laconic overview, in three languages (in Latvian, Lithuanian, and English), which is particularly important by virtue of its numerous references to the most recent findings, is to be found in the prospectus appended to the *Atlas of the Baltic Languages*[18].

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13 *Latvijas vēstures atlants*. Rīga: Jāņa sēta, 1998, 12. lpp.

14 Топоров, В. Н. Балтийские языки, с. 26–35.

15 E.g.: Endzelīns, J. *Ievads baltu filoloģijā.* Rīga: Universitātes grāmatu apgāds, 1945, 44.–50. lpp.

16 Breidaks, A. Ievads baltu valodniecībā, 2. d., 11.–31. lpp. (also: Breidaks, A. *Darbu izlase.* 1. sēj., 567.–601. lpp.)

17 Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*, pp. 290–320.

18 Mikulėnienė, D., Stafecka, A. Dzīvās un mirušās baltu valodas. *Baltu valodu atlants: prospekts.* Mikulėnienė, D., Stafecka, A. (sast.). Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts; Vilnius: Lietuvių kalbos institutas, 2009, 15.–24. lpp.

The **Cours** lived in the south-western part of the territory of present-day Latvia, extending into the north-western part of Lithuania (see Fig. 1) during the 5th–8th centuries, while at the end of the 12th century they occupied most of the area of present-day Kurzeme (Courland) (see Fig. 2).

The Cours played a rather visible role against the backdrop of Baltic history during the Middle Ages. Usually the first accounts of the history of the Cours are considered to be found in a 9th century description of the life of Ansgar, *Vita Anskarii*, a school teacher and predecessor of the author of this work, Rimbert, Archbishop of Bremen and Hamburg, wherein the Cours are mentioned in connection with the work of Ansgar in Scandinavia; however, Marija Gimbutienė noted references to the Cours — *Cori*, *Chori* — in a 7th century text[19]. Out of all of the languages spoken by the ancient Latvian tribes the Couronian language survived the longest, as it was still spoken in the 16th century, when it was identified to differ from the other Baltic languages by several observers writing during the 15th–16th centuries; for example, a French (according to some sources a Flemish[20]) knight, traveller, and diplomat, Guillebert de Lannoy, who traversed Livonia in 1412[21] (in many secondary sources this journey has been dated as having occurred in 1413–1414[22]) and who mentioned in his account the Couronian, and Semigallian languages, as well as the language of the Livs: "I went from Līva in Kurzeme to Riga in Vidzeme passing through many towns, castles and military units of the Livonian rulers. First of all, through *Gurbin* [Grobiņa? — O.B.], which is a castle, then through Kuldīga, which is a fortified town, then through the castle at *Cando* [Kandava? — O.B.] and many other towns and castles in Kurzeme and in *Sammette*, which belong to Livonia; I passed through many towns belonging to Semigallians, Cours and Livs, in each of which a different language was spoken."[23] Others writing at the end of the 16th century, for example, the chronicler Balthasar Russow (1584) testify to the Cours speaking a language not intelligible by other local residents.[24] However, during the 17th century, others wrote that the Cours spoke Latvian; thus, Paul Einhorn, Superintendent of Courland, stated in his 1649 book *Historia Lettica* (The History of Latvia), that the Couronian and Latvian languages are one and the same language ("(…) ist die Curische und Lettische eine Sprache"[25]). It is also possible that this assertion reflects the fact that, for example, in documents from the 16th century, the version of Latvian spoken then in Courland is identified to be the Couronian language.

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[19] Gimbutiene, M. *Balti aizvēsturiskajos laikos: etnoģenēze, materiālā kultūra un mitoloģija.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 15. lpp.

[20] See, for example, Bielenstein, A. *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes und der lettischen Sprache in der Gegenwart und im 13. Jahrhundert: ein Beitrag zur ethnologischen Geographie und Geschichte Russlands.* St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1892, S. 129.

[21] Lannoy, G., de. *Voyages et ambassades.* Mons: Typographie d'Em. Hoyois, 1840, pp. 11–31.

[22] Kabelka, J. *Baltų filologijos įvadas*. Vilnius: Mokslas, 1982, p. 68; Bielenstein, A. *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes und der lettischen Sprache in der Gegenwart und im 13. Jahrhundert*, S. 130–132.

[23] Lannoy, G., de. *Voyages et ambassades*, p. 17.

[24] Rusovs, B. *Livonijas kronika.* Veispals, E. (tulk.). Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1926.

[25] Einhorn, P. Historia Lettica. *Das iſt Beſchreibung der Lettiſchen Nation*. Dorpt in Liefland: Gedruckt durch Johann Vogeln, 1649, S. 8.

The question of the ethnolinguistic belonging of the Couronian language has been the subject of a long debate among scholars[26]. The "Couronian question" has been related to ascertaining whether the Cours mentioned by historical sources were a Baltic or a Finno-Ugric people. Several publications by J. Endzelīns[27] from the second decade of the 20th century substantially contributed to clarification of the Baltic ethnicity of the Cours.

Nevertheless, there remain not a few points to be elucidated about the Cours and the language that they spoke. In 1935, the archaeologist Eduards Šturms was able rather precisely to identify the different groups of inhabitants which were labelled as Cours in historical records dating from the 13th–14th centuries. He argued that there were three types of such groups: 1) the true Cours, a Baltic tribe; 2) Livs who identified themselves as Cours; 3) true Livs living in Courland, but who were politically dependent on the Cours[28]. Evidently this formulation, in general terms, may be regarded as credible.

A monograph by Valentin Kiparsky, *Die Kurenfrage*[29] (The Couronian Question) has been published, dedicated solely to the Couronian language; none of the other languages spoken by the ancient Latvian tribes has been so honoured

The following are considered to be the principal features unique to the Couronian language and not found in the Latvian language: 1) tautosyllabic combinations *an*, *en*, *in*, *un* have been retained, for example, in the terms, *Landze*, *menca*, *dzintars*; 2) the vowel *u* has been retained preceding the consonants *b*, *v*, for example, in the terms, *dubens*, *zuve*; 3) the group of consonants **tj*, **dj* appearing at the end of roots of words have been transformed into the palatovolars *t'*, *d'*, which have been transformed in cases of the Latvian form of place names in the former Kursa to be palatovolars *ķ*, *ģ*, for example, the Couronian *Todayten* — and the Latvian *Tadaiķi*; 4) the diphthong, *ei*, has been retained in at least one part of the Couronian language, for example, the Couronian *Gaweysen* — the Latvian *Gavieze*[30].

The **Semigallians** lived during the 5th–8th centuries over a large area of modern-day Latvia extending in a direction from south to north-east as far as Cēsis, extending also into the northern part of the territory of Lithuania (see Fig. 1), while at the end of the 12th century they occupied the area of modern Zemgale excepting Upper Latvia (see Fig. 2).

Knowledge about the language spoken by the Semigallians is even more hypothetical. The terms *Zemgale* (Semigallia) and *Semigallians* (in various written forms) are mentioned in historical sources over a broad period of time. Semigallians were

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[26] See, for example, Bušs, O. Kuršu valoda mūsdienu zinātnes skatījumā. *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, Nr. 2, 1985, 65.–71. lpp.

[27] Endzelīns, J. Ventas vārds un kūru tautība. Endzelīns, J. *Darbu izlase.* 2. sēj. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, 357.–359. lpp.; Endzelīns, J. Über die Nazionalität und Sprache der Kuren. Endzelīns, J. *Darbu izlase.* 2. sēj. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, S. 440–453; Endzelīns, J. Par seno kursu (jeb kuršu) tautību un valodu. Endzelīns, J. *Darbu izlase.* 2. sēj. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, 454.–465. lpp.

[28] Šturms, E. Die Vorgeschichtlichen Probleme des Kurenlandes. *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschsaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde zu Riga.* Riga, 1935, S. 9–21.

[29] Kiparsky, V. *Die Kurenfrage.* Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1939.

[30] Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*, pp. 295–297.

referred to in the 9th century in a Danish chronicle, *Annales Ryenses,* which was written in the 13th century (some scholars doubt this reference[31]), in the 11th century in the form of inscriptions on Scandinavian rune stones[32], and in the 15th century when they are mentioned by G. de Lannoy in the account of his travels. Along the route from Riga to Narva, which, incidentally, meant passage through Sigulda, Cēsis, and Valmiera, G. de Lannoy encountered four tribes (gens) which differed in terms of their language — the Livs, Semigallians (*Tzamegaelz*), Latgalians (?) (*Loches*), and Estonians (*Eestes*). The travel account names tribes which were encountered in the succession just mentioned[33] (see Fig. 3), which, it is likely, corresponds to the actual order in which they were encountered during the journey. Thus, in his passage through the western part of Vidzeme, G. de Lannoy evidently first came across the Livs and the Semigallians. This assertion, however, contrasts with the information shown on the map (see Fig. 2), i.e. that at the end of the 12th century, Semigallians were to be found only on the territory of modern-day Zemgale. P. U. Dini has pointed out that Lithuanians settled in Semigallian territory from the 14th century onwards and also that an even larger part of their territory was occupied by Latgalians; it is likely that use of the Semigallian language began to wane during this period of time when members of the tribe were widely scattered and their lands colonised.[34]

We are only able, however, to assess the Semigallian language purely from ancient proper nouns (fewer Semigallian proper nouns have survived in written records than Couronian place names and personal names) and a few unique features evident in dialects of the Latvian and Lithuanian languages which are associated with areas formerly inhabited by the Semigallians.

Allegedly the best known linguistic feature attributed to the Semigallian language is anaptyxis[35], i.e. insertion of a vowel following a tautosyllabic sound in combination with, *-r-*, or (rarely) *-l-*; for example, *zir^{a}gs* 'zirgs (Latv.)', *var^{a}na* 'vārna (Latv.)', *dar^{a}zs* 'dārzs (Latv.)', *vil^{a}ks* 'vilks (Latv.)'; see also the form of the modern place name Tērvete found written in a document dated 1271 as *Terevethene*[36]. However, it appears that, although it might certainly have been one feature of the Semigallian language, it was not evident throughout the entire area inhabited by the Semigallians.

The **Selonians** inhabited the area of modern-day Upper Latvia, as well as the lower reaches of the Aiviekste River during the 5th–8th centuries (see Fig. 1), while at the end of the 12th centuries they occupied the area of modern-day Upper Latvia (see Fig. 2).

Even less is known that is certain (and even less than certain) about the Selonian language and the associated ethnos. There is a hypothesis that the Selonians might be

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[31] This assertion is based on consultations with Andrejs Vasks.

[32] For details about Semigallian names which have been found on Scandinavian rune stones, see Butkus, A. Žiemgalos vardas skandinavų runomis. *Baltistica*, XXIX (1). Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 1994, pp. 86–90.

[33] Lannoy, G., de. *Voyages et ambassades*, p. 18.

[34] Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*, p. 317.

[35] For more details see: Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*, pp. 318–320.

[36] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā*. 2. daļa. Daugavpils: Saule, 1999 (also: Breidaks, A. *Darbu izlase*. 1. sēj. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2007, 583. lpp.)

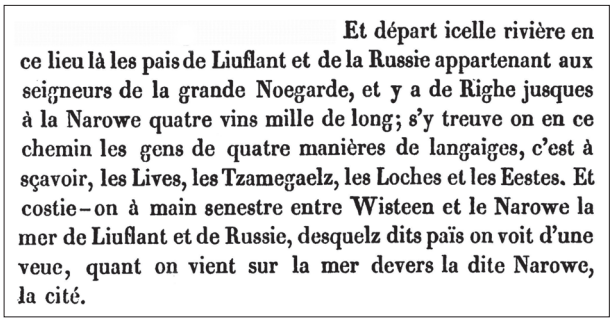

Et départ icelle rivière en ce lieu là les pais de Liuflant et de la Russie appartenant aux seigneurs de la grande Noegarde, et y a de Righe jusques à la Narowe quatre vins mille de long; s'y treuve on en ce chemin les gens de quatre manières de langaiges, c'est à sçavoir, les Lives, les Tzamegaelz, les Loches et les Eestes. Et costie-on à main senestre entre Wisteen et le Narowe la mer de Liuflant et de Russie, desquelz dits païs on voit d'une veue, quant on vient sur la mer devers la dite Narowe, la cité.

Fig. 3. Fragment of text taken from: Lannoy G. de. *Voyages et ambassades.* Mons: Typographie d'Em. Hoyois, 1840, p. 18.

the first Baltic tribe to be mentioned in a written historical record: a Roman map of the 3rd or 4th century (the surviving copies date from the 10th–12th centuries) indicates a river *Fluvius Sellianus* (i.e. the river of the Selonians) to flow into the Baltic Sea; it has been hypothesised that this might refer to the Daugava River (these, however, are speculations)[37]. Were this to be true it would reinforce the hypothesis advanced by the archaeologist E. Šturms, that the Selonians were the original Baltic inhabitants of eastern Vidzeme and eastern Zemgale (during the 1st–6th centuries, in advance of the Latgalians)[38]. Nevertheless, the Selonians living in the southern part of the area which they occupied intermingled with Lithuanians rather early (previous to the 14th century), while in the northern part of their territory they assimilated with the Latgalians no later than in the 14th century[39]; Algirdas Sabaliauskas is of the opinion that no one spoke the Selonian language any longer by the mid-14th century[40]. Features unique to the Selonian language may be inferred from a number of place names and by the so-called Selonian isoglosses. It is noteworthy in regard to the unique vowel system of the Selonian language, that in the same way as for the spoken Latgalian language, the first rank vowels *i*, *e*, *ē* in certain positions would be transformed into middle rank vowels, *y*, *a*, *ā*; compare the written records of the 14th century giving the place name in eastern Vidzeme, *Barsone*, with the place name, *Bērzaune,* in modern Latvian[41]. In turn the essential aspects of the system of consonants of the Selonian language, in the same way as for the Latgalian, Semigallian, Couronian, Old Prussian, Yotvingian language the Lithuanian language sibilants, *š*, *ž*, correspond to the stridents *s*, *z*, for example, Selonian river names (in old written texts) *Vesinte*, *Wesinte*, *Vesyten*, are to be compared with the Lithuanian term, *Viešintà*; the Selonian place name, *Zálvas* (a lake in north-east Lithuania), is to be compared with the name of a river in Lithuania, *Žalvė*[42].

The **Latgalians** lived in the area of modern-day Latgale, as well as in most of Vidzeme, in the west in contact with the Semigallians, and in the north with the Baltic Finns during the 5th–8th centuries (see Fig. 1), while at the end of the 12th century they had expanded as far as the northern border of Latvia, displacing northwards the Baltic

[37] Sabaliauskas, A. *Mes – baltai.* Kaunas: Šviesa, 1986, p. 97.

[38] Šturms, E. Sēļi. *Latviešu konversācijas vārdnīca.* Rīga: Grāmatu apgādniecība A. Gulbis, 1939, 19. sēj., 38065. sl.

[39] Zinkevičius, Z. *Lietuvių kalbos kilmė*. I. Vilnius: Mokslas, 1984, p. 359.

[40] Sabaliauskas, A. *Mes – baltai*, p. 97.

[41] Breidaks, A. *Ievads baltu valodniecībā.* 2. daļa. Daugavpils: Saule, 1999 (also: Breidaks, A. Darbu izlase. 1. sēj. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2007).

[42] Ibid.

Finns (see Fig. 2). Based on the nature and dispersal of graveyards at the end of the Iron Age, archaeologist Ēvalds Mugurēvičs has concluded that the territory inhabited by Latgalians during the 12th century comprised all of modern-day Latgale, together with the central and eastern parts of Vidzeme as far as a meridian that passed through the town of Cēsis[43].

The earliest references to Latgalians are found in ancient chronicles and other historical sources. It is possible that the first explicit mention of the Latgalians is found in the Primary Chronicle by Nestor published at the beginning of the 12th century (*Въ Афетови же части сѣдить русь, чюдь и вси языцѣ: меря, мурома, всь, мордва, заволочьская чюдь, пермь, печера, ямь, югра, литва, зимигола, корсь, лѣтьгола, либь. Ляховѣ же, и пруси и чюдь присѣдять к морю Вяряскому*[44]). The parallel terms *latgaļi jeb latvieši* (Latgalians or Latvians) are found in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*[45]; for example, in the account of events in 1296, "*Lethos, qui proprie dicuntur Lethigalli*" (X, 3) (the Letts, who in reality are called the Lettgallians) and again, a few lines below, "*Letthi vel Letthigalli*" (the Letts or the Lettgallians)[46]. Use of *proprie dicuntur,* evidently is to be understood to mean that *letgaļi* (i.e. the Latgalians) is the name of this tribe, whereas the term *leti* (Letts) denotes how they are called by others, i.e. the Germans. The name of an ethnos being based on the name of a component tribe has been a frequent historical phenomenon.

There are not all that many facts known about the earliest period of development of the Latgalian language, despite the name of this language being so directly linked to a Latvian ethnonym. Among other observations, A. Breidaks noted that the Latgalian tribal language was highly differentiated in respect of dialects, and already during the 13th–14th centuries, the Western Latgalian dialect differed greatly from the Eastern Latgalian dialect. The fragmentation of the Latgalian tribal language into dialects is due to several factors: 1) dialect features inherited from the Eastern Baltic parent language; 2) the rather wide area inhabited by members of the Latgalian tribe; 3) a pronounced influence exerted by the Semigallian tribal language (in particular in south-western Vidzeme) on the Western Latgalian dialect; 4) a substrate of different Baltic Finnic languages.[47]

The essential unique phonetic features of the Western Latgalian dialect are: 1) the positional distribution of the vowels *o* and *a*; 2) the first rank vowels, *i*, *e*, *ē* in certain positions turn into middle rank vowels, *y*, *a*, *ā*; for example, *Gulbana* (Gulbene) 1224; 3) the Eastern Baltic long vowels **ī*, **ū*, have been retained; for example, *Lixnam* in the accusative singular case becomes *Līksnu* 1230; 4), while the tautosyllabic combinations **en*, **on*, **in*, **un*, have been transformed into **ī^{e}*, **ū^{o}*, **ī*, **ū*.

In ascertaining the principal unique characteristics of the tribal languages, it is firstly important to understand how the unified Latvian language developed. Some

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[43] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs.–16. gs. vidus). *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados.* Caune, A. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 54. lpp., 6. att.

[44] http://lib.pushkinskijdom.ru/Default.aspx?tabid=4869#_edn8.

[45] *Indriķa hronika.* No latīņu val. tulk. Ā. Feldhūns; Ē. Mugurēviča priekšv. un koment. Rīga: Zinātne, 1993.

[46] See also: Bušs, O. *Latvija* un *latvieši*: vārdu cilme. *Latvieši un Latvija.* 1. sēj.: *Latvieši.* Jansone, I., Vasks, A. (atb. red.). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 20.–21. lpp.

[47] Breidaks, A. Ievads baltu valodniecībā, 2. d. Breidaks, A. *Darbu izlase.* 1. sēj., 586. lpp.

time ago, Marta Rudzīte postulated that the modern Latvian "originated through coalescence of the languages spoken by the Baltic tribes that history has recorded — the Latgalians or Latvians, Selonians, Semigallians, as well as the Cours"[48]. It is not credible that the mutual coalescence of several (four?) languages with each language made a roughly equal contribution to formation of a "new" language. Evidently one of the tribal languages rather directly evolved into the Latvian language absorbing elements from the other languages. One of the fundamental questions to be resolved (in a sense the most important one) in the search for the roots of the modern Latvian language is: which of the Baltic tribal languages was the direct ancestor of the Latvian language. Two replies to this question may be found in the specialist literature: that the direct ancestor of our language was either the (ancient) Latgalian language or the Semigallian language.

The name of the Latgalian tribe evidently has been the basis for our later common ethnonym, but this is not sufficient proof for the respective tribe subsequently constituting the core of the Latvian people, or that this tribal language evolved into our language.

The Semigallian language played an important role in the history of the origin of the dialects of Vidzeme and how the Middle Latvian dialect evolved (the modern consolidated Latvian has formed on the basis of this dialect); A. Breidaks has noted that this view is "in good agreement with a scientific understanding of archaeological, dialectological and toponymal materials. This new view of the ethnogenesis of the Latvian language [concerning the decisive role of the Semigallians in the birth of the Latvian ethnos — O. B., I. J.] has been expressed by Harri Moora, Jānis Graudonis, Vallija Dambe, and also, J. Endzelīns, towards the end of his scientific career"[49]. J. Endzelīns, in one of the last of his research (in 1954), *Latviešu valoda Vidzemē* (The Latvian Language in Vidzeme), offered the conclusion that the language, "which is to be heard in central Vidzeme, in particular, in the south-western area [sic! – O. B., I. J.], is quite similar to that spoken in Zemgale in the Lielupe River basin. There are only few differences today, and one can imagine a time, when none existed"[50].

In regard to what has been cited above, it is not at all necessary to imagine there to have been a time when the Semigallian language spoken in South-Western Vidzeme and Central Vidzeme did not at all differ from that spoken in Zemgale. All of the Baltic tribal languages spoken in Livonia existed in the period before they were written down, in the form of a continuum of dialects, such that they could not have been and were not as consolidated as modern languages are today, which have an agreed standardised written form (although in this sense modern languages are not as standardised as it might appear!). Evidently there were numerous territorial varieties of the Couronian language, as well as the Semigallian, the Selonian, and the ancient Latgalian language, and it is entirely possible, that not a few unique features which today we

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[48] Rudzīte, M. *Latviešu valodas vēsturiskā fonētika.* Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1993, 4. lpp.

[49] Breidaks, A. Latviešu valodas dialektu un izlokšņu grupu cilme un teritoriālā izplatība. *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados*. Caune, A. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 29. lpp.

[50] Endzelīns, J. Latviešu valoda Vidzemē. Endzelīns, J. *Darbu izlase*. 3. sēj. 2. d. Rīga: Zinātne, 1980, 479. lpp.

ascribe to one or another ancient Baltic tribal language, were present in all dialects of a particular tribal language (to give only one example — tautosyllabic combinations with *n* appearing before a consonant, for example, the dialect form, *bezdelinga* (*bezdelīga* in Latvian), are considered to be a relatively certain sign of influence by the Couronian language, yet Juris Plāķis has cast doubt on the validity of this view, based on the attribution of place names[51]). Taking into account the broad area over which archaeological evidence shows the presence of Semigallian culture, from northern Lithuania to mid-Vidzeme, it is obvious that the language spoken by this ethnos could not have been identical throughout. However, the differences were considerable with regard to the Western Latgalian language spoken in eastern Vidzeme and the Eastern Latgalian language, out of which the modern High Latvian dialect has emerged.

The ancestors of modern-day Latvians in western Vidzeme lived in close contact with the **Livs**, and, possibly, also with the **Southern Estonians**, hence, with speakers of a Baltic Finno-Ugric language. Written information about the Livs who lived in Vidzeme has survived only from a relatively late date, at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries[52] (and there is no mention of the Livs who lived in Courland in any surviving 13th century document[53]); nevertheless, archaeological evidence, first and foremost graves with piled stones typical of the Baltic Sea Finns, points to the presence in Vidzeme of a Finno-Ugric ethnos from the Early Iron Age onwards (the 1st–5th centuries CE)[54]. It is possible that this ethnos constituted the ancestors of both the Livs and the Southern Estonians[55]. If the formation of the Latvian language is territorially associated with Vidzeme (and Zemgale), it is credible that the Finno-Ugric elements found in the vocabulary of modern Latvian (including words which are core elements, such as, *vai* (perhaps), *vajadzēt* (to need), *bojā* (damaged)[56]), as well as structural and semantic Finno-Ugric features (for example, prefixes are replaced by postpositive adverbs: *pārraut* > *raut pušu* (pull apart) and many other examples[57]) largely originated with the Finno-Ugric ethnos living in Vidzeme, with the Livs residing in Vidzeme or their ancestors.

Based on the fragmentary knowledge at our disposal about Livonian tribal languages, including what we can infer retrospectively from contemporary dialects of the Latvian language, we may assert that the Latvian literary language is based on the Semigallian language and its linguistically close group of Western Latgalian sub-dialects (it appears that linguistically the Semigallian and Western Latgalian languages were closer than were the Western Latgalian and Eastern Latgalian languages). In historical sources the Western Latgalians are called *Latvians* (i.e., in Latin and German

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[51] Plāķis, J. Vai tautosillbiskais voc. + N (+ Cons.) savienojums ir kuršu valodas iezīme? *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti*, XVII, Rīga, 1928, 63.–100. lpp.

[52] Auns, M. Lībieši rakstīto vēstures avotu ziņās (līdz 13. gs.). *Lībieši*: rakstu krājums. Boiko, K. (sast.). Rīga: Zinātne, 1994, 7. lpp.

[53] Ibid., 15. lpp.

[54] Tenisons, Ē. Arheologu domas par lībiešu izcelsmi. *Lībieši*: rakstu krājums, 24. lpp.

[55] Ibid., 31. lpp.

[56] Karulis, K. *Latviešu etimoloģijas vārdnīca*. Rīga: Avots, 1992; 1. sēj., 138. lpp.; 2. sēj., 466., 472. lpp.

[57] Raģe, S. Ko latviešu valoda mantojusi no baltu un somu senajiem sakariem. Raģe, S. *Darbu izlase.* Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2003, 249. lpp.

terminology); it is possible that this ethnic group referred to itself by a term which had contained, *lat-*, as its root, and with the coalescence of the Western Latgalians with the Semigallians of Vidzeme, this term became the ethnonym which has been present in the Latvian language at least from the mid-17th century onwards[58]. Different formulations of the interrelationship between the Livonian Baltic tribes and the Latvian language have most recently been expressed by Zigmas Zinkevičius; in his opinion, "the Latvian language has to be regarded as a successor of the Latgalian language (and not the Semigallian language!) which has been extensively influenced by the presence of a substrate of the archaic Semigallian language"[59]. In turn, the version of the Couronian language spoken in Courland, which was the northern part of the area over which this language was spoken, was assimilated by the Latvian language, with elements of the Couronian language retained in the Latvian language as a substrate.

Based on the observations recorded by G. de Lannoy of the Baltic and Finno-Ugric tribes, and their spoken languages, which he encountered in 1412 while crossing the present-day territory of Latvia from the south-west to the north-east (Cours, Semigallians, Livs, Semigallians, Latgalians), it is logical to assume that at that time the coalescence of the ancient Latvian tribes into a Latvian people had not yet come to an end[60]. However, from the perspective of the historical development of the Latvian language our attention is drawn to the fact that published texts of Latvian sayings and translations of the Lord's Prayer from the first half of the 16th century onwards are rather straightforward to read, once orthography issues are clarified, and they are intelligible Latvian texts. Does this mean that 100 years has seen a significant advance in the process of formation of the Latvian people? It is possible, but it is more credible that the Baltic tribe, which at the time that G. de Lannoy encountered it was still described as the Semigallians, spoke a language that essentially was not different from that used 150–200 years later by authors of the first printed works in Latvian.

Traces of ancient tribal languages are evident in the sub-dialects of the modern Latvian language, both phonetically and at a morphological level. Many of the dialect aspects of our modern vocabulary arose in the distant past when our ancestors still spoke the Couronian, Latgalian, Selonian, and Semigallian tribal languages. The names of ancient tribes or ethnic groups have survived in the names of various dialects and groups of sub-dialects.

There are three territorially-based dialects of the Latvian language: the Middle Latvian dialect, the Livonian dialect, and the High Latvian dialect[61]. The Livonian dialect and the Middle dialect are relatively close to one another, but are distinctly

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[58] Bušs, O. *Latvija* un *latvieši*: vārdu cilme, 18.–19. lpp.

[59] Zinkevičius, Z. Par latviešu valodas cilmi. Zinkevičius, Z. *Rinktiniai straipsniai*. I. Vilnius: Lietuvių katalikų akademija, 2002, 139. lpp.

[60] Cimermanis, S. Ceļavārdi. Spekke, A. *Latvieši un Livonija 16. gs.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1995, 26. lpp.

[61] See, Latvian Dialects and their Classification. *Atlas of the Baltic Languages*: a Prospect. Stafecka, A., Mikulėnienė, D. (eds.). Rīga/Vilnius: University of Latvia, Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia, Institute of the Lithuanian Language, 2009, pp. 28–29; Jansone, I. Latvian. *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, Vol. 88, Is. 3, 2010, pp. 750–752.

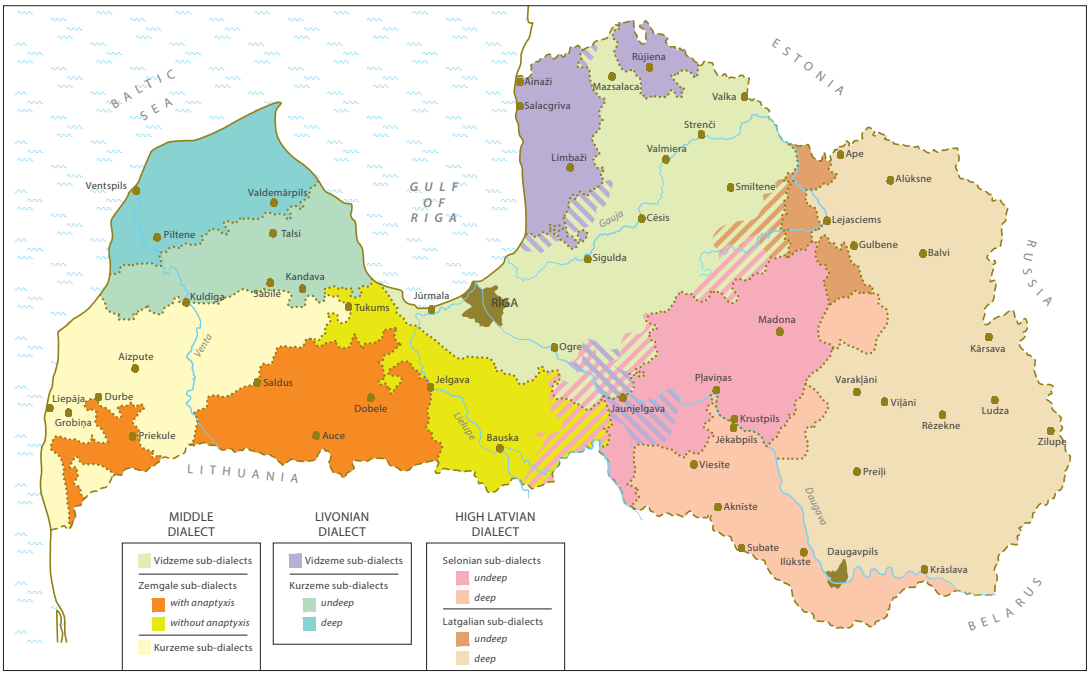


Fig. 4. The dialects and the sub-dialect groups of the Latvian language (electronic version created by Liene Markus-Narvila)

different with respect to the High Latvian dialect. On occasion one may contrast the sub-dialects of the lowlanders (of the Middle and Livonian dialects) with those of the High Latvian dialect.

The **Livonian dialect** is spoken in Northern Kurzeme and in Western Vidzeme. There are two sub-dialect groups within the dialect: the Kurzeme Livonian sub-dialects are spoken in the northern part of Kurzeme, while the Vidzeme Livonian sub-dialects are encountered in the west of Vidzeme. The Livonian sub-dialects in Vidzeme resulted from the Liv language mixing with the sub-dialects in Vidzeme of the Middle dialect. The Livonian sub-dialects in Kurzeme arose from the Couronian language, and later the Latvian sub-dialects in Kurzeme mixing with the Liv language.

The **High Latvian dialect** is spoken widely in Latvia (in Eastern Vidzeme, Eastern Zemgale, and in Latgale). This dialect has two groups of sub-dialects: the Latgalian and Selonian sub-dialect groups. The Latgalian sub-dialects of the High Latvian dialect are based on the Eastern Latgalian tribal language. The ethnolinguistic links between Eastern Latgalians and the Baltic Finns of Eastern Latvia played a significant role in the development of the Eastern Latgalian dialect and the Latgalian sub-dialects.

The Selonian sub-dialects of the High Latvian dialect were influenced by the Selonian tribe or ethnic group. Anthropologists and archaeologists have determined the mixing which occurred between the Selonians and the Latgalians. Latgalians had assimilated the Selonians of south-east Vidzeme by the 12th century. A powerful presence

of the Latgalian anthropological type and material culture was evident at that time in the eastern region of Zemgale (Upper Latvia). Hence the Latgalian tribal language influenced the Selonian sub-dialects of both Vidzeme and Zemgale. Latgalian features of the Selonian language are also present in the Selonian sub-dialects of the Latvian language.

The **Middle dialect** is spoken in central Vidzeme around Valka, Valmiera, Cēsis and Riga, in Zemgale around Jelgava and Dobele, and in the southern part of Kurzeme. The Middle dialect comprises three groups of sub-dialects: those associated with Zemgale, the sub-dialects of the Middle dialect in Vidzeme, and those associated with Kurzeme.

The question of the origin of the Vidzeme sub-dialects of the Middle dialect is related to the ethnic origin of Baltic newcomers to the territory, which constitutes modern Vidzeme, over which these sub-dialects are to be encountered today. It is also closely related to the question as to whether the Semigallian or the Western Latgalian language was the basis for the consolidated Latvian language.

It is most probable that the sub-dialects in Vidzeme of the Middle dialect originated and developed on the basis of the Semigallian and Western Latgalian tribal languages. The sub-dialects in Zemgale of the Middle dialect originated with the Semigallian tribal language. The sub-dialects in Kurzeme of the Middle dialect are based on the tribal language spoken by the Cours. Some of the sub-dialects of the Middle dialect encountered in the south of Kurzeme do not differ greatly from sub-dialects found in mid-Zemgale. Some features of these latter sub-dialects contain features similar to those of sub-dialects in Kurzeme. Therefore, these sub-dialects may be described as Couronian-Semigallian.

It must be admitted that today differences between sub-dialects are tending to even out: either the area tends to contract over which historically a sub-dialect is spoken, or the differences disappear. The number of sub-dialects is rising which are no longer spoken.

Written records are used to delineate the historical development path followed by the Latvian language.

The first stage in the evolution of the written Latvian language may be described as the **period of alphabetisation and choice of language,** which lasted from the 12th/13th centuries until 1631[62]. The oldest surviving text to have been written in Latvian is a translation of the Lord's Prayer included in the 1550 edition of the book, *Cosmographia,* by Sebastian Münster[63]. News has survived of a book, allegedly in

[62] In his overview of the use of the Latvian language, its function and status, Professor Pēteris Vanags offers the following periodisation of the written form: 1) the period of alphabetisation and choice of language (13th cent. – the first half of the 17th cent.); 2) a period of initial codification of norms (mid-17th cent. – mid-18th cent.); 3) a period of stabilisation of norms (second half of the 18th cent. – mid-19th cent.); 4) a period during which norms were partially changed and modernised (second half of the 19th cent. – early 20th cent.); 5) a period when its functionality was widened (1918–1940); 6) a period when its use was restricted (1940–1991); 7) a second period when its use was expanded (1991– now). Vanags, P. Latviešu literārās valodas attīstība. *Latvieši un Latvija.* 1. sēj., 178. lpp.

[63] Draviņš, K. Das Hasentötersche lettische Vaterunser. *Studi Baltici*, 9, 1952, S. 211–230; Vanags, P. Latviešu literārās valodas attīstība, 179. lpp.

Latvian, *Luterāņu mise* (A Lutheran Mass), which was foreseen for distribution during the Reformation, and which was confiscated in 1525 by the Catholic Council of the City of Lübeck[64].

Several handwritten manuscripts of the Lord's Prayer date from the first half of the 16th century: *Gisberta tēvreize* (The Lord's Prayer according to Gisbert) (between 1507 and 1540), *Bruno tēvreize* (The Lord's Prayer according to Bruno) (the actual manuscript dates from the end of the 16th century, but it is considered to have relied upon source material from the 1520s), and *Grūnava tēvreize* (The Lord's Prayer according to Grūnavs) (between 1521 and 1529)[65]; there is reason to be sceptical that the last of these was written in Latvian, but it appears that this text of the Lord's Prayer is in Latvian containing a number of terms the Prussian (perhaps from the Couronian?) language[66].

It is approximately from this period that the first written sentences written in Latvian appear in documents of the tradesmen's guilds, for example, the book of the Guild of Porters in Riga (*Losträgergilde*) dated 1533 contains a sentence (which has been cited by many authors), "*Anna Szageryn lyck sow scryvet paer joune mahsze",* which has been rendered in modern Latvian by Alvils Augstkalns as, "Anna Žagariņa lika sevi ierakstīt par jaunu māsu" (Anna Žagariņa insisted that she be registered as a new sister)[67]. A number of documents of this guild written starting from around 1450 contain Latvian proper nouns; Leonid Arbusow junior published a list of these nouns in the 20th century[68]. During the 15th century, books of trades in Riga contain a number of Latvian common terms, for example, *mate* [māte (mother)], *scewe* [sieve (wife)][69]. It is significant that in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* (*Heinrici Chronicon*), which was written during the first half of the 13th century (1225–1227), the Latvian word *draugs (friend)* is included in the text in a Latin form in the accusative singular case (follows in bold type) (*Russinus interea de castri summitate Bertoldum magistrum de Wenden,* ***draugum*** *suum, id est consocium.*[70])

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[64] Apīnis, A. *Latviešu grāmatniecība*: no pirmsākumiem līdz 19. gs. beigām. Rīga: Liesma, 1977, 35.–36. lpp.; Vanags, P. *Luterāņu rokasgrāmatas avoti*: *vecākā perioda (16. gs.–17. gs. sākuma) latviešu teksti*. Stokholma: Memento; Rīga: Mantojums, 2000, 14. lpp.; Ross, K., Vanags, P. (eds.) *Common Roots of the Latvian and Estonian Literary Languages*. Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2008, pp. 11–13.

[65] Ozols, A. *Veclatviešu rakstu valoda.* Rīga: Liesma, 1965, 57.–58. lpp.; see also: Pokrotniece, K. Grēki un parādi — pamest vai piedot?: ieskats latviešu senajās tēvreizēs. *Baltistica*, VIII priedas. Vilnius: Vilniaus Universitetas, 2012, 111.–112. lpp.

[66] For more about this, see, for example, Kiparsky, V. Das Schicksal eines altpreußischen Katechismus (II). *Baltistica*, VI (2). Vilnius: Mintis, 1970, S. 225–226; Bušs, O. Dažas leksikoloģiskas pārdomas Grūnava tēvreizes sakarā. Bušs, O. *No ģermānismiem līdz superlatīvam.* Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2008, 201.–202. lpp.

[67] Augstkalns, A. Pirmie latviešu teksti un grāmatas (...1530–1630...). Augstkalns, A. *Darbu izlase.* Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2009, 322. lpp.

[68] Arbusow, L. Kirchliches Leben der Rigaschen Losträger im 15. Jahrhundert. Mit 2 Beilagen. *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti*, VI, 1923, 185–224. lpp.

[69] Arbusow, L. Studien zur Geschichte der lettischen Bevölkerung Rigas im Mittelalter und 16. Jahrhundert. *Latvijas Augstskolas Raksti*, I, 1921, 98. lpp.

[70] *Indriķa hronika*, 176. lpp.

According to Pēteris Vanags, at the end of the 16th century (1585–1587) the choice of books printed in Latvian (Catholic and Lutheran catechisms, and collections of pericopes) was determined by economic considerations. "Riga was the principal city of Livonia, whereupon the earliest texts in the Latvian language ... reflect the Latvian language spoken there."[71] As much as can be ascertained from these texts, the language spoken in Riga at that time by and large corresponded to the modern Latvian literary language (with certainly a number of archaic traits)[72].

Let us now examine in detail books of the 16th century which were written in the Latvian language. There are only six such books dating from the 16th century[73] listed in the catalogue, *Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā*[74]. The first of these is the already mentioned text, *Luterāņu mise* (A Lutheran Mass)[75] (1525), while the second of these is, *Luterāņu katehisms* (A Lutheran Catechism) (1585); both were books about which information is available, but which have not survived (no copies have as yet been found). The first printed books in Latvian are religious texts: *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (*Catechismvs Catholicorum*, 1585[76]), and parts of the Lutheran Handbook (*Enchiridion*, 1586[77]; *Evangelia und Episteln*, 1587[78]; *Undeudsche Psalmen und geistliche Lieder*, 1587[79]). A further six books treating similar topics appeared in the period to 1631.

The authors of these first texts and books were Germans. Their mother tongue was, most probably, Low German. In writing their articles in Latvian the authors used letters then current in German texts — Gothic script (Fraktur typeface), and furthermore they followed the example of Low German orthography, although the latter in principle was not suited to reproducing certain sounds of the Latvian language. One consequence was that practically all texts were written following a different unique

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71 Vanags, P. Latviešu literārās valodas attīstība, 180. lpp.

72 Ibid., 180.–181. lpp.

73 Information about 16th–17th century articles written by Latvian authors (and information about these authors) is to be found in: Dini, P. U. *Foundations of Baltic Languages*, pp. 401–404; many 16th–18th century publications are listed in *Seno tekstu korpusā* (http://www.korpuss.lv/senie/).

74 *Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā, 1525–1855*: kopkatalogs. This catalogue was compiled by a number of contributors led by Silvija Šiško. Apīnis, A. (scientific editor). Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka, 1999, 39.–41. lpp.

75 Biezais, H. *Beiträge zur lettischen Kultur- und Sprachgeschichte.* Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1973, S. 25–31.

76 *Catechismvs Catholicorum. Iſcige pam=maciſcß*[sic!]*en/ no thems Paprekſche Galwe gab=blems Chriſtites macibes. Prexſkan thems nemaci=gems vnd iounems bernems. Cour Kungam Petrum Caniſsium / thaes Schwetes rakſtes* Doctor. Ehſpreſtcz Vilne Pille / Litto=urre Semmen / pi Danielem Lan=cicienſem expan tho gadde. 1585.

77 *Enchiridion. Der kleine Ca=techiſmus: Oder Chriſt=liche zucht für die gemeinen Pfar=herr vnd Prediger auch Haus=ueter* etc. Durch D. Martin. Luther. Nun aber aus dem Deud=ſchen ins vndeudſche gebracht/ vnd von wort zu wort/ wie es von D. M. Luthero geſetzet/ gefaſ=ſet worden. Gedruckt zu Königsperg bey George Oſterbergern. Anno M. D. LXXXVI.

78 *Euangelia vnd Episteln / aus dem deud=schen in vndeudsche Sprache gebracht / so durchs gantze Jar / auff alle Sontage vnd fuernem=sten Feste / in den Kirchen des Fuersten= thumbs Churlandt vnd Semigallien in Liefland vor die vndeudschen gelesen werden. Mit de Historien des Lei=dens / vnd Aufferstehung vn=sers HErrn Jesu Christi / aus den vier Euange=listen*. Gedruckt zu Königsperg in Preussen / bey Georgen Osterbergern. M. D. LXXXVII.

79 *Vndeudsche PSalmen vnd geistliche Lieder oder Gesenge* / welche in den Kirchen Fuerstenthums Churland vnd Semigallien in Liefflande gesungen werden. M. D. LXXXVII.

orthography; added to this was an evident shortcoming in the authors' mastery of the Latvian language. The sequence of words was non-Latvian, and there were many literal translations.

Aside from the presence of several deformations in orthography, morphology, and syntax, these books provide insight into Latvian language features characteristic of that period. Once errors due to the German authors have been filtered out, the language of books from the end of the 16th century and early 17th century largely reflects the state of play of the language of Latvians as it had taken shape through merger of languages spoken by the ancient tribes and ethnic groups.

A better understanding of the actual system of the Latvian language was needed in order to improve its written form. Owing to a lack of specialist linguists during the 17th century, this task was undertaken by individuals on the basis of need and who had some grasp of theoretical concepts. These were clergymen for whom language was a tool of their trade, and who had acquired a minimum level of linguistic knowledge in learning Latin, Greek, and other languages. Their activities may be deemed to have been those of missionaries-linguists, akin to what was happening at that time in America and elsewhere outside of Europe where the spread of Christianity began with mastering the local language and writing down grammar.

The next stage in development of the Latvian language was the **initial period of the codification of norms** (1631–1739), which began in 1631 with publication of a Lutheran Handbook, *Lettisch Vade mecum*[80], by Georg Mancelius, with the end of this stage, and the onset of the following stage marked by publication in 1739 of the 2nd edition of the Holy Bible[81]. While printed literature during this period was devoted principally to spiritual topics, the period saw appearance of the first ABC books, grammar books and dictionaries.

The first known ABC book in Latvian from the 1680s has survived in the form of a title-page and fragment of text, which were found in the library of Tartu University (Estonia) in the form of a printer's sheet which had not been cut into individual pages. This book was ordered in alphabetic sequence featuring Lutheran religious texts. The image of a rooster is featured on the title page, and this has become a symbol of these

[80] *Lettiſch* Vade mecum. *Handbuch, darinnen fol=gende ſechs Stücke begriffen*: 1. Evangelia vnd Epiſteln ſo durchs gantze Jahr auff alle Sontag vnd fürnehmbſte Feſte in den Lettiſchen Kirchen in Liefland Churland vnd Semgallen geleſen werden. 2. Die tröſtliche Hiſtoria des ſchmertzlichen Leidens vnd Sterbens vnſers Erlöſers JEſu Chriſti aus den Vier Evangeliſten. 3. Die trawrige Hiſtoria der erbärmlichen Zerſtörung der Statt Jeruſalem 40. Jahr nach des HErren Leiden hiebevor in Lettiſcher Sprach nie in Durck geſehen. 4. Geiſtliche Lieder vnd Pſalmen Collecten vnd Ge=behte, ſo das gantze Jahr durch in Chriſtlicher Verſamblung zu Hauſe vnd in den Kirchen geſungen werden. 5. Der kleine Catechiſmus D. MARTINI LUTHERI, Seliger gedächtnis. 6. Das Haus=Zucht= vnd Lehrbuch Syrachs zum er=ſten mahl in Lettiſcher Zungen gebracht vnd außgangen. So wol für die Lettiſche Kirchendiener alß auch für ſolcher Sprache Chriſtliche Hauß=Väter. Von newen reſpectivè vberſehen corrigiret vnd gemehret. Durch GEORGIUM MANCELIUM Semgallum, teutſchen Pa=ſtorn zu Dörpt bey S. Iohan. Kirchen vnd deſſelben Kräyſes Probſt. Gedruckt zu Riga durch vnd in Verlegung Gerhard Schröders, [1631].

[81] BIBLIA, *tas irr: Ta Swehta Grahmata, jeb Deewa Swehti Wahrdi, Kas preekſch un pehz ta Kunga JEſus Kriſtus ſwehtas Peedſimſanas no teem ſwehteem Deewa=Zilwekeem, Prawee=ſcheem, Ewangeliſteem jeb Preezas= Mahzihtajeem un Apuſtuļeem usrakſtiti, Tahm Latweeſchahm Deewa Draudſibahm par labbu istaifita*. Ķensbergâ, driķķehts pee Jahņa Indriķa Artunga, 1739.

books over several centuries. It is possible that the book was published by Johann Georg Wilcken (?–1701).

In 2010, the Bank of Latvia emitted a one Lat coin commemorating the publication of *Latviešu ābece* (Latvian ABC Book) in two versions — in silver, and the other in a copper–nickel alloy. The reverse side of this coin features the image of the rooster from the oldest published ABC book[82] (see Fig. 5).[83]



Fig. 5. Design of a coin (reverse side) issued by the Bank of Latvia in 2010 to commemorate publication of *Latviešu ābece*. Graphic design by the artist Arvīds Priedīte, the casting mould was by the sculptor Ligita Franckeviča[83]

The Catalogue of ancient printed works records two further ABC books published in the 1680s[84], copies of which either have not survived, or their location is unknown. At least one copy has survived of the three ABC books published during the 1690s[85], which featured Lutheran religious texts and numerals, organised following the spelling method.

The first known book of Latvian grammar was written in Latin around 1630 by Johann Georg Rehehusen, a pastor at Aizkraukle, *Manuductio ad linguam Lettonicam facilis et certa*[86] (A Simple and Sure Guide to the Latvian Language). For 14 years, this book was used as a written manuscript, until it was published in 1644 in Riga. The sole known copy of the first edition is held by the Library of Uppsala University. The book of grammar has three chapters. In the first chapter, which is devoted to phonetics and orthography issues, J. G. Rehehusen sets out, on a single page, the basic principles for the written form, showing the correspondence between letters of the alphabet and sounds. The orthography which he employs differs from that used by other writers of the period. The second chapter presents sparse information on the declension of nouns, the comparative case of adjectives and the formation of participles. The third chapter, which is the longest, presents sparse and unclear information about verbs. A separate section is devoted to verb moods, dealing with the debitive mood. The text dealing with grammar covers 31 pages; there is an appendix starting on page 32, which consists of eight short narratives: about a journey, harvesting cereals, drying and threshing in a barn, on the preparation of malt, about work in the fields at spring time, about herding livestock, about constructing buildings, about fishing and hunting.

The fact that his contemporaries were dissatisfied by J. G. Rehehusen's grammar book is evident from an extract of a treatise published by Paul Einhorn, *Tractatus*

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[82] https://monetas.bank.lv/monetas/latviesu-abece.

[83] Ibid.

[84] *Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā, 1525–1855*, 55., 61. lpp.

[85] *Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā, 1525–1855*, 64.–65. lpp.

[86] MANVDVCTIO *Ad Lingvam Lettonicam facilis & certa, monſtrata à JOANNE GEORGO REHEHUSEN Aſcheradenſium Pastore et Conſistorii Kokenhuſenſis Regii Aſſeſſore*. Excuſa à Gerhardo Schrödero Typothetâ Rigenſi Sumptibus Authoris. Anno MDCXLIV. See also: Fennell, T. G. *The First Latvian Grammar J. G. Rehehusen's "Manuductio ad linguam lettonicam..."*: a facsimile Text with annotated translation & commentary. Melbourne: Latvian Tertiary Committee, 1982.

contra Rehehusium, which deals with declensions. This short passage demonstrates that P. Einhorn had examined in greater depth the Latvian language system and better understood it.[87]

It is, therefore, inevitable that a new book of Latvian grammar appeared in 1685, prepared by Heinrich, Superintendent of Courland (also Henricus Adolphi)[88]. H. Adolphi based his book on materials compiled by Christoph Fürecker which came into his possession after the death of Ch. Fürecker. Ch. Fürecker had lived among Latvians, and he had learned the Latvian language from them, which meant that his language was closer to what the people spoke. Rūdolfs Grabis has pointed out that, "the entire book by H. Adolphi is based on conclusions about grammar of the Latvian language drawn by Fürecker"[89]. The chapter devoted to phonetics discusses vowels, diphthongs, and consonants in the Latvian language, and similarities of Latvian pronunciation to the German language are pointed out. H. Adolphi was the first to discuss stress placed on words, indicating that in Latvian this falls onto the first syllable. The largest part of the book is devoted to a survey of morphological issues. He differentiated between the category of all declinable terms (nouns, pronouns, verbs, participles) from those which cannot be declined (adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections). For the first time six declinations of nouns were identified (three masculine and three feminine cases) and seven cases (he was the first to indicate the locative case). For nouns of common gender, differences were noted for the dative case of masculine and feminine nouns. Numerals were included in the class of adjectives, the latter being identified as a separate class of words for the first time by H. Adolphi. Furthermore, the definite and indefinite endings of adjectives were noted, as well as the various degrees of adjectives. Pronouns were identified to be a separate group, but no detailed characterisation was given; the identical forms of masculine and feminine pronouns were noted (*es*, *tu*, *mēs*, *jūs*) as were those which were different in the masculine and feminine form (*tas*, *tā,* etc.). Verbs have been given a prominent place in this grammar book. Paradigms were provided for a large number of verbs, and there was an attempt to group verbs. Considerably less information is given about other categories of words. Only a few pages are devoted to syntax. Despite the large number of errors and shortcomings, which are the result of a desire to attribute to the Latvian language the German language grammatical system (for example, articles, the ablative case), as well as an inability to explain all features of the Latvian language (for example the complex verb system), this grammar book has an important place in the history of the Latvian language. This is due in large measure thanks to the knowledge Ch. Fürecker had of the Latvian language.

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[87] Grabis, R. Pārskats par 17. gadsimta latviešu valodas gramatikām. *Latvijas PSR Zinātņu akadēmijas Valodas un literatūras institūta raksti*, 5. sēj. Rīga: LPSR ZA izdevniecība, 1955, 205.–266. lpp.

[88] *Erſter Verſuch Einer kurtz=verfaſſeten Anleitung Zur Lettischen Sprache überreichet von HENRICO ADOLPHI, Der Herzogthümer Curland und Secgallen* Superintendente, *auch Ober=Paſtoren der Chriſtlichen Teutſchen Gemeine in der Fürſtl. Reſidentz MITAU.* Gedruckt in Mitau durch Ihro Hoch=Fürſtl: Durchl: Hof=Buchdrucker George Radetzky 1685. See also: Fennell, T. G. *Adolphi's Latvian Grammar*. A facsimile Text with annotated translation & commentary. Melbourne: Latvian Tertiary Committee, 1993.

[89] Grabis, R. Pārskats par 17. gadsimta latviešu valodas gramatikām, 205.–266. lpp.

A book of grammar, *Ganz kurtze Anleitung* (A Very Brief Guide), by Georg Dressell appeared in 1685[90]; it contained no discussion of grammar issues which was not already present in the work by H. Adolphi.

The book of grammar, *Kurtze Lettische Grammatica* (A Short Latvian Grammar), by Johannes Langius, bears the date 1685, but it was only published, together with a dictionary, in 1936[91]. This book of grammar by J. Langius occupied a distinguished place among books of grammar of the 17th century. In comparison with other grammar books of the period it presented many important facts about the language, which are all the more significant in that J. Langius collected his observations in Lower Kurzeme, i.e. the south-western part of Latvia. The grammar book by J. Langius was the first to consider names of numbers as a separate category of words. A number of derivations of words not previously mentioned are included in this grammar book. Naturally, it shares many of the shortcomings of all grammar books of the Latvian language written during this time by German clergymen, namely a tendency to treat grammatical forms of the Latvian language from the standpoint of features evident in other languages.[92]


LETTUS,
Das iſt
Wortbuch/
Sampt angehengtem täglichem Gebrauch der Lettiſchen Sprache;
Allen vnd jeden Außheimiſchen/die in Churland/Semgallen vnd Lettiſchem Liefflande bleiben/vnd ſich redlich nehren wollen/
zu Nutze verfertigt /
Durch
GEORGIVM MANCELIVM
Semgall. der H. Schrifft Licentiatum &c.
Erſter Theil.
Cum Grat. & Priv. S.R.M. Svec.
Gedruckt vnnd verlegt zu Riga/
durch GERHARD. Schröder/
Anno M. DC. XXXVIII.

Fig. 6. Title page of G. Mancelius' dictionary *Lettus*

The beginning of Latvian lexicography dates from the 1630s.[93] The first dictionary intended for use by translators of the Latvian language was published in 1638 — the German–Latvian dictionary, *Lettus*[94] (see Fig. 6) by Georg Mancelius, Court Chaplain to the Duke of Courland, which also had appended as the second part a thematically ordered

[90] *Ganz kurtze Anleitung Zur Lettiſchen Sprache Ans Tages Licht gegeben Von GEORGIO Dreßell* Paſt. Pinck. Rifa In Verlegung Georg Matth. Nöllers Im Jahr Chriſti 1685. See also: Fennell, T. G. *Georg Dreszell's Gantz kurtze Anleitung Zur Lettiſchen Sprache*. Text, Translation, Commentary, Concordance. Melbourne: Latvian Tertiary Committee, 1984.

[91] Lettiſch-Deutſches Lexicon worinnen Der Lettiſchen Sprachen Gründe, Wörter, Bedeutung vnd Gebrauch in deutſcher Sprachen gezeiget vnd erkläret werden. Sampt einer kurtzen Grammatica, wodurch Den Außländern ein richtiger Weg gewiesen wird zur Erlernung der Lettiſchen Sprachen leichtlich zukommen. geſtellet vnd außgegeben von Johanne Langio, Pastoren zur Ober vnd Nieder=Bartaw in Curland. *Nīcas un Bārtas mācītāja Jāņa Langija 1685. gada latviski-vāciskā vārdnīca ar īsu latviešu gramatiku*: pēc manuskripta fotokopijas izdevis un ar īsu apcerējumu par J. Langija dzīvi, rakstību un valodu papildinājis E. Blese. Rīga: Latvijas Ūniversitāte, 1936.

[92] Grabis, R. Pārskats par 17. gadsimta latviešu valodas gramatikām, 205.–266. lpp.

[93] Jansone, I. Entwicklung der lettischen Lexikographie von G. Mancelius bis zu elektronischen Wörterbüchern. *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, Heft 129, 2003, S. 64–95.

[94] *Lettus, / Das iſt Wortbuch / Sampt angehengtem täg=lichem Gebrauch der Letti=ſchen Sprache; Allen vnd jeden Außhei=miſchen / die in Churland / Semgallen vnd Lettischem Liefflande blei=ben / vnd ſich redlich nehren wollen / zu Nutze verfertigt* / Durch GEORGIVM MANCELIVM Semgall. der H. Schrifft Licentiatum &c. Erſter Theil. Cum Grat. & Priv. S. R. M. Svec. Gedruckt vnnd verlegt zu Riga durch GERHARD. Schröder Anno M. DC. XXXVIII [1638].

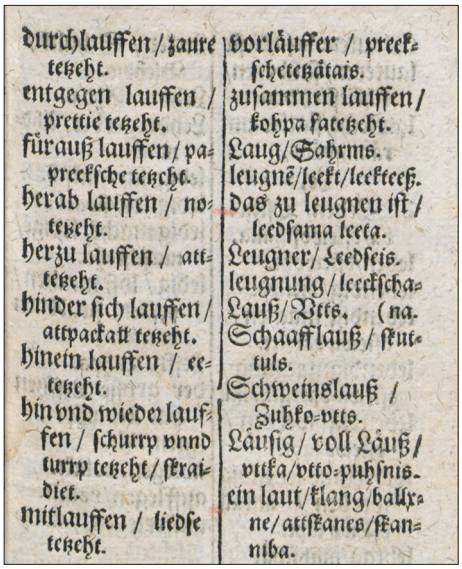

durchlauffen / zaure tetzeht.
entgegen lauffen / prettie tetzeht.
fürauß lauffen / papreckſche tetzeht.
herab lauffen / notetzeht.
herzu lauffen / attetzeht.
hinder ſich lauffen / attpackatt tetzeht.
hinein lauffen / ee-tetzeht.
hin vnd wieder lauffen / ſchurrp vnnd turrp tetzeht / ſkraidiet.
mitlauffen / liedſe tetzeht.
vorläuffer / preckſchetetzätais.
zuſammen lauffen / kohpa tatetzeht.
Laug/Sahrms.
leugnē/leekt/leekteeß.
das zu leugnen iſt / leedſama leeta.
Leugner/Leedſeis.
leugnung/leeckſcha-
Lauß/Vtts. (na.
Schaafflauß / ſkutuls.
Schweinslauß / Suhku-vtts.
Läuſig/voll Läuß/ vtſka/vtto-puhſnis.
ein laut/klang/ballxne/attſkanes/ſkanniba.

Fig. 7. Excerpt from the dictionary *Lettus* by G. Mancelius

collection of phrases, *Phraseologia Lettica*[95]. The two parts of the Dictionary together consisted of 414 pages.

The full title of the dictionary clearly signals its use for practical mastery of the Latvian language, yet the number of terms that it contains is relatively restricted, and its German part might have been based on an earlier German dictionary meant for translation. The special place that the dictionary *Lettus* and the thematic compilation *Phraseologia Lettica,* occupy in Latvian lexicography is that they were the first of their kind. The dictionary was printed using Gothic letters (using a Fraktur typeface) with words separated by slashes (/). In the first part of the dictionary the German words are ordered alphabetically. Very often one Latvian word corresponds to one German term, but there are some exceptions. Occasionally, two or more terms in Latvian (*Beruff / Ampt – Ammatz*) correspond to a single German term. Two or more Latvian terms may correspond to one German term, e.g. (*Banck – Benckis / Sohla*; *Gefahr – Nhelaime / Lixta / Bähdi*), (*weiß – albus, ballts*; *Hermlin – mus araneus*, *Särrmulis*); a combination of terms or a more extensive fragment may be suitably translated (*langer Bart – gharra Bahrda*; *hin vnd wieder lauffen – ſchurrp vnnd turrp tetzet / ſkraidiet*) (see Fig. 7). The principle of alphabetic ordering is respected in all 51 chapters of the second part. In some instances, G. Mancelius also tried to indicate the territorial reach of a term, indicating words used in Courland, or those encountered in Valle.

Two multi-language dictionaries were published during the 17th century in addition to the dictionary by G. Mancelius, while only a single dictionary was published during the 18th century.

A tri-lingual dictionary, *Dictionariym Polono–Latino–Lottauicum* (Polish–Latin–Latvian)[96], was compiled and published by Georg Elger in 1683; this dictionary was based on the Polish and Latin language parts of the 3rd edition (1642) of the first dictionary of the Lithuanian language, *Dictionarium trium linguarum*, by Konstantinas Sirvydas. The dictionary by G. Elger covers a broader range of terms than that due to G. Mancelius. It comprises 674 pages and about 14 000 entries. Latvian terms are written using Polish orthography, although many entries deviate from this. The Latvian language used in the dictionary by G. Elger is replete with errors, and features many incorrect words and forms. The same principle of reliance on translations is largely

[95] *PHRASEOLOGIA LETTICA, / Das iſt: Täglicher Gebrauch der Lettiſchen Sprache*. Verfertigt / durch GEORGIUM MANCELIUM, Semgallum, / Der H. Schrifft Licentia-tum &c. Ander Theil. Dieſem iſt beygefüget das Spruchbuch Salomonis. Zu Riga Gedruckt vnnd Verlegt durch Gerhard. Schröder / 1638.

[96] *DICTIONARIVM Polono-Latino-Lottauicum Opus poſthumum*. R. P. GEORGII ELGER Soc. IESU. In gratiam Studioſae Iuuentutis In lucem datum. VILNAE Typis Academicis Soc. IESU. A. D. 1683.

followed in this dictionary, just as in the dictionary by G. Mancelius. There are occasional indications of the region where a particular term was found.

An anonymous four-language dictionary, German–Latin–Polish–Latvian[97], was published five years later. Entries were ordered thematically in separate chapters.

A very similar dictionary, German–Swedish–Polish–Latvian appeared in 1705[98]. Liborius Depkin is traditionally considered to have been the author of this dictionary

Several manuscripts of dictionaries have been attributed to the 17th century and the early 18th century, the most important ones being a Latvian–German dictionary by Ch. Fürecker (it has survived in two versions, i.e. as two different manuscripts)[99], and a Latvian–German dictionary with a grammar supplement compiled by J. Langius, a pastor in Nīca and Bārta[100]. The manuscripts by Ch. Fürecker were originally held by the Academic (Misiņš) Library of the University of Latvia, while the manuscript of the dictionary by J. Langius was discovered in 1923 at the Library of Heidelberg University (Germany). The dictionary by J. Langius is considered to have been finished by 1685. Ch. Fürecker completed his work on a dictionary in 1670. The dictionary by J. Langius includes many terms from Lower Kurzeme. Ch. Fürecker based his dictionary on the vocabulary current in the district of Dobele.

Both of these dictionaries were only published in the 20th century, yet they attracted considerable interest by linguists, given the relatively high level of their lexicography. An extensive vocabulary from this period is found in these dictionaries, but the total number of lexemes is difficult to calculate, as entries were ordered alphabetically with an internal nested set of entries (such ordering was not always followed: for example, in the dictionary by Ch. Fürecker the alphabetic sequence restarts several times) — usually an entry comprised: 1) the essential term, and varieties featuring prefixes, 2) derived terms including prefixes and compound words, 3) synonyms.

There was an attempt to indicate to the maximum possible degree additional information about how wide-spread a word was in use, its origin, grammatical category. Furthermore, there were numerous references to 17th century texts, grammars, and other linguistic studies.

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[97] *VOCABULARIUM Wie Etzliche gebräuchliche Sachen Auff Teutſch/ Lateiniſch/ Polniſch Und Lettiſch/ Auszuſprechen ſeynd*. RIGA/ Gedruckt bey Georg Matth. Nöllern/ 1688.

[98] *Wörter=Büchlein Wie Etzliche gebräuchliche Sachen auff Teutſch / Schwediſch / Polniſch und Lettiſch Zu benennen ſeynd.* RIGA Bey Georg Matth. Nöller 1705. A facsimile reproduction of this dictionary with extensive commentary by Pēteris Vanags was published in 1999: *"Wörter=Büchlein": Glossary Designating some Ordinary Things in German, Swedish, Polish and Latvian. Facsimile of the 1705 German–Swedish–Polish–Latvian Glossary printed in Riga*. With commentary and a Latvian word index by Pēteris Vanags. Stockholm: Memento, 1999.

[99] Lettiſches und Teutſches Wörterbuch zuſahmen geſchrieben und mit fleiß gesamlet Von Christopher Fürecker. Fennel, T. G. *Fürecker's Dictionary: the First Manuscript*. Rīga: Latvijas Akadēmiskā bibliotēka, 1997; Christoph Füreckers, Candidat des Predigtamts in Kurland lettisch-deutschen Wörterbuchs erster theil A–P, zwey_ter Theil R–Z. Fennell, T. G. *Fürecker's Dictionary: the Second Manuscript*. Rīga: Latvijas Akadēmiskā bibliotēka, 1998.

[100] Lettiſch–Deutſches Lexicon worinnen Der Lettiſchen Sprachen Gründe, Wörter, Bedeutung vnd Gebrauch in deutſcher Sprachen gezeiget vnd erkläret werden. Sampt einer kurtzen Grammatica, wodurch Den Außländern ein richtiger Weg gewieſen wird zur Erlernung der Lettiſchen Sprachen leichtlich zukommen. geſtellet vnd außgegeben von Johanne Langio, Pastoren zur Ober vnd Nieder=Bartaw in Curland. *Nīcas un Bārtas mācītāja Jāņa Langija 1685. gada latviski–vāciskā vārdnīca ar īsu latviešu gramatiku*.

Important changes in orthography took place during this period, which are associated with the name of G. Mancelius. Lengthening vowel sounds was achieved by G. Mancelius through insertion of the letter *h* — *ah*, *eh*, *ih*, *uh,* following the German example. In German, long vowels are usually found in the root of words, whereupon G. Mancelius combined a vowel together with the letter *h* to represent long vowels which occurred only in the root of words; he relied upon short vowels in prefixes, while long vowels in endings were designated by a specific mark placed over the vowel. Thus, words no longer ended only in the letter *e*, but with the short vowels — *a*, *e*, *i*, *u*.

For consonants G. Mancelius invariably adopted the German example, using combinations of letters, for example, *š – ſch*, *ž – ſch*. In contrast to what obtains for German, he distinguished the representation of the letters *s*, *z*, *š*, *ž* as follows: *s – ſ*, *z – ſ*, *š – ſch*, *ž – ſch*, *č – tſch*, *dž – dſch.* He also began to distinguish representation of the palatalised consonants *ļ*, *ņ*, *ķ*, *ģ* from the hard form of these consonants *l*, *n*, *k*, *g*, introducing a special mark, crossing these letters.

The reform also affected representation diphthongs. The diphthong *ie* was consistently written as *ee*, whereas the diphthong *uo* was represented in the same way as a vowel: in the root of a word by *oh*, in suffixes as the short *o*, and in ending — as the consonant with an intonation sign.

The orthography introduced by G. Mancelius radically improved the written form of the language, and, furthermore, it ensured that the language appearing in books stabilised around the Middle Dialect by consistently employing the letter *h* for the long form of vowels, as well as the diphthong *o* [uo].

Translation of the complete text of the Bible into the Latvian language, which was printed in 1694, deserves special mention as it was one of many religious texts[101]. This translation was the result of collaboration between Johann Fischer, Superintendent-General of Vidzeme during the reign of Charles XI of Sweden, and Johann Ernst Glück, pastor at Alūksne. Charles XI devoted great attention to church matters and schooling, and, thus, he willingly granted financial support (7500 Thalers) for translation of the Bible into the Latvian language and for its publication. J. Fischer, who at that time owned a printing house in Riga, was responsible for organising this activity. E. Glück, assisted by Michael Klemken and Christian Bartholomeus Witten, took eight years to translate the Bible. The Bible was translated from the Hebrew and Greek original text, as E. Glück had learned these languages during six years of study in Hamburg. In 1683, the first organised discussion or conference took place in Jelgava, devoted to translation of the New Testament by E. Glück, and to assessment of the principles for writing the text. The translated text was written initially following the orthography developed by G. Mancelius, which was already outdated by that time, and the clergymen from Courland rejected this version. The translation was reworked over a year and a half following the writing principles contained in the grammar book of H. Adolphi. At

[101] *Ta Swehta Grahmata Jeb Deewa Swehtais Wahrds / Kas Preekſch un pehz ta Kunga JEſus Kriſtus ſwehtas Peedſimſchanas no teem ſwehteem Deewa=Zilwekeem / Praweeſcheem / Ewangeliſteem jeb Preezas=Mahzitajeem un Apuſtuļeem usrak=ſtihts / Tahm latweeſchahm Deewa Draudſibahm par labbu istaiſita*. [J. Fišera uzdevumā tulk. E. Gliks ar palīgiem K. B. Vitenu un M. Klemkenu]. Riga / Gedruckt bey Georg Wilcken / Koenigl. Buchdrucker / M DC LXXXIX.

a conference held in 1685 in Riga, permission was granted by the clergymen of Courland to publish the result, i.e. the New Testament. Work on translation of the Bible was completed in 1689, but Charles XI only granted permission to publish it in 1694, at which time 1500 copies of the Bible translated into the Latvian language were printed (see Fig. 8). This Bible contains 2487 pages and it weighs four kilogrammes. On the basis of a special order, 250 copies of this Bible were distributed free of charge to churches and schools on 30 September 1694.

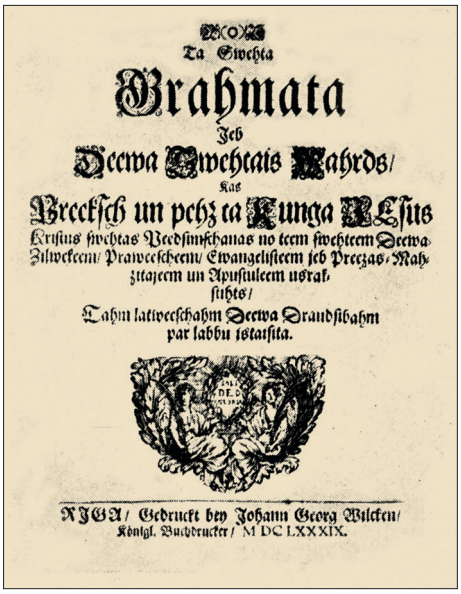

Ta Swehta
Grahmata
Jeb
Deewa Swehtais Mahrds/
Kas
Wezzajs un Jaunajs Derribas
Kriſtus ſwehtas Wedſinnſchanas no teem ſwehteem Deewa
Zilwekeem/ Praweeſcheem/ Ewangelijſteem jeb Preezas-Mah-
zitajeem un Apuſtuleem uſrak-
ſtihts/
Tahm latweeſchahm Deewa Draudſibahm
par labbu iſtaiſita.
RIGA/ Gedruckt bey Johann Georg Wilcken/
Königl. Buchdrucker/ M DC LXXXIX.

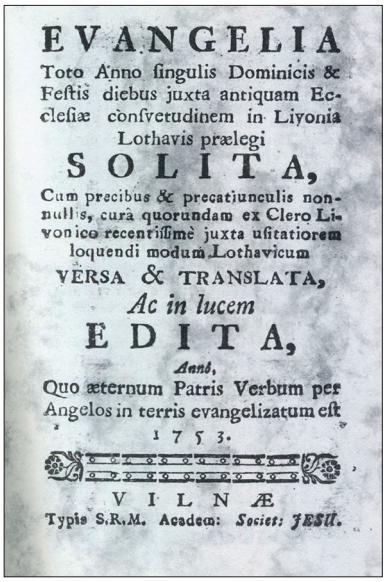
Fig. 8. Title page of E. Glück's translation of the Bible

There followed a **period when norms were stabilised** (1739–1856), starting with the publication of the 2nd edition of the translated Bible and closing with the publication in 1856 of the first collection of poems, *Dziesmiņas* (Short Songs)[102], by Juris Alunāns, which included the essay "Kāds vārds par latviešu valodu" (Some words about the Latvian language).

A characteristic of this period was stabilisation of the orthography norms used in the second edition of the Bible (1739), with these, together with the new forms of expression therein, transferred to written secular literature. Over this period, 2336 books (titles) were published in the Latvian language. Whereas during the 18th century, religious texts predominated, then secular literature acquired a rising place in numbers of the titles published during the first half of the 19th century.

After the Truce of Altmark in 1629, the lands where Latvians lived were divided into two parts, with each part coming under the influence of a different culture. Modern-day Vidzeme and Kurzeme remained under the influence of German and Lutheran culture, whereas modern-day Latgale came under the influence of the Polish Catholic church and Polish culture. This split had serious implications for the history of the language. The Liv and Central sub-dialects, for the most part, were spoken in Vidzeme and in Kurzeme, whereas sub-dialects of the High Latvian dialect were spoken in the territory of modern-day Latgale. Thus, during the 18th century, a new writing system tradition appeared — the written Latgalian language, which had its roots in sub-dialects of the High Latvian dialect. The first Latgalian written work that we are

[102] *Dſeefmiņas Latweeſchu wallodai pahrtulkotas*. Tehrpatâ. Drukkatas pee Laakmanna 1856tâ gaddâ.


EVANGELIA
Toto Anno ſingulis Dominicis & Feſtis diebus juxta antiquam Eccleſiæ conſvetudinem in Livonia Lothavis prælegi
SOLITA,
Cum precibus & precatiunculis nonnullis, curà quorundam ex Clero Livonico recentiſſimè juxta uſitatiorem loquendi modum Lothavicum
VERSA & TRANSLATA,
Ac in lucem
EDITA,
Annô,
Quo æternum Patris Verbum per Angelos in terris evangelizatum eſt
1753.
VILNÆ
Typis S.R.M. Academ: Societ: JESU.

9. att. Title page of *Evangelia toto anno*

certain of, and which has survived, was a translation of the Gospels, *Evangelia toto anno*[103] (see Fig. 9). The title page in Latin states that the Gospels have been given a new translation with the assistance of the clergy of Livonia (*ex Clero Livonico*) into the Latvian language as it was then spoken. Traditionally, the 1753 translation has been regarded to have been the work of Jesuits. Gustav Manteuffel held the opinion that the Jesuit priest, Jānis Lukaševičs (1699–1779), translated this work; this view has long been maintained in the history of Latgalian written texts[104], but the phrase *ex Clero Livonico* leads to the supposition that the likely translator (translators?) of the Gospels is to be found not among members of the Jesuit order, but among the few priests who were not members of the order.[105]

The first known manuscript containing vocabulary identifiable as typical of the High Latvian dialect dates from the early 18th century, *Lexicon Lothavicum,* by Jan Kariger[106], which is held in the Manuscripts Department of Vilnius University; the surviving manuscript is a re-written copy and the precise date of the original is unknown.

In 1787, Gotthard Friedrich Stender published the *Bilžu ābece* (The ABC in Pictures)[107], to supplement traditional ABC books in the lowland territory of Latvia, with each letter illustrated by a drawing and a didactic couplet, for example *Bites ziedos medu salasa: / Tā no grāmatām nāk gudrība* (As bees gather honey from flowers / So wisdom may come from books) (see Fig. 10). At the end of the book there is a list of upper case and lower case letters, as well as examples of the pronunciation of syllables.

The first known calendar in Latvian dates from the mid-18th century, *Zemnieku jeb latviešu laiku grāmata uz to 1758tu gadu* (A Peasant's or a Latvian's Time Book for 1758), was published in 1757, but no copy has survived. A similar fate has befallen calendars for the succeeding years. Insight into their content may be gained from a

[103] *EVANGELIA Toto Anno ſingulis Dominicis & Feſtis diebus juxta antiquam Eccleſiæ conſvetudinem in Livonia Lothavis prælegi SOLITA, Cum precibus & precatiunculis nonnulis, curâ quorundam ex Clero Livonico recentiſſimè juxta uſitatiorem loquendi modum Lothavicum VERSA & TRANSLATA*, Ac in lucem EDITA, Annô, Quo æternum Patris Verbum per Angelos in terris evangelizatum eſt 1753. VILNÆ: Typis, S. R. M. Academ. Societ. JESU, 1753; a facsimile of this book, supplemented by an extensive essay by Anna Stafecka was published in 2004 (*Evangelia Toto Anno 1753. Pirmā latgaliešu grāmata*. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2004).

[104] Vonogs, V. Latgaļu rakstnīceibas sōkumi. *Rokstu krōjums latgaļu drukas aizlīguma atceļšonas 40 godu atcerei.* Daugavpils: V. Lōča izdevnīceiba, 1944, 36.–37. lpp.

[105] Kalvāne, S. *Latgaliešu literatūras sākumi* (*garīgā literatūra 18. un 19. gadsimtā*): disertācijas kopsavilkums filoloģijas doktora grāda iegūšanai. Rīga, 1997, 13. lpp.

[106] For details about the dictionary of J. Kariger see: Kolbuszewski, S. *Jana Karigera Słownik polsko-łotewski na tle leksykografii b. Inflant polskich*. Studium z historii języka łotewskiego i dziejów kultury b. Inflant polskich. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 1977.

[107] *Bildu=Ahbize*. Jelgawâ, pee J. W. Steffenhagen 1787.

calendar intended for 1763[108], where the tables are succeeded by brief articles on geographical, historical, and cultural historical topics, for example, there was a note about what was used to write upon before paper existed, how many continents (parts) make up the world, the size of Europe, the size of Kurzeme, how many towns there were in Kurzeme.



Fig. 10. Excerpt from *Bilžu ābece* by G. F. Stender

The content of the first popular science books chimed with information which was included in these calendars. The first book of this type in the Latvian language was that by G. F. Stender, *Augstas gudrības grāmata* (The Book of High Wisdom), with its first edition appearing in 1774[109]. The book is in two parts, of which the first was devoted to the natural sciences and geography, whereas the second comprised translations of poetry. A facsimile copy of the 3rd revised edition (1796) of *Augstas gudrības grāmata*, together with annotations and essays was published in 1988[110].

Literature offering practical advice appeared from the 1760s onwards covering a variety of topics: medicine, farming, raising cattle, housekeeping, and cook books. Advice on medical matters was included in the first serial publication in the Latvian language, *Latviešu Ārste* (Latvian Doctor) (1768–1769). Jacob Lange acted as translator.

The first secular examples of fiction in the Latvian language appeared, and their author was G. F. Stender. The beginnings of original literature also occurred during the period of stabilisation of norms (1739–1856). A book of poems appeared in 1806 by Neredzīgais Indriķis (1783–1827)[111], in which he lamented his ill fortune (the author was a blind Latvian), proclaimed relying on God, etc. Ansis Leitāns (1815–1874), Ernests Dinsbergs (1816–1902), and Jānis Ruģēns (1817–1876) all began their literary activities during this period, in the first half of the 19th century.

The first Latvian language newspaper *Latviešu Avīzes* started publication in 1822.

The number and quality of linguistic publications — grammars and dictionaries — grew rapidly during this period.

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[108] *Jauna un Wezza Latweeſchu Laiku un notikkuſchu Leetu Grahmata, us to 1763. Gaddu, Pehz tahs ſwehtas Peedſimſchanas muhſu Kunga JEſus KRiſtus, Tà rakſtita arri Widſemmê un zitti Ļaudis, kas Latweeſchu Wallodu proht in laſſiht mahk, Laikus, Deenas Garrumu, Mehneſchu Starpas un zittas Leetas ſinnaht warr.* Eeſpeeſta Jelgawâ no Kriſchjana Liedtke, zeen. Kurſemmes Leel=Kunga Grahmatu=Speedeja. [1762]

[109] *Augſtas Gudribas Grahmata no Paſaules un Dabbas.* Sarakſtita no Sehrpiles un Sunnakſtes Baſnizkunga Stender. Jelgawa un Aisputte: Jekoppe Friedrike Hinz, 1774.

[110] Stenders, G. F. *Augstas gudrības grāmata no pasaules un dabas: 1796. gada izdevuma teksts ar komentāriem* [komentāru aut.: K. Karulis u. c.; mākslinieks A. Sprūdžs; rec. A. Apīnis]. Rīga: Liesma, 1988.

[111] *Ta Neredſiga Indriķa Dſeefmas.* Jelgawâ: pee J. W. Steffenhagen un dehla, 1806.

With his works, *Neue vollständigere lettische Grammatik* (A New, More Complete Latvian Grammar)[112] (1761), and *Lettische Grammatik*[113] (1783) G. F. Stender created the first comprehensive description of the Latvian language; they gave information on sub-dialects, phraseology, poetic theory, folklore, mythology, and ethnography, in addition to grammar. The publication which appeared in 1783, and was translated into Latvian in 2015[114], consists of six parts: Part 1. "Par ortogrāfiju" (On Orthography) (*Orthographie*), examines phonetic questions; Part 2. "Par etimoloģiju" (On Ethymology) (*Etymologie*), morphology issues are examined; Part 3. "Par sintaksi" (On Syntax) (*Syntax*); Part 4. "Par dialektiem" (On Dialects) (*Dialect*); Part 5. "Par īpatnējo" (On Unique Features) (*Idiotismvs*), includes a list of proverbs and riddles; Part 6. "Par poētiku" (On Poetic Theory) (*Poesie*).

Otto Benjamin Gottfried Rosenberger merits being mentioned among the authors of grammar books. His work *Formenlehre der lettischen Sprache* (The Form of the Latvian Language)[115](1830) has attracted the greatest interest. As the title suggests, it consists of a morphological description without any consideration of syntax. The revised and improved edition of his work, *Formenlehre der lettischen Sprache in neuer Darstellung* (A New Look at the Form of the Latvian Language)[116] appeared in 1848. In his books of grammar O. Rosenberger attempted to move focus from practical grammar to scientific grammar. For the first time a grammar of the Latvian language was written using comparative materials and the terminology of comparative linguistics, taking as its model the book by Franz Bopp on the grammar of Sanskrit, *Kritische Grammatik der Sanskrita – Sprache in kürzerer Fassung* (A Critical Grammar of the Sanskrit Language in a Shortened Version) (Berlin, 1834). In his amended book on grammar, O. Rosenberger offered a more extensive description of phonetics; declined forms of nouns are no longer mentioned, instead, there is a discussion of roots of words. In addition, when treating conjugation, the notion of three conjugations is replaced by five classes of conjugation. The description of verb moods was corrected such that it listed all of the moods of Latvian verbs.

In 1852, O. Rosenberger published the syntax part of this work, *Der lettischen Grammatik zweiter Theil, Syntax*[117], which was based on the work on grammar by G. F. Stender, supplemented by additional material. His principle for construction of

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[112] *Neue vollſtändigere Lettiſche Grammatik, Nebſt einem hinlänglichen LEXICO, wie auch einigen Gedichten, verfaſſet von Gotthard Friederich Stender*. Braunſchweig: Gedruckt im Fürſtl. großen Waiſenhauſe, 1761.

[113] *Lettiſche Grammatik, verfaſſet von Gotthard Friedrich Stender, Probſt des Selburgiſchen Kirchenkreiſes, Paſtor ſenior zu Selburg und Sonnaxt, und der Königl. deutſchen Geſellſchaft zu Göttingen Mitgliede*. Zweyte Auflage, von dem Verfaſſer ſelbſt verbeſſert, vermehret und von neuen umgearbeitet. Mitau: Gedruckt und zu haben bey Johann Fried. Steffenhagen, Hochfürſtl. Hofbuchdrucker, 1783.

[114] Stenders Gothards Frīdrihs. *Latviešu gramatika 1783*. Frīde, Z. (tulk.). Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2015.

[115] *Formenlehre der lettiſchen Sprache*. Conſpect für ſeine Zuhörer von dem Lector der lettiſchen Sprache Hofrath Roſenberger. Mitau: Gedruckt bei Joh. Friedr. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1830.

[116] Formenlehre der lettiſchen Sprache in neuer Darſtellung. Ein Versuch von dem Verfaſſer des Conſpects für ſeine Zuhörer Otto Benj. Gottfr. Roſenberger. *Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettiſch=Literäriſchen Geſellſchaft*. Neunten Bandes zweites Stück. Mitau: gedruckt bei J. F. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1848.

[117] Der lettiſchen Grammatik zweiter Theil, Syntax. Entworfen von Otto Benj. Gottfr. Roſenberger. – *Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettiſch=Literäriſchen Geſellſchaft*. Zehnten Bandes erſtes Stück. Mitau, gedruckt bei J. F. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1852.

syntax is the same as that followed by G. F. Stender — use of words was examined as parts of speech. Considerable attention was paid to verbs, followed by nouns and pronouns, and briefly, to the sequence of words in a sentence.

The first books of grammar appeared at the beginning of the 19th century intended for speakers of the High Latvian dialect in Latgale. Whereas in the rest of the territory of Latvia, the authors of grammar books were mostly Germans, up until the early 20th century the authors of books for Latgalians were mostly Poles and Lithuanians. The first known manuscript of a Latgalian grammar dates from 1810 and is associated with the name of Jezups Rimkevičs, but the printed version appeared in 1817 under the name of Tomasz Kossowski[118], and also in 1853.[119] Characteristic features of the written form of Latgalian are presented in these grammar books; however, the writing system was deliberately left without any norms. There was a tradition of spontaneous norms in the Latgalian writing system, and this tradition was very persistent.

A noticeable upsurge in Latvian lexicography occurred beginning with the second half of the 18th century. Two voluminous dictionaries were compiled during the 1770s–1780s — the German–Latvian and Latvian–German dictionaries by J. Lange and G. F. Stender — which are noteworthy not merely for their extensive collections of Latvian words, but also by their great impact on the future development of the written form of the Latvian language, in particular on the formation of the vocabulary of the Latvian literary language.

The dictionary by J. Lange, *Lettischen Lexici*, appeared from 1772 to 1777. The German–Latvian segment of this dictionary was published in 1772[120], and the Latvian–German part appeared one year later[121]. Both parts were published repeatedly and in combined form in 1777 in Jelgava.[122] The German–Latvian part consisted of 607 text columns with around 15 000 words, while in the Latvian–German part there were 406 text columns with around 10 000 words. The dictionary was printed using Gothic letters. Alphabetic ordering was observed, however, an entry included derived words, word combinations and compound words.

J. Lange demonstrated his great interest in Latvian vocabulary through inclusion of several hundred place names in the dictionary: the names of settled places, towns, castles, estates, rivers, lakes, hill, and forests.

J. Lange collected material for his dictionary throughout the 50 years that he spent living and working in Vidzeme, listening to the language spoken by the people. He was

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[118] *GRAMMATYKA INFLANSKO-ŁOTEWSKA KRÓTKO ZEBRANA dla UCZĄCYCH SIĘ JĘZYKA ŁOTEWSKIEGO*. w WILNIE: w Drukarni XX. Missyonarzow p. K. S. Kazimierza, Roku 1817.

[119] *GRAMATYKA INFLANTSKO ŁOTEWSKA DLA UCZĄCYCH SIĘ JĘZYKA ŁOTEWSKIEGO ułożona przed TOMASZA KOSSOWSKIEGO PLEBANA LIKSNIEŃSKIEGO*. RYGA. Drukiem L. Hartunga, 1853.

[120] *Volſtändiges Lettiſches Lexicon, ſamt angezeigten verſchiedenen Provinzialdialekten in Lief= und Kurland*. Schloß Ober=Pahlen, 1772.

[121] *Lettiſch Deütſcher Theil des volſtändigen Lettiſchen Lexici, darinnen nicht nur ſämtliſche Stammwörter dieſer Sprache ſamt ihren Abſtämlingen, ſondern auch die ſeltene, nur in gewißen Gegenden gebräuchliche Wörter, zum Nachſchlagen, angezeigt werden*. Schloß Ober=Pahlen, 1773.

[122] *Vollſtändiges deutſchlettiſches und lettiſchdeutſches Lexicon, nach den Hauptdialecten in Lief= und Curland ausgefertigt von Jacob Lange, Generalſuperintendenten des Herzogthums Liefland ec*. Mitau: Gedruckt bey J. Fr. Steffenhagen, Hochfürſtl. Hofbuchdrucker, 1777.

able to record many words which other lexicographers had failed to notice. He noted many popular terms for objects and concepts which in previous dictionaries were mentioned as loan words.

G. F. Stender compiled several dictionaries, but his work, *Lettisches Lexikon*[123] published in 1789, served for over one hundred years as a source of important lexicographical information; it included a Latvian–German part (*Lettisches Wörter=Lexikon*) and a German–Latvian part (*Deutschlettisches Wörter=Lexikon*), together with a 12-chapter semasiological supplement of toponyms (*Lettisches Namen=Lexikon*). The Latvian–German part consisted of 402 pages in octavo format with approximately 7000 words, while the German–Latvian part consisted of 769 pages with approximately 14 000 words. Latvian words were printed using Latin letters, German words using Gothic characters. Words were grouped as entries, with a single entry comprising the basic word, together with derived forms using prefixes or suffixes, compound words, word combinations, and phraseological units[124]. Entries are more extensive in comparison with the dictionary by J. Lange.

At the beginning of the 19th century, individuals who were interested in preserving and popularising Latvian identity sought to form associations, and a Latvian Literary (Friends of Latvians) Society was established, which from its foundation (in 1824) was a significant centre for study of the Latvian language and culture. The Society was particularly active during the initial period of its existence, when a wide-ranging discussion took place about the Latvian writing system, which was reflected in the Society's publication, *Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettiſch = Literäriſchen Geſellſchaft*, which first appeared in1828. This was the first serial publication dedicated to Latvian language issues, whose content is still useful today. Articles were published in it about grammar, vocabulary, as well as other questions. Juris Bārs was a particularly noteworthy contributor, being the first Latvian to write about the Latvian language. The Society also called for proposals to write a new book of grammar, to which there was only one reply, and this was subsequently published — *Lettische Sprachlehre* (Latvian Grammar)[125] (1841) by Heinrich Hesselberg.

Two different writing traditions existed in parallel from the mid-18th century onwards when the first works were published based on the High Latvian dialect. One was in circulation in the territory of modern-day Latgale, i.e. the Latgalian written language, while on the remainder of the territory of Latvia the Latvian written language, or the Low Latvian written language prevailed, for which the orthography of the 2nd edition of the Bible was the norm. The principal innovation of the 19th century was that nouns were no longer written with the first letter capitalised.

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[123] *Lettiſches Lexikon.* In zween Theilen abgefaſſet, und den Liebhabern der lettiſchen Litteratur gewidmet von Gotthard Friedrich Stender, Präpoſitus emeritus zu Selburg, Paſtor zu Selburg und Sonnaxt, und der k. d. G. zu Göttingen M. Mitau: Gedruckt bey I. F. Steffenhagen, Hochfürſtl. Hofbuchdrucker, [1789].

[124] Ibid., *Lettiſches Wörter- und Namen=Lexikon*, S. 66.

[125] *Lettiſche Sprachlehre*, verfaßt von Heinrich Heſſelberg, Prediger zu Dalbingen in Kurland. Eine von der Allerhöchſt beſtätigten lettiſch=literäriſchen Geſellſchaft gekrönte und auf Roſten derſelben gedruckte Preisſchrift. Mitau: Gedruckt bei Johann Friedrich Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1841.

The writing system was still based on German traditions, therefore a number of curious suggestions appeared, for example, to eliminate combinations of letters replacing these by Russian letters (1830[126]), or to adopt the Cyrillic alphabet (1833[127]). For example, a selection of Latvian folk songs by Ivans Sproģis, *Памятники латышскаго народнаго творчества* (Latvian Folk Art Records)[128] (1868), was published using the Cyrillic alphabet, where the Russian translation appeared in parallel with the Latvian text (see Fig. 11).

2.	2.
Прѣцайѣс, межа мàте,	Радуйся, мать лѣсовъ,
Стiпрi вирi межà брауца:	Мужи сильные ѣдутъ въ лѣсъ:
Асi цiрві, калтi раті,	Острые топоры, кованныя тѣлеги,
Пакавоті кумелiнi.	Подкованныя лошади.
3.	3.
Межа вирс межà брауце,	Дровосѣкъ ѣдетъ въ лѣсъ,
Межа дрѣбес мугурà:	На немъ лѣсная одежда:
Лўку крекліе, крію ўзас,	Лыковая рубаха, лубочные портки,
Бѣрза краупес цепуріте.	Берёстовая шапка.

Fig. 11. Excerpt from the selection of folk songs *Памятники латышскаго народнаго творчества*

In 1847, Juris Bārs, pastor at Dobele, argued for reform of the Latvian writing system. He suggested use of letters of the Latin alphabet; the long vowels were to be marked in two different ways, depending on their intonation; the diphthongs *ie* and *uo* were to be represented by *ia* and *ua,* respectively; the letters *s*, *z*, *c* were to be written as Latin letters, while the softened consonants, *š*, *ž*, *č,* were to be represented as, *ś*, *ź*, *ć*; the softened consonants were to be represented by placing a comma beneath the respective letters, with the exception when the comma would be placed above the letter — *ķ*, *ļ*, *ņ*, *ŗ*, *ģ*; to use the letter *v* in place of the *w*; and not to distinguish between the narrow and broad *e*, *ē*, as these occurred positionally.[129]

The High Latvian writing system was also based on a foreign tradition — the Polish language writing system[130]. The length of vowels was variously indicated, both with an *accent grave* above the consonant, for example, *dìna*, or with a double vowel, for example, *diina*, or has not at all been marked, for example, *dinas*.

The second component of diphthongs [ai], [ei], [oi] un [ui] is written using *y*, following the Polish system of writing of the times.

During the second half of the 18th century and particularly during the 19th century, Latvian book publishing expanded to include works of fiction, various kinds of practical literature, and later newspapers and journals. The first Latvian writers eventually joined the company of German clergymen as authors. The Moravian Church spread among Latvian peasants and, in consequence, peasants began to write texts by hand.

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[126] *Formenlehre der lettiſchen Sprache*. Conſpect für ſeine Zuhörer von dem Lector der lettiſchen Sprache Hofrath Roſenberger. Mitau: Gedruckt bei Joh. Friedr. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1830

[127] Wendt, D. Flüchtige Bemerkungen hinſichtlich des Alphabets und der Ausſprache der lettiſchen Sprache. *Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettiſch-Literäriſchen Geſellſchaft*, Vierten Bandes zweites Stück. Mitau: Gedruckt bey J. F. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1833, S. 208–212.

[128] *Памятники латышскаго народнаго творчества* собраны и изданы Иваномъ Спрогисомъ. Вильна: Печатня Вилѣнскаго Губѣрнскаго Правлѣния, 1868.

[129] Baar, G. H. Ueber die in der lettiſchen Sprache vorkommenden Laute und deren einfache Bezeichnung durch die Schrift. *Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettiſch-Literäriſchen Geſellſchaft*, Neunten Bandes erstes Stück. Mitau: Gedruckt bey J. F. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1847, S. 21–48.

[130] For more details about the writing system of the High Latvian dialect see: Jansone, I., Stafecka, A. Latviešu rakstības attīstība: lejzemnieku un augšzemnieku tradīcija. *Latvieši un Latvija.* 1. sēj.: *Latvieši,* 227.–243. lpp.

Once the written language began to be used more widely and the genre of texts multiplied, the need arose to perfect the written language. With a view to retaining control over the cultural life of Latvians, some German clergymen continued to follow the example of G. Mancelius, i.e. they made the effort to learn Latvian and encouraged their countrymen to learn to speak correct Latvian. Others held that the best option would be to transform Latvians into Germans.

The following period was one of partial reform of norms and their modernisation (1856–1918); the newspaper *Mājas Viesis* (House Guest) started to appear in 1856, and in the same year the book of poems *Dziesmiņas*, by J. Alunāns was published in Tartu (Dorpat), supplemented by his article "Some words about the Latvian language". This period closed in 1918, the year that the Latvian state was founded, an event which influenced the status and function of the Latvian language.

During this period, we can only speak of development of the Latvian language over the territory of the Low Latvian written language, since further developments of Latgalian linguistics and the written language was interrupted over a long period of time (1864–1904), by the so-called printing interdiction, during which time the printing of books was forbidden using the Latin alphabet in the Governorate of Vitebsk, of which the territory of modern-day Latgale was then a part.

Development of the Latvian language was still influenced by German clergymen, but with Latvians themselves gaining a greater say. During the second half of the 19th century, they united in a national public movement known as the "New Latvians". The best-known New Latvian centres were associated with the educational institutions of the time, Dorpat (Tartu) University and St. Petersburg University. The New Latvians had recourse to the newspaper *Mājas Viesis* (1856–1910) to popularise their ideas, the first editor of this newspaper being A. Leitāns; a collection of articles by J. Alunāns, *Sēta, daba, pasaule* (Farmstead, Nature, the World) (1–3, 1859–1860), demanded autonomy for Latvians to decide on their culture and education. The New Latvians paid great attention to education and to enlightening the ordinary people. Krišjānis Valdemārs, Krišjānis Barons, and J. Alunāns organised publication in St. Petersburg of a newspaper, *Pēterburgas Avīzes* (St Petersburg Newspaper) (1862–1865), which greatly expanded the horizons of Latvians, and which criticised privileges enjoyed by the German barons; it also featured two satirical supplements, *Dzirkstele* (Spark), and *Zobugals* (The Joker), marking the beginning of Latvian political satire. The critical position taken by the New Latvians vis-à-vis much that was going on in the development of the Latvian language, in particular in regard to orthography, provoked a strident reaction by some German clergy. Nevertheless, the New Latvians did not yet enjoy enough support by the Latvian people, and, furthermore, many of their number naively believed that Latvians had to travel the same road as Russia by becoming a part of its culture.

The Riga Latvian Society played an important role in the formation of Latvian national consciousness. From its foundation in 1868, it was a centre for Latvian intellectual thought and treated issues touching the Latvian language and its use.

Until the mid-19th century, there were very considerable difference between the written and spoken Latvian language, i.e., the sub-dialects. A great achievement by the

New Latvians was that they were able over approximately 30 years to substantially narrow this gap.

It was necessary that the Latvian language in both spoken and in written form served all of the needs of the Latvian nation, thus it had to be refined and developed. J. Alunāns was the first individual to take up this task. He correctly understood how languages developed, recalling the fact that the German literary language had developed step by step and pointed out the way in which the Latvian language might become the language of a cultured people[131].

The first encyclopaedia titled *Konversācijas vārdnīca* (Latvian Encyclopaedia) appeared at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century as evidence of the multi-functional capabilities of the Latvian language. This encyclopaedia was published between 1891 and 1898[132], in two volumes and 27 parts, by Jēkabs Dravnieks (parts 1–25) and Heinrihs Alunāns (parts 26–27). *Konversācijas vārdnīca* was never completed, and its entries stopped with *Kristjans*. Between 1904 and 1921, a second *Konversācijas vārdnīca*[133] appeared in four volumes and 99 parts. It was published by the Science Committee of the Riga Latvian Society (Parts 1–32) and by the Useful Books Department of the Society (parts 31–99), with J. Dravnieks as its editor. This dictionary presents knowledge as it was then current in the fields of geography, the natural sciences, mathematics, medicine, pharmacology, and history. Volumes 2 and 3 contain a very extensive entry, *Latvians*, which spans 160 pages, and which is subdivided into 24 thematic blocks covering the topics of nature in Latvia, the Latvian language, history, economic and cultural development.

A need arose during the 1870s for books of Latvian grammar for schoolteachers, and for textbooks meant for Latvian schoolchildren. In 1874, in Vidzeme, and 1875, in Kurzeme, teaching in primary school acquired a more structured and study programme, which included teaching reading and writing, and this led to a demand for textbooks. The book, *Latviskas valodas katķisme priekš tautas skolām* (A Catechism for the Latvian Language meant for Primary Schools)[134] by Frīdrihs Mekons was the first textbook meant for learning the mother tongue. The most important authors of textbooks for schools at the end of the 19th century were Matīss Kaudzīte, Heinrihs Spalviņš, Antons Laimiņš, and Juris Kalniņš.

The first books of grammar in the Latvian language appeared shortly before 1874. We need first to recognise the book by Kaspars Biezbārdis, *Mūsu valoda un viņas rakstība* (Our Language and its Writing System)[135], while special mention among similar books must be made of Andrejs Stērste's *Latviešu valodas mācība, sistemātisks kurss*

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[131] Kahds wahrds par Latweeſchu wallodu. *Dſeeſmiņas Latweeſchu wallodai pahrtulkotas*. Tehrpata: drukkatas pee Laakmanna 1856tâ gaddâ, 62.–70. lpp.

[132] *Konwersazijas wahrdniza ar daudz mahzitu latveeschu palihdsibu J. Drawneeka isdota*. Jelgawa: H. J. Drawiņ-Drawneeka apgādībā, 1891–1898.

[133] *Konwersazijas wahrdnica*. Rīga, 1904–1921.

[134] *Latwiskas walodas katķisme preeksch tautas skohlahm, jeb gramatikaliga lasischanas, runaschanas un rakstischanas mahciba eeksch 393 prasischanahm, uzdohschanahm, atbildehm un prohwehm ar daudzeem peesihmejumeem un ihpaschu pamahzischanu kā wehstules rakstamas* / sarakstita un gaismâ laista no Fr. Mekon. Jelgava: drukata un dabujama pee J.W. Steffenhagens un dehla, 1874.

[135] Beeſbardis, K. *Mufu waloda un wiņas rakſtiba*. Riga: rakſtos ſpeeſts pee K. Stalberg, 1869.

(A Systematic Course for Teaching the Latvian Language)[136], which was the first systematic book of the Latvian language written in Latvia, and for nearly thirty years it was the best and most comprehensive book of grammar of the Latvian language. The next examples of these kinds of book were joint efforts by J. Endzelīns and K. Mīlenbahs, *Latviešu valodas mācība* (Teaching the Latvian Language)[137] and *Latviešu gramatika* (Latvian Grammar)[138]. The last of these was the first normative book of Latvian grammar, and served as the principal handbook for mastering the Latvian language until the Second World War. This treatment of grammar relied upon the linguistic terminology which was developed following discussions in 1901–1902 and agreement reached then. The book *Teikums* (Sentence)[139], prepared by K. Mīlenbahs, deserves to be mentioned, in that it is a significant compilation and explanation of syntax theory of its time, and can be regarded as the basis for the development of Latvian syntax theory.

Germans continued their study of Latvian grammar in parallel with the activities of Latvian authors. The 1850s and 1860s was a time when investigations of the Latvian language acquired a modern and scientific basis. At this time the comparative historical method began its century-long dominant position in scholarship. In 1856, August Bielenstein published his thoughts on what the new Latvian language grammar ought to be, and then worked assiduously to implement these; with support from the Imperial Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences, his work, *Die lettische Sprache, nach ihren Lauten und Formen erklärend un vergleichend dargestellt von A. Bielenstein* (The Latvian Language Presented and Explained according to its Sounds and Forms by A. Bielenstein)[140], appeared in two volumes in 1863–1864. As Sarma Kļaviņa notes[141], this work introduced the Latvian language to the international scholarly community, and it was also a significant source of facts up until the end of the First World War. Simultaneously A. Bielenstein prepared a short version of the aforementioned work, namely, *Lettische Grammatik*[142].

Changes took place in terms of lexicography[143]. Latvian national lexicography started with Latvians participating in compilation of dictionaries. Whereas until the mid-19th century German clergymen were the chief compilers of dictionaries with the beginning of the New Latvian movement Latvians deliberately involved themselves in producing Latvian dictionaries. K. Valdemārs must be mentioned as one of the first to become involved, both personally and in urging other New Latvians to do so as well.

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[136] Stērste, A. *Latviešu valodas mācības sistemātisks kurss. I. Etimoloģija. II. Sintaksa. III. Ortogrāfija.* Rīgā un Tērbatā: Šnakenburga spiest., 1879–1880.

[137] Endſelins, J., Mülenbachs, K. *Latveeſchu walodas mahciba*. Rīga: R. I. Zichmaņa apgahdibā, 1907.

[138] Endſelins, J., Mülenbachs, K. *Latveeſchu gramatika*. Rīga: R. I. Zichmaņa apgahdibā, 1907.

[139] Mīlenbahs, K. *Teikums.* Rīga: Pūcīšu Ģederta apgādībā, 1898 (also: *Kārlis Mīlenbahs. Darbu izlase.* 1. sēj. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2009, 221.–296. lpp.).

[140] *Die lettische Sprache, nach ihren Lauten und Formen erklärend un vergleichend dargestellt von A. Bielenstein*. Erster Theil. Die Laute. Die Wortbildung. Zweiter Theil. Die Wortbeugung. Berlin: Ferd. Dümmler's Verlahsbuchhandlung, 1863–1864.

[141] Kļaviņa, S. Die Werke von August Bielenstein — eine bedeutende Quelle der Indoeuropäistik des 19. Jahrhundes. *Res Balticae*: miscellanea italiana di studi Baltistici, Vol. 8, 2002, S. 151–168.

[142] *Lettische Grammatik von A. Bielenstein*. Mitau: F. Lucas' Buchhandlung, 1863.

[143] For more details about the development of Latvian lexicography see, Jansone, I. Entwicklung der lettischen Lexikographie von G. Mancelius bis zu elektronischen Wörterbüchern. *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, Heft 129, 2003, S. 64–95.

In 1872, the first Russian–Latvian–German dictionary[144] appeared in Moscow; K. Valdemārs coordinated preparation of this dictionary, while a number of New Latvians also took part (Andrejs Spāģis, Krišjānis Kalniņš, Indriķis Laube, and Fricis Brīvzemnieks). The dictionary consisted of approximately 37 000 terms. Latvian words were written using the Latin alphabet. Spelling was simplified, eschewing duplicated consonants. The innovative features of the orthography of this dictionary were subsequently followed in many other publications. A Latvian–Russian–German dictionary[145] also appeared in Moscow in 1879. This dictionary contains 13 000 words, taken from the previous dictionary, and it was published following the same writing system as the previous one. The grammatical forms of Latvian and foreign language words are given consistently. There is no illustrative material in the dictionary, literal translations are given. Replacement of Germanisms by new terms continued and there was also a search for new, more precise terms.

Latvians assisted in producing dictionaries which included Russian vocabulary, and they sought also to engage themselves with the inclusion of Latvian lexicography in traditional German language dictionaries. Usually, however, their names did not appear on the title pages of these dictionaries. In 1872, the first part of the dictionary, *Lettisches Wörterbuch*[146] by Karl Christian Ulmann, was published in Riga, i.e. the Latvian–German segment. Initially, the Latvian J. Bārs, and, later the Latvian writer and pastor, Juris Neikens, contributed to producing this dictionary. It contained approximately 20 000 words, and most of these featured sample usages. These words were taken from previously published dictionaries and hand-written scripts, with some collected anew. K. Ulmann initially sought to avoid including newly-coined words, but eventually did so, persuaded by Atis Kronvalds. Loan words from Slavic languages feature mostly in sub-dialect vocabulary. The dictionary also included several dozen regional terms of Estonian or Liv origin which had previously not been published.

The second part of the *Lettisches Wörterbuch,* the German–Latvian segment[147], was published in 1880. J. Neikens took part in its preparation up to 1868, while afterwards three German pastors carried out this work, namely, K. Ulmann, August Döbner, and Gustav Brasche. There were approximately 35 000 words in this segment. In contrast to previous practice the dictionary by G. Brasche included a large number of foreign words.

Although foreign words were present in all dictionaries of the Latvian language, starting with the dictionary *Lettus* by G. Mancelius in 1638, special attention was paid to foreign words during the second half of the 19th century, when the newspaper *Pēterburgas Avīzes* published in 1862 a specialised supplement of foreign words compiled by J. Alunāns. There were 150 words in this list with rather correct explanations. The first dictionary consisting solely of foreign words was published in 1878 by

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[144] *Kreewu-latweeschu-wahcu wardnize isdota no Tautas Apgaismoschanas Ministerijas* ... Москва, 1872.

[145] *Latweeschu-Kreewu-wahzu wardnize isdota no Tautas Apgaismoschanas Ministerijas* ... Москва, 1879.

[146] *Lettiſches Wörterbuch. Erſter Theil. Lettiſch-deutſches Wörterbuch von Biſchof Dr. Carl Chriſtian Ulmann.* Riga: Verlag von H. Brutzer & Co, 1872.

[147] *Lettiſches Wörterbuch von Ulmann und Braſche. Zweiter Theil. Deutſch-lettiſches Wörterbuch mit Zugrundelegung des von Biſchof Dr. Carl Chriſtian Ulmann zurückgelaſſenen Manuſcriptes bearbeitet von Guſtav Braſche.* Riga u. Leipzig: Verlag von H. Brutzer & Co, 1880.

Fr. Mekon[148]. This comprised 42 pages with two columns per page and a total of 2200 foreign words. The origin of these words was given. The first dictionary consisting of an extensive number of foreign words was due to Jēkabs Dravnieks who published *Svešu vārdu grāmata* (A Book of Foreign Words) [149] in 1886. It consisted of around 5000 words, with by and large precise clarification given. A further four revised editions of this dictionary were published up to 1914. It is known that the school teacher Augusts Burkins produced a hand-written dictionary of foreign words at the end of the 19th century[150].

A Catholic priest, Jan Kurmin, compiled a Polish–Latin–Latvian dictionary[151], which was printed in 1858 in Vilnius; in this dictionary Latvian corresponding words were taken from the High Latvian dialect, i.e. from the Latgalian written language. In producing his dictionaries J. Kurmin took advantage of the Polish–Latin–Latvian dictionary by G. Elger, as well as the Polish–Latin–Lithuanian language dictionary due to K. Syrvidas. It must be mentioned that the dictionary produced by J. Kurmin was published after his death. The dictionary was intended for use by Catholic priests in their study of the Latvian language. The dictionary contains around 13 000 entries. Latvian words are written following Polish orthography rules. The written form of the language is mixed with dialect forms; there are many printing errors, as well as errors in failing to conform to the writing system. When a comparison is made of the words in the dictionary compiled by J. Kurmin with words in the dictionary due to G. Elger, it is noteworthy that there is a substantial rise in the number of words of Slavic, in particular, of Russian provenance.

The number of languages featured in dictionaries rose. Special emphasis is placed on languages spoken by neighbouring peoples. A German–Latvian–Russian–Estonian dictionary was published in 1885[152]; M. Kaudzīte, Jaan Nebocat, and Johannes Kontsewicz all contributed to preparation of this dictionary. The 183 pages of this dictionary, arranged in present seventy-three different sectors, included questions and sayings in parallel in four languages.

In 1894, a Lithuanian–Latvian–Polish–Russian dictionary due to Mykolas Miežinis[153] was published in Lithuania Minor (Tilsit), containing approximately 15 000 words.

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[148] Mekon Fr. *Swefchu wahrdu grahmata: preekſch grahmatneekeem un laikrakstu laſitajeem, ar 2200 ſweſcheem wahrdeem un wiņu nozihmehſchanu latwiſkā walodā*. Leepaja: V. Neemanis, 1878.

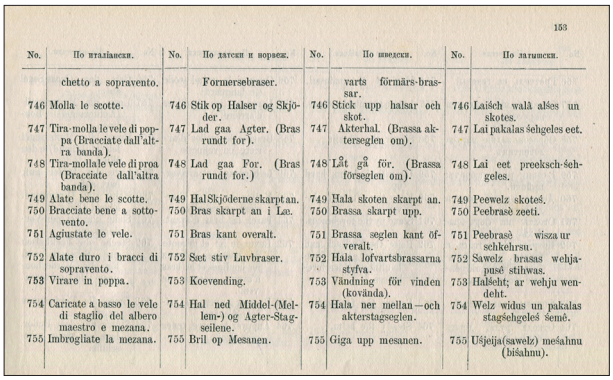
[149] Drawneeks, J. *Swefchu wahrdu grahmata grahmatneekeem un laikrakſtu lafitajeem*. Jelgawa: apgahdajis un drukajis H. Allunans, 1886 (2. izd. 1899, 3. papild. izd. 1904, 4. izd. 1906, 5. pārlab. izd. 1914).

[150] Burkins, A. *Literarisks tulks grahmatneekeem, laikrakſtu laſitajeem un paſchiſglihtibai* (a manuscript from the end of the 19th century held by the Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts of the Academic Library of the University of Latvia).

[151] *Słownik polsko łacinsko łotewski, ułozony i napisany przez xiędza Jana Kurmina*. Wilno, 1858.

[152] *Systematiſches Vocabularium in deutſcher, lettiſcher, ruſſiſcher und eſtniſcher Sprache*. Anleitung zu Uebungen in den betr. Umgangsſprachen von J. Koncewicz / Siſtematiſki ſakahrtota Wahzu-Latweeſchu-Kreewu-Igauņu wahrdniza. Latwiſko daļu rakſtijis Kaudſites Mathiſs / Sakſa-Läti-Wene-Eestikeele Sõnaraamat. Toimetanud J. Nebocat. Riga und Dorpat: Druck und Verlag von Schnakenburg's lith und typogr. anſtalt, 1885.

[153] *Lietuviszkai-latviszkai-lenkiszkai-rusiszkas žodynas* / kun. M. Miežinio = Leišu-latviešu-pūļu-krievu vārdnica / nů Miežina = Litewsko- łotewsko-polsko-rossyski słòwnik / ks. Miežinisa = Литовско-латышско-польско-русскій словарь / M. Межииса. Tilžėje: M. Noveskio, 1894.



153

No.	По италіански.	No.	По датски и норвеж.	No.	По шведски.	No.	По латышски.
	chetto a sopravento.		Formersebraser.		varts förmärs-brassar.		
746	Molla le scotte.	746	Stik op Halser og Skjöder.	746	Stick upp halsar och skot.	746	Laiśch walā alśes un skotes.
747	Tira-molla le vele di poppa (Bracciate dall'altra banda).	747	Lad gaa Agter. (Bras rundt for).	747	Akterhal. (Brassa akterseglen om).	747	Lai pakalas śehgeles ect.
748	Tira-mollale vele di proa (Bracciate dall'altra banda).	748	Lad gaa For. (Bras rundt for.)	748	Låt gå för. (Brassa förseglen om).	748	Lai eet preeksch-śehgeles.
749	Alate bene le scotte.	749	HalSkjöderne skarpt an.	749	Hala skoten skarpt an.	749	Peewelz skoteś.
750	Bracciate bene a sottovento.	750	Bras skarpt an i Læ.	750	Brassa skarpt upp.	750	Peebrasè zeeti.
751	Agiustate le vele.	751	Bras kant overalt.	751	Brassa seglen kant överalt.	751	Peebrasè wisza ur schkehrsu.
752	Alate duro i bracci di sopravento.	752	Sæt stiv Luvbraser.	752	Hala lofvartsbrassarna styfva.	752	Sawelz brassas wehjapuśé stihwas.
753	Virare in poppa.	753	Koevending.	753	Vändning för vinden (kovända).	753	Halśeht; ar wehju wendeht.
754	Caricate a basso le vele di staglio del albero maestro e mezana.	754	Hal ned Middel-(Mellem-) og Agter-Stagseilene.	754	Hala ner mellan—och akterstagseglen.	754	Welz widus un pakalas stagśehgeleś śemé.
755	Imbrogliate la mezana.	755	Bril op Mesanen.	755	Giga upp mesanen.	755	Uśjeija(sawelz) meśahnu (bišahnu).

Fig. 12. A page of a pocket dictionary for seamen

The first specialist dictionaries were compiled and published. In 1881, the Imperial Society for the Promotion of Russian Maritime Trade published in Moscow a 300-page pocket dictionary for seamen compiled by K. Valdemārs, in Russian, English, French, German, Italian, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Latvian, with a supplement in Dutch and Spanish[154]. This dictionary was laid out following the example of several dictionaries published during the 19th century in Western Europe specialising in maritime terminology (see Fig. 12). K. Valdemārs, together with teachers at naval schools, complemented the texts drawn from other languages with terms in Latvian and Russian. During the second half of the 19th century, the speech of Latvian seamen contained very many foreign words, and there was no consolidated terminology.

Investigations of the Latvian language broadened during the last quarter of the 19th century, with many new topics identified as meriting study. Dialectology was one of these topics. The first description of a sub-dialect appeared in *Magazin* in 1863[155], while members of the first dialectology expeditions to various places in Latgale included A. Bielenstein together with Professor Adalbert Bezzenberger of the University of Königsberg; the latter subsequently published the first broad overview about dialect forms of the Latvian language as *Lettische Dialect=Studien*[156] (1885). A. Bielenstein may be regarded as the individual who launched geolinguistic studies of the Latvian language. Around 1860, he drew the first map of the dialects of the Latvian language. This map was published 20 years later by Friedrich Julius Döring[157] in an article about the origin of Latvians living in Kurzeme. In 1892, A. Bielenstein published the first map of the occurrence of dialect isoglosses of the Latvian language[158]. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, several other Latvian linguists

[154] [Х. Вальдемар] Карманный русско-англійско-французско-немецко-италіянско-датско и норвежско-шведско-латышскій морской словарь съ прибавленем голландскаго и испанскаго языковъ.., изданный Императорскимъ Обществомъ для Содействія Русскому Торговому Мореходству. Москва, 1881.

[155] Treu, F. Der Oppekalnſche Dialect. *Magazin, herausgegeben von der Lettiſch-Literäriſchen Gefellſchaft*, Dreizehnten Bandes erstes Stück. Mitau: Gedruckt bey J. F. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1863, 21–29.

[156] Bezzenberger, A. Lettische Dialekt-Studien. Göttingen: Vandenhock & Ruprecht, 1885.

[157] Döring, J. Über die Herkunft der kurländischen Letten. *Sitzungs-Berichte der kurländischen Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst nebst Veröffentlichungen des kurländischen Provinzial-Museums aus dem Jahre 1880*. Mitau: Gedruckt bei J. F. Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1881, S. 47–118.

[158] Bielenstein, A. *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volkstammes und der lettischen Sprache in der Gegenwart und im 13. Jahrhundert*: ein Beitrag zur ethnologischen Geographie und Geschichte Russlands. St Petersburg: Commisionäre der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1892.

investigated dialects, including Jānis Kauliņš, J. Plāķis, and others. The most important work was done by J. Endzelīns who, together with K. Mīlenbahs, visited many areas in Latvia collecting material about sub-dialects.

The Riga Latvian Society played a crucial role in the development of the Latvian writing system. With a view to normalising the situation in Latvian orthography, the Science Committee of the Riga Latvian Society developed in 1876 its own proposed orthography system which included: exclusive use of letters from the Latin alphabet, representing softened consonants, *š*, *ž*, *č*, with a diacritical mark over the letter, representing the softened consonants with a comma, *ļ*, *ņ*, *ŗ*, *ķ*, abandoning indicating the intonation of long consonants, representation of the diphthong *ie* as *ee*. The Riga Latvian Society lacked the resources to buy the lengthening marks, and, thus, only marked the long vowels in cases where this changed the sense of a word, i.e. *kazas* (goats) and *kāzas (*wedding*)*. For lack of diacritical marks, *š*, *ž*, *č* were represented by a comma under the letter.

An Orthography Committee was founded on 25 January 1908 alongside the Science Committee of the Riga Latvian Society, "with a membership consisting of K. Mīlenbahs, J. Endzeliņš, J. Kalniņš, M. Arona, J. Birznieks[159], Fr. Trasuns, M. Siliņš, Spr. Paegle and V. Maldonis, with the right to co-opt new members, and charged with drafting proposals for a new Latvian orthography, suitable for meeting the challenges of daily life, as well as to oversee its practical implementation"[160]. An article was published in the newspaper *Latvija* at the end of March of that same year by K. Mīlenbahs, "Latviešu pareizrakstības jautājums"' (On the Question of Spelling in Latvian), which reviewed the historical development of Latvian orthography, examining in detail the representation of long vowels, suggesting abandoning use of the letter *h* for this purpose, and pointing out the need to cease using Gothic letters.[161] The shortcomings of the old form of spelling were comprehensively analysed and the principles of the new system discussed at meetings of the Orthography Committee (18 meetings were held during 1908, with attendance by 220 interested individuals). The Language Department discussed extensively the issue of reform of Latvian orthography.[162] During the Summer Meetings of 17 and 18 June, just six months after the Orthography Committee was created, it met for the historical gathering led by J. Endzelīns at which a decision was taken on reform of the Latvian writing system: 1) to accept use of Latin letters; 2) abandon use of *h* to mark long vowels; 3) to signal a long vowel with a flat level dash above the vowel, except cases outlined in the grammar of Mīlenbahs and Endzelīns; 4) to replace *ee* by *ie*; 5) to replace the groups of letters, *ſch*, *ſch*, *tſch*, and *dſch,* with *ž*, *š*, *č*, and *dž*, respectively.[163]

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[159] Protocols of the Science Committee of the Riga Latvian Society indicates that, in fact, the agronomist Jānis Bisenieks was this member of the Orthography Committee (see Ms 1230, V-3, at Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts of the Academic Library of the University of Latvia).

[160] *40. gada pārskats par Rīgas Latv[iešu] Biedrības darbošanos un rēķiniem 1908. gadā, savienots ar biedru sarakstu*. [Rīga, 1909], 21. lpp.

[161] Mīlenbahs, K. Latviešu pareizrakstības jautājums. *Latvija*, Nr. 74, 1908, 29. marts (11. apr.), 3. lpp.

[162] *40. gada pārskats par Rīgas Latv[iešu] Biedrības darbošanos un rēķiniem 1908. gadā, savienots ar biedru sarakstu*, 23. lpp.

[163] Ibid., 21.–22. lpp.

Nonetheless, even after the decision was taken the new orthography was not immediately implemented. There were several reasons for this: first, the events of the First World War were a hindrance, and second, printing houses had little spare resources to acquire the new typefaces. The transition to the new orthography took place gradually during the first half of the 1930s.

Publication of Latgalian texts could resume once the prohibition on printing books with Latin letters was lifted in 1904. A meeting took place in St. Petersburg in 1903 wherein a small group of individuals discussed future developments of the written Latgalian language. A more substantial discussion was held in 1907 in Rēzekne with participation by Francis Trasuns, Francis Kemps, Ontons Skrinda, Nikodems Rancāns, Pēteris Smelters, and others. Decisions taken on this occasion were reflected in the book of grammar written by O. Skrinda and published in 1908[164], which was based on High Latvian dialect traditions.

This book is regarded as presenting the first normative grammar of the written Latgalian language. The book was written in Russian and was intended for use at the Roman Catholic Theological Academy in St Petersburg.

The writing system proposed by O. Skrinda was quite complicated. Pēteris Strods has succinctly described the meaning of this book of grammar, namely, that with this publication O. Skrinda highlighted principal issues, out of which four became the major problems faced by Latgalian orthography, i.e. the relationship of the Latgalian dialect with the Middle dialect, the use of diacritical marks to lengthen vowel, the softening of consonants, and the gradation of vowels in the roots of words.[165]

The principles contained in the grammar of O. Skrinda were used up until introduction of the new orthography in 1929, gradually changing different writing system norms beginning immediately following a discussion on orthography which took place in 1918.

During the first decade of the 20th century, notwithstanding certain restrictions on the part of official bodies of Russia, Latvian linguistic studies and the use of the written Latvian language began to spread. Nevertheless, only the First World War (1914–1918) brought essential changes in existing conditions. The most important event was proclamation of the Republic of Latvia (1918) and creation of the state. The Latvian language and linguistics were able for twenty years (until 1940) to develop in a qualitatively completely different environment — in a national state.

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[164] Skrinda, O. *Latwìszu wolúdas gramatika* (*Латышская грамматика летгальскаго наречія*). С-Петербургъ, 1908.

[165] Strods, P. Latgaļu dialekta ortografijas problemas. *Rokstu krājums latgaļu drukas aizlīguma atceļšonas 40 godu atcerei*. Daugavpiļs: V. Lōča izdevnīceiba, 1944, 365.–366. lpp.

Conclusions

The Latvian language has travelled a long way from being one dialect in the northern Indo-European area to the consolidated language of Latvia. It is believed that around the year 1000 the following languages of ancient Baltic tribes or ethnic groups — Couronian, Semigallian, Selonian, and Latgalian — were spoken on the territory of present-day Latvia. It is most probable that the Latvian language formed as the successor to the Semigallian language and the set of linguistically close Western Latgalian sub-dialects. Another view holds that the Latgalian language was the basis for the Latvian language. Thus, the languages of the ancient Baltic tribes or ethnic groups have left their traces in the form of the dialects and sub-dialects of the Latvian language. In the same way the language of the Livs which was a member of the Finno-Ugric family has influenced the Latvian language and its dialects and sub-dialects.

Regrettably, as the Latvian language cannot boast of an ancient writing system, many features of the language have to be reconstructed from ancient place names, evidence found in contemporary chronicles and travel observations, as well as examining development processes of other members of the Indo-European language family.

The oldest books in the Latvian language to survive — the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1585) and parts of a Lutheran Handbook (1586) — give insight into the large influence exerted by religion in Latvia and in the Baltic region as a whole. Up until the mid-19th century, Latvian book publishing was dominated by religious texts; even such linguistic texts as dictionaries and books of grammar served a single need — to help clergymen improve their Latvian language skills, at the same time leaving a historical record about the spoken Latvian language of their time. Up until the middle of the 19th century almost all of the authors of linguistic texts were Germans, the Latvian writing system was based on a Germanic writing system tradition; Gothic fraktur typeface letters were used, with softening and lengthening of letters achieved following examples set by the German language. With the start of the Latvian national awakening movement, Latvians themselves started to solve issues of the writing system, as well as writing dictionaries, grammar books, and textbooks, in this way raising Latvian self-awareness and the prestige of the Latvian language.

When considering works created following a German style writing system it must be borne in mind that this tradition only applied to present-day Vidzeme, Kurzeme, and Zemgale. Latgale, the eastern part of Latvia was separated from the rest of the ethnic territory of Latvia following the Truce of Altmark (1629), isolating one part of the people from the rest. As a result, a different writing system evolved in Latgale based on Polish traditions. At the start of the 20th century, the writing system, which was not the same over the entire present-day territory of Latvia turned into a factor uniting the Latvian people, when in 1908 the decision was taken to abandon use of the Fraktur typeface in favour of the Antiqua typeface.

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Muntis Auns

EVOLUTION OF THE TRADITIONAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF LATVIA FROM THE 16TH CENTURY TO THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

The article describes the main features which characterise the cultural landscape of Latvia — mainly the rural environment — and how these have changed over time. In addition to considering certain static landscape elements (farm homesteads, hamlets, manors, churches, roads, etc.) attention will be paid to various processes — activities associated with working, feasts, and traditions, which constituted the rhythm of daily life, as well as being part of the landscape. The social, political, and ethnic environment will be described which gave rise to the cultural landscape.

Keywords: cultural environment, hamlets, manors, roads, sacred spaces.

Introduction

There is a very broad range of issues related to the topic of cultural landscape since it encompasses how historically this landscape was formed, as well as non-material cultural, social, ethnic, confessional, and other aspects. The article describes the cultural landscape and several of its constituent elements — hamlets, farmsteads, castles, estates, as well as sacred areas, at the same time sketching the social, political, and ethnic backdrop on which the cultural landscape has evolved.

A landscape is any outdoor view, while a cultural landscape may be defined as the landscape resulting from human activities, and, thus, by definition, is the opposite of a natural landscape, the latter being one which is both uninhabited and untouched by human hands. When considering the cultural context of landscape, the boundary between a natural landscape and a cultural landscape tends to disappear, as maintaining a natural landscape might well be the result of a deliberate policy implemented by society. Similarly a degraded landscape may be considered from the point of view of relationship to be a cultural landscape, one which reflects the attitude of the public, or at least part of it in terms of their values or lack thereof.

The direct or indirect presence of man in the landscape may find expression in a variety of ways — cultivation of land, what is planted, buildings, apparel, mechanical equipment, etc., also in terms of movement and noise. Surviving objects, past images,

descriptions, and cartographic materials, as well as archaeological, ethnographic, and other investigations all are part of the cultural landscape and evidence for how it has evolved. Images and maps which most credibly provide evidence for the historical development of the landscape of Latvia have survived largely starting from the 17th century. It is useful to note in this context an album of drawings produced by the Swiss artist Johann Rudolph Storno during the 1660s,[1] a set of maps on the occasion of the cadastre created at the end of the 17th century during the period of Swedish rule,[2] drawings of landscapes in Kurzeme (Courland) produced by the house tutor and artist Hermann Friedrich Weber at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries,[3] as well as the so-called Paulucci album produced during the 1820s.[4]

The collection of drawings, *Monumente*, by Johann Christoph Brotze, a teacher at the Riga Lyceum and a local historian, was an outstanding achievement. The 10 volumes of this collection include landscapes, monuments, portraits, coins and other objects, with their descriptions, from Latvia and Estonia (mostly from districts which formerly were part of the Governorate of Livonia). Part of the *Monumente* collection has been published, particularly historical urban views (in particular, of Riga and its suburbs) and rural scenes, individual buildings, persons, work processes, and other images.[5] In fact our perceptions of urban and rural landscapes during the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century derive from this collection of drawings by J. Ch. Brotze.

The development of photography has resulted in rich and varied source of information available to researchers and interested individuals. The collection of digital images, *Zudusī Latvija* (Lost Latvia)[6], held by the National Library of Latvia gives an outstanding opportunity, among others, to view these images — the sad title of this collection notwithstanding, it points out many objects which are still visible today.

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1 Adelung, F. *Augustin Freiherr von Meyerberg und seine Reise nach Russland. Nebst einer von ihm auf dieser Reise veranstalteten Sammlung von Ansichten, Gebräuchen, Bildnissen u. s. w.* St. Petersburg: Gedruckt bey Karl Kray, 1827.

2 A substantial collection of these maps is held by the Latvian National Historical Archive of the National Archives of Latvia (further LVVA). Several significant cartographic collections have been published by Edgars Dunsdorfs: Dunsdorfs, E. *Der grosse schwedische Kataster in Livland 1681–1710*. Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1950; Dunsdorfs, E. *Der grosse schwedische Kataster in Livland 1681–1710. Kartenband*. Melbourne, 1974; Dunsdorfs, E. *Kurzemes kaņakartes (17. un 18. gadsimtenī)*. Melburna: Kārļa Zariņa fonds, 1984; Dunsdorfs, E. *Latgales vēsturiskās kartes*. Melburna: Kārļa Zariņa fonds, 1991. See also: Barzdeviča, M. Kurzemes un Zemgales hercogistes pilsētu kartogrāfiskie attēli (apzināšana un izpēte). *Ventspils muzeja raksti*, 1. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2001, 139.–153. lpp.; Barzdeviča, M. *Rīga zviedru laika kartēs un plānos 1621–1710*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2011; Jakovļeva, M. Jaunatklātie kartogrāfiskie materiāli par Ventspils novadu un pilsētu 17. un 18. gadsimtā. *Ventspils muzeja raksti*, 3. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2003, 177.–189. lpp.

3 Meinarte, A. Kurzemes kultūrvēsturiskā ainava Hermaņa Frīdriha Vēbera (1761–1833) zīmējumos un akvareļos. *Ventspils muzeja raksti*, 1. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2001, 275.–288. lpp.

4 Ose, I. (sast.) *Livonijas piļu attēli no marķīza Pauluči albuma. Abbildungen der livländischen Burgen im Album des Marquis Paulucci*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008.

5 Broce, J. K. *Zīmējumi un apraksti*, 1–4. Rīga: Zinātne; Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1992–2007; Brotze, J. Ch. *Estonica*. Tallinn: Estopol OÜ, 2006. The collection by Ch. Brotze is accessible at: http://www3.acadlib.lv/broce/ (site last visited 22.03.2017); http://dspace.lu.lv/dspace/handle/7/2354 (site last visited 22.03.2017).

6 Accessible at: http://www.zudusilatvija.lv/ (site last visited 22.03.2017).

The social, political, and confessional environment of the cultural landscape

Germans were the privileged residents of Livonia which was formed as a result of the Baltic Crusades of the 13th century, where political and administrative power was in their hands, as was administration of the Church, to a large extent also trade and the crafts, while the absolute majority of the indigenous people were peasants and their status degraded gradually becoming serfs starting with the second half of the 15th century. Polarisation of society into free and captive individuals largely coincided with the ethnic origin of individuals, and this led to creation of two different cultural spaces — that of the Germans (and later that of the Poles in Latgale) and that of the Latvians, which nevertheless were interrelated. Thus, modernisation (of clothes, furniture, food, agricultural technologies, etc.) of the life of peasants was introduced via their life on estates. The market was another source of new experience — despite severe restrictions on mobility, peasants headed with their products to Riga and to other towns, in some cases quite far beyond the present-day borders of Latvia, for example, to Poland.

Several turning points in the history of Latvia can be identified, which significantly impacted the cultural environment either in part, or throughout the entire territory of Latvia — which led to integration into the cultural space of Western Europe, starting with the already mentioned events of the 13th century, the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, the spread of the Moravian Brothers (Herrnhuter) movement, and, of course, a number of political developments.

The fact of the single Livonian political, economic, and cultural space was conducive to consolidation of the indigenous ethnic groups; however, later political events significantly affected this process. The whole territory of Latvia passed under control of the Polish–Lithuanian state during the course of the Livonian War (1558–1583), obtaining a different status for different districts: lands to the left of the Daugava River became the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia (the district of Piltene, the former Bishopric of Courland was not part of the Duchy), while the Duchy of Livonia (*Ducatus Ultradunensis*) was formed on the right bank of the Daugava River, this Duchy was administered by a person appointed by the King of Poland. Following the Polish–Swedish War (1600–1629), part of this Duchy (Vidzeme together with Riga) came under the control of Sweden, while the remainder (Inflanty, i.e. Latgale) was retained by Poland–Lithuania. These political developments led to the division of Latvia into three parts: Kurzeme (understanding by this the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia as well as the district of Piltene), Vidzeme, and Latgale.[7]

At the same time the lands inhabited by Latvians were divided on confessional grounds: Lutheranism was dominant over the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, and in Vidzeme, while the Roman Catholic Church held sway over Latgale. The legal systems were also different. The Livonian legal system was largely retained in Vidzeme

[7] This fact is symbolically represented by the three stars in the State Coat of Arms of the Republic of Latvia.

and in the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, while from 1677 onwards the statutes of Lithuania were in force in Latgale. Even after the entire territory of Latvia, in parts during the 18th century, was absorbed by the Russian Empire, the Baltic provinces (the Governorates of Courland, Livonia, and Estonia) retained their legal autonomy until the second half of the 19th century, while in Latgale the Russian Imperial legal system displaced the Lithuanian statutes in 1831.

As serfs peasants had very limited possibilities to acquire education, and even after the abolition of serfdom during the 19th century[8] peasants were still subject to a number of restrictions in order to gain higher education. The first primary schools for Latvian children were established in Riga already in the 16th century, but it is possible to speak of a more or less stable system of education for peasants (mostly in Vidzeme) only from the second half of the 18th century onwards. Home schooling had an important place in the acquisition of basic education up until the first half of the 19th century. As a result, literacy rates in the Governorates of Courland and Livonia at the end of the 19th century were among the highest in the Russian Empire. In 1897, literacy rates among residents 10 years of age and older in the districts of the Governorate of Courland were 86–92% (53% in the Catholic district of Ilūkste), and 93–96% in the Latvian part of the Governorate of Livonia.[9] The value of this indicator was substantially lower in Latgale — 47–53%, being influenced by a relatively slowly developing school system in Catholic districts, as well as by the ethnic breakdown of residents.[10] The situation in Latgale was also negatively influenced by the interdiction on books printed using the Latin alphabet — this was in force between 1865 and 1904 in various governorates of Russia, including that of Vitebsk which Latgale was then a part — the written form of the Latvian language in Latgale used the Latin alphabet, while in the rest of Latvia Gothic letters were used, and, thus, the interdiction did not apply.

Freeing the serfs created conditions for a rapid emergence of the Latvian intelligentsia. Dorpat University in modern-day Tartu played an important role in this process, but many Latvians also studied in universities in Russia and in Germany. In the same way as elsewhere in Europe, a powerful national movement developed in Latvia during the mid-19th century, which through a combination of appreciating national values together with openness towards contemporary trends, transformed Latvians into a European nation, whose further development resulted in proclamation of a sovereign Latvian state in 1918.

Ethnically the territory of Latvia has been from ancient times a zone of interaction between the Baltic and Finno-Ugric peoples. A German community came into being during the 13th century. A small Russian and Belarusian minority existed in Riga and in Eastern Latvia during the Middle Ages, while their numbers rose substantially from

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[8] Serfdom was abolished in 1817 in Kurzeme, and in 1819 in Vidzeme, while it was abolished in Latgale only in 1861.

[9] *Latvijas vēstures atlants*. Rīga: Jāņa sēta, 1998, 35. lpp.

[10] In 1925, 68% of all Latvians resident in Latgale 10 years of age and older were literate; there was a higher rate of literacy (69–72%) among Lithuanians, and Poles, and, in particular, among Jews, Estonians, and Germans (80–97%), while among Russians and Belarusians this level was 51–55% (Skujenieks, M. *Latvija. Zeme un iedzīvotāji*. 3. izd. Rīga: A. Gulbja apgādniecība, 1927, 347. lpp.).

the 17th century onwards. Beginning with the 16th century, Jews settled in the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia and in the district of Piltene, and later, also elsewhere.[11]

It is almost impossible to determine the relative numerical proportion of various peoples living on the territory of Latvia before the end of the 18th century. This is due to absence of relevant data, as well as by the fact that often the notion of nationality coalesced with confessional, social, district, or state sense of belonging. Estimates of the situation at the end of the 18th century have been made by Edgars Dunsdorfs (see Table 1), with the comment that, "an approximate picture of the relative presence of different peoples (...) is better than complete ignorance."[12]

Table 1

Changes in the ethnic composition of the territory of Latvia[13]

Nationality/ ethnic group	At the end of the 18th century[14]		1897		1935	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Latvians	784 000	89.8	1 318 112	68.4	1 472 612	75.5
Germans	57 000	6.5	120 191	6.2	62 144	3.2
Jews	10 000	1.1	142 315	7.4	93 479	4.8
Poles	7 000	0.8	65 056	3.4	48 949	2.5
Russians	5 000	0.6	232 204	12.0	206 499	10.6
Livs	3 000	0.3	1312	0.0	944	0.0
Votes[15]	3 000	0.3				
Lithuanians	3 000	0.3	26 033	1.4	22 913	1.2
Estonians	1 000	0.1	17 990	0.9	7014	0.4
Others	–	0.2	6174	0.3	35 813	1.8
Total	873 000	100.0	1 929 387	100.0	1 950 502	100.0

It is certain that the above estimates offered by Edgars Dunsdorfs could be improved. Firstly, there certainly were more Russian, as well as Belarusian residents, the latter occasionally being registered as Russians. For example, in the revision of resident numbers issued in 1797 for the Governorate of Courland, the Parish of Daugavpils (Dünaburg), which physically was located in Selonia, was noted to have 2450 Russian members; more Russians and Belarusians lived in Latgale. If one does not include

[11] See: Dribins, L. *Ebreji Latvijā.* 2. izd. Rīga: Elpa, 2002.

[12] Dunsdorfs, E. *Latvijas vēsture 1710–1800.* [Stokholma]: Daugava, 1973, 292. lpp.

[13] Dunsdorfs, E. *Latvijas vēsture 1710–1800*, 306. lpp.; Skujenieks, M. *Latvija. Zeme un iedzīvotāji*, 256. lpp.; Blumberga, R. Lībieši 19.–21. gadsimtā. *Lībieši. Vēsture, valoda un kultūra.* Rīga: Līvõ Kultūr sidām, 2013, 172. lpp.; http://www.csb.gov.lv/statistikas-temas/iedzivotaji-ticiba-tautiba-uc-tema-32901.html (site last visited 22.03.2017).

[14] These figures do not include the number of soldiers of the Russian Army stationed on the territory of Latvia; for example, in Vidzeme this number might have been around 7 thousand at the end of the 18th century.

[15] Known as *krieviņi* in Latvian, this people, related to Estonians and Livs, were settled near Bauska during the Middle Ages.

Latgale and certain districts of Selonia, then the ethnic composition of the rural areas of Latvia was reasonably homogeneous, at least up to the middle of the 19th century; even in Latgale, in 1920, the relative fraction of Latvians in many municipalities was 90–98%. The relative numbers of Germans in cities and towns was higher until the end of the 18th century; thereafter the number of Jewish residents increased rapidly.

The rural landscape

The modern landscape of Latvia consists of a rural and urban environment which contains traces of earlier times. The natural landscape, although greatly affected by human activities, still comprises a large fraction of the total landscape — forests cover around 50%, marshes 4.7% of the territory of Latvia; the landscape also includes the sea and internal surface water resources.

Forests were exploited in ancient times for various economic purposes, and this led to imposition of certain restrictions. In 1696, the Economic Regulation on crown estates in Vidzeme forbade cutting down oak trees, but if an oak tree was cut down, then two new oaks had to be planted as replacements.[16] Provision for protecting and renewing forests was included in instructions issued in 1663–1664 by Queen Hedwig Eleonora of Sweden; these were applicable to Vidzeme, but it is not known how these instructions worked in practice.[17] In any event, complaints were registered in many districts during the 18th and 19th centuries about the lack of timber for building and shortages of firewood, and they had to be brought in from distant regions.

Various forms of erosion altered the environment. Coastal erosion and other damage (fertile land washed away during floods) are occasionally mentioned in the 17th and 18th century accounting of estates and ploughs; this damage occurred close to the Daugava, Gauja, and Venta rivers. Coastal erosion and in particular wind erosion (wind-blown sand dunes) threatened hamlets and farmsteads close to the seashore. Considerable data is available for the area around Ventspils. In 1675, part of the land of the Sarkanmuiža estate located close to the city was covered with wind-blown sand or had been washed affecting 13 farmsteads then inhabited and this erosion was responsible for ruin several abandoned houses. By 1741, due to wind erosion the hamlet of Jaunupe, which belonged to the estate, was almost completely abandoned, and it is likely that the same reasons lay behind only three out of the previously mentioned 13 holdings surviving in the hamlet of Liepene.[18]

Credible evidence has been found in the ancient remains of the old city of Ventspils for wind-blown sand covering inhabited areas. There an archaeological excavation uncovered a 1.5–1.8 m thick layer of sand underneath a 0.3 m thick cultural layer of 18th–19th century remnants; furthermore there was a 0.8–1.35 m layer constituting a

[16] Strods, H. Latvijas mežu politika un likumdošana (XI gs. – 1940. g.). *Latvijas mežu vēsture līdz 1940. gadam.* Rīga: [WWF – Pasaules Dabas fonds], 1999, 52. lpp.

[17] Ibid., 51.–53. lpp.

[18] The 1652–1697 and 1740–1748 inventories of the estates of the District of Ventspils (LVVA, 6999. f., 44. apr., 1126., 1131. l.).

former settlement which was dated from the 15th to the turn of the 16th/17th centuries.[19] The fact of the city being covered by drifting sand was noted in 17th century written records. Wind erosion problems were evident along the seashore southwards from Liepāja, and in the Gulf of Riga in the vicinity of modern-day Saulkrasti and elsewhere.

A view exists that drifting sand dunes in Latvia and elsewhere in Europe largely were the consequences of human activities, deforestation in sandy areas, pasturing cattle, gathering forest moss for use as litter.[20] Regulations were issued in 1829 creating a 530 m wide restricted zone along the shoreline of Kurzeme. In this zone it was forbidden to graze animals, gather moss, fir cones, pine needles, roots, to mow the grass and heather, or to kindle fire. A similar regulation was issued in 1838 by the Council of the Governorate of Vidzeme defining a forbidden zone 320 m wide, but in particularly sensitive areas the width of this zone could be between 530 m and 2 km.[21] Planting trees was begun in an effort to mitigate drifting of sand dunes: in 1835–1860 for the seashore at Liepāja, in 1853–1860 for the seashore at Ventspils, in 1866 for the district of Piltene, and in 1885 for land belonging to the city of Riga along the right bank of the Lielupe River.

The sharply differing seasons of Latvia and agricultural activities have contributed to formation of the rural landscape. The range of dominant colours and shades was determined by readying the land for sowing (ploughing, harrowing), and afterwards – by the growth of agricultural crops, their flowering and ripening. Seasonal features appeared during the time of mowing hay and gathering the harvest — hay stacks, hay racks, and cereal or flax stacks. The process of work was itself an important element of the landscape which included individuals and groups engaged in the necessary activities, together with their tools and means of transport or mechanical devices. For example, a 1792 drawing of the landscape by Johann Christoph Brotze shows cereal harvesting, carried out jointly by men and women — the former are reaping cereal using a short-handle scythe and a rake (in Latgale sickles were used for this), the latter are tying the crops in bundles and forming stacks; the presence of children is a significant detail and a cradle with infant suspended from a batten.

The agrarian landscape of the territory of Latvia during the Middle Ages (from the 13th century onwards) and during the Early Modern Times has only been little studied, most attention has been focussed on ascertaining the survival of agrarian practices in the environment dating from late Iron Age (9th–12th centuries) and even earlier periods in evidence revealed in archaeological investigations. It is credible that visually discernible features from various periods would not differ substantially — these may be marks left by sustained ploughing, terraces, piled stones collected from fields, and fences which mark the boundaries of fields. Palynology (the study of plant dust and spores) of the ancient settled place of Drubaži in the valley of the Abava River in the vicinity of Sabile have shown that over the period of the transition from the Early to the

[19] Vijups, A. Arheoloģiskie izrakumi 2010. gadā Ventspilī, Maiznieku ielā 7/9 un Maiznieku ielā 11. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2010.–2011. gadā.* Rīga: Nordik, 2012, 190.–195. lpp.

[20] Gabrāne, L. Kā aizsākās Ventspils Ostgala vēsture. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 4, 2001, 46. lpp.

[21] Ibid., 48. lpp.

Middle Iron Age (4th–5th centuries) to the Middle Ages, forest cover diminished in favour of a greater extent of underbrush, as well as fields and grazing areas; judging by pollen found in soil samples, barley, also wheat (*Triticum*), hemp, hops, as well as oats — found only in the topmost layers — were the dominant cultivated crops.[22] In terms of agriculture during different periods various approaches in differing proportions were employed in Latvia i.e. the forest clearing,[23] set-aside,[24] and ley farming[25] approaches.



Fig. 1. Cereal harvesting in Vidzeme. 1792 drawing by J. Ch. Brotze (Broce, J. K. *Zīmējumi un apraksti. 3. sēj. Latvijas mazās pilsētas un lauki*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2002, 6. att., 31. lpp.)

Traditionally the greatest areas under cultivation in Latvia have been dedicated to grass cereals — rye, barley, oats, and to lesser extent, wheat. (For example, for estates in Vidzeme belonging to the Swedish statesman Axel Oxenstierna peasants in 1638/1639 cultivated the following crops, by area, 37%, rye, 32.7%, barley, 29.2%, oats, and 1.1%, wheat; the areas of estate land under cultivation showed respective results of 44.7%, 42%, 12.9%, and 0.4%.[26]) Flax was the principal fibrous plant under cultivation. Although it is assumed that potatoes were first introduced on the territory of Latvia already in 1673 (in the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia), their widespread cultivation both on estates and in peasant holdings in fact began only during the first half of the 19th century, whereupon potato fields with their specific appearance and technology for harvesting are late arrivals in the rural landscape. Potatoes were grown in small quantities during the second half of the 18th century. Recourse to cultivation of potatoes was driven by the fact that potatoes could compensate for cereal shortfalls and mitigate the threat of famine; however, its rapid progress in terms of cultivation from the 1820s onwards was due to the use of potatoes to produce alcohol.[27] According to statistics for the period 1909–1913, in Latvia 83.13% of the total area under cultivation was covered by cereal crops (including rye over 33.13%), by potatoes — 7.51%; flax

[22] Ritums, R., Kalniņa, L. Ieskats Abavas ielejas senāko apdzīvoto vietu izpētē. *Latvijas arheoloģija: pētījumi un problēmas. Rakstu krājums.* Rīga: NIMS, 2002, 162. lpp. (9. att.), 164. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, 8).

[23] In the case of farming in forest clearings, these clearings were first created by cutting down trees. After 3–6 harvests were gathered, such clearings were left to stand fallow for 20–25 years, at least for 10–15 years, after which time, invasive trees and underbrush were cleared and a clearing used as before.

[24] Fields of arable land were left fallow for several years in order that the fertility of the soil might recover.

[25] Fields left fallow as part of this practice were allowed to stand unseeded for a single season only. It was then necessary to use fertiliser inasmuch as soil fertility could not recover in so short a period of time.

[26] Dunsdorfs, E. *Uksenšernas Vidzemes muižu saimniecības grāmatas 1624.–1654.* Rīga: L. ū. Studentu padomes grāmatnīca, 1935, 109. lpp.

[27] Strods, H. *Lauksaimniecība Latvijā pārejas periodā no feodālisma uz kapitālismu (18. gs. 80. gadi – 19. gs. 60. gadu sākums).* Rīga: Zinātne, 1972, 116.–117. lpp.



Fig. 2. Crops sown on strips of land, Latgale, 1930s. Photograph by Valdemārs Upīts

covered 6.57%, other crops (legumes etc.) — 2.79%.[28]

The modern era has left its mark on the agrarian landscape in the form of drainage ditches and dykes for flood defence. A large-scale effort to drain land began at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. For example, a 12 km long canal was dug around 1800 between the Bērze, Svēte, and Auce rivers, as well as many drainage ditches which allowed drainage of circa 700 ha of land. In 1837–1838, with a view to increasing the area of land suitable for agriculture, Lake Vīdale in the district of Dundaga was drained completely; in 1842, a canal 1.2 km long was dug to the sea which resulted in lowering the level of Lake Engure with 5700 ha of meadows and arable land were gained thereby.[29]

The rural landscape of Latgale has the unique features of the so-called strip field system, which from the point of view of agrotechnology as well as the likelihood of raising well-being must be assessed negatively. The appearance of the strip field system was related to unique social legal principles which existed in Latgale, notably with the system of the village owning all land in common, which was from time to time redistributed for individual use according to the number of able-bodied men. In order to ensure a uniform distribution of land according to its usefulness, each user was granted a strip of land in each field. With an increase in the number of residents, as well as following the division of families (in contrast with the system in Vidzeme and Kurzeme, where the holding usually was inherited by one of the children, in Latgale everyone who set up a family was given an equal share of the land), strips of land were subdivided and their width in some cases reduced to as little as 2 metres.

A number of laws were adopted in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century to abolish the legal ownership of land in common by a village, in this way strengthening the rights of individual ownership and doing away with the strip land system; nevertheless the process of dividing up strips of land into holdings owned by individuals only began with the 1920 agrarian reform in Latvia. This process protracted until the end of the 1930s. Despite the more rational use of land associated with the new conditions facilitated elimination of traces of the strip-land system, some traces have survived until today. Thus, in 2006–2007, marks of the strip-land system were discovered in the now all but abandoned hamlet of Luņi. Since the post-Second World War, conditions were unfavourable for agriculture, some land areas have not been ploughed,

[28] Skujenieks, M. *Latvija. Zeme un iedzīvotāji*, 504.–505. lpp.

[29] Strods, H. Zemes meliorācijas pamattendences Latvijā 17.gs.–19.gs. pirmajā pusē. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 3, 1999, 17. lpp.

but used for grazing, and one can find signs of the former strips of land in the form of remnants of earth ramparts, rows, and piles of stones.[30]

The agrarian landscape is conservative and many of its features survived into the mid-20th century and even later; however, certain features changed rapidly with the introduction of new farming machinery and new crops (for example, the landscape changed as a result of the rise in sugar beet cultivation over large areas during the 1920s–1930s). Grain cultivation was the most important agricultural sector until the 18th century, but at the end of the century estates began to favour livestock — first bulls, then merino sheep were raised, and from the 1840s–1850s onwards farming dairy animals. This demanded selection of herds, cultivation of grazing fields, and growing of forage crops.[31] Intensive cultivation of livestock by peasant holdings developed at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, largely taking benefitting from advances made by the estates advantage. During the 1920s–1930s, the dominant breed of livestock in Latvia, and a typical feature of the landscape was the brown cow strain which had been developed in Latvia.[32]

Hamlets, farmsteads

Hamlets and individual houses with outbuildings and farmsteads were a salient feature of the rural landscape in settled areas. The origin and further development of hamlets and farmsteads was a complex process on which various points of view were declared. Baltic German historiography was of the opinion that the Latgalians, and Latvians in general, already in ancient times (at least from the 13th century onwards) lived typically in farmsteads, whereas the Livs and the Estonians, lived typically in hamlets.[33] Evidence for this view was found in a fragment of the oldest *Rhymed Chronicle* written at the end of the 13th century where Latgalians are described as follows:

Die heidenschaft hât spêhe site,	Odd they are in spirit,
sie wonet nôte ein ander mite,	They live not together in a group,
sie bûwen besunder in manchen walt.[34]	But build separate houses in the forest.

The Latvian historian Arveds Švābe supported this thesis, and this corresponded to the opinions current during the 1920s and 1930s about Latvian spirit of individualism. More careful studies have shown that, during the Middle Ages, hamlets were, nevertheless, the basic form of a settled place in Livonia.

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[30] Zariņa, A., Liepiņš, I. Ainavas lasīšana: pa senās kultūras pēdām Latgalē. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa: sociālās un humanitārās zinātnes*, Nr. 5/6, 2009, 75.–98. lpp.

[31] See: Dumpe, L. *Lopkopība Latvijā 19. gs. – 20. gs. sākumā. Etnogrāfisks apcerējums.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1985.

[32] As regards raising cattle in Latvia today this is still the case according to official statistics; the future of this breed is threatened and a programme has been launched to safeguard their genetic material.

[33] See for example: Bielenstein, A. *Die Holzbauten und Holzgeräte der Letten*. St.-Petersburg–Petrograd: Russische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1907–1918, S. 141–145; Laakmann, H. Estland und Livland in früheschichtlicher Zeit. *Baltische Lande*, Bd. 1. Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1939, S. 224–228, 233 (Abb. 141).

[34] *Atskaņu hronika. Livländische Reimchronik*. Bisenieks, V. (tulk.), Mugurēvičs, Ē., Kļaviņš, K. (komentāri). Rīga: Zinātne, 1998, 343.–345. rinda.



Fig. 3. Three peasant farmsteads sited alongside the Ogre River in Vidzeme. Year 1792 drawing by J. Ch. Brotze (Broce, J. K. *Zīmējumi un apraksti. 3. sēj. Latvijas mazās pilsētas un lauki*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2002, 155. att., 243. lpp.)



Fig. 4. Joint work in the civil parish of Code in Zemgale. Early 20th century (Repository of Ethnographic Material, Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia, E 26, 5017)

Initially hamlets constituted a social unit with joint ownership of land and collective responsibility for paying taxes; however, over time the hamlet became a more or less compact group of individual farmsteads and individual right to use land, and the hamlet community dissolved. This was an uneven process, and, therefore, at times hamlets existed side by side at different stages in their evolution.[35] Individual use of land dominated already during the 16th century, and taxes had to be paid and corvée discharged not by the hamlet collectively, but by each peasant farmstead separately. A single hamlet or group of hamlets (a civil parish or *vaka*, or *pagasts*) continued to exist as an administrative structure of an estate. The officials of a civil parish — the elder (in Latvian *vagars*, *stārasts*; in German texts: *Elste*, *Wagger*, *Starast,* etc.) and his assistants, *šķilteris* (also *vēstnieks*, *jātnieks*; in German texts: *Schilter*, *Schildreuter*) and *rijnieks* (also *meiris*; in German texts: *Meier*) — enforced discipline and ensured that orders of the estate owner were carried out. As late as in the first half of the 17th century, the civil parish elder was elected by the peasants, but during the second half of the 17th century the elder was empowered by the estate, i.e. the civil parish elder became a clerk of the estate. Officials of a civil parish were usually free of paying taxes and corvée duties.

With the disappearance of collective responsibility of the hamlet and transition to individual use of land (common pasture land and meadows persisted for quite some time) the hamlet, in fact, turned into a collection of individual farmsteads, but the tradition of attributing the name to such an arrangement persisted even up to the 20th century. In many areas this tradition fell into oblivion whereupon it is possible to find districts with a very similar distribution of dwellings, but in one instance the group of holdings is called a hamlet, while elsewhere these are farmsteads.

[35] Dzidra Liepiņa has studied issues related to hamlets during the period up to the 18th century: Лиепиня, Дз. О типах поселений латышских крестьян в XVII в. *Сельские поселения Прибалтики (XIII–XX вв.)*. Москва: Наука, 1971, с. 130. See also: Liepiņa, Dz. Par ciema novadu Vidzemē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 12. laid., 1978, 138.–160. lpp.



Fig. 5. The row village of Degteri in Latgale (*Latviešu tautas māksla*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1961, 3. att., 62. lpp.)

However, the earlier social relationship did not disappear completely, but transformed into joint work with neighbours in cases of hard, extensive or urgent work. This joint work was done when the residents of two or more farmsteads joined forces to achieve a well-defined task, for example, making a clearing in the forest, bringing in the harvest, threshing cereals, mucking out stables, building a house, etc. Participation in these efforts was voluntary, without recompense, yet at the same time an obligation. A feast invariably followed completion of the work. These joint efforts (called *talka* in Latvian) were one factor that allowed preserving a sense of community between holdings after the demise of hamlets. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, steam-powered threshing machines began to be used. This new machinery lightened the work load but was expensive, which meant that there typically was only one such machine in area and this led to holding joint efforts at harvest time. After work was completed at one holding, the machinery was usually brought to another one; in this way joint work resulted in participation by a considerable part of people living in a region. Scenes with this machinery working during a harvest were often photographed, although literary works also pointed out the negative consequences of careless use of the machinery.

Reliable information about how hamlets and farmsteads looked in the landscape (mostly about Vidzeme) may be obtained from maps from the end of the 17th century. Row villages were widespread with dwellings arranged in a single line alongside the principal field, or alongside a road which crossed several fields. Individual houses were not compactly sited but were some 100–300 m apart from one another. In some cases houses were arrayed in a circle around tilled fields. Often houses within the borders of a village were located randomly, unsystematically. Villages with a compact layout are more often encountered close to the sea. When comparing the situation at the end of the 17th century and at the beginning of the 20th century it is evident that the majority of old farms which were present during the period of Swedish rule were still located in the same place, hence the pattern of settlement had proved to be quite stable over two centuries. We may assume that a similar situation obtains for Kurzeme where in some districts the pedigree of house names can be traced starting from the second half of the 17th century.

A different evolution of hamlets took place in Latgale. On 27 October 1830, a Russian Imperial law was adopted on how villages were to be organised (Law No. 4037), which set out the layout of a village, the arrangement of dwellings and gardens; furthermore, the regulations applied not only to new villages but also to existing



Fig. 6. A building with walls made of split boulders — the civil parish centre at Puikule, 1920s (?) (Repository of Ethnographic Material, Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia, 73, 248)

ones.[36] This regulation did not apply to the Governorates of Courland and Livonia where the nobility had achieved autonomy of the legal system; it did apply to Latgale since it was part of the Governorate of Vitebsk and during the 1840s villages and buildings were altered to comply with this regulation whereupon villages evolved with regular and relatively compact layouts similar to what obtains in neighbouring territories of Russia and Belarus. The visual similarity of villages in Latgale with those in areas inhabited by Russians and Belarusians is accentuated by the fact that the buildings of peasants in Latgale were largely built by Russian carpenters.[37]

The character of rural housing was largely determined by traditions and the available building materials. Usually farmstead buildings were constructed of wood (pine or spruce), and roofs were made of straw or reeds. Given that during the 18th and 19th centuries peasants were allocated timber by the estate on which they lived, the latter also sought to regulate the construction of peasant dwellings.[38] Wooden houses unequivocally dominated the rural landscape until the end of the 19th century. For example, statistics of 1883 for the Governorate of Courland show that 88.93% of peasant dwellings were made of wood, 4.51% — of bricks and stone, while 3.45% were cob buildings.[39] Straw was the roofing material for 96.38% of all dwellings in the economically weak district of Ilūkste (in the eastern part of Selonia), while in the well-off district of Dobele in Zemgale 83.06% of roofs were made of straw or reeds, 11.7% were made of tiles, and 5.23% were wooden shingle roofs.[40] During the second half of the 19th century, and especially at the beginning of the 20th century peasant buildings appeared with walls made of split boulders, often supplemented with a red brick finish, then becoming a distinctive feature of the landscape.

Farmsteads in all districts usually consisted of a main house with living quarters, a granary, a cattle-shed, a bath-house, a threshing-barn, a hay loft, a summer kitchen,

[36] *Полное собрание законов Российской империи*, 2/V. Санктпетербург, 1831, с. 219–227. Accessible at: http://www.nlr.ru/e-res/law_r/search.php (site last visited 22.03.2017).

[37] Cimermanis, S. *Latviešu tautas dzīves pieminekļi. Celtnes un to iekārta.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1969, 14. lpp.

[38] This is not universally to be seen positively, in that in parallel with the idea of a rational use of building materials estate owners sought to impose living in threshing-barns, which must be assessed negatively from the point of personal well-being and hygiene. In such a threshing-barn cereals were dried in the same space as people used for living, which meant that it was hot and smoke-filled. From the end of the 18th century onwards, peasants sought to arrange for one or two rooms to be separated from the main space.

[39] Cimermanis, S. *Latviešu tautas dzīves pieminekļi*, 17. lpp.

[40] Ibid., 24. lpp.

and other buildings, as needed, for craftsmen, this might be a smithy, or a pottery, in the case of fishermen — a fish smoke-house, a shed for fishing nets. Buildings for different uses could be found under a common roof. There were a few regional differences in the placement, construction, and decoration of buildings; overall, there are features evident in Western Latvia, which render the region to be similar in appearance to Western Lithuania and Prussia, while features in Eastern Latvia are similar to those in the south-eastern part of Estonia, Russia, Belarus, and Eastern Lithuania. Very often the outbuildings were arranged in such a way that the granary faced directly the main house, with the space between them the so-called clean courtyard, while the cattle-shed faced the other side of the main house with the space in between being the working or dirty courtyard. Buildings more susceptible to catching fire — bath-houses, threshing-barns, forges, and pottery kilns — were sited at some remove.



Fig. 7. Peasant farmstead in Latgale (*Latviešu tautas māksla*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1961, 5. att. 63. lpp.)



Fig. 8. Peasant farmstead in Southern Kurzeme (*Latviešu tautas māksla*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1961, 15. att., 69. lpp.)

The traditional Latvian farmstead today is associated with trees planted and growing in the vicinity of the buildings, an alley which stretches from the main road to the buildings, and also an orchard. A centre of economic activity is therefore associated with buildings and clumps of trees which stand out on the surrounding rural background. It is possible that this usual, even iconic picture is relatively new. The art historian Imants Lancmanis observed that the landscape of Latvia at the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century was somewhat open, that drawings of that time showed estate manors and outbuildings to be located on open ground, with relatively recently planted trees in their neighbourhood. "It was the 19th century which gave the rural landscape of Latvia the image of the cultural landscape surrounded by green foliage which we have grown accustomed to."[41]

[41] Lancmanis, I. Muižu centri Latvijas mūsdienu kultūrainavā. *Kultūrvēstures avoti un Latvijas ainava.* Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis, 2011, 295.–296. lpp.

The possibility of buying homes which would then be transmitted to their heirs created a new situation for peasant society. With the abolition of serfdom peasants gained only the right to use land; the Law on peasants adopted in Vidzeme in 1849, and, in particular, Russian government decisions during the 1860s led to a rise in the purchase of houses which resulted in the peasant becoming a true landowner. Following established habits, purchase of relatively large and stable properties was promoted, while in Latgale each adult male was granted only 4.4–4.9 ha of land. It followed that by the end of the 19th century the average size of a holding in Vidzeme was 47 ha, in Kurzeme — 41.5 ha, and in Latgale — 7 ha. Thus, a well-off class of farmers formed in Vidzeme and in Kurzeme, together with a substantial number of landless peasants, while the rural problems of Latgale lay in small, economically weak holdings.

The newly established State of Latvia sought to deal with these and other agrarian issues by means of the Agrarian Reform of 1920. Without examining in detail the complicated implementation of these reforms, two factors resulted which essentially transformed the cultural landscape of the countryside.

In Latgale almost all of the traditional villages were divided into farmsteads (a village community sense survived) and the strip-field system was abolished. Buildings were either transported to the appropriate piece of land,[42] or new ones were built. The new centres of economic activity largely reproduced construction and decoration styles previously typical of Latgale; however, the layout of buildings became more open, trees were planted in the vicinity of buildings and along access roads.

Land from the State Land Fund was allocated to individuals throughout Latvia, upon their request, in order to deal with the landless peasant issue. Some 55 000 new farms were thus created, as well as thousands of craftsmen's and fishermen's holdings, and market gardens.[43] The majority of new farms (54.34%) were moderate in size, 15–22 ha. Usually land was allocated which previously had been cultivated on estates, fields and pastures; however, some of the new farms were on land not previously cultivated, whereupon creation of forest clearings, as well as removal of stumps and stones from the cleared land re-emerged as part of the landscape of agricultural labour. With a view to easing problems arising and accelerating the process of creating centres of economic activity the Ministry for Agriculture, as early as in 1922, drafted new plans for model dwellings and outbuildings, as well as their disposition relative to one another. The concept of these models was to achieve a rational, modern result with a compact arrangement of buildings to minimise the area of land taken out of cultivation. These guidelines were in the form of recommendations, and they were often altered in practice; nevertheless, new building silhouettes appeared in the rural landscape, although the buildings were largely inspired by traditional designs. Wood remained the most popular building material, with roofs of wooden shingles or

[42] Technically this was not difficult to do as the buildings were largely made of logs and could be dismantled and readily set up anew.

[43] For more about how new farms stood out in the cultural landscape of Latvia see: Niedre, U. Latvijas 20. gadsimta 20. gadu agrārā reforma Vidzemes kultūrainavā. *Kultūrvēstures avoti un Latvijas ainava*, 45.–72. lpp.

boards. Clumps of trees were centrally planted in new farms, as well as alleys of trees. The rural landscape was complemented by public buildings — civil parish centres, new schools, cooperative dairies painted white.

Castles, palaces, and manors

During the Livonian period, the landscape of Latvia featured stone castles of the Livonian Order and of the Bishoprics as fortresses, and as centres of economic life and administration. Local authority was exercised and economic life centred on estates whose development began during the second half of the 15th century. Serfdom, involuntary submission to authority of the landed gentry, and corvée after the end of serfdom[44] resulted in the Latvian image of estates, as was the case for castles of the Livonian period, to be symbols of oppression and presence of a foreign power. This was the background for the symbolic, and practical, arson or wrecking of manors during the 1905 Revolution (out of 1095 estates in Kurzeme and Vidzeme some 459 suffered arson or vandalism); however, these events led to a different attitude among Latvians themselves. The negative image of manor and castles was sustained during the 1920s and 1930s, when memories were still fresh of the complicated history of the ethnic relations between Germans and Latvians, as well as under the Soviet regime with its postulates about class struggle. Nevertheless, the 1960s saw the slow start of investigation, conservation and restoration of castles and manors; nowadays there are no longer problems in society about looking at manors with "sympathy or hatred"[45] — this has been replaced by understanding that castles and manors are historical and cultural values.

The first stone castles appeared on the territory of Latvia at the end of the 12th century, while the majority were built in the 14th century (up until then administration and defence of the land not infrequently relied on wooden fortifications). During the 15th century, account was taken of the proliferation of firearms and castles were substantially rebuilt. During the second half of the 16th century, the military role of castles decreased and they provided uncomfortable living quarters, whereupon those destroyed during the Livonian War were not renewed, intact castles were rebuilt with some surrounded by earthen fortifications.[46]

Devastation resulting from the Great Northern War (1700–1721) marked the final demise of stone castles dating from the Middle Ages — only a few rooms were used as living quarters, or for economic activities, in those castles which had survived the war unscathed, but even these were abandoned later, so that by the end of the 18th century only ruins remained of once stately castles, and even these remnants were often

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[44] Peasants were granted unlimited personal freedom, but ownership of the land was retained by estate owners, and rent for land usually had to be paid in the form of corvée, the extent of which roughly doubled after abolition of serfdom.

[45] Lancmanis, I. Muižu centri Latvijas mūsdienu kultūrainavā, 291. lpp.

[46] For more about the castles of the Livonian period see: Caune, A., Ose, I. *Latvijas 12. gadsimta beigu – 17. gadsimta vācu piļu leksikons.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004 (Latvijas viduslaiku pilis, 4).



Fig. 9. The river valley of the Daugava, with a highway visible and ruins of the mediaeval castle at Koknese, in the 1930s. Photograph by Valdemārs Upīts

quarried to supply building materials for new construction. Today only some 15 out of the 100 stone castles from the Livonian period have survived; after substantial refurbishment, or partial restoration, many of them are inhabited, or serve as museums (for example, the castles at Bauska, Cēsis, Dundaga, Ēdole, Jaunpils, Krustpils, Lielstraupe, Riga, Turaida, and Ventspils). However, even as ruins, stone castles have remained a significant part of the landscape, and from the 18th century onwards, they have attracted the attention of interested individuals and collectors of historical evidence.[47]

It is thought that the majority of manor houses belonging to vassals were built of wood during the Livonian era and differed only slightly from the log buildings of peasants, although there were a few stone buildings, particularly in the Archbishopric of Riga (at Ērgļi, Indrica, Krievciems, Lielstraupe, Mazstraupe, Mujāni, etc.). From an economic point of view, castles of the Livonian Order and those of bishops were manors.

Information about groups of buildings dating from the second half of the 17th century, and in particular from the 18th century may be found in estate inventories. These sources have been extensively studied, but there are no comprehensive summaries of the findings about the manner in which estate centres formed and how they were constructed up until the mid-18th century, i.e. before the start of a new phase in the construction of manors. Estates were owned by the state, were privately owned, and there were estates owned by the clergy, i.e. parsonages, while estates in the vicinity of Riga typically were the summer estates of city dwellers.

Inventory reports allow the conclusion that until the 18th century the typical form of manor residential building was elongated structure made of trimmed logs, with a vestibule and a kitchen located in the centre and two symmetrical wings, in each of which there was a room with one or two smaller chambers. Residential buildings on an estate differed from peasant dwellings (and not in all cases) with a slightly more elaborate floor plan, also different interior decoration and a furnace with a chimney for heating purposes, the latter starting to appear in peasant homes only during the second half of the 18th century. The roof was usually made of wooden shingles, occasionally it was made of clay tiles, but often the roof was covered by straw. There were other buildings in the estate complex — cattle-sheds, granaries, threshing-barns, stables, bath-houses, etc. Windmills and watermills were built close to towns already during the Middle Ages; inventories from the 18th century show that their prevalence was insufficient.

[47] See: Broce, J. K. *Zīmējumi un apraksti*, 1–4; Brotze, J. Chr. *Estonica*; Ose, I. (sast.). *Livonijas piļu attēli no marķīza Pauluči albuma.*



Fig. 10. The Embūte estate which has on its grounds ruins of a mediaeval castle. Drawing by Vilong. 1827 (Ose, I. *Livonijas piļu attēli no marķīza Pauluči albuma*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 97. lpp.)

The Leči estate located in the vicinity of Ventspils comprised 24 peasant holdings and its inventory reports show that during the 1760s the centre of the estate included an old residential building in poor condition, old servants' quarters (also used to house guests), a coach house where horses were accommodated (the horse stable was unusable), a half-collapsed cattle-shed, a rectangular stockyard made of stone rubble, two granaries, and a threshing-barn. There were two stone gates leading to the courtyard: an enclosure to store cheese was located above one of the gates, while the cattle-shed was located to one side of the other gate, with a shed for small stock on the other side. The estate had two orchards, where apples, pears, and cherries were grown.[48] The Brunava estate is an example of a smaller estate which consisted of five peasant holdings. The principal residential building at Brunava according to the 1713 inventory had a roof made of wooden shingles and straw with an antechamber, room, and two chambers. In addition two granaries were centrally located (a room had been added over one of the granaries), a coach-house, cattle-shed, threshing-barn, and an old bath-house with an antechamber and chamber.[49]

The basic part of manor culture which has come down to us date mainly from the second half of the 18th century and the 19th century, when buildings were put up in the Classicism style, and later in the Historicism style. Initially Baroque gardens were centrally located; later landscape parks were established.[50] During this period, many estates developed into major economic centres. Over and above residential buildings (including servants' quarters) and buildings of an agrarian nature (sheds, stables, granaries, barns, etc.) an estate might also include a smithy, a distillery, a tavern, mills, and other buildings, which began to resemble a small hamlet. It was thanks to estates that many innovations and fashions of the times reached peasant holdings and were reflected in the construction of buildings, also in the appearance of gardens and tree alleys, and also, for example, in the peasant kitchen. The acquisition of building plots of land on the territory of estates promoted the development of certain localities at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

As a result of the 1920 Agrarian Reform, state and privately owned estates, including parsonages, were abolished in Latvia and their land given over to the State Land Fund. Part of this land was allocated to the creation of new farms. Although the former

[48] The 1760–1768 inventories taken of the Leči Estate (LVVA, 6999. f., 44. apr., 49. l.).
[49] The 1713 inventory of Sece Estate (LVVA, 472. f., 11, apr., 648. l.).
[50] See: Janelis, I. M. *Latvijas muižu dārzi un parki.* Rīga: Neputns, 2010.

owners were allowed to retain part of the land of their estates (typically 50–60 ha), the central buildings of the estates were nationalised. Many principal buildings (manor houses) were transformed into schools, sanatoriums, cultural centres, or local authorities installed their offices and associations there, in this way the central buildings of estates continued their historical central role in civil parish life. Distribution of building plots of land close to the centre of former estates led to rapid development of many inhabited areas (Cesvaine, Ranka, Rauna, Koknese, Skrunda, Vaiņode, and elsewhere).

A negative influence was exerted by the fact that in many cases the central buildings of estates were given to different new farmers and thereby estates lost their integrated nature — this effect was exacerbated by the reconstruction of certain buildings for new different uses. Estate parks were particularly hard hit because parts of them were converted into fruit and vegetable gardens; other transformations were effected corresponding to fashions and tastes of the times. The fate and place of the former estates were affected by destruction wreaked by the First and Second World Wars, and later, during the Soviet period, by construction of central parts of kolkhozes with disregard for the environment (in many cases they were located in the former central regions of estates), and by other circumstances.

Today one can note positive examples of how estate centres are managed (careful restoration, establishing of museums and guest houses), as well as negative examples (a lack of understanding of values, abandoning buildings in various stages of collapse). The restoration and renewal of the Baroque gardens and palace at Rundāle — which was the residence of the Dukes of Courland and was built to a design by Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli — deserves special mention. The Association of Latvian Castles, Palaces and Manors[51] was created in 2000 and is actively pursuing its goals of gathering information about the cultural values of castles, palaces, and manors, and their preservation, as well as promotion of cultural tourism.

Roads

Roads and their attendant infrastructure are an integral part of any landscape. To a large extent roads reveal to the observer the changeable and diverse nature of the landscape.

Only some indications in written records provide some insight into the nature of the network of traffic and war roads in mediaeval Livonia. Archaeological investigations and surveys have uncovered traces of roads. Detailed cartographical information is available about Vidzeme starting with the 17th century; for the rest of the territory of Latvia such information dates from the 18th century onwards. Therefore, previous to maps created which are adequately exact we can speak less about actual routes that roads followed as about the directions in which they led. Nevertheless, in many instances terrain and other geographic features determined the sole, optimal path taken and one which has endured. Judging from a comparison of maps made for the Swedish land registry (cadastre) and later maps, leads to the conclusion that there was a large

[51] See: www.pilis.lv (site last visited 22.03.2017).

degree of stability for the road network in Vidzeme from the end of the 17th century through to the 20th century, and that this applies to the major roads as well as those of local importance; large changes affected mostly those roads which joined together separate peasant holdings, or which led to fields and meadows.

The most important transit routes which crossed the territory of Latvia converged in Riga. The most important ones among them was the road through Kuldīga and Grobiņa leading to Prussia, the road to Pskov which passed through Straupe and Valmiera (or its variant which passed through Cēsis), as well as the road to Polotsk, which ran along the right bank of the Daugava River. Great attention was devoted to road maintenance. For example, the Courland Diet decided in June 1570 that all bridges on the roads of the Duchy should be maintained to a width that two carts be able to pass over them at the same time. Each parish was to appoint an individual responsible to care for bridges (*Brücken Meister*).[52] Part 4 of the police regulation (*Landes Polizey Ordnungen*) promulgated in 1688 by Claudius Tott, Governor-General of Livonia, dealt with roads. There was provision for the principal roads to be built 12 Swedish alnar, or approximately 7 m wide; they also had to be even and straight, with all stones removed. Technical details were included about the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges.[53] Notwithstanding these decisions, there were frequent complaints about the poor state of roads.

The most extensive road works in Latvia for its time began around 1830, and the process was stimulated by an Imperial Russian law (No. 6076), adopted in 1833, on roads and their maintenance throughout the state.[54] Roads were classified into five categories according to their importance. Out of all roads of the first category (the main roads, of which there were six in all) there were portions of only two such roads on the territory of Latvia, notably, the segment St Petersburg–Riga, and St Petersburg–Daugavpils–Kaunas (leading further to Warsaw); while there were two segments of the roads of the second category (highways, of which there were 10 in all), namely, Riga–Jelgava–Šauliai–Tauragė, and part of the road Riga–Pskov–Moscow. These sections of roads, excepting that towards Moscow, were substantially reconstructed during the 1830s–1850s, and in some stretches rerouted along new lines.

Gravel was most commonly encountered road surface material, stone chippings, and, over some segments, stone pavement. Use of Swedish cobblestones was popular in port cities and in their vicinity — they were imported in great quantities as ballast by ships. A start was made during the 1920s and 1930s to use cement (14.67 km) and asphalt (16.47 km) as road surface material over relatively short distances; however, a cheaper and more widespread technique for improving road surfaces was to impregnate a layer of stone chippings with bitumen.[55]

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[52] Bunge, F. G. *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Esth- und Curlands*, Bd. 2. Dorpat: J. E. Schünmann`s Wittwe, 1843, S. 207.

[53] Apsītis, R., Blūzma, V., Lazdiņš, J. *Latvijas tiesību avoti. Teksti un komentāri. 2. sēj. Poļu un zviedru laiku tiesību avoti.* Rīga: Juridiskā koledža, 2006, 302.–304. lpp.

[54] *Полное собрание законов Российской империи*, 2/VIII. Санктпетербург, 1834, с. 180–183. Accessible at: http://www.nlr.ru/e-res/law_r/search.php (site last visited 22.03.2017).

[55] Andrejsons, V. *Ceļi Latvijā*. Rīga: VAS "Latvijas Valsts ceļi", 2009, 71.–74. lpp.



Fig. 11. Bridge across the Tirza River (Repository of Ethnographic Material, Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia, E 26, 5517)



Fig. 12. Bridge at Kuldīga across the Venta River. Photograph by the author

Roads also required an appropriate infrastructure — provision for ferries, construction of bridges and dams, inns, later the development also of a postal station network. Certain objects associated with road infrastructure are protected and are part of the industrial heritage of Latvia — these are distance markers, bridges and viaducts, horse postal stations, railway stations, and others.[56]

One of the oldest and most important road infrastructure elements on the territory of Latvia was the bridge and dam at Bukulti (also at Ropaži, Jugla), which passed over the bogged-up part of Lake Jugla, and which ensured traffic flow out of Riga eastward — towards Vidzeme, Estonia, and Pskov. A bridge stood here as early as in 1226,[57] and its location was a cardinal point which marked the eastern border of the patrimonial territory of Riga, and, subsequently, until 1974, the eastern border of the city of Riga. In the light of the available technical means, bridges were built to cross small rivers, but from the 15th century onwards larger obstacles became overcome, for example, a new bridge was built in 1438 across the Venta River at Kuldīga.[58] In 1701, a raft bridge was built across the Daugava River at Riga, and in 1714, it was renewed after its destruction; after successive similar events a raft bridge was located there until 1892 (length 630 m, width 12.6 m; the bridge could be dismantled and set up again after the spring floods and it was in use until the late autumn).

Wood was the usual building material for bridges. Surviving stone bridges in Latvia largely date from the 19th century (in 1939 some 242 stone bridges were

[56] Biedriņš, A., Liepiņš, E. *Latvijas industriālā mantojuma ceļvedis. Guide to Industrial Heritage of Latvia.* Rīga: Latvijas Industriālā mantojuma fonds; Valsts kultūras pieminekļu aizsardzības inspekcija, 2002.

[57] The bridge at Ropaži (*pons de Rodepois*) and a guard at this bridge (*ponterius de Rodepois*) are mentioned in: *Livländische Güterurkunden aus den Jahren 1207 bis 1500, Bd. 1. Herausgegeben von Hermann von Bruiningk und Nicolaus Busch*. Riga: Kommissionsverlag von Jonck & Poliewsky, 1908, S. 7.

[58] Pāvulāns, V. *Satiksmes ceļi Latvijā XIII–XVII gs.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1971, 160. lpp.

counted; however, most of them have by now been replaced by reinforced concrete constructions[59]). The largest stone bridge (length 164 m, width, 10.7 m; made of bricks) was built in 1874 across the Venta River at Kuldīga. Iron bridges were built in Latvia starting with the second half of the 19th century, in particular for railways; while reinforced concrete came into use from the start of the 20th century onwards.



Fig. 13. The Āžu Inn in Viesīte (built circa 1840). Photograph by the author

The topic of inns (*krogs* in Latvian)[60] is often treated in a negative fashion, due to the trade in alcoholic drinks in these establishments. Despite these sales being an important element in the function of inns, in particularly during the period of time when distillation of alcohol was an important factor in the economic activities of estates, the principal function of such inns was to provide the traveller with care and a safe journey. Some of these establishments were operated on a seasonal basis, for example, to serve loggers travelling along winter roads, or ferrymen at the Daugava River, as well as raftsmen and bargemen[61] along the Daugava River during the summer months. These establishments were centres of public life — a gathering place for members of a municipality as well as a place to find employment, also a forum for exchange of information among members of the local community and strangers; travelling artists performed at inns. Until the second half of the 19th century, when buildings were put up for this purpose, the local community council met here. Annual fairs were often held beside inns.

The earliest trustworthy references to inns on the territory of Latvia date from the beginning of the 14th century onwards. Usually these establishments belonged to an estate which also managed them or let them out. Beer brewed on the estate was on offer, and from the second half of the 18th century onwards — also hard liquor which produced large revenue for the estate. Innkeepers were both local peasants and foreigners, Germans, Jews, Poles, and others. An inn was usually built of wood, but from the end of the 18th century they were gradually replaced with stone buildings. Inns varied both in terms of their appearance and interior planning; however, in their classical form they were long, monumental edifices, with all guest rooms and one or two stands for horses and carts under one roof. In the same way as in other European

[59] Klētnieks, J., Salcevičs, R. *Tilti Latvijā. Bridges in Latvia*. Rīga: Vizuālais elements, 2004, 10. lpp.

[60] For more about the history of inns see: Teivens, A. *Latvijas lauku krogi un ceļi*. Rīga: Māksla, 1995; Niedre, U. 19. gadsimta Vidzemes lauku krogu vieta pagasta saimniecībā, sabiedrībā un sadzīvē. *Letonikas avoti: Latvijas piekraste. Arheoloģija, etnogrāfija, vēsture*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 167.–229. lpp.

[61] Crew members of *strūgas*, which were flat-bottomed barges used to transport goods from the region around the upper reaches of the Daugava River (in Russia and Byelorussia) to Riga — where the barges were dismantled and used as timber.

countries, mail stations were appended to inns in Latvia from the first half of the 17th century onwards. Development of a postal network first started in Vidzeme during the period of Swedish rule with creation of the post-office in Riga in 1625.[62] Postal deliveries to Stockholm were made either by sea, or by land through Estonia and Finland. Johan Skytte, the Governor-General of Vidzeme, issued an order in 1630 requiring that every three miles there should be postal stations at inns, providing feed for horses and food for travellers. As a result of an initiative by Jakob Becker, Postmaster of Riga, postal service was extended to the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, while in 1685 the Duchy established its own postal organisation.

Inns rapidly lost their importance after the alcohol monopoly was introduced in 1900 in the Russian Empire. Various associations, whose numbers increased rapidly at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, took over the role in the public life of municipalities previously played by inns. Shops and flats were set up at inns, or they were reconfigured for use as meeting places of the local councils, associations, schools, etc.; later many buildings were destroyed for a variety of reasons, largely during the First and Second World Wars. The ethnographer Uģis Niedre has concluded with regret that today "searching for the places where inns used to stand means travelling from one set of ruins to the next set of ruins";[63] however, this element has not completely vanished from the landscape of Latvia.

The development of railway in Latvia began in 1860 with construction of the segments of the line St Petersburg-Warsaw passing through Daugavpils (Dünaburg) and Rēzekne. The line Riga–Daugavpils was opened in 1861, which was subsequently extended to meet up with the railway network of Inner Russia; in 1871, the line Liepāja–Kaišadorys (in Lithuania) was opened which was extended to Romny in Ukraine. Construction of the important line Ventspils–Moscow (then Windau–Rybinsk) took place over the period 1897–1904.[64]

The rail network continued to be extended until the 1930s. Narrow-gauge lines were built at the same time as broad-gauge railway lines. Construction of narrow-gauge lines was especially pronounced during the First World War in the part of Latvia occupied by Germany — they were intended to be supply lines for the front, but after the war they were adjusted for carrying passengers. Narrow-gauge railway lost its significance after the end of the Second World War and most of the tracks were dismantled during the 1960s–1970s. However, the narrow-gauge line stretching from Gulbene to Alūksne (33 km) is noteworthy because it continues to function today — it

[62] Pārsla Pētersone has studied the history of the postal system in Vidzeme and Kurzeme: Pētersone, P. *Vidzemes pasta vēsture 17.–19. gs.* Promocijas darbs. Rīga, 1998. Accessible at: Petersone_P_Vidzemes_pasta_vesture_1998_OCR.pdf (site last visited 22.03.2017); Pētersone, P. Kurzemes un Zemgales hercogistes pasta organizācijas loma Baltijas jūras reģiona sakaru attīstībā 17. gadsimtā. *Ventspils muzeja raksti*, 1. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2001, 154.–171. lpp.; Pētersone, P. Komunikāciju sistēmas Kurzemes hercogistē Ziemeļu kara laikā. *Ventspils muzeja raksti*, 3. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2003, 115.–142. lpp.

[63] Niedre, U. 19. gadsimta Vidzemes lauku krogu vieta, 226. lpp.

[64] Development of the railway network in Latvia has been described in: Malahovska, L. *Latvijas transporta vēsture: 19. gs. otrā puse – 20. gs. sākums*. Rīga: LV fonds, 1998; Altbergs, T., Augustāne, K., Pētersone, I. *Dzelzceļi Latvijā*. Rīga: Jumava, 2009.

is a segment of the 210 km long line opened in 1903 from Stukmaņi (Pļaviņas)–Alūksne–Valka.

The coming of the railway substantially altered the economic environment. It connected ports with substantial industrial and commercial centres. However, railways also produced a significant impact locally — railway stations were in rural areas and became convenient transportation points for farmers and entrepreneurs, housing was built nearby for railway personnel, convenient transportation possibilities promoted development of new inhabited areas and a rise of summer houses in the vicinity of railway stations. Economic interests stimulated estate owners to allocate plots of land for building in the vicinity of railway stations. These were the factors which at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century led to the appearance of Auce, Lielvārde, Bēne, and other towns and substantial settled places. During the period of agrarian reform in Latvia of the 1920s, this trend to settle down close to railway stations continued and increased.



Fig. 14. Timber rafts along the Gauja River. 1930s. Rīga: Fotobrom

A history of the roads of Latvia cannot exclude the waterways, in particular along the Daugava River. The economic significance of other rivers was considerably smaller, despite the persistence of ideas starting with the 17th century of building a series of canals to complement the economic potential of the smaller rivers. Rafting, which was the most economical way to transport timber, and which was also adapted for transporting other items, gave an irreplaceable nuance to river landscapes. A raft typically consisted of 20–30 logs tied together, although this number could vary depending on the nature of the timber and size of the river. Rafts (2–8) were tied to one another end-to-end. These rafts were floated along all of the larger rivers of Latvia, but the Daugava had the greatest importance. Timber from the tributaries of the Daugava and the extensive territory of its upper reaches in Russia and in Byelorussia came this way to Riga where it was sorted and treated or transported further to Western Europe. At the beginning of the 20th century, 15 000 rafts arrived in Riga annually. Up until the second half of the 19th century, goods were transported along the Daugava during the rafting season in special flat-bottomed boats — *strūgas*.

The romanticised work and life-style (spending evenings by a campfire, singing, contact between various nationalities) of those engaged in timber rafting, which nevertheless was dangerous, was a very specific part of the cultural environment. Timber rafting was widespread until the 1960s, while the last rafts appeared on the Gauja River in the 1970s.

Urban landscape

The urban landscape deserves brief mention despite the traditional cultural landscape of Latvia being associated firstly with rural areas, as there is no strictly defined boundary which separates one from the other. Features observable in the rural environment in many ways are repeated in small towns and hamlets.

Urban landscape on the territory of Latvia began to take shape already during the Late Iron Age, when the so-called early towns appeared as economic and administrative centres, based on trade and crafts. German aggression in the Baltic during the 13th century marked a turning point in urban development. Urban centres based on older administrative centres developed following the example of German cities. In 1225, Riga was the first urban centre to be granted the rights of a town. There were not many recognised towns during the mediaeval period of Livonia — 17 in all, out of which 10 were located on the territory of Latvia. With the exception of Riga, Reval, and Dorpat, the other towns of Livonia were small. Hamlets, small towns, and castle districts which developed into administrative centres, complemented the urban environment.

By the end of the 18th century, a further 15 towns were formed from hamlets on the territory of Latvia, of which Jelgava, one of the residences of the Dukes of Courland and Semigallia, enjoyed the most rapid and most significant development. Germans were the dominant residents, or burghers of the city, and thus they controlled the city council; however, it would be hasty to state that the city environment was predominantly German, since the public space — churches, the market place, and taverns — largely belonged to peasants from the surrounding countryside. Relative numbers of Latvians rose rapidly during the second half of the 19th century, once various restrictions on change in residence, which had survived after the abolition of serfdom, were rescinded.

While the second half of the 19th century also saw more rapid industrialisation, Riga undoubtedly dominated other towns in this regard, attracting work force from Latvia as well as from distant regions of the Russian Empire. Liepāja, Daugavpils, and Jelgava were other substantial industrial centres. A unique urban landscape of the industrial era formed in Līgatne, where, beginning in 1814, a hamlet was created, consisting of housing for the workers and buildings of the paper factory. Many hamlets and settled places, which began to develop rapidly at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, earned the right of a town during the 1920s; however, the economy of Latvia retained its essentially agrarian nature,[65] and town residents, many of whom had only recently become town dwellers kept their links to rural areas, in this way maintaining the idea that the rural environment was typically Latvian.

[65] According to results of the 1935 census, 67.8% of all individuals in work were engaged in the agricultural sector (*Ceturtā tautas skaitīšana Latvijā 1935. gadā. VI. Nodarbošanās.* Rīga: Valsts statistiskā pārvalde, 1939, 495. lpp.).

Sacred space



Fig. 15. John's Day celebrations. Photograph by the author

Sacred space is formed conforming to public perception of how the world is structured. The landscape of Latvian sacred space has traditionally featured geo-botanic objects — groves, individual trees, stones, springs, hills, and caves, with a certain sacral load associated with various elements (fire, water, and earth), animals, signs, objects, legendary places, etc. Sacred space was laid out in such a way that with the help of cosmic and other forces of nature fertility, health and prosperity would be ensured. It can be stated figuratively that all of nature was a church for peasants, while trees, stones, and everything else which has been mentioned in documents and erroneously interpreted as the objects of devotion — were in fact altars in this church.

Agricultural tasks which had to be carried out at very specific times most tangibly affected the life of peasants. Festivities allowed following the annual rhythm of nature — Easter, John's day (latv. *Jāņi, Jāņu diena*, i.e. summer solstice), harvest-home, Christmas, and others. These festivities were based on traditional ideas about how the world was arranged and how by means of rituals to ensure continued fertility, health and prosperity over the next cycle. Fire was an element of rituals (bonfire on John's Day,[66] rolling the sun wheel on John's day, dragging a log and burning it at Christmas) as well as water (washing in the morning dew, swimming, splashing water over others), and swings at Easter time, parading with masks, mummery in winter time.

Christian elements have intertwined with traditional Latvian perceptions to an extent that it is difficult to determine the precise origin of this or that phenomenon. In any event the Catholic cult of saints fitted very well with traditional precepts and different saints would be useful in daily life — to guard animals, prevent fires, etc. Annual festivities such as Easter and Christmas are today supported also by Christian tradition, while the oldest and most important traditional festivity which has no trace of Christian influence, for Latvians is celebration of the summer solstice, John's day.

The Christian sacred space in Latvia began to take shape with the missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church and construction of the first church in Ikšķile at the end of the 12th century. During the period of Livonia, approximately 60 religious parishes existed on the territory of Latvia. There were smaller chapels and minor churches

[66] A bonfire, also a burning barrel of pitch, or a burning pitch-impregnated wheel set on top of a pole.



Fig. 16. Lutheran church at Lubāna during the 1920s (?) (consecrated in 1872)

affiliated to the principal parish church. During the Middle Ages, stone churches were built — with a few exceptions — only in Vidzeme, of which some 25 have survived till today in a direct, albeit reconstructed, form.[67]

The start of the Reformation in Livonia (in Riga) is taken to be 1522 when it gained great support by city residents and by the landed gentry, whereupon despite the rulers of the land — the Master of the Livonian Order and the Bishops — remaining Catholic, Livonia may be considered to be a Lutheran country by the mid-16th century. Given that Livonia (excepting Northern Estonia) soon came under control of Poland–Lithuania, Counter-Reformation or return to Catholicism set in during the 1580s. The Polish–Swedish War decided the confessional division of the territory of Latvia as a result of which the Polish–Lithuanian state retained its sway over Inflanty (Latgale), whereby the dominant confession in Latgale was Roman Catholicism, while in the rest of the territory of Latvia (including the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia which was granted freedom of religious belief by the King of Poland) it was Lutheranism.

This confessional division substantially influenced the future development of different districts of Latvia. Latgale was part of the Catholic culture space of Poland and Lithuania (the German landed gentry in Latgale were Polonised), while German and Protestant culture continued to influence the rest of Latvia. The influence of different confessional belonging is seen in the vicinity of Krustpils, which was part of Inflanty but belonged to the Korff family, which, in contrast to the rest of the landed gentry of Inflanty of German origin, had retained their allegiance to Lutheranism. As a result the Latvian ethnographic elements in the district of Krustpils (for example, folk costumes) were closer to those of Lutheran Vidzeme, rather than to Latgale. Another example relates to the district of Alsunga in Western Kurzeme whose inhabitants have distinctive ethnographic features (in Latvian these people are called *suiti*). In 1623, the owner of this district, Johann Ulrich von Schwerin married the Polish aristocrat Barbara Konarska and converted to Catholicism; accordingly his serfs also became Catholics. Their maintenance of a lifestyle in the face of being completely surrounded

[67] For more about the churches in Latvia during the Middle Ages which were built of stone see: Caune, A., Ose, I. *Latvijas viduslaiku mūra baznīcas. 12. gs. beigas – 16. gs. sākums. Enciklopēdija.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2010.



Fig. 17. Roman Catholic church at Rikava (built in 1829). Photograph by the author



Fig. 18. An enclosed crucifix in Tukiši hamlet, Latgale, built in 1908. Photographed in 1927 by V. Krustāns (Repository of Ethnographic Material, Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia, E 24, 5 fc)

by Lutheran parishes led to certain unique features of the district which retained for a longer time certain Latvian ethnographic elements, for example, drone singing, and wearing traditional folk costumes.

Extensive literature is available concerning the history of churches, as well as about the building of churches.[68] The ideas of the times as well as architectural trends are reflected in the appearance of churches, and formerly — also the relative wealth of the landed gentry as patrons of churches. In Western Latvia great importance was attached to a decision adopted by the Diet of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia on 28 February 1567 authorising construction or renovation of at least 58 churches;[69] in Vidzeme the greatest flurry of building or renovating churches took place during the second half of the 17th century, while in Latgale the 18th century Baroque churches are a salient feature of the cultural landscape. A phenomenon specific to Vidzeme during the 18th–19th centuries was construction of the Meeting Houses of the Herrnhuter (Moravian

[68] The most important comprehensive works about Lutheran churches are: Mašnovskis, V. *Latvijas luterāņu baznīcas. Vēsture, arhitektūra, māksla un memoriālā kultūra. Enciklopēdija četros sējumos.* [Rīga:] DUE, 2005–2007. See also the series: Kalnačs, J. *Sakrālās arhitektūras un mākslas mantojums Valmieras rajonā.* Rīga: Neputns, 2010; Kaminska, R. *Sakrālās arhitektūras un mākslas mantojums Daugavpils rajonā.* Rīga: Neputns, 2006; Kaminska, R. *Sakrālās arhitektūras un mākslas mantojums Rēzeknes pilsētā un rajonā.* Rīga: Neputns, 2011; Kaminska, R. *Sakrālās arhitektūras un mākslas mantojums vēsturiskajā Preiļu rajonā.* Rīga: Neputns, 2013; Kaminska, R. *Sakrālās arhitektūras un mākslas mantojums vēsturiskajā Krāslavas rajonā.* Rīga: Neputns, 2015; Putniņa, M. *Sakrālās arhitektūras un mākslas mantojums Zemgalē.* Rīga: Neputns, 2015.

[69] This Landtag decision has been preserved in the form of several copies with a different number of churches in different copies.



Fig. 19. A church of Russian Orthodox Old Believers in Koroļevščina village, Latgale. Photographed in 1927 by V. Krustāns (Repository of Ethnographic Material, Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia, E 24, 1 fc)

Brothers) parishes in Vidzeme; taking the form similar to the peasant dwellings built of logs, these buildings were set up and maintained by the peasants themselves. Over and above churches the sacred culture landscape was enriched by parsonages, consecrated burial grounds with attendant chapels, bell towers, tombstones and fences made of piled stones, in Catholic districts, cloisters and wayside crosses or enclosures with crucifixes. Notwithstanding two world wars and the destruction wreaked by the Soviet regime in the name of ideology, churches today remain a dominant architectural feature of the rural landscape; furthermore, starting in the 1990s a number of churches have been rebuilt important to the cultural history of Latvia which had been completely destroyed.

The Russian Orthodox religion has a well-defined place in the cultural history of Latvia, and also one of its forms, the Old Believers. Russian Orthodoxy was known in Eastern Latvia from before the 13th century; however, there exist no written records or archaeological evidence which would allow evaluating the degree to which Russian Orthodoxy influenced the culture of the local ethnos. During the Middle Ages, Orthodoxy was only relevant to Russian traders and the small Russian and Belarusian communities in Livonia, which had settled in Eastern Latvia; nevertheless, during the 17th–18th centuries, the number of these communities increased. Particularly noteworthy is the arrival at the end of the 17th century of the Russian Orthodox Old Believers fleeing persecution in Russia.

Many Latvians converted to the "Tsar's religion" during the 1840s as a result of dissatisfaction with unresolved agrarian and social problems, and with the hope of being supported by the Russian imperial government. The greatest numbers of converts originated in Vidzeme, where more than a half of the residents of certain civil parishes converted.[70] One result was the appearance in the landscape of Latvian Orthodox parish churches and cemeteries. Once the Russian manifesto on religious freedom was issued in 1905, a fraction of the converts reverted to Lutheranism; however, Latvian Orthodox parishes continued to exist then and now.

[70] According to the results of the 1897 All-Russia census, there were around 45 000 Russian Orthodox Latvians resident in Vidzeme, around 4800 in Kurzeme, and around 6300 in Latgale (approximately 4% of the total number of Latvians). For more details about the conversion movement see: Гаврилин, А. В. *Очерки истории Рижской епархии. 19 век.* Рига: Филокалия, 1999.



Fig. 20. A funeral in a well-off peasant family, Virāne civil parish, Vidzeme (1914)

Cemeteries occupy an important part of sacred space.[71] Their arrangement has changed depending on the times, the religious and social affiliation of the departed, and other circumstances. The tradition of tending graves is a cultural value and agreed part of the cultural canon of Latvia.[72] In fact, this tradition ought to be considered more broadly as based on ancient notions of honouring the dead and our ancestors. It is possible that Latvian beliefs about the dead are the fusion of two elements — the concept of the dead as an underground spirit, and the dead as the soul of the departed (both called *velis* in Latvian). Region to region the period of the dead (*veļu laiks*) in Latvian beliefs is between the end of September and the beginning of November when the principal field work of autumn has been done and days become shorter and dank.

The period of the dead coincides with the Day to Commemorate the Dead introduced by the Christian Church (Evening of Candles), which usually falls on the last Sunday in November (Eternity Sunday — according to the liturgical calendar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church), but in Catholic districts on 2 November (All Souls Day, commemoration of the faithful departed). The tradition of cemetery festivals spread during the 19th century under influence of the Lutheran Church (the tradition was first mentioned in 1831 in Krimulda), commemorating the departed and treating the issue of death. These popular festivals have been held from the beginning of the 20th century onwards. They are usually held in July or August.

Cemetery festivals and the Day to Commemorate the Dead are living traditions. During the Soviet period, these commemoration days in Riga were an occasion for non-violent manifestation of anti-Soviet sentiments, and took the form of placing lighted candles at the Motherland Monument at the Brethren Cemetery (*Brāļu kapi*) in Riga, as well as by the graves of deceased Latvian statesmen, and at locations, marked by white crosses in the Forest Cemetery (*Meža kapi*), where those killed in 1940–1941 by Soviet authorities were buried. The cemetery festivals held during the summer months are popular since this is an occasion when relatives who live in various parts of

[71] See, for example: Muižnieks, V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gadsimta apbedīšanas vietu materiāla.* Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2015 (Latvijas Nacionālā muzeja raksti, 21); Grauds, M. u.c. *Kopā kapos. Cemetery festival — coming together.* Rīga: Neputns, 2016. Interneta resursi: Kapsētu informācijas digitalizācijas un datu pārvaldības sistēma. Accessible at: www.cemety.lv (site last visited 22.03.2017); https://nekropole.info (site last visited 22.03.2017).

[72] http://www.kulturaskanons.lv/ (site last visited 22.03.2017).

Latvia, and now elsewhere in the world, gather to honour their ancestors and other deceased persons who were dear to them.

The available materials do not allow readily identifying when and how the tradition of tending graves originated and evolved. Graves were marked already in ancient times by a cross or by some other symbol, usually made of wood, less often of stone. During the 19th century, particularly during the latter half of the century, the rise in prosperity of Latvians was accompanied by graves being marked by cast iron or stone crosses, obelisks, tombstones, and other symbols. Probably the traditions of tending graves were promoted by the project for the Forest Cemetery developed by Georg Kuphaldt, Head Gardener of Riga. The new cemetery which was opened in 1913 was laid out as a landscaped park following examples in Germany, and this "garden of those in permanent sleep" was an idea which required an appropriate upkeep aesthetic. Many sculptures supplemented the Forest Cemetery ensemble produced by eminent Latvian sculptors of the period — Kārlis Zemdega, Kārlis Jansons, Teodors Zaļkalns, Žanis Smiltnieks, and others.

Conclusions

The cultural environment and landscape are both in a steady state of change, and this cannot be stopped. There are phenomena or elements of landscapes which are created under certain circumstances, and afterwards, equally naturally, disappear irreversibly or nearly irreversibly. One example are the inexpensive roofs made of reeds or straw — the former are now a highly expensive and exclusive form of roofing material, while straw is no longer available since it requires cereals to be harvested by hand. Changes are not only due to developments in technology, but even by just the desire to wear modern clothes.

Today we are discomfited by the fact that the environment which we have become accustomed to is changing rapidly, and hence, it is more important than ever to understand what in our heritage is a value and therefore needs to be preserved and used as a mark of our identity in the present and also in constructing the future. Pressure exerted by mercantile interests constitutes a risk factor as do inadequate appreciation of values and their cultivation. Another risk factor is the rural demographic crisis and other conditions. In parallel with the negative experience from allowing cultural values (including landscapes) to be destroyed before our eyes, we can mention many positive examples in Latvia — putting into order various objects, their renewal, and their restoration. For example, a number of river meanders have been renewed, which had been straightened and transformed into ditches, and which appeared to have been lost irreversibly to the landscape. Our present-day situation is not uniquely determined: technologies allow quick destruction of cultural environmental values, but at the same time allow them to be saved and renewed; however, the latter requires more time and resources.

About the author

Muntis Auns (b. 1955) — *Dr. hist*., researcher at the Institute of Latvian History, University of Latvia. Scientific interests relate mostly to the historical geography and demography of Latvia over the period of the 13th–18th centuries, has studied various aspects of the history of Livonia; participated in drawing together materials for the publication of *Monumente* by J. Ch. Brotze, (Vols. 1–4, 1992–2007). Chief Scientific Editor for the publication *Latvijas vēstures atlants* (Atlas of the History of Latvia) (Rīga: Jāņa sēta, 1998, 2005, 2011); editor of the history section for the publication *Latvijas enciklopēdija* (The Encyclopaedia of Latvia) (Rīga: SIA Valērija Belokoņa izdevniecība, 1.–5. sēj., 2002–2009). Has published around 40 scientific articles in Latvia, Poland, Finland, and Sweden.

Guntis Zemītis

ISSUES CONCERNING EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF STATEHOOD ON THE TERRITORY OF LATVIA

The article deals with the issue of development of the concept of statehood on the territory of modern-day Latvia during the pre-historical period (9th–12th centuries), as well as explaining the historical reasons which led to creation of larger publicly organised structures (*terrae*). The author discusses separately the societies formed by the Couronians, Latgalians, Semigallians, and the Livs (Livonians) over the 9th–13th centuries, emphasising the fact that several different regions might exist within an area inhabited by a single ethnos, e.g. the Daugava and Gauja Livs for the case of the Livonian people. Developments in Western Latvia were partially influenced by external impulses coming from Scandinavia, while in Eastern Latvia these came from the orthodox Old Russian dukedoms (Polotsk, Novgorod).

Keywords: early statehood, statehood, power, chieftains, Couronians, Semigallians, Latgalians, Livs.

The issue of Latvian statehood in historiography

The issue of how statehood developed on the territory of Latvia has been politically contentious — this follows from the complicated history of Latvia. The territory of Latvia was conquered during the 13th century in the course of the Northern Crusades (also, the Baltic Crusade). During the Middle Ages, two privileged classes — the clergy and the nobility — consisted of German-speaking inhabitants who were a minority, whereas the lowest order, the peasants, consisted of indigenous peoples, the tribes of Couronians, Semigallians, Latgalians, and Selonians, whose descendants are today's Latvians together with the Livs (Livonians) who are part of the Finnic language group. The first scholars to study the history of Latvia in the 18th and 19th centuries were members of the privileged classes.

The first Baltic-German historians, faced with written records from the 12th and 13th centuries, mostly *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, refused to abandon their imagined culture mission. In his book, *Historia Lettica*[1], Paul Einhorn, a clergyman from

[1] Einhorn, P. *Historia Lettica*. Dorpat in Liefland: Gedruckt durch Johann Vogeln, der Königl. Acad. Buchdrucker, 1649.

Courland (present-day Kurzeme), wrote that Latvians and Estonians had lived previously without any political or social order and organisation. A state had begun to be established only after arrival of the German conquerors during the 13th century.[2] In the same way Baltic-German historians sought, during the 19th and 20th centuries, to portray Latvia as being a completely savage place in the 12th century. Astaf von Transehe-Roseneck considered that the cultural level of Latvians had not been higher than that of the Germanic tribes as described by Tacitus: primitive field-crop cultivation based on forest clearings, primitive animal husbandry, with principal occupations, hunting and fishing. Friedrich Kruse, in the first extensive book devoted to archaeology in the Baltic region, *Necrolivonica*[3], did not even assume the idea that ancient findings, jewellery and weapons, could have belonged to the indigenous peoples, whose implements in his mind could only have been those used by peasants; these weapons and jewellery could only have belonged to Scandinavians living in Russia, the "Varangians – Russi".

Works by the first professional historians of Latvian origin resulted from a fierce debate with the German historians, circumstances which often strongly influenced their content. Jānis Krodznieks (Krīgers), the first Latvian professional historian, was relatively objective about the emergence of statehood on the territory of Latvia, remarking that, "our ancestors found themselves at a level of development, where the extended family had not lost its power and importance, when the first intimations of a state had just begun to appear and to begin evolving into new political forms, ones which then already existed in the West, and ones which the Russians also had established by then."[4]

Special attention to early developments of statehood was paid by scholars during the period of authoritarian rule by Kārlis Ulmanis (1934–1940), when historical developments were presented to have occurred as advance along a spiral path: in the beginning there existed a "free Ancient Latvia" with its kings and heroes, followed by the loss of freedom; freedom was regained after victory in the struggle for independence, this process culminating in "the rebirth of a Latvian Latvia" after the state coup of 15 May 1934. School textbooks were written conforming to this schematic view of history on the territory of Latvia,[5] with supporting evidence presented in academic publications. A typical feature of the latter was a tendency to minimise the historical importance of Baltic Finnic culture, asserting that "conquests" by the ancient Latvians were of paramount importance in the organisation of state-like entities.

The lawyer and historian, Arveds Švābe[6] and the archaeologist Francis Balodis,[7] responded to the spirit of their times and asserted the existence of states (kingdoms)

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2 Zeids, T. *Feodālisms Livonijā*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1951, 50. lpp.

3 Kruse, F. K. H. *Necrolivonica oder Alterthümer Liv-, Esth- und Curlands*. Dorpat: F. Kruse [a.o.]; Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1842.

4 Krodznieks, J. *Iz Baltijas vēstures*, I. Rīga: Rīgas Latviešu biedrības Derīgu grāmatu nod., 1912–1914, 21. lpp.

5 Grīns, A. *Latvijas vēsture pamatskolām, papildskolām un pašmācībai*. 2. iespiedums. Rīga: Zemnieka domas, 1935.

6 Švābe, A. Jersikas karaļvalsts. *Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 1, 1936, 5.–31. lpp.

7 Balodis, F. 9.–12. gadsimteņu Latvija. *Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 2, 1936, 5.–15. lpp.; Balodis, F. Senās latviešu zemes. *Vēstures atziņas un tēlojumi*. Rīga: Izglītības ministrija, 1937, 19.–26. lpp.

among Latgalians, ones characterised by a leader who gained his authority through succession. The most important of these states was Jersika, while Tālava and Koknese were both described as a kind of buffer state, set up by the ruler of Jersika, with support by the Prince (Knyaz) of Polotsk.

After the Soviet occupation in 1940, Latvian historians were obliged to adapt the presentation of the history of Latvia to conform to Marxist-Leninist dogma, which also viewed history to follow a spiral path. According to Marxist-Leninist doctrine history began with a classless primal community and the end of history would see emergence of a classless society (Communism). The state is only a weapon deployed to oppress the lower orders and it was born with the invention of private property.[8] The advance of history was seen to be oriented to "liberation from oppression by the exploiting class" and to the abolition of private property. Lip-service was paid to "the rights of peoples", but, in fact, history was viewed from the point of view of Russian imperialism — only the Russian people was capable of "being liberators", of "bringing progressive culture", and acting to defend other peoples from "conquerors".[9] Russian influence was always treated as positive, even if it was associated with domination and demands for tribute.

The ancient history of Latvia was assessed in its relationship with the Russian people, and the ancient Russian state.[10] In describing early forms of statehood on the territory of Latvia it was important to identify common enemy, conquerors that came from Northern and Western Europe, and their apologists, "the reactionary Baltic-German historians". The concept of a "kingdom" was replaced by the term "state-like entity", with the origin of these in Eastern Latvia to be: "the earliest state-like entities were established on the territory of Eastern Latvia, in particular, among Latgalians (influenced by the example of the ancient Russian state)."[11] It was asserted that, "Jersika was organised along the same lines as a Russian kingdom".[12] Any manifestation of statehood outside the area subject to Russian influence was grudgingly admitted: "early examples of state-like entities in Western Latvia, it appears, were less well-developed than those in the Eastern areas. (…) One can note a slight influence of the example of Scandinavian state forms in Courland, and a greater influence of the example of Lithuania in Semigallia."[13]

Latvian historians living in exile largely retained the same view on history as was current in the Republic of Latvia until the loss of independence.[14]

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[8] Engels, F. *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums und des Staats. Im Anschluss an Lewis H. Morgan's Forschungen*. Schweizerische Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei, Hottingen-Zürich, 1884.

[9] *Latvijas PSR vēsture: saīsināts kurss*. 2., pārstrādāts un papildināts izdevums A. Drīzuļa redakcijā. Rīga: Zinātne, 1967, 98. lpp.

[10] Zutis, J. Agrais feodālisms. *Latvijas PSR vēsture: saīsināts kurss*, p. 15; *Latvijas PSR vēsture: no vissenākajiem laikiem līdz mūsu dienām*. 3., pārstrādāts un papildināts izdevums A. Drīzuļa redakcijā. Rīga: Zinātne, 1986, 24.–37. lpp.

[11] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1972, 14. lpp.

[12] Zeids, T. *Feodālisms Livonijā*, 52. lpp.

[13] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 27. lpp.

[14] Biļķins, V. *Viestarts kā zemgaliešu valstsvīrs*. New York: Latviešu kultūras institūts, 1953, 56. lpp.

After the renewal of independence, Ēvalds Mugurēvičs and Jānis Apals[15] have written about issues related to early forms of statehood in Latvia, searching for the earliest manifestations in Courland. A chronology of developments during the Late Iron Age has been reviewed defining this period to be from the 9th to the 12th century, in place of the previously accepted range of the 10th–12th centuries. This meant that developments on the territory of Latvia were considered in conjunction with developments in Northern Europe during the era of the Vikings, as well as highlighting evidence for the development of statehood in Courland in the 9th century, which defined a new beginning to development processes. Ē. Mugurēvičs, as well as Indriķis Šterns, remarked that the highest possible achievement of a mini-people was to establish a unified state.[16]

Historians Valdis Blūzma and Jānis Lazdiņš have studied certain aspects of the early forms of statehood.[17] V. Blūzma considers that the internal order in early forms of statehood created by the Baltic and Livonian tribes over the period between the 9th and 12th centuries contained elements of constitutional rights.[18]

In a book describing the prehistory of Latvia, Andrejs Vasks, Baiba Vaska, and Rita Grāvere are of the opinion that all indications point to emergence in Latvia during the Late Iron Age of state-like entities with pronounced military traditions. During the 12th century, these began to transform themselves into small feudal states. Developments in Western Latvia were closer to the Scandinavian model where free peasants and popular assemblies (things) persisted throughout the 12th and 13th century.[19] Arnis Radiņš has found evidence for early forms of statehood with rulers gaining authority in Latgalian society through succession.[20]

Social relations and the issue of statehood in Eastern Latvia has been studied by Andris Šnē taking advantage of the most recent findings of Western archaeologists and social anthropologists.[21] He has concluded that the Baltic peoples, as well as the Livs, who are members of the Baltic Finnic language group had during the Late Iron Age reached the development stage of having chieftains, but did not allow for power to be transmitted through succession. This study by A. Šnē formulated an essential question which currently is the subject of debate about early forms of statehood, namely,

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[15] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki), 800.–1200. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture, 9. g. t. pr. Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 290.–377. lpp.; Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus). *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados*. Caune, A. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 54.–90. lpp.

[16] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 58. lpp.

[17] Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs. *Latvijas tiesību avoti: teksti un komentāri*, 1. sēj.: Seno paražu un Livonijas tiesību avoti. 10. gs. – 16. gs. E. Meļķiša red. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 1998, 19. lpp.

[18] Blūzma, V. Konstitucionālo tiesību elementi Senlatvijas teritorijā līdz Livonijas periodam. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 1, 2008, 67.–72. lpp.; Nr. 2, 2008, 5.–12. lpp.

[19] Vasks, A., Vaska, B., Grāvere, R. *Latvijas aizvēsture, 8500. g. pr. Kr. – 1200. g. pēc Kr*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 1997, 184. lpp.

[20] Radiņš, A. *10.–13. gadsimta senkapi latgaļu apdzīvotajā teritorijā un Austrumlatvijas etniskās, sociālās un politiskās vēstures jautājumi*. Rīga: N.I.M.S., 1999, 131.–153. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti Nr. 5).

[21] Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*. Rīga: Intelekts, 2002.

whether states existed on the territory of Latvia prior to the 13th century, with rulers, transfer of power by succession, with elements of public authority, or can society at that time be described as chiefdoms (*Herrschaften,* in German). This descriptive term is due to the social anthropologist Elman Rogers Service who identified four levels of social organisation: a collection of local groups, a society consisting of families or clans, chiefdoms, and states.[22] A chiefdom may be characterised as "an autonomous political association, one that consists of several hamlets or communities, subject to constant control by the community chieftain".[23] The nature of actual chiefdoms is wide-ranging — starting with those where the ability of the chieftain to enforce his will rests on his personal authority ("a leader may lead, but his followers are not obliged to follow"), to ones where the chieftain disposes of instruments to ensure compliance with his orders.[24]

In publications by Western historians the issue of statehood in the Baltic lands is only discussed in passing, mostly as a chapter in a more extensive exposition on Baltic history. Differences between developments in the eastern and western parts of Latvia are noted by today's historians, explaining these by the different influence of Scandinavians and Russians in these regions.

Michael North[25] and Andrejs Plakans[26] are two authors who live outside of Latvia, yet who have written about the history of Latvia, including its prehistory, at the same time setting it into a Baltic context.

The origin of a state in the barbarian society

The state as a socially organised society regulates its relationship with its components, its individual members. A state consists of its citizens; it has a definite territory, and exercises public power, the latter to ensure compliance with laws. Early states are characterised by seven criteria: 1) an adequate number of members to ensure social stratification and specialisation; 2) belonging to the state is determined by birth, or by living within its territory; 3) state authority is exercised centrally, and is sufficiently powerful to ensure that laws are obeyed and order maintained, by means of its authority, enforcement capability, or by threats; 4) the state is at least *de facto* independent, and state institutions are sufficiently powerful to avert separatism, and to defend the state from outside threats; 5) the degree of stratification among its members ensures existence of at least three distinct orders; 6) manufacturing ensures sufficient

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[22] Service, E. *Primitive Social Organization: An Evolutionary Perspective*. New York: Random House, 1962. Cited in: Vasks, A. Apdzīvotība, saimniecība un sabiedrība Daugavas baseinā bronzas un senākajā dzelzs laikmetā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 1994, 61. lpp.

[23] Carneiro, R. L. The chiefdom: precursor of the state. *The Transition to Statehood in the New World*. Jones, G. D., Kautz, R. R. (eds.). Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 45.

[24] Levy, J. E. *Social and Religious Organization in Bronze Age Denmark: An Analysis of Ritual Hoard Finds*. Oxford, 1982, p. 52 (BAR International Series, 124).

[25] North, M. *The Baltic. A History*. Harvard University Press, 2015, p. 22.

[26] Plakans, A. *A Concise History of the Baltic States.* Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 17.

over-supply of goods which are used to support state institutions; 7) there is an agreed ideology as the basis for legitimacy of the ruling order.[27]

Michael Mann distinguishes between four sources of power: ideological, economic, military, and political power.[28] The role of economic power was exaggerated in Soviet historiography. This is understandable, since the Marxist doctrine of history associates creation of a state with the onset of antagonism between two classes, the exploiters and the exploited.

Early states, or the barbarian states, appeared amidst the rubble of the Roman Empire after the early 6th century period of the great migration of peoples, when most of the Germanic tribes had come to occupy their present territories. The monarchy which had existed in the Roman Empire greatly influenced the development of the legal basis for a Germanic state. However, Germans had their own understanding of matters — in their mind a king was first the leader of an armed retinue. When a territory was settled, power was transmitted as a legacy and was nearly absolute. In German thinking, a state was considered to be the personal property of a king's family. The more successful leaders were able to unite smaller entities into larger ones. For example, Clovis, leader of the Salian Franks, rose from being a minor ruler (*civitaskönig*) to the powerful ruler of all the Franks (*Herrscher*).[29]

After the death of their king, the Burgundians and the Franks divided the state into as many parts as there were male descendants.[30] Germanic tribes which settled in Northern Europe retained a similar practice well into the Viking Age (800–1050). Similar processes of centralising and decentralising power took place in England, where King Alfred united the Anglo-Saxon tribes during the 9th century in their fight against foreigners (Scandinavians).[31]

Administrative regions were created in the Frankish state (*pagus,* Latin), which were at the same time constituted a court district. Under customary Frankish law, the codified "Salic Law" (*Lex Salica*), an individual had to assume responsibility for failing to appear before a court.[32] This provision represented a substantial step forward in terms of strengthening public authority.

The next important development was the appearance, during the 8th century, of feudal relations in the Frankish state, and their subsequent spread throughout Western

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[27] Claessen, H. J. M., Skalnik P. The early state: theories and hypotheses. *The Early State*. Claessen, H. J. M., Skalnik, P. (eds.). The Hague: Mouton, 1978, pp. 586–589; Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*, 56. lpp.

[28] Mann, M. *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1. A History of Power from the Beginning to A. D. 1760. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*, 341. lpp.

[29] *Handbuch der europäischen Geschichte in 7 Bänden*, Bd. 1.: Europa im Wandel von der Antike zum Mittelalter. Herausgeben von Theodor Schieder. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996, S. 253.

[30] Альфан, Л. *Варвары от Великого переселения народов до тюркских завоеваний XI века*. Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2003, с. 45.

[31] Plakans, A. *A Concise History of the Baltic States*, p. 17.

[32] Lex Salica – Loi Salique. Accessible at: http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/loisalique/loi2.htm (site last visited 30.05. 2016); Lex Salica, 1.–5. §. Accessible at: http://www.vostlit.info/Texts/Dokumenty/France/VI/Lex_Salica/text.htm (site last visited 30.05.2016); *Ārvalstu tiesību vēstures avoti (no vissenākajiem laikiem līdz 1689. gadam).* Blūzma, V., Osipova, S., Zemītis, G. (sast., zin. red.). Rīga: Biznesa augstskola "Turība", 2007, 154. lpp.

Europe. Different schools of historians have defined feudal relations differently; it is customary to equate feudal relations in Mediaeval Europe with relations between individuals which bound together members of the upper layer of society. The feudal system consisted of personal links between two free individuals that persisted over their lifetimes, one individual becoming master of the other, the latter, in return, providing certain services, among which the usual one was military service. Feudal relations of this type did not develop in Northern Europe, including on the territory of Latvia, which was outside of the Frankish state.

Here in the same way as in the North and North-east of Europe, statehood developed differently. The nascent class of rulers resorted to other instruments of power. An important contributing factor to developments was the fact that the Baltic tribes (Lithuanians, Latgalians, Selonians, Couronians, Semigallians, Samogitians, and Old Prussians) and the Baltic Finns (Estonians, Livs, Vends) constituted a small island of pagans located in North-east Europe which lay between two different forms of Christianity — the Roman Catholic, and the Orthodox Church — between Rome and Constantinople.

Preconditions for development of statehood on the territory of Latvia

The borders of contemporary Latvia largely correspond to the territory inhabited during the Iron Age by small peoples who came into being and who belonged to the family of Baltic language speakers — the Couronians, Semigallians, Latgalians, Selonians, as well as by the Livs, who spoke a Baltic Finnic language, and, possibly, by the Vends. The southern border of Latvia took shape during the 13th century crusade when the Order of the Brethren of the Sword (*Schwertbrüder; Fratres militiæ Christi Livoniae*), between 1202 and 1236, and after 1237, the Teutonic Order (*Ordo fratrum domus Sanctae Mariae Theutonicorum Ierosolimitanorum, Ordo Teutonicus; Orden der Brüder vom Deutschen Haus St. Mariens in Jerusalem*) were able to conquer the lands inhabited by all of the previously mentioned ethnic groups, as well as those of the Estonians. The land known during the Middle Ages as that of the Virgin St. Mary (*Terra Mariana* or *Terra Matris*) was widely also known as Livonia. Baltic ethnic groups subjected to the Teutonic Order fused into a single Latvian people over the period of the 13th to 16th centuries. The smaller Baltic Finnic ethnic groups, the Vends and the Idumeans were fully assimilated. A few Livs still live in modern Latvia. Prior to arrival of Christian missionaries and the onset of the Baltic Crusade, each ethnic unit lived its own life, so that any development of statehood took place within a small group. This does not preclude the possibility that, under more favourable circumstances, one of these ethnic groups might have been able to consolidate the others into a unified state. Despite developments within each ethnic group being determined by different circumstances, several social processes which are preconditions for developing a state structure were common to all of them.

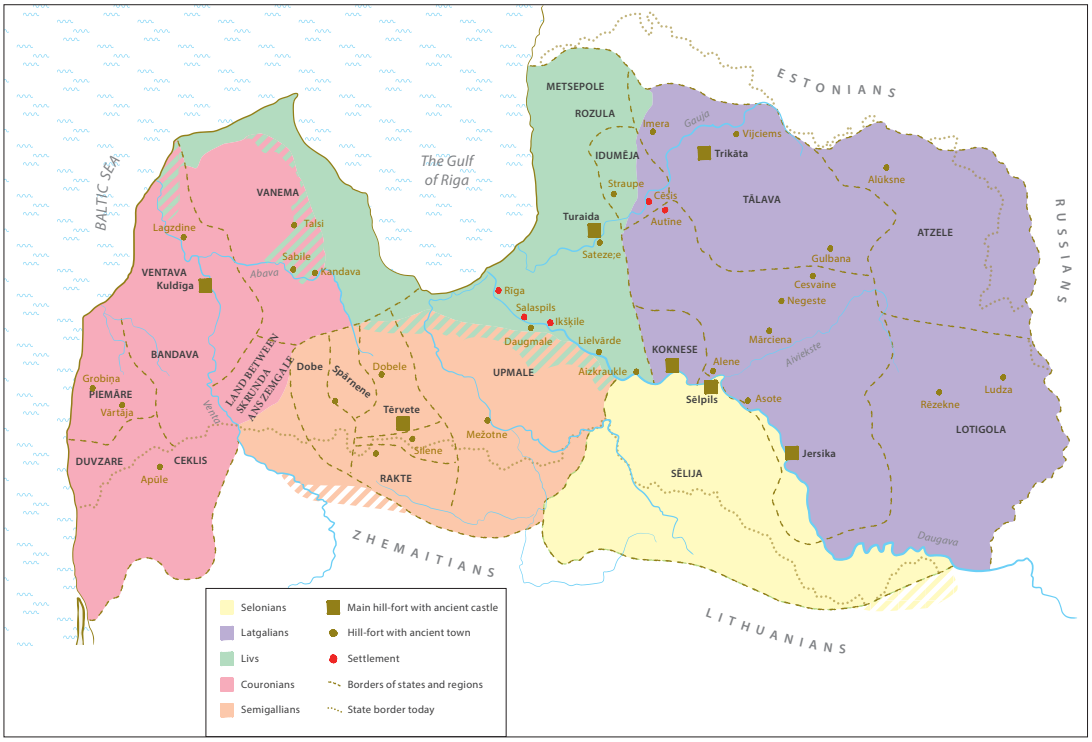


Fig. 1. Tribes and regions on the territory of Latvia from the end of the 12th century to the 13th century (source: Latvijas PSR arheoloģija, Fig. 176, as corrected by the author)

Economic power. Social stratification

Andris Šnē is of the opinion that, at least in Eastern Latvia, society at the end of prehistory period (9th–12th centuries) was organised on the basis of family relations — these were kingdoms enjoying a large degree of equality, evidence for which is inferred from the manner in which living space was laid out, as well as from examination of the contents of graves. In his opinion, despite the fact that it is possible to identify, at the end of the prehistory period, several distinct economic centres, political power was not reflected in the material culture during this period. Various archaeological excavations at both hill-forts and other settlements have the manner in which these areas were settled to have been similar, including typical structures; however, no buildings have been identified which can be associated with the political leaders of society. Different leaders, or groups of leaders, were at the forefront of society, but power had not yet been institutionalised, a leader was simply one among the many members of society.[33] Society itself was unwilling up until the end of the 12th century

[33] Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*, 369. lpp.

to abandon traditional relations with those in power, which were based on an egalitarian collective ideology.[34]

V. Blūzma and J. Lazdiņš consider this level of state organisation to be that of a military democracy, wherein outstanding individuals attracted the other members of the community. Their power derived mostly from their origin (members of the aristocracy) and personal authority, not on compulsion organised by the state.[35] M. North remarks that, "Compared with Slavic and Germanic tribes, Baltic tribal society appears to have been less hierarchical and, thus, more egalitarian. Aside from slaves, mainly women and children who were abducted from neighbouring peoples, society consisted mostly of free farmers. Different approaches to social structures — possibly patterned after Scandinavian models — are to be found most prominently in western coastal regions, and, later, in the eastern Latvian areas and in Lithuania".[36]

Nevertheless, several indications have been discovered which testify to a rather significant degree of social stratification. Such developments were not always linear. Society did not develop smoothly from an egalitarian one, step by step transforming into a structure led by an elite. This vision typified Soviet historiography, when a gradual transformation was predicated from a primitive community of equals to a class society.

There are periods in the prehistory of Latvia when society was distinctly socially differentiated, with pronounced concentration of power accompanied by manifestations of this concentration. Such a society was present during the Bronze Age (1800–500 BCE), while during the Early Iron Age (1–400 CE) several previously inhabited centres of power, i.e. hill-forts, were abandoned in favour of open settlements, i.e. hamlets. A new episode of social stratification took place during the first two centuries of the Middle Iron Age (400–800 CE), when sufficient wealth and food reserves were accumulated. In both cases, social stratification led to the appearance of new forms of wealth; first this was bronze, then silver (from the 5th century onwards), with a small amount of gold finding its way into the territory of Latvia from the 6th century onwards.[37] This provided the basis for the redistribution of wealth, which took the form of raids accompanied by looting.

It appears that society was more substantially differentiated at the beginning of this period (5th–6th centuries) than during the second half of the period (7th–8th centuries).[38]

In general, collective ideology predominated in the 5th–8th centuries, the status of chieftain being achieved during his lifetime, and not inherited. That burial in rows did not group together members of a single family (this was particularly the case in Semigallia during the 5th–11th centuries) definitively points to the existence of such an ideology.

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[34] Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*, 371. lpp.

[35] Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs., 19. lpp.

[36] North, M. *The Baltic. A History*, p. 17.

[37] Urtāns, V. Sudraba un zelta apstrāde senajā Latvijā (līdz 13. gs.). *Par tehnikas vēsturi Latvijas PSR*, III. Rīga: Zinātne, 1962, 69.–108. lpp.

[38] Atgāzis, M. Vidējais dzelzs laikmets. 400.–800. g. *Latvijas senākā vēsture. 9. g. t. pr. Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 270. lpp.

Latgalian society was already structured during the 9th–12th centuries. Elvīra Šnore has identified four groups, based on her analysis of the social standing of males buried in Nukši cemetery.[39] Arnis Radiņš has given the following characterisation of social layering in Latgalian society at the end of the 12th century: the ruler occupied the top position, the elderly, free, members of the military retinue and the unfree (slaves and captives) were found lower down.[40]

The remains of an aristocratic individual were discovered in 1989 in grave No. 30 of the Priekuļu Ģūģeri cemetery during excavations led by Zigrīda Apala.[41] This individual must be considered to have been a renowned member of the upper layer of the 11th century Latgalian society, whom Henry of Livonia in his Livonian Chronicle described as elders (*seniores*), and who constituted the military and administrative leadership of Latgalians — community, hamlet, district and territorial elders.[42]

Similar processes were evident in Semigallian society. The number and content of silver hoards dating from the 11th and 12th centuries attest to this. The hoard found at Salgales Rijnieki is a good example of this, in that it consists of small silver money bars which have been bound together with a silver neck-ring. The Museum acquired pieces weighing 5749 grams, but originally the total weight had been around 11 kilograms.[43]

Families which had prospered began to separate from the socially equal community. This process is best seen in 10th–12th century burials by the Semigallians. In the cemeteries of Gaideļi–Viduči, Ciemalde, and elsewhere the regular rows of graves start to break up around the 10th century, with some burials on top of previous ones, while after the 11th century the long lines of graves typical of the Semigallians disappeared. This means that family members sought to be buried in a group. As ties strengthened between members of a single family, the distance increased between them and other members of the community.[44]

Up to now, investigations of the prehistory of Latvia have paid most attention to social stratification based on wealth, whereas the variety of social groups typical of the barbarian society may have come about for other reasons. There were many categories of free people in societies where customary laws are well known, whose rights were limited. Customary law in Scandinavia mentions children born to slave women fathered by free men; children born out of wedlock to free women (the so-called corner children, bush children); children born in wedlock while the parents were excluded from the community (the so-called wolf children); children born to a free woman fathered by a slave whom she had manumitted in order that they might live together (the so-called stable children). During the Middle Iron Age, many clashes evidently

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[39] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1974, 275. lpp.

[40] Radiņš, A. *10.–13. gadsimta senkapi latgaļu apdzīvotajā teritorijā un Austrumlatvijas etniskās, sociālās un politiskās vēstures jautājumi*, 135.–136. lpp.

[41] Apala, Z., Zariņa, A. Dižciltīga latgaļa apbedījums Ģūģeru kapulaukā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 1991, 11.–29. lpp.

[42] Ibid., 26. lpp.

[43] Urtāns, V. *Senākie depozīti Latvijā (līdz 1200. g.)*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1977, Nr. 63, 180.–181. lpp.

[44] Zemītis, G. Vēlā dzelzs laikmeta ekonomisko un sociālo pārmaiņu atspoguļojums Gaideļu–Viduču kapulauka arheoloģiskajā materiālā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 22. laid., 2005, 218. lpp.

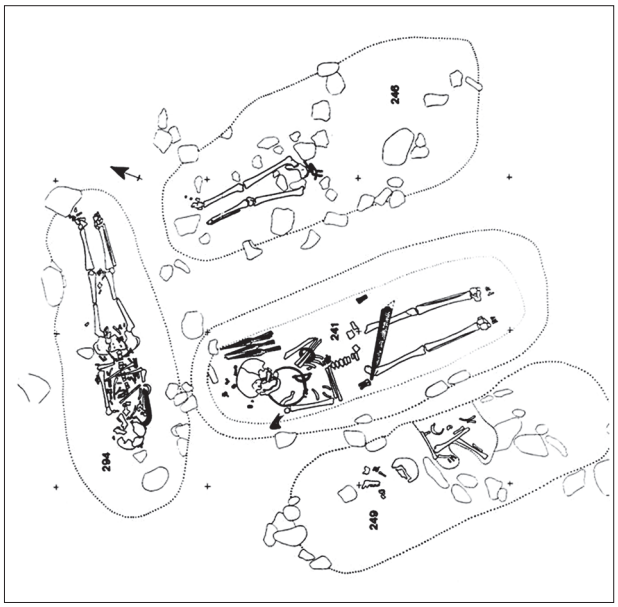


Fig. 2. A group of graves at Dreņģeri–Čunkāni burial field. Graves Nos. 249, 241, 246, and 294 (source: Atgāzis, M. Dreņģeru–Čunkānu 241. kaps un šķēpu līdzdošanas tradīcija 8.–9. gs. zemgaļu apbedījumos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 17. laid., 1994, 29.–38. lpp.)

occurred between Latgalians and Estonians with the former pushing back incursions by the latter, the Latgalians recovering and holding the territory which later would form Tālava, Latgalian society came to include many captives. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* mentions the habitual practice of local tribes to capture young women subsequently to become additional wives. The fact of this practice being known in Northern Europe may be inferred from the collection of customary Icelandic law, "The Grey Goose Laws" (*Grágás,* in Icelandic), where this is stated to be the right of every Icelandic male.[45] Individuals who kept an additional wife earned prestige in society, while children born of such unions could not have been the equals of those born in wedlock.

Certain indications that additional wives were kept can be found in Semigallian archaeological material dating from the 8th–9th centuries. The remains of a 35–40 year old man were found in grave No. 241 in Dreņģeri–Čunkāni cemetery (age at the time of death was determined by the anthropologist Guntis Gerhards) with the remains of a poor 30-year old woman buried (grave No. 249) perpendicularly to those of the man.[46] The remains of the woman were found near the head of those of the man, this orientation being a significant departure from Semigallian custom. The archaeologist Māris Atgāzis presumes that this woman might have been the servant, or additional wife of the man buried in grave No. 241.[47]

The practice of keeping an additional wife may have been a symbol of authority. It is credible that family structures among the Baltic tribes during the Late Iron Age might not have differed significantly from what Tacitus described, "where everyone is satisfied with one wife, excepting those who marry several not driven by desire, but by reason of his nobility receives many offers of marriage".[48]

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[45] Dennis, A., Foote, P., Perkins, R. (eds.). *Laws of Early Iceland, Gragas: The Codex Regius of Gragas with Material from Other Manuscripts*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1980; Pāvulāns, V. *Skandināvija agrajos viduslaikos.* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts universitāte, 1976, 24. lpp.

[46] Atgāzis, M. Dreņģeru–Čunkānu 241. kaps un šķēpu līdzdošanas tradīcija 8.–9. gs. zemgaļu apbedījumos. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 17. laid., 1994, 29.–38. lpp.

[47] Ibid., 38. lpp.

[48] Tacits, G. K. *Ģermānija: par Ģermānijas atrašanās vietu un tautām*. Endzelīns, J. (tulk. no latīņu val.). Rīga: Vēstures izpētes un popularizēšanas biedrība, 2011, 18. (107) lpp.

A collection of laws, *Landesordnung*, published in 1422 by the Archbishop of Riga, Johannes VI Ambundi von Schwan, may be evidence for the practice of keeping slaves among the Latgalians, as it contains a provision that the period of slavery for a Christian must last for no longer than ten years.[49] It is likely that this refers to Latgalian society, and also that the practice of keeping slaves did not come about during the Livonian period, but was inherited from previous times.

The development of the institution of succession

Development of the practice of succession is typified by accumulation of movable goods which were not buried together with the departed, but which were left to his heirs. When in the 5th and 6th centuries the first precious metals reached the territory of Latvia — silver and gold in small quantities — these were buried alongside the remains, together with weapons and work implements; additionally, they were buried as hoards. A massive gilded silver neck-ring — 593.64 g — dated to the 5th century was found in Kurzeme in Piltene.[50] A hoard from the 5th–6th century weighing 1445.90 g was found in Eastern Latvia, at Miškiņeva,[51] and one consisting of seven neck-rings weighing in total 1092.61 g was found at Lejaslepji, in the region of Madona.[52]

The number of hoards discovered dating from the 10th–12th centuries is twice the number from the previous period,[53] and their weight was greater. It is credible that a number of these hoards remained buried independent of the wish of their owners. Several reasons suggest themselves for this: being captured, death, an inability to find the buried treasure after a long absence; however, this buried material suggests that there was a desire for these valuables to be kept by members of the same family after the death of the person who buried them.

The next stage in the development of inheritance rights led to the appearance of private ownership.

A system had definitely come into being on the territory of Latvia by the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th century whereby arable land and bee trees could be privately owned. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* records devastation by fire of all of the property owned by Kaupo (Caupo), that Livs had burned all his goods, taken over his fields, broken up his bee trees.[54] Legal protection of private property is found in the oldest collections of customary law, which are rightly seen as

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[49] Švābe, A. *Latvijas tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa. Pēc 1931./32. m. g. LU lasītām lekcijām atreferējis stud. iur. A. Širons. Rīga: LU studentu padomes grāmatnīca, 1932.

[50] Urtāns, V. *Senākie depozīti Latvijā (līdz 1200. g.)*, 148.–149. lpp.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 149.–150. lpp.

[53] Ibid., 88. lpp.

[54] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. Translated with a new introduction and notes by James A. Brundage. New York. Columbia University Press. Edition 2003, X, 13. This article relies on two different editions of *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. The portion reproduced is taken from the translation from the Latin by J. Brundage; comparison with the text in Latvian is taken from the publication: *Indriķa hronika.* No latīņu val. tulk. Ā. Feldhūns; Ē. Mugurēviča priekšvārds un komentāri. Rīga: Zinātne, 1993 X; 13.

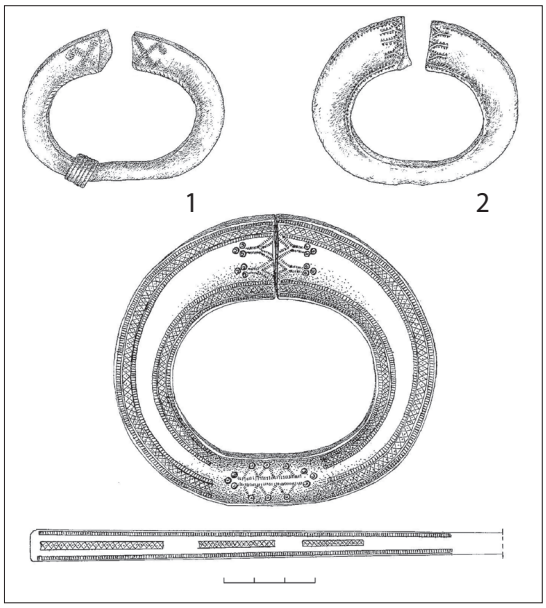


Fig. 3. Warrior bracelets — that of a boy and a grown man. Boys' bracelets: 1 — grave No. 169 at Aizkraukles Lejasbitēni, (A 11823, 2); 2 — grave No. 175 at Nukši cemetery (A 652: 1). Grown-up's bracelet: grave No. 93 at Rušonas Kristapiņi (A 12404: 113). Drawing by Dzintra Zemīte

codification of local customary laws, with some later overlays.[55] For example, the collection of laws of the Archbishopric of Riga, or the rights of Latgalian peasants: "If someone cuts down or destroys many bee trees or barns, smashes bins or chests, or steals horses or other things, (fine) 3 marks."[56]

The final stage in social development consists of inherited social status or power. Evidence for inherited social status is found in rich grave goods of some children.

Evidence for the fact of a son inheriting social status was provided by discovery in a grave of a boy's warrior's bracelet for which a date could be attributed.

These massive bracelets (the heaviest weigh around 400–700 g) were placed, alongside other rich deposits in the graves of men over the period from the 9th to the beginning of the 12th century. The earliest examples were found on Semigallian territory close by the Daugava River; later these were wide-spread over Latgalian territory, where these bracelets were worn on the left hand together with a richly decorated armcloth. Warrior bracelets are considered to have been a symbol of special social status,[57] although the explanation cannot be excluded of their use as a shield — to catch the stroke in battle from an enemy or to protect the arm from the shock of bow-string when shooting with a bow. Graves of boys contain smaller and lighter bracelets — their weight ranges from 13 to 30 grams. Warriors' bracelets were placed in the graves of children, including infants, for example, in grave No. 81 in the centre of Mežotne. The earliest examples of bracelets placed in the graves of children, as well as those of adults of the period are made of a single piece, with a trapezoidal cross-section and these have been dated to the early 9th century or around the year 800.

In the graves contained in the Salaspils Laukskola cemetery where burials took place over the period 10th–13th centuries, children's clothing is decorated in 33% cases. Graves of boys have been found to contain luxurious weapons, spurs, bindings of

[55] Švābe, A. *Vecākās zemnieku tiesības*. Rīga: Latvijas Skolotāju savienība, 1927; Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs.

[56] Die altlivländische Bauernrechte. Hrsg. v. L. Arbusow. *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, Bd. XXIII. Riga, 1924, 144 S.; Švābe, A. Vecākās zemnieku tiesības; *Latvijas tiesību avoti: Teksti un komentāri*, 1. sēj.: Seno paražu un Livonijas tiesību avoti 10. gs. – 16. gs.; Назарова, Е. Л. "Ливонские Правды" как исторический источник. *Древнейшие государства на территории СССР.* Москва: Наука, 1980.

[57] Daiga, J. Karavīra aproce. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 11. laid., 1974, 174.–197. lpp.

drinking horns, leather belts decorated with spirals and bindings, as well as other objects.

Scales, weights, and their fragments, the tools of a trader, have been discovered in the graves of 15 men and four boys.[58] Grave No. 2 located in the Salaspils Laukskola cemetery was found to contain rich deposits alongside a boy aged 7 ± 2 years who was buried there.[59]



Fig. 4. Grave No. 2 at Salaspils Laukskola. Photograph (1936) by Valdemārs Ģinters

The remains in this grave were accompanied by nine fragments of a brocade ribbon near the head of the boy, two spears, bronze binding of a drinking horn, an iron axe, a bronze neck-ring, a bronze horseshoe brooch, a silver horseshoe brooch, a spiral bracelet on each arm, three bronze bracelets on the left hand, two more bronze bracelets on the right hand, a leather belt with bronze bindings, an iron knife in a bronze sheath, a bone comb, iron weights, fragments of two coins, a bronze fishing hook, the fang of a bear.[60] The wealth and social standing of a girl is indicated first by her clothes and ornaments, as well as by neck-rings, strings of beads, bracelets, and other grave goods.[61] Excavation of graves at Ikšķile barrow show that essential changes in the grave goods of the remains of a child relate to age, with a threshold of 8–9 years. Thereafter, the remains of boys are accompanied by a greater number of weapons, also by spurs, and drinking horns. The remains of girls are accompanied by ornaments in the form of a chain.[62] This can be explained by the age threshold, and it is certain that these individuals were not considered to be adults. The age at which a boy reached majority varied, typically it was 12 years.[63] Salic Law stated that: "If a boy younger than 12 commits an offence, he shall not receive punishment [*fretus*]."[64]

Several documents from the 13th century mention inheritance rights. These are explicitly mentioned in the rights of peasants and of peasant rights in Courland as

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[58] Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2006, 224. lpp.

[59] Zariņa, G. Salaspils Laukskolas 10.–13. gs. iedzīvotāju paleodemogrāfija. Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks 10.–13. gadsimts*, 453. lpp.

[60] Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*, 28.–30. lpp.

[61] Zariņa, G. Salaspils Laukskolas 10.–13. gs. iedzīvotāju paleodemogrāfija, 318. lpp.

[62] Zariņa, G. *Ikšķiles 13.–15. gadsimta iedzīvotāji. 13th–15th century population of Ikšķile.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2016, 43.–49. lpp.

[63] Ibid., 47.–49. lpp.; Callow, C. Transitions to adulthood in Early Icelandic Society. Crawford, S., Shepherd, G. (eds.). *Children, Childhood and Society.* Oxford: Archaeopress, 2007, pp. 45–55.

[64] Lex Salica – Loi Salique, XXIV: 5. Accessible at: http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/loisalique/loi2.htm (site last visited 30.05.2016); Saliešu tiesa, XXIV: 5. *Ārvalstu tiesību vēstures avoti (no vissenākajiem laikiem līdz 1689. gadam).*

published by the Archbishopric of Riga; these are considered to be codification of the rights developed by the indigenous peoples.[65] Usually only sons were entitled to inherit.[66]

Changes in the social status of women and elite marriage strategies from the 9th to the 13th century

During this period, priorities of the elite changed, blood relations which bound them to their fellow tribesmen became less important than those which established a link to other ruling families, even if these belonged to a different ethnos. This substantially changed the role of women, but these changes only affected women of leading families. In previous times leader status could be ensured by maintaining additional wives, whereas the new priorities dictated establishing a kin relationship with other ruling families. At the start of the 13th century, Visvaldis, ruler of Jersika, married the daughter of Daugeruthe[67], a Lithuanian noble (*duxerat*)[68] whose name was not recorded in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* in his account of events at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries. This Chronicle mentions the names of only two women, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene. However, in *The Rhymed Chronicle of Livonia* the wife of the first Lithuanian kings is named, although her antecedents are not given:

> "*dem kunige Myndowen* (the king was Mindaugas)
> *und Marthen sîner vrowen* (and his wife was Marthe)."[69]

Marriage as a component of diplomacy led by rulers and ruling families is known from ancient times, but in barbarian societies this practice only established itself with the formation of large political associations and the emergence of dynasties. Thus, already in the 5th century, with a view to stabilising the situation in Italy the leader of the Ostrogoths married Audofleda, a sister of the Frankish ruler Clovis. Clovis himself married Clothilde, a Princess of the Kingdom of Burgundy.[70]

Marriage of leading Livonian families with noble families of other ethnic groups may be signalled by pendants worn by women embossed with the sign of the so-called Rurikovich family, whose origins are in Scandinavia, while the symbol itself was

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[65] Švābe, A. *Vecākās zemnieku tiesības*; Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs., 22. lpp. Accessible at: http://www.historia.lv/dokumenti/latgalu-tiesibas-jeb-rigas-arhibiskapijas-zemnieku-tiesibas-teksts-lejas vacu-valoda-un (site last visited 30.05.2016).

[66] Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs., 22. lpp.

[67] XVII, 3. Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XIII, 4.

[68] Ibid., XVII, 3.

[69] *Atskaņu hronika*. No vidusaugšvācu val. atdzejojis V. Bisenieks; Ē. Mugurēviča priekšvārds; Ē. Mugurēviča, K. Kļaviņa komentāri. Vidusaugšvācu un latviešu val. Rīga: Zinātne, 1998, 03545.–3546. rinda. Accessible at: http:// www.old.historia.lv/alfabets/A/AT/atskanu_hronika/hronikas_teksts/atskanu_hronika_saturs.htm (site last visited 30.05.2016).

[70] *Handbuch der europäischen Geschichte in 7 Bänden*, Bd. 1.: Europa im Wandel von der Antike zum Mittelalter, S. 253.

created in Scandinavian centres located in Russia. During the 10th–13th centuries, rich Livonian women wore these ornaments which might testify to their membership of noble families which had intermarried with Russian nobles of Scandinavian origin.[71]

Centres of power on the territory of Latvia from the 5th to the 13th century

For a long historical period, centres of power in the lands of the Baltic and Baltic Finnic peoples were located in hill-forts. Hill-forts as a cultural and historical phenomenon are one of the types of settlement favoured by the Baltic, Baltic Finnic and Slavic peoples from the 2nd millennium BCE until the 13th century; in several places, particularly in Courland, they were present also in the 14th century and even later. The tradition of fortifying the top of a hill was found in Sweden, Finland, Wales, Ireland and elsewhere, particularly during the Bronze Age and during the early Middle Ages.

Hill-forts are hills that have been transformed as a result of human activity and where a cultural layer is found corresponding to human habitation; these have been mentioned in documents or are traditionally regarded as such. The entire ensemble has not survived intact in all cases.

Hill-forts as fortified sites first appeared in Latvia during the Bronze Age (1800–500 BCE).

Society which lived in hill-forts over two thousand years experienced changes which altered the nature of hill-forts as strong points. Hill-forts have experienced times when they flourished, as well as times when their importance declined, since they evidently no longer conformed to the existing model of society.

There is no doubt that one, if not the principal, function of hill-forts was defence. Hill-forts stood out in the surroundings as dominating high points. The community which controlled a hill-fort undoubtedly was in a better position than those which lived in open settlements — hamlets. It was not by chance that the role of hill-forts increased during periods when social stratification took place. Not all of these periods of change coincide with the chronology of the Iron Age in Latvia.

Several changes occurred during the Middle Iron Age (400–800) which altered the significance of hill-forts as well as encouraging an increase in the number of their inhabitants.

Migration of ethnic groups, which took place on the territory inhabited by the Baltic peoples, is mentioned as one of the reasons for the rebirth of hill-forts.[72] Another reason was further stratification of society, and the emergence of a top layer could have resulted in leaders being able to mobilise sufficient numbers of people to carry out substantial construction projects. These could have been members of the community,

[71] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Piekariņi ar t.s. Rjurikoviču cilts zīmi Latvijā 11.–13. gs. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 17. laid., 1994, 76.–83. lpp.

[72] Ibid., 237. lpp.

or people living in the surrounding neighbourhood. This also might have taken the form of agreements with the residents of near-by hamlets and farmsteads that in case of danger the latter would receive shelter in the hill-fort if they helped strengthen the defences of a hill-fort. This sketched the borders of a future castle region. It was first necessary that small permanent families form in order that the number of inhabitants of a hill-fort might rise or settle in an ancient town; this process admittedly was slow. In Scandinavia, even during the Age of the Vikings, armed units often were organised along blood-lines (raiders departed as a group of relatives). No individual could alienate himself from his kin, since these alone were able to defend him. It is likely that established households, who were resident in the hill-fort, might object to the presence of newcomers. The section of the Salic Law on migrants (*Migrantibus*) (the first edition around 507–511, additions in 763–764, and in 802–803), states that a migrant was entitled to remain if everyone agreed. If even a single person objected, he would have to leave on the following day after being given shelter for one night.[73]

The dominating role of large centres versus smaller ones led to gradual formation of large territorial units — which in circa 850 Rimbert described as being the case for the Couronians; archaeological excavations show that a similar formation existed in Western Semigallia.[74] This leads to the conclusion that a new identity was emerging slowly which was not associated simply with family, kin, hamlet, but also with the land.

The creation of ever larger associations (of lands) ought to have been a logical development in the face of a growing number of military conflicts as this would have allowed uniting larger forces.

The importance of hill-forts rose significantly during the Late Iron Age (9th–12th centuries). During that period their function became more varied as well as changing over time due to on-going changes in society which occurred ever more rapidly than in earlier times. The first half of the Late Iron Age corresponds to the Viking Age in Northern Europe (800–1050).

M. North in his book, *The Baltic. A History*, has expressed the idea that, "fortified hill settlements in Lithuania are an expression of this hierarchical pattern, such places are much less numerous among the Latvians and Estonians".[75]

However, this is not what really happened. Hill-forts could have been inhabited during various periods. There are a total of 470 hill-forts in Latvia. During the period between the 9th–13th centuries, there were castles within 250–300 hill-forts; some of these were the centre of a state, a land or a district.[76]

During the second half of the Late Iron Age, buildings appeared in front of hill-forts. It is thought that artisans and members of the military retinue lived there. Some

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[73] Saliešu tiesa. *Ārvalstu tiesību vēstures avoti (no vissenākajiem laikiem līdz 1689. gadam)*, 177. lpp.; Lex Salica – Loi Salique, XLV. De Migrantibus. Accessible at: http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/loisalique/loi2.htm (site last visited 30.05.2016).

[74] Atgāzis, M. Vidējais dzelzs laikmets. 400.–800. g., 277. lpp.

[75] North, M. *The Baltic. A History*, p. 22.

[76] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki) 800.–1200. g., 367. lpp.

hill-forts became the residence of a district leader and his household.[77] Some hill-forts were gradually transformed into the castle-residence of the ruler of a district, who lived there together with his military retinue ("friends and relatives"), while the rest of the community moved to an ancient town.

This meant that a hill-fort became the residence not only of kin (*cognate,* in Latin), but also that of friends (*amici,* in Latin) and of other persons, lower in the social hierarchy, members of different families. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* states that each Latgalian chieftain ruled his own separate castle: Rūsiņš lived in Sotekle (*Sotecle*) Castle, Varidots, in Autine (*Autina*) Castle, and Tālibalds, in Beverīna (*Beverin*) Castle.[78] Chieftains of other ethnic groups also had their own separate castles: Viestards, Kaupo (possibly had several), Dabrelis, etc.

Accounts in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* lead to the idea that not all hill-forts were associated with a single chieftain. There is no indication that the castle at Mežotne (*Mesyote, Mesiote, Mesiothe*) was ruled by a single chieftain. We find indications in the description of the battle of 1220 that one hundred unnamed elders (*seniores),* who had come out of the castle, were betrayed and killed, while the two elders who went to negotiate terms of surrender are named — Madis and Gailis.[79]

Nevertheless, migration of people took place more rapidly during the Late Iron Age, in particular during the 10th and 11th centuries. A steep rise in the population was observed at that time along the lower reaches of the Daugava River; this process has been precisely uncovered at Salaspils Laukskola. These changes cannot be explained away by improved demography. Some of the residents undoubtedly were newcomers.[80]

Several ancient towns located near hill-forts extend over considerable areas: that of Talsi hill-fort occupied 4 ha, that at Tērvete hill-fort, around 9.5 ha, whereas the ancient town at Mežotne hill-fort extended over 13 ha. Not all of the hill-forts were necessarily just the administrative centre of a smaller or larger district. A centre such as the Daugmale hill-fort enjoyed rapid development during the second half of the 10th century when Semigallians lived there, whereas the ethnic composition of its residents changed with Livs gaining the upper hand in the 10th–11th centuries. The location of this hill-fort close by the waterway of the Daugava River, at the cross-roads of trade routes and close to the border permitted this hill-fort and its associated ancient towns to turn into a centre that has all the hallmarks of an early Northern European city (vici).[81]

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[77] Apals, J. *Āraišu ezerpils: rakstu izlase un draugu atmiņas*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2012, 365. lpp.

[78] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XII, 6.

[79] Ibid., XXII, 8.

[80] Zariņa, G. Salaspils Laukskolas 10.–13. gs. iedzīvotāju paleodemogrāfija; Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts,* 452. lpp.

[81] Zemītis, G. 10th–12th Century Daugmale – the Earliest Urban Settlement along the Lower Daugava and Forerunner of Riga. *Cultural Interaction Between East and West. Archaeology, Artefacts and Human Contacts in Northern Europe.* Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2007, pp. 279–284 (Stockholm Studies in Archaeology, 44).

Between Rome and Byzantium

The answer to the question which has been often debated as to which concept of statehood was more powerful — the Western one, i.e. the one coming from Scandinavia, or the Eastern one, coming from Russia, is to be found already at the beginning of the Viking Age. There is no doubt that the stimuli that were felt in Western Latvia differed from those felt in Eastern Latvia. Furthermore, both in the West and the East of Latvia, external influence produced local nuances in an additional two, or even three, regions. The Daugava River was a common border for these regions. The left bank of the Daugava was a border of the Western region, inhabited by the Couronians, Semigallians and Selonians, as well as by the Livs of Courland (the Vends), whereas Latgalians and Livs lived along the right bank of the Daugava. At the end of the 12th century and in early 13th century some of the Courland Livs (Vends) migrated to this region and the ethnically mixed Ydumea came into being.

In order better to understand developments in the Baltic area it is necessary to examine Scandinavian behaviour during the Viking Age — paying attention to what occurred during the 9th century in North-Eastern Europe. According to the *Chronicle of Nestor*,[82] in 862 the Slavs of Novgorod and Finnic tribes invited Varangian leaders to come from Scandinavia together with their retinue, Rus.[83]

The well-known passage in the *Chronicle of Nestor* (written in 1113) describes the invitation extended in 862 as follows: "... they chose three brothers and their families, and they came, Rurik the eldest brother settled in Novgorod, yet another, Sineus, in Beloozer, and the third, Truvor, in Izborsk. And Russia began with these Varangians. The people of Novgorod are descended from the Varangians, but before that they were Slavs. Sineus and his brother Truvor died two years later. And Rurik assumed sole authority and started to hand out cities to his men, one received Polotsk, another, Rostov, yet another, Beloozer. In these cities the Varangians are outsiders, whereas the indigenous people of Novgorod are Slavs."[84] In 882, Oleg the Prophet, descendant of the legendary Rurik, took Solensk, and installed one of his men as its ruler. That same year Kiev fell to Oleg. In 988, Prince Vladimir of Kiev was baptised into the Byzantine rite, and became Prince Vladimir I Svyatoslavich of Kiev, also known as the Splendid Sun.

In the early 10th century, Ragnvald (circa 920–978/980), who most historians consider to have been a member of the Norwegian Ingling family, became ruler of Polotsk located in the upper reaches of the Daugava River. He came to dominate the waterway of the Daugava over the territory of modern Latvia and Belarus, including Daugmale, Koknese, and Jersika; it is impossible to be precise, but it appears that Christian out-

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[82] *Повесть временных лет* [Рос. акад. наук]. Подгот. текста, пер., ст. и коммент. Д. С. Лихачева; Под ред. В. И. Адриановой-Перетц [Доп. М. Б. Свердлова]. 2-е изд., испр. и доп. Санкт-Петербург: Наука, 1996, с. 667. Accessible at: http://old-russian.chat.ru/01povest.htm

[83] Петрухин, В. Я. Скандинавия и Русь на путях мировой цивилизации. *Путь из варяг в греки и из грек… The Road the Varangians to the Greeks and from the Greeks…* Москва: Государственный Исторический музей, 1996, с. 10.

[84] *Повесть временных лет* [Рос. акад. наук], ч. 1.

posts from Polotsk were established at Koknese and Jersika by the second half of the 12th century.

Ragnvald was killed by Prince Vladimir of Novgorod (later the Grand Prince of Kiev), who married his daughter Ragnhilda. As a result, orthodox kingdoms, led at least initially by princes of Scandinavian descent, were established in the neighbourhood of territories inhabited by the Balts and the Baltic Finns. The feudal customs of the Kievan Rus' were based on those in Scandinavia, with an absence of liege lord-vassal relations. The authority of princes rested on their military retinue, which consisted of individuals loyal to their prince, "relatives and friends" (*cognatis et amicis*), who at least at first were Scandinavians.

The ethnic composition of military retinues changed over time. Local Slavs and Finns joined the retinue; the top layer of the newcomers fused with the top layer of local Slavic and Finnic society while retaining awareness of their order. It is possible that one external manifestation of this identity was wearing the so-called Rurikovich's sign. Princes installed rulers loyal to them in centres which they controlled. The principal task of these individuals was to collect taxes and to give military support.

Becoming Christians provided another reason to expand — in order to spread Christianity among the pagans. Baptism opened new possibilities for rival chieftains. According to the accounts of Nestor, around 1030, Yaroslav, Grand Prince of Kiev, captured Tartu (*Terbata, Tharbata, Darbete, Tharbete*) in modern South Estonia (*Ugaunia, Ungaunia, Ungania*), and renamed it Yuryev. However, in 1061, Estonians chased out the Russians and wreaked their revenge by capturing Polotsk and laying it waste.[85] Following these events, Orthodox Christianity could penetrate the lands inhabited by Latgalians and Livs both from Estonia (Ugaunia) and from Polotsk.

Written records show that during the 13th century rulers of early Latgalian states such as Jersika (*Gercike*, *Gerceke*), Koknese (*Kukonoys, Kukenoys, Kukennoys, Kokenoys*), Tālava (*Tholowa*, *Tolowa*), Imera (*Ymera*), Atzele (*Agzele*), had been baptised as Orthodox Christians. The states Jersika and Koknese were dependents of the Prince of Polotsk, while Tālava paid tribute to Novgorod and to Pskov. A new designation of administrative territory — civil parish (*pagasts*) — appeared at the end of the 13th century; this is considered to derive from the time when tribute was collected by ancient Russia.[86] This term originally referred to duties paid to the King and his officials for a feast, as well as the schedule for such payment.[87] It is considered that the Latvian term for a civil parish, *pagasts* originates from the Russian word *погост* which has over time mutated into the description of a territorial unit over which taxes were collected.[88] The right of a ruler to a feast, established by German kings, was in part influenced by Roman law (*Gastunsrecht*; in German, and *servitium regis*, in Latin). A ruler had the right to demand of his citizens that he and his attendants be received, fed and given lodging (*procuratio*, in Latin) while travelling about his realm. These Germanic rights

[85] *Повесть временных лет* [Рос. акад. наук], ч. 3.
[86] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki), 800.–1200. g., 366.–367. lpp.
[87] Švābe, A. Pagasts. *Latviešu konversācijas vārdnīca*, 15. sēj. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1937, 30326. sl.
[88] Zutis, J. Agrais feodālisms, 22. lpp.

persisted most emphatically and for the longest period of time in Scandinavia where feudal relations developed when tribal chieftains began to impose their will with increasing determination upon nominally free fellows. This process began with regular collection of a fee for a feast. A chieftain would travel from one area to demanding food and lodgings for himself and his companions. Gradually exercise of this right was replaced by a tax collected regularly, a task that the chieftain (king) would entrust to one of his close associates.[89]

A. Švābe concluded that such rights of a ruler were directly adopted in Western Latvia (from Scandinavia) during the Viking Age, both in regard to the state, as in private life, whereas in Eastern Latvia these appeared indirectly, via Russia.[90]

The other Baltic lands found themselves in a similar situation. In 1009, Bruno Bonifacius, a future saint and missionary came from Prussia to Lithuania. There he baptised Netimeras, a Lithuanian chieftain, who was later killed by his brother. This suggests that gaining power through succession, within a family, had been established in Lithuania as early as in the 11th century.[91] The first Christian missionary campaigns in Lithuania coincided with similar efforts elsewhere in Central and Northern Europe: in Poland (966), in the Kievan Rus' (988), in Norway (997), in Hungary (1000), and in Iceland (1000). Lithuania was not mentioned in any chronicle for the following 200 years. At the beginning of the 12th century, Lithuanians were mentioned as one of the ethnic groups paying tribute to the Kievan Rus'.[92] Evidently unification of Lithuania had thus been delayed for some time. In the treaty concluded in 1219 by the chieftains of Lithuania with the Princes of Galicia-Volhynia, Mindaugas, who in future would unite Lithuania, is mentioned as the fourth among five Lithuanian chieftains who signed this agreement. Mindaugas was baptised in 1251, and he was crowned king on 6 July 1253. Mindaugas subsequently renounced Christianity; the period of pagan state came to an end with baptism of Lithuania which was completed only in 1387, and that of Samogitia (Lith. *Žemaitėjė*), in 1413–1417. During its time as a pagan state, Lithuania acquired vast territories inhabited by Orthodox Christians. Lithuanian rulers in these regions were baptised as Orthodox Christians, while the Slavic Ruthenian language (a precursor of modern Ukrainian and Belarusian) became the state language of Lithuania. Nevertheless, globally speaking, after Lithuania accepted Christianity it became part of the Western Christian world.

Influences exerted by Orthodox Christianity led to essential differences appearing between Eastern and Western Latvia, and, for this reason, developments in these two different parts of the territory of Latvia will be presented separately.

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89 Pāvulāns, V. *Skandināvija agrajos viduslaikos*, 34. lpp.

90 Švābe, A. Pagasta mielasts. *Latviešu konversācijas vārdnīca*, 15. sēj., 30302. sl.

91 Zimkevičius, Z. Netimeras, Zebedenas IR KT. Ryšium su seniausiu Lietuvos vardo paminėjimu. *Baltistica*, XLIV. Vilniaus: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2009, p. 148; Eidinits, A., Bumblausks, A., Kulikausks, A., Tamošaitis, M. *Lietuvas vēsture*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2014, 27. lpp.

92 *Повесть временных лет* [Рос. акад. наук].

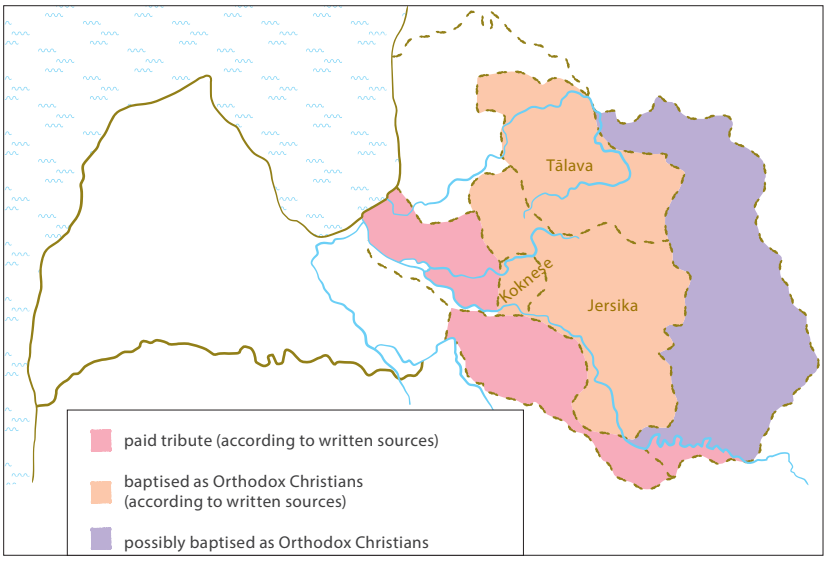


Fig. 5. The political and religious situation on the territory of Latvia during the second half of the 12th century (before the start of the mission led by Meinhard). Drawing by Dzintra Zemīte

Development of statehood in Eastern Latvia

It is possible that a group of officials and administrative territorial units, the civil parishes, had come into being in Eastern Latvia. Thus, the situation of a ruler no longer was based on personal authority but also rested on a certain measure of public power which largely took the form of tax collection.[93]

It has been repeatedly asserted in historical literature that Russian princes were primarily interested in collection of taxes and tribute from regions over which they held sway, and did not interfere in the local administrative, religious and public life in these regions.[94]

Nevertheless, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* notes the presence of churches in Jersika.[95] Conversion to Orthodox Christianity may have been one of the ways that elders in various areas sought to strengthen their authority. V. Blūzma assumes that educated clergy might have worked as secretaries and clerks, while advisory bodies consisted of boyars and these were organised along the lines extant in ancient Russia.[96] The question is still debateable as to whether a class of boyars came into being in Latgalian society. Boyars (in Latvian *bajārs*) have been referred to in Latvian folk songs.[97] The term itself is found in the *Latvian Dictionary* compiled by Liborius Depkin (1704), where its meaning is explained as follows: "*Bajahrs — pahns. Das letzte pahns ist ein*

[93] Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs., 19. lpp.

[94] Хрусталёв, Д. Г. *Северные крестоносци. Русь в борье за сферы влияния в Восточной Прибалтике XII–XIII вв.* Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2012, с. 22.

[95] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XIII, 4.

[96] Blūzma, V. Konstitucionālo tiesību elementi Senlatvijas teritorijā līdz Livonijas periodam. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 1, 2008, 71. lpp.

[97] Barons, K., Visendorfs H. *Latvju dainas*, 4. sēj. Pēterburga, 1910, Nr. 31179.

littausches wort = ein kleiner Edelman."[98] ("Boyar — pahn. The latter is a Lithuanian word signifying a minor noble."). However, the term *bajārs* was not used in areas of Latvia settled by Latgalians, i.e. in Vidzeme and in Latgale.[99] Occurrence of this term is rather wide-spread in Kurzeme,[100] which leads to the supposition that it appeared there during more modern times, with the Lithuanian language acting as an intermediary.

It is likely that already at the threshold of the 13th century most influential Latgalian elders possessed armed retinues, who were customarily referred to as "relatives and friends" (*driugan,* in the language of the Goths; *cognatis et amicis*, in Latin). The core of this retinue might consist of blood relatives of the elder/chieftain; the involvement of relatives, however, was not a matter of principle, rather an organisational aspect of a retinue. The size of this group (typically 15–20 strong) and internal organisation could be very different.

Rūsiņš[101] from Sotekle Castle is known to have had such a retinue. Among Latgalian rulers who controlled large areas the presence of an armed retinue is known for Visvaldis, ruler of Jersika, and that of Tālivaldis (Tālibalds), ruler of Tālava.

Visvaldis, ruler of Jersika, the largest Latgalian land (noted as *Vissewalde*, *Wissewaldus, Wyssewaldus, Vissewalde*, in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, and in the treaty of 1209, as *Wiscewolodus*[102]) is styled as *rex*. This term has been variously translated as knyaz, and as king.

Texts written in Latin after the 9th century feature the term *rex* to denote a king; thus, descriptions of rulers among the peoples of Latvia as *rex* should be translated as king.

Visvaldis was the son-in-law of Daugeruthe, a Lithuanian nobleman, and an ally of the struggle by Prince Vladimir of Polotsk against the German crusaders.[103] The ethnic origin of Visvaldis has been extensively discussed, and the issue is crucial in determining the status of Jersika and its relationship with the Kingdom of Polotsk. Consensus opinion has emerged during the last decades of the 20th century that he was of local origin (this opinion is shared by Harri Moora, Teodors Zeids, Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, Muntis Auns, and Antonija Vilcāne).[104] Although a number of Russian scholars do not exclude possibility that Visvaldis was related to the Prince of Polotsk, they point out that it is impossible convincingly to speak about his Slavic roots.[105] There is no reason to consider the name *Vissewalde* to be Slavic and to correspond to the Russian name

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[98] Depkin, L. *Lettisches Wörterbuch*. The original manuscript transcribed and annotated by T. G. Fennell, vol. 1. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2005, p. 196.

[99] Rozenbergs, J. Bajāri latviešu klasiskajās tautasdziesmās. *Valodas un literatūras institūta Raksti*, 11. sēj. Rīga: Latvijas PSR Zinātņu akadēmijas izdevniecība, 1959, 122. lpp.

[100] Ibid., 144. lpp.

[101] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XV, 7.

[102] http://www.historia.lv/dokumenti/rigas-biskaps-alberts-izleno-jersikas-knazam-vsevolodam-visvaldim-jersikas-novadus-1209 (site last visited 31.05.2016).

[103] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Komentāri. *Indriķa hronika*, pp. 357–358.

[104] Vilcāne, A. *Senā Jersika*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 79. lpp.

[105] Хрусталёв, Д. Г. *Северные крестоносци. Русь в борье за сферы влияния в Восточной Прибалтике XII–XIII вв.*, с. 24.

Vsevolod, which has taken the form, *Wiscewolodus*, in signed agreements. The name *Vissewalde* is close to the name of a ruler appearing in Scandinavian sagas, *Vísivaldr*.[106] Names with the root *-vald-* (in Latvian: *valdīt*; in English: to rule, to reign) or *-var-* (in Latvian: *vara*, power; in English: power) are found among other Indo-European peoples, signifying a ruler, which has over time become a given name. During the 12th and 13th centuries, several related names have been recorded: Varibuls, Varidots, Varigribs or Varigerbs, and Drivinalds or Drunvalds.[107]



Fig. 6. Jersika Hill-fort. 2005. Photograph by Juris Urtāns

The centre of the state (*regnum*) ruled by Visvaldis was Jersika — this has been verified by excavations of the castle mound of Jersika carried out by F. Balodis, Ē. Mugurēvičs, and A. Vilcāne, at a burial mound (by O. Kalējs).

Visvaldis was baptised as an Orthodox Christian and *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* mentions that the castle defenders were "Russians" (*Rutheni*, in Latin). Archaeologists who have spent many years excavating Jersika are unanimous in asserting that the inhabitants of the castle were Latgalians,[108] and that the report about Russians at Jersika are explained by the habit, "that just as every Catholic was described as a Latin, so all Orthodox Christians were deemed to be Russians".[109]

F. Balodis accepted that both Jersika and Koknese were founded by Scandinavians, Varangians, partly to engage in trade with the Latgalians, partly to guard the waterway along the Daugava.[110]

V. Blūzma, although he does not exclude the possibility that a decisive role in founding Jersika might have been played by Russians, and that Visvaldis could have been a Russian (*Vsevolod*), nevertheless contest the assertion that Visvaldis was dependent on the Prince of Polotsk, or that he had paid tribute to Polotsk. Evidence for this position is the fact that the 1209 agreement freeing Jersika from having to pay tribute does not mention any links with Polotsk, which would have been logically present if Jersika had been previously a vassal state of Polotsk.[111]

James Brundage, who in 2003 translated *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* into English, asserts in his Foreword that these were Russian provinces, ruled by Russian

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[106] http://norse.ulver.com/articles/jackson/austr/chapter3.html (site last visited 31.05.2016).

[107] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Komentāri. *Indriķa hronika*, 358. lpp.

[108] Kalējs, O. Jersikas senkapi. *Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 2, 1940, 11.–28. lpp.; Balodis, F. *Jersika un tai 1939. gadā izdarītie izrakumi*. Rīga: Pieminekļu valde, 1940, 84.–96. lpp.; Vilcāne, A. *Senā Jersika*, 115. lpp.

[109] Balodis, F. *Jersika un tai 1939. gadā izdarītie izrakumi*, 93. lpp.

[110] Balodis, F. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets: senās ciltis, viņu zemes un senvietas. *Latvijas archaioloģija*. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1926, 73. lpp.

[111] Blūzma, V. Konstitucionālo tiesību elementi Senlatvijas teritorijā līdz Livonijas periodam. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 1, 2008, 69–70. lpp.

princes: "The Saxon bishop and his men defeated the Russian princes of Gerzike (in Latvian, Jersika) and Kokenhausen (in Latvian, Koknese) and destroyed their principalities."[112]

The right of Visvaldis to rule in Jersika is an argument suggesting that the right of an individual to rule could, in separate lands, already at the beginning of the 13th century, be inherited, and was not solely based on the authority and power of the family. Words ascribed to Visvaldis by the chronicler spoken after the devastation of Jersika in 1209 are evidence for this: "Oh, Jersika my beloved city! Oh my inheritance." ("*O'hereditas patrum meorum*!")[113] In the agreement of 1209 with Bishop Albert the former rights of Visvaldis to the castle and region are described as "inherited rights" ("*hereditario iure*").[114]

T. Zeids wrote that, the political organisation of the Latgalian mini-states Jersika and Tālava "showed some features of feudal states".[115] The question is still contentious as to what was the relationship of Visvaldis with other elders of the region, and could this relationship be characterised as feudal, i.e. the relationship between lord and vassal. Certainly previous to German conquests there was no understanding on the territory of Latvia, nor among its southern and eastern and northern neighbours (here referring to the territory of Estonia), about the nature of feudal arrangements current in Western Europe. It is likely that the relations between Polotsk and the rulers of Jersika and Tālava were similar in principle to those which were current in the relations of powerful Latgalian and other Baltic and Livonian elders with those who were dependent on them. Elders dependent on a more powerful ruler principally provided military services as well as paid taxes. These did not flow from a vassal swearing fealty to an elder, or from inherited rights to a fief regulated by the benefits accruing (*beneficium* — Latin, charity). Feudal relationships did not include payment to the liege lord. In North-eastern Europe relations between a ruler and his subordinate elders were based on strength or mutual advantage and were not durable.

After Jersika had been laid waste and the subsequent agreement with Bishop Albert, Visvaldis received Jersika back as a fief with three flags. A. Švābe concluded that, according to ideas then current in Western Europe, Visvaldis of the Kingdom of Jersika (the "lord's districts") lost two flags in 1209 and retained three. Autine and Cesvaine who had until then paid tribute were the lost districts. Varidots was the elder of Autine,[116] who already in 1208 had abandoned Visvaldis and had, together with Tālibalds of Beverīna and Rūsiņš of Sotekle, signed a friendship agreement with the Brethren of the Order at Cēsis, even converting to Catholicism. The political dependence of Varidots on Visvaldis consisted of paying tribute.[117]

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[112] Brundage, A. J. Introduction to the 2003 edition. Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, p. XXIII.

[113] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XIII, 4.

[114] http://www.historia.lv/dokumenti/rigas-biskaps-alberts-izleno-jersikas-knazam-vsevolodam-visvaldim-jersikas-novadus-1209

[115] Zeids, T. *Feodālisms Livonijā*, 53. lpp.

[116] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XII, 6.

[117] Švābe, A. Jersikas karaļvalsts, 5.–31. lpp.

Another ruler who was described in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* as a king (*rex*) or either a minor ruler or viceroy (*regulus*) was Wetseke, ruler of the small region around Koknese.[118] This designation of the ruler of Koknese as a king in contrast to Viestards, an influential Semigallian ruler, whom Henry of Livonia never characterised as king in his Chronicle, has led to historians forming an opinion that the chronicler only designated Christian rulers as kings.



Fig. 7. Possible location of Sotekle Castle at Rauna Tanīskalns. 2009. Photograph by Juris Urtāns

The ethnic origin of Wetseke has been discussed in historical literature. In the *Chronicle of Novgorod*[119] he is described as Prince (Knyaz) Vyachko (in Russian: *Вячеслав*). I. Šterns believes that Wetseke was a local, possibly a Livonian, who had been given the name Vyacheslav when he was baptised into the Orthodox rite.[120] However, this view does not seem convincing; likewise, it has proven impossible to demonstrate his descent from the family of a Prince of Polotsk, nor confirm the later Livonian Tiesenhausen family's genealogical connection with him as an ancestor.[121]

It is quite possible that the ruler Wetseke, or Vyachko, the ruler of Koknese, had been installed by the Prince of Polotsk. With the support by Novgorod he was named in 1223 to be ruler also of Tartu (Dorpat): "After this the people of Novgorod sent King Vyachko… gave him money and two hundred men and gave him authority over Dorpat and the other provinces which he could subject to himself. This king came with his men to Dorpat, and the people in the fort received him with joy that they might be made stronger against the Germans, they gave him tribute from the provinces lying round about".[122]

V. Blūzma believes that, like Visvaldis, Wetseke also was not a dependent of the Prince of Polotsk. He argues that this is demonstrated by Wetseke independently deciding to become a vassal of Bishop Albert, promising him half of his land.[123]

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[118] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, IX, 10; XI, 2, 8, 9; XII, 1; XIII, 1; XXV, 2; XXVIII, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6.

[119] *Полное собрание русских летописей*, т. 3. Москва: Изд. Восточной литературы, 1962, с. 39; *Повесть временных лет*. (Подготовка текста, перевод и комментарии О. В. Творогова). Библиотека литературы Древней Руси / РАН. ИРЛИ. Под ред. Д. С. Лихачева, Л. А. Дмитриева, А. А. Алексеева, Н. В. Понырко. Санкт-Петербург: Наука, 1997, т. 1: XI–XII века, с. 543. (Ипатьевский список ПВЛ на языке оригинала и с синхронным переводом) Электронная версия издания, публикация Института русской литературы (Пушкинский Дом) РАН.

[120] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture, 1180–1290: krustakari.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2002, 182. lpp.

[121] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Komentāri. *Indriķa hronika*, 363. lpp.

[122] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XXVII, 5.

[123] Blūzma, V. Konstitucionālo tiesību elementi Senlatvijas teritorijā līdz Livonijas periodam. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 1, 2008, 71. lpp.

Sovereignty is an essential pre-condition in order to speak of a state.[124] In the early 13th century, with weakening of central power (in this case that of the Prince of Polotsk), a degree of sovereignty could be detected in the activities of the rulers of both Jersika and Koknese, but their connection with Polotsk persisted. The extent of this dependence was determined by relative strength at any given moment and the personality of the rulers.

Independent of whether Visvaldis was a Latgalian, or a Russian named Vsevolod, or whether Wetseke was a Livonian, a Latgalian, or a Russian named Vyachko, it must be admitted that their defeat by the crusaders moved the border between Western civilisation and the Orthodox civilisation further to the east. In this way, Western civilisation irreversibly spread throughout the territory of today's Latvia.

The land of Tālava had developed in the North-east of Latvia. More than 20 settlements in Tālava are mentioned by 13th century sources. This leads to the conclusion that the land named Tālava (*terra, que Tolowa dicitur*) included the middle and upper segments of the Gauja river basin. The population here during the Middle Iron Age consisted predominantly of Baltic Finns, and Latgalians settled the territory later known as Tālava only during the Late Iron Age.[125] Tālibalds was the ruler of Tālava at the beginning of the 13th century.[126] In contrast to Visvaldis and Wetseke, Tālibalds was not styled as a king (*rex*) in written records, being described as the leading elder of a province (*seniorem illus provincie*). It is written that Tālibalds lived in the district of Trikāta,[127] with Beverīna named as one of his castles; in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* he is styled as "Tālibalds from Beverīna" (*Talibaldus de Beverin*).[128]

Tālibalds had three or four sons with the names recorded of three of them Ramēķis, Varibuls, and Drivinalds. I. Šterns has concluded that Tālibalds "ruled his state to the benefit of his family",[129] while his sons governed different districts of his state.[130] In 1214, the sons of Tālibalds, acting in his name as elder of Tālava appeared before Bishop Philipp von Ratzeburg, renounced orthodoxy, and accepted "the Latin rite".[131]

In the case of Tālibalds and his sons we see a situation that was similar to what happened in the formation of the Kingdom of Burgundy and the Frankish Kingdom where upon death of the king his inheritance was divided into as many parts as he had male offsprings. Even while their father lived the sons of Tālibalds each governed a castle and surrounding district, and they regarded Tālava as belonging to them and to their kin, which could be passed on as a legacy. The processes of centralisation and decentralisation occurred in this case hand-in-hand. It may be assumed that in his prime Tālibalds was sole ruler of Tālava, while his grown-up sons each received his share of

[124] Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs., 20. lpp.
[125] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 75. lpp.
[126] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XVIII, 3.
[127] Ibid., XV, 7; XVII, 2; XIX, 3.
[128] Ibid., XII, 6.
[129] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture, 1180–1290: krustakari*, 110. lpp.
[130] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XVII, 3.
[131] Ibid., XVIII, 3.

the state while their father was still alive. In this way, the state is divided yet is governed by members of the same family. It must be noted that Latgalians, in contrast to the Couronians, did not follow the principle of primogeniture wherein the oldest son would inherit an undivided land. For Latgalians the youngest son had the priority in inheriting his father's land.[132] However, land might be divided, when there were several heirs, as the folk song says: "Brothers fell out/Their father's land had to be divided."[133]

Tālibalds did not exercise power simply based on his inherited authority. Towards the end of his life he suffered reverses which also testify to the extent and durability of his power. Estonians robbed Tālibalds in 1211.[134] In 1213, he and his son Varibuls were captured by Lithuanians,[135] while finally in 1215 Tālibalds was taken prisoner and killed by Estonians.[136]

The sons of Tālibalds, Ramēķis and Drivinalds exacted revenge for Tālibalds death: "They entered Ungannia, despoiled all the villages, and delivered them to the flames. They burned alive all the men they could capture in revenge for Thalibald. They burned down all the forts, so that they would have no refuge in them. They sought out the Ungannians in the dark hiding places of the forest and the Ungannians could hide from them nowhere. They took them out of the forests and killed them and took the women and children away as captives. They drove off the horses and flocks, took many spoils, and returned to their own land."[137] This pitiless act of revenge may be explained by the Latgalian tradition of blood feuds, when the family and kin were obliged to avenge the death of a relative; in this case the extent of this vengeance proves that it was retaliation for the death of a high-ranking individual.

The people of Selonia

The Selonians lived along the west bank of the Daugava River on the territories of modern Latvia and Lithuania.

There is very little surviving evidence for statehood in the territory inhabited by the Selonians, and no records survive of the names of Selonian rulers. It is equally difficult to answer the question as to whether the Selonians, or the Latgalians of Jersika, had converted to Orthodoxy. Social developments evidently proceeded in a similar manner for the Selonians as for the Latgalians. Similarities in their material culture have meant that Selonians and Latgalians have been seen as a single tribe[138] or considered jointly.[139] Researchers today no longer doubt that these peoples had different

[132] Lazdiņš, J., Blūzma, V. Paražu tiesības Latvijas teritorijā līdz XIII gs., 24. lpp.
[133] Barons, K., Visendorfs, H. *Latvju dainas*, 1. sēj. Jelgava, 1894, Nr. 3786.
[134] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XV, 7.
[135] Ibid., XVII, 2.
[136] Ibid., XIX, 3.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Balodis, F. Senās latviešu zemes, 22. lpp.
[139] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 217–282. lpp.

ethnic origins.[140] A feature specific for Selonians is a tradition of collective burial in barrows through to the Late Iron Age; these barrows may have been either family burial grounds[141], or those of an extended family. Emergence of an upper class of Selonian society is reflected in the contents of grave No. 1 situated in the 5th burial mound at Sēlpils Lejasdopeles; the clothing, ornaments and collection of weapons found in this grave, which dates from the 11th century, testify to the man buried there being a member of the social elite.[142]

The main political and military centre of the Selonians was located at Sēlpils, which was captured by the crusaders in 1208.[143] Selonian resistance to the Germans ceased after the fall of Sēlpils.

A document from 1392 wherein the Master of the Livonian Order refers to a so-called donation made in 1255 by Mindaugas which contains a reference that Selonian-inhabited territory was divided into several lands (*terra, quae Zelonia muncupatur, continet in se terrulas*).[144] A Bull issued by Pope Innocent IV on 23 May 1254 mentions the Selonian lands, *Allecten, Calve, Selen, Medene,* and *Nitczegale.*[145] The Selonian castle at Dignāja and its surrounding territory evidently were part of the state of Jersika.

The Baltic Finns

The Baltic Finns lived in the northern part of Latvia, both in the West (Courland), and in the East (Vidzeme). There is no clear indication in accessible sources of the identity of the Baltic Finns who lived in Courland — possibly they were Livs, some of whom moved to the lower reaches of the Daugava River, and later to the river basin of the Gauja, or these inhabitants might have been Vends.[146] It is known that two lands in Northern Courland possessed Finnic names — Vanema (the Old Land) and Ventava. Written records from the end of the 12th century and the early 13th century contain rather more information about Livs living in the vicinity of the Daugava and Gauja rivers.

Several features provide insight into society formed by Livs who lived near the Gauja River which differed from that of Livs who lived near the Daugava River. From the 10th century to the beginning of the 13th century, the territory near Turaida was inhabited only by Livs (the exception might be several of their leaders, for example, Dabrelis[147], an elder of Satesele (*Sattesele*)[148] who might have been of Baltic orig-

[140] Ciglis, J. Etnoģenēze. *Sēļi un Sēlija*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2005, 31.–50. lpp.
[141] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 226. lpp.
[142] Ibid., 228.–229. lpp., Figure 148.
[143] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XI, 6.
[144] Sk.: Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 84. lpp.
[145] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 2. burtn. Izd. A. Švābe. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūts, 1940, Nr. 394.
[146] Zemītis, G. Vendu jautājums un arheoloģijas avotu iespējas tā risinājumā. *Akadēmiskā Dzīve*, Nr. 46, 2009, 92–101, 134–135. lpp.
[147] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XVI, 3, 4.
[148] Ibid., X, 10, 14; XIV, 10; XV, 7; XVI, 4, 5; XXV, 2.

in),[149] while the territories of the lower reaches of the Daugava River had an ethnically mixed population. It is possible that a few Latgalians lived at Raušu Hamlet on Dole Island,[150] while two graves of Scandinavian residents, dating from the 10th–11th centuries, have been found at Salaspils Laukskola.[151] Many aspects of Livonian culture are similar to cultural features in Scandinavia, which may testify to intensive contacts, including, possibly family relations, between Livs and Scandinavians. This coincidence was particularly marked in the territory extending from Mārtiņsala to Aizkraukle, the location where the greatest concentration of all oval or turtle-shaped brooches usually worn by Scandinavian women have been found near the Daugava waterway.[152] Some 9% of all jewellery dating from the 9th–10th centuries uncovered at Salaspils Laukskola cemetery is of Scandinavian origin.[153]

During the 12th century, in addition to the Daugava Livs, numbers of Livs from Courland lived in the settlements around Riga, the latter, possibly, being Vends seeking refuge from Livs in Courland.[154] Findings of ancient objects indicate the presence also of Semigallians in Riga, at least from the 13th century onwards;[155] it is possible that Latgalians and Selonians lived there as well.[156] Evidence for the presence of Livs from Courland, or Vends, has been found elsewhere near the Daugava River. Livs lived side-by-side with Latgalians in Aizkraukle,[157] while the presence has been detected of Semigallians at Daugmale,[158] in addition to the possible presence here of Scandinavian and Russian traders.[159]

Regional developments responded to different stimuli. Development began in the region of the Daugava River during the Viking Age, i.e. during the second half of the

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[149] Mīlenbahs, K., Endzelīns, J. *Latviešu valodas vārdnīca*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Izglītības ministrija, 1923–1925, 429. lpp.; Blese, E. *Latviešu personu vārdu un uzvārdu studijas*. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1929, 170. lpp.

[150] Daiga, J. Izrakumi Raušu lībiešu ciemā 1971. gadā. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu, antropologu un etnogrāfu 1971. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1972, 64. lpp.

[151] Zariņa, A. Die Kontakte der Liven mit skandinavischen Ländern nach den Schmucksachen des Gräberfeldes aus dem 10.–13. Jh. zu Salaspils Laukskola. *Die Kontakte zwischen Ostbaltikum und Skandinavien im frühen Mittelalter*. Stockholm: Centre for Baltic Studies at University of Stockholm, 1992, S. 173–174 (*Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis.* Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 9).

[152] Jansson, I. Scandinavian oval brooches found in Latvia. *Die Kontakte zwischen Ostbaltikum und Skandinavien im frühen Mittelalter.* Stockholm, 1992, S. 61–78 (*Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis.* Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 9).

[153] Zariņa, A. Die Kontakte der Liven mit skandinavischen Ländern nach den Schmucksachen des Gräberfeldes aus dem 10–3. Jh. zu Salaspils Laukskola, S. 184.

[154] Caune, A. Jauni atklājumi Rīgas 12. gadsimta kapulaukā un to nozīme pilsētas pirmsākumu skaidrojumā. Caune A. *Pētījumi Rīgas arheoloģijā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 331.–341. lpp.

[155] Celmiņš, A. Sv. Paula baznīcas kapsēta Rīgā. *Senā Rīga: Pilsētas arheoloģija, arhitektūra un vēsture*, 6. sēj. Rīga: Mantojums, 2009, 27. lpp.

[156] Caune, A. Rīgas loma Daugavas lejteces apgabalā 10.–12. gadsimtā. Caune A. *Pētījumi Rīgas arheoloģijā*. 48. lpp.

[157] Urtāns, V. Aizkraukles arheoloģiskās ekspedīcijas guvumi 1971. gadā. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu un etnogrāfu 1971. gada pētījumu rezultātiem*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1972, 99–103. lpp.

[158] Zemītis, G. Daugmales attiecības ar Rīgu un Zemgali 12./13. gadsimtā. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 20. laid., 2000. 120. lpp.

[159] Urtāns, V. Daugmales ekspedīcijas rezultāti 1966. gadā. *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas referātu tēzes par arheologu un etnogrāfu pētījumu rezultātiem 1966. gadā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1967, 42. lpp.

10th century and beginning of the 11th century when substantial economic and trading centres formed along its banks: at Daugmale on the left bank, and at Salaspils Laukskola on the right bank. During this period, the Daugava as a waterway played an important role in the transit of trade goods between Scandinavia, Russia, and Byzantium. The greatest concentration of coins from the 10th–12th centuries have been found in the vicinity of the Daugava waterway, in particular along the lower part of the waterway.[160]

Few hill-forts were sited on the territory of the Daugava Livs. Furthermore, the ancient building site at Daugmale, including a castle mound, with an ancient town on either side, and cemeteries, better corresponds to an early form of city (a vici), rather than a centre of power. This complex has evident links with the settlements at Salaspils Laukskola which was located on the opposite bank of the Daugava.[161]

Materials unearthed from the 10th–13th century cemetery located at Salaspils Laukskola provide good insight into the social model of the Daugava Livs. Among the 610 graves studied at this site, a number of burials of rich males of noble birth have been identified (16 adults and one boy), of well-off soldiers (40 adults), and of materially secure nobles (19 adults and four boys), whereas 56% of the graves of women contain rich grave goods, and 10 graves may be considered to be those of noble women.[162] This is evidence for a rather substantial segment of society to have been well off and also for the high status enjoyed by women in this society. Feminine values were important and the status of women higher in this society when compared with the situation among their southern neighbours the Latgalians, a conclusion similar to one drawn for Estonian society in prehistory, according to Heiki Valk. The status of women is low in societies oriented towards military activities.

This permits the conclusion that society in pre-historic Estonia was more egalitarian than militaristic.[163] Akin to the situation that obtains for Finland it is impossible to detect who led this society during the Viking Age: a society consisting of farmers, craftsmen, traders, and soldiers was egalitarian in that all members of society were presented with the same opportunities and enjoyed the same rights, including being part of institutions of public order. Pirkko Liisa Lehtosalo-Hilander has concluded that individuals who exercised power during this time were farmers, and also that views expressed by a number of researchers that a state existed then on the territory of Finland are unfounded.[164]

Alvydas Nikžentaitis believes that no ruling class (*Fürstenschicht*) had emerged among the Livs and Latgalians. All power was concentrated in the hands of an elder

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[160] Берга, Т. М. *Монеты в археологических памятниках в Латвии IX–XII вв*. Рига: Зинатне, 1988, с. 68.

[161] Zemītis, G. 10th–12th century Daugmale — the earliest urban settlement along the lower Daugava and forerunner of Riga, pp. 279–284.

[162] Zariņa, A. *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks. 10.–13. gadsimts*, 317.–318. lpp.

[163] Valk, H. Estland im 11.–13. Jh. Neuere Aspekte aus Sicht der Archäologie. *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, Bd. 3. Tartu (Estland): Akadeemiline ajaloselts, 2008, S. 67.

[164] Lehtosalo-Hilander, P. L. *Luistari III. A Burial-Ground Reflecting. The Finnish Viking Age Society*. Helsinki: Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja, 1982, p. 15; Lehtosalo-Hilander, P. L. Finnland zur Wikingerzeit – Monarchie oder Gleichwertige Gesellschaft? *Karhunhammas*, vol. 15. Kaarina, 1993, S. 25–43; Šnē, A. *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās*, 33. lpp.

(*Adel*). A leader was chosen when the need arose for military action.[165] One might concur with this view for the case of the Daugava Livs, but it did not apply to the Livs at Turaida, and to the Latgalians, whose influential leaders had their armed retinues.

Ako is the only member of the Daugava Liv community who was described as "an elder and leader" (*princeps ac senior*).[166] Although Ako was an elder of Sala (*Holme,* in Latin), he became leader in 1206 of extensive military campaigns against the Germans as a result of his personal traits, rather than due to the authority which he had exercised previously as elder. The relatively weak power exercised by a leader and the high degree of individual freedom to act is reflected by the fact that baptism of the Daugava Livs occurred on an individual basis. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* names individuals who were baptised, for example, at Ikšķile (*Uexküll,* in German) first of all, "Ylo, the father of Kulevene and Viezo, the father of Alo [were baptised]".[167] "But at first some were baptised, with whatever sort of intentions, and their names are: Viliendi, Uldenago, Wade, Valdeko, Gerverder, and Vietzo."[168] It is also recorded that in some settlements many were baptised, but not all.[169] This implies that the authority exercised by rulers was not strong enough to ensure that conversion to Christianity of the entire community would take place by means of baptism of their ruler.

In general, based on its composition Daugava Livonian society was close to that of early cities, the latter characterised by a strong class of trades and craftsmen who enjoyed many rights, together with diffuse authority of the ruler.

Development of the Turaida Livs, i.e. Livs living by the Gauja River, proceeded differently. Livs settled the Gauja River basin later than the environs of the Daugava River. Several hill-forts were established covering a relatively small area, and these were not inhabited for a long period of time; evidently they were sited in an area that was not yet settled, and were centres of power. There is other evidence on the territory of the Gauja Livs pointing to manifestation of power: creation of barrow burial grounds may be seen as one such manifestation.

Barrow burial grounds are also found in the Daugava river basin, they are, however, specific to the Gauja Livs. Cremation burials may also be seen as manifestations of power since the cremation process itself is complicated and evokes strong emotions. Livs cremated only one third of their dead, as opposed to it being the predominant practice among the Couronians; furthermore, 70% of those cremated were men.[170] This may indicate that it was an honour reserved mostly for the privileged warrior caste. Cremation of distinguished leaders is confirmed by the fact that Kaupo was cremated in 1217.[171]

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[165] Nikžentaitis, A. Zur Frage des Fürstenschicht in der baltischen Gesellschaft des 13. Jahrhunderts. *Lübeck Style? Novgorod Style. Baltic Rim Central Places as Arenas for Cultural Encounters and Urbanisation 1100–1400 AD*. Riga: Nordik, 2001, p. 332.

[166] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, X, 8; XXV, 2.

[167] Ibid., I, 4.

[168] Ibid., I, 7.

[169] Ibid., III, 7.

[170] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 201. lpp.

[171] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XXI, 4.



Fig. 8. Liv barrow burials located at Krimuldas Priedes. 2014. Photograph by Guntis Zemītis

More graves of men than women have been found in the barrow burials at Krimuldas Tāleņi, Liepene, at Turaidas Pūteļi, and in some graves of males by women's jewellery was found, as well as weapons buried alongside women.[172] This might indicate that the remains of members of armed retinues were buried here, as well as those of their family members. The imbalance in numbers of men and women might be explained by the fact that members of an armed retinue might well die before founding a family. Thus, it appears that the Gauja Livonian society was more militarised and prepared to wage war. It can also be explained by stabilisation of the status of families and increasing self-awareness of their members. Demand rose among members of the military aristocracy for prestigious weapons, whence, importing modern weapons became more important.[173] Weapons copying imported ones were produced locally, and demand for these allowed the prestige and income of craftsmen to rise. This explains an increase in the number of craftsmen living in hill-forts, which gradually were transformed from a collective residence to castles belonging to a single ruler, e.g. the castle of Dabrelis in Satesele.[174]

Evidently war and brigandage were important factors in development of this region. Close links between war and trade characterised the former Viking Age (in Northern Europe this lasted from 100 to 1050). In the Baltic, in particular for the society of the Couronians and that of the Livs this age continued into the early 13th century. The massive (1.4 kg)[175] hoard consisting of silver jewellery and coins has been found at Krimuldas Ragana. The collection might have been buried at the beginning of the 13th century. It consists of 176 antique silver items, including seven Arab dirhams, ten Anglo-Saxon denarii, one Danish denarius, five Scandinavian coin counterfeits and 122 German denarii,[176] as well as jewellery that proved trade links existed with the lands of the Baltic Finns, with Scandinavia and with Scandinavian centres located on the territory of Russia.[177] The Livs of Turaida took part in battles with Estonians, which attests to the military nature of their society. Elders of the Gauja Livs, such as Kaupo, Vesiķis, as well as Dabrelis and Ninnus, together with their people,

[172] Tõnisson, E. *Die Gauja Liven und ihre materielle Kultur*. Tallinn: Eesti raamat, 1974, S. 71.

[173] Ibid., S. 166.

[174] Zemītis, G. Rakstītie un arheoloģiskie avoti par Sateseles pili. *Letonikas otrais kongress. Letonikas avoti: Latvijas piekraste. Arheoloģija, etnogrāfija, vēsture.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 354.–355. lpp.

[175] Jemeļjanovs, E. Krimuldas Raganas depozīts un Gaujas lībiešu vēsturiskā teritorija. *Krimuldas Raganas depozīts: Gaujas lībiešu sudraba rotas un monētas, 10.–13. gadsimts*: katalogs. Rīga: Zinātne, 2012, 8. lpp.

[176] Berga, T. Krimuldas Raganas depozīta monētas. *Krimuldas Raganas depozīts: Gaujas lībiešu sudraba rotas un monētas, 10.–13. gadsimts*, 42.–90. lpp.

[177] Zemītis, G. Krimuldas Raganas depozīta rotas. *Krimuldas Raganas depozīts: Gaujas lībiešu sudraba rotas un monētas, 10.–13. gadsimts*, 19. lpp.

regularly fought battles during the first and second decades of the 13th century.

Kaupo is the only Livonian ruler whom the chronicler describes as being a king, although qualifying this title (*quasi rex*): "… Brother Theodoric… Returned to Germany and took with him a certain Livonian from Treiden, Caupo by name, who was a kind of king and elder of the Livonians…"[178] The baptism of Kaupo evidently implied conversion to Christianity of his citizens, although this process evoked some protests. Kaupo was even expelled and was able to retake his castle only with the help of crusaders and Semigallians.[179] Few names of newly baptised Gauja Livs are given, their protests and actions opposing change of belief of their leader notwithstanding, they were forced to acquiesce.



Fig. 9. Plaque commemorating Kaupo, elder of the Livs, at Krimulda (Kubesele) Church. 2014. Photograph by Guntis Zemītis

Kaupo was not the only individual whom the Germans had to take into account. At the start of his activities in 1200, Bishop Albert demanded hostages, "He therefore demanded hostages from Anno and Caupo, and the elders of the land"[180]; Anno, just as Kaupo, came from Turaida and governed at least one settlement.[181] For his part Kaupo controlled at least two castles.

An older castle that of Dabrelis (*pars Dobrelis*),[182] i.e., Satesele, was located on the left bank of the Gauja.

Given that in 1206 Kaupo assisted by the Germans and Semigallians sought to take Satesele, it is evident that hostile relations had previously existed between the two leaders.

However, the territory controlled by each of the two most influential elders of the Gauja Livs was too small that they might conform to the criteria of an early state.[183] Battles took place at Satesele during the summer of 1212 when Livs, together with a force of Latgalians from Autine led by Rūsiņš, fought against the Germans; the name of Vesiķis is then mentioned for the first time, as a "leader and elder" of the Livs of "the other bank of the Gauja".[184] At that time Kaupo was still leader of the Turaida Livs. It is likely that Vesiķis, as was the case for Ako, was elected to be leader at a time when the Livs renounced their alliance with the Germans and denounced Kaupo. Vesiķis, as the case for Ako, is described by the chronicler as, "a leader and elder". It is possible that Vesiķis had an armed retinue — "his men" (*Vesike cum suis*),[185] and there is an on-going search for traces of his castle in the castle mound at Viešu hill.[186]

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[178] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, VII, 5.
[179] Ibid., X, 10.
[180] Ibid., IV, 4.
[181] Ibid., XI, 5; Mugurēvičs, Ē. Komentāri. *Indriķa hronika*, 343. lpp.
[182] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, X, 10; XVI, 3, 4.
[183] Claessen, H. J. M., Skalnik, P. The early state: theories and hypotheses, pp. 586–589.
[184] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XVI, 4.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Brastiņš, E. *Latvijas pilskalni: Vidzeme.* Rīga: Pieminekļu valde, 1930, p. 69.

Apart from his armed retinue, it appears that a ruler did not have any other instruments of public power at his disposal. Court decisions for the Livs in cases where there was no clear proof available, or which touched upon issues related to change in religion, of war and peace, sacrificial offerings or profaning God, were taken by pagan priests. A striking example is the judgement handed down by a Court of God in Turaida in 1186 where the fate of the missionary Theodericus was decided with the intermediary of a horse of destiny.[187] However, when the matter was related to treason, for example, the case of the Christian Livs Kyrianus and Layan, the matter was examined and sentence passed collectively. The record seems to indicate that the decision was taken by the elders of the land: "Thus it was that by a conspiracy of all the Livs their feet were bound by ropes and they were cut through the middle. They afflicted them with most cruel punishments, tore out their viscera and cut off their arms and legs."[188]

The conclusion is that while individual Livonian elders, particularly those living near the Gauja River, sought to impose one-man rule, and used all means to achieve their aims, including change of their religion, traditions of a military democracy were still significant. These latter were more evident among the Daugava Livs.

Western Latvia

Western Latvia is taken to consist of those peoples along the left bank of the Daugava River which were not influenced by Russian kingdom. Historically Courland was closely connected with Scandinavia. These relations were first established during the Bronze Age when settlers from Scandinavia left behind tomb stones, the so-called Devil's Boats. A Scandinavian colony was present from 650 to 800 at Grobiņa. In time the ethnic make-up of Courland — starting in the 9th century the Couronians expanded northwards, gradually displacing and assimilating the Baltic Finns from their former settlements. Several scholars consider the Baltic Finns of Courland to be Livs, others identify them as Vends, while still others believe that the Livs of Courland and the Vends to have been entirely different ethnic groups.

A Scandinavian burial ground at "Lapsas" in Padure dating from the 9th–early 10th century provides evidence for closer relations between the Couronians and the Livs (Vends) of Courland than has up to now been accepted.[189]

Throughout the entire Iron Age, economic and social development processes in Western Latvia were ahead of analogous developments in the Eastern regions of Latvia.[190] It comes as no surprise that the first indications of statehood relate to the Couronians, although some of these indications are based on legends.

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[187] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, I, 10.

[188] Ibid., X, 5.

[189] Lūsēns, M. Jauns skandināvu kapulauks Kurzemē. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2014.–2015. gadā.* Rīga: Nordik, 2016, 58.–52. lpp.

[190] Vasks, A., Vaska, B., Grāvere, R. *Latvijas aizvēsture, 8500. g. pr. Kr. – 1200. g. pēc Kr.*, 180.–181. lpp.

In the *Saga of Hadingus* Saxo Grammaticus recounts legendary raids in the Baltic carried out by the Danish Viking Hadingus who was captured by Lokers (*Lokerus Curetum tyrannus*), a Couronian tyrant.[191] After the death of Hadingus his son Frotho also travelled to Courland where the King of the Couronians, Dorno (*Dorno Curetum rex*),[192] hoping to starve out the enemy and destroy him with plagues, laid waste to his own land and retreated to a strongly defended city which Frotho captured by stealth by luring the Couronians into wolf pits which had been dug in front of the city.[193] Arnolds Kursis considers the individuals Dorno, Lokers, and Hadingus, to be mythical persons living outside of space and time and who were known only to Saxo Grammaticus.[194]

An account written in the 9th century by Rimbert, Archbishop of Bremen, is on more solid ground in describing an invasion of Courland[195] by the Danes in circa 854–855. The Couronians defeated the Danish fleet and acquired a lot of war booty, but afterwards Olof, the Swedish King at Birka, came to Kursa, and took the city of Seeborg, which has been identified as Grobiņa. Having surrounded Apulia, he demanded hostages and the share belonging to the former ruler, as well as half a pound of silver for every man in Apulia. According to Rimbert the Couronian state (*regnum*) at that time consisted of five districts (*civitates*).

According to Adam of Bremen it was Danes who in the 11th century were the first Roman Catholic missionaries to Courland. A second stream of Christianity in the form of Byzantine Orthodoxy originating in Russia flowed towards Courland during the second half of the 11th century, while the German mission from the Holy Roman Empire began its work in the mid-12th century.[196] Despite Christianity's links to paying tribute, at least for the Orthodox variety, local leaders sought to use it as a weapon to strengthen their own authority. Protection offered by the Christian world in the fight against their pagan fellow tribesmen played a decisive role in strengthening the authority of a ruler in almost all barbarian states.

Archaeological evidence shows that Couronian society at the end of the 12th century and in the 13th century was militarised — weapons are the predominant article found in the graves of men, and even helmets were unearthed in the ancient cemeteries at Durbes Dīri and Lībagu Sārāji. This might indicate the fact of a chiefdom based on the principles of a military democracy. Information about the social structure may be gleaned from written records which verify the fact of slavery existing among the Couronians already at the beginning of the 10th century. This is described in the saga of Egill Skallagrímsson.[197]

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[191] Saxo Grammaticus. I. Accessible at: https://archive.org/stream/saxonisgrammatic00saxouoft/saxonisgrammatic00 saxouoft_djvu.txt (site last visited 31.05.2016).

[192] Ibid., II, p. 39.

[193] Ibid.

[194] *Mīti un īstenība: Ziemeļnieku sāgas par seno Latviju un latviešiem*. 2., labotais un papildinātais izdevums. Tulkojis, komentējis un sakārtojis A. Kursis. Stokholma: ARAR, 1998, 57. lpp.

[195] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 1. burtn. Izd. A. Švābe. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūts, 1937, Nr. 5, 3–5. lpp.

[196] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Priekšvārds. *Indriķa hronika*, 7.–12. lpp.

[197] Ibid., Nr. 10, 8.–10. lpp.

The disposition of archaeological sites dating from the 10th–13th centuries testifies to expansion by the Couronians northwards, compressing the Baltic Finn residents into the very north of Courland, or even expelling them altogether from Courland.[198]

An account of this process is found in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*: "At that time the Vends were excessively humble and very poor. Once they were driven from the environs of the Venta, a river in Kursa, they lived at the Old Hill located close by where Riga is today. They were again driven from this place by the Couronians, and many of them were killed; others took refuge with the Letts, lived with them and rejoiced at the arrival of a priest."[199] The Couronians often went on overseas raids. It appears that their adoption of a lifestyle similar to that of the Vikings hindered emergence of united statehood. Overseas raids facilitated persistence of a chiefdom — these raids presented opportunities for many young energetic leaders to try their luck and quickly to gain wealth and fame.

It is known that on 28 December 1230 their ruler was Lamekins, who was described as King (*Lammekinus rex*).[200] Baudouin d'Aulne, a Papal vice-legate who had come on mission to Riga formally agreed on that date with the elders of Western Kursa, the latter acting on behalf of 14 named lands (styled *kiligunda*, a term from the Livonian language) located on both banks of the Venta River, that the Couronians would convert to Christianity in return for which they would remain free.[201]

A. Švābe[202] and Ē. Mugurēvičs[203] identified these lands as part of Ziemeļpiemare and Rietumu Bandava, indicating that the state ruled by Lamekins in 1230 encompassed in whole or in part the following Couronian territories or lands: Ventava, Western Bandava and Piemare (*Bihavelanc*).[204] A. Švābe and I. Šterns, concluded that Lamekins, in fact, did not rule over the largest part of Kursa.[205]

Undoubtedly Lamekins governed several districts, but his actions were not those of a sovereign ruler, rather he was spokesman for the interests of elders of these lands, i.e. he had been chosen to act being regarded as their most capable representative. One can see here similarities with the approach followed by the Prussians who selected leaders for their uprising in 1260 from among the most influential of their elders.

Developments in Western Latvia appear to have been close to the Scandinavian model, where peasants-warriors were still free people and assemblies of the people — things — were still empowered.[206]

The term *vak* which is found on territory formerly inhabited by the Baltic Finns, has a meaning similar to the Latvian term *pagasts*, or civil parish. A castle and surrounding district was a larger administrative territorial unit. Each of these units con-

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[198] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 189. lpp.
[199] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, X, 14.
[200] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 1. burtn., Nr. 162.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Švābe, A. Senā Kursa. *Straumes un avoti*. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1938, 86. lpp.
[203] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Novadu veidošanās un to robežas Latvijas teritorijā (12. gs. – 16. gs. vidus), 63. lpp.
[204] Švābe, A. Senā Kursa, 86. lpp.
[205] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture, 1180–1290: krustakari*, 109. lpp.
[206] Vasks, A., Vaska, B., Grāvere, R. *Latvijas aizvēsture, 8500. g. pr. Kr. – 1200. g. pēc Kr.*, 184. lpp.

sisted of several civil parishes and hamlets, which were subordinated to a ruler living in a castle.[207]

The Semigallians may also be considered to be part of the population of Western Latvia, although linguistically they were related to the group of Eastern Baltic peoples. Belonging in this case relates to political developments, which for the Semigallians, as for the Couronians, differed from those which occurred in Eastern Latvia.



Fig. 10. Veckuldīga hill-fort. 2002. Photograph by Juris Urtāns

Despite mention in Russian sources that the Semigallians are one of the peoples who paid tribute to Polotsk, this dependency cannot have lasted for a long. Stimuli for development of statehood among the Semigallians may be traced arising during the Viking Age. Somewhat surprisingly the Semigallians are referred to rather often in written Scandinavian records. The Saga of Yngvar the Far-travelled recounts that Olof the Swedish King sent his sons Anund and Yngvar with three ships to the Semigallians (*Seimgaler*) to collect tribute. Having come to the Semigallians they convened a meeting at which they convinced the chieftains assembled (*höfpingjum*) and the King (*kong*) of the need to pay tribute. Three chieftains refused and gathered their forces. When appraised of this the King beseeched Anund and Yngvar to move against the chieftains and lent them his army. A battle ensued and there were many casualties before the chieftains fled. The chieftain who had protested the most against paying tribute was captured and hanged, but the other two chieftains escaped. Anund and Yngvar, laden with Semigallian gold and silver and other items, returned to King Olof.[208]

The Swedish archaeologist Birger Nerman has dated these events to have happened during the period 1035–1041 and concluded that during that time Semigallia paid tribute to the Swedes.[209] There is no doubt that the Saga of Yngvar the Far-traveller describes historical events of the 10th century; however, there are no other sources to verify the veracity of this saga. There are no other records to confirm the fact of the Semigallians paying tribute to the Swedes.[210]

This information is of interest to us as regards the principles on which state organisation was based. The fact of decisions being taken at an assembly of elders of a land (chieftains), as well as the fact that several participants disagreed, and even resorted to armed conflict reflected the actual situation not only in Scandinavia, but also, it appears, in Semigallia.

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[207] Apals, J., Mugurēvičs, Ē. Vēlais dzelzs laikmets (agrie viduslaiki), 800.–1200. g., 366.–367. lpp.

[208] *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 1. burtn., Nr. 11, 10. lpp.; Kursis, A. *Mīti un īstenība: Ziemeļnieku sāgas par seno Latviju un latviešiem*, 21. lpp.

[209] Birger, N. *Sveriges första storhetstid*. Stockholm: Skoglund, 1942, s. 215.

[210] Ibid., s. 22.



Fig. 11. Tērvete hill-fort. 2008. Photograph by Juris Urtāns

The contacts of Semigallians with Scandinavia are reflected in archaeological material. Excellent examples are two Scandinavian style three-wing brooches dating from around the year 1000 which were found at the burial ground in Dreņģeri–Čunkāni.[211] Arab dirhams which had previously been brought by Scandinavian traders to the territory of Latvia were discovered in the cemeteries located at Jaunsvirlaukas Ciemalde and Gaideļi–Viduči. Scales used by traders have been found in Semigallian graves dating from the second half of the 10th century onwards.[212]

Russian sources insist that Semigallians paid tribute to Russians. Even if this was the case at one time, victory in 1106 by the Semigallians over the brothers Vseslavich, Princes of Polotsk, who had invaded Semigallia inflicting on them the loss of about nine thousand men,[213] terminated any obligation to pay tribute, as well as arrested the westward advance of Orthodoxy. Several Russian researchers admit that Polotsk was incapable of regularly collecting any tribute from Western Semigallia.[214]

Seven large districts constituted Semigallia during the 13th century, and they had started to form earlier in terms of concentration of settled places. These districts were Tērvete, Mežotne, Dobele, Dobene, Spārnene, Silene, and Upmale.[215] Semigallia during the 12th and 13th centuries was not united, yet the rulers of Tērvete were at the centre of activities during the 13th century: Viestards at the beginning of the century, and Nameisis during the second half of the century, around 1270–1281.[216]

Viestards is the only indigenous individual described in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* as high-born: "…Viesthard, a noble of the Semgalls (*maior natu*)."[217] He is also described as leader of the Semigallian army,[218] leader,[219] and in the *Rhyme Chronicle* as a King (*konic Vesters*).[220] Viestards governed the Western part of Semigallia, and his seat of power was Tērvete Castle. Viestards first collaborated with the Germans, and

[211] Atgāzis, M. First finds of three-armed (trefoil) brooches in Latvia. *Die Kontakte zwischen Ostbaltikum und Sandinavien im frühen Mittelalter*. Sockholm, 1992, S. 19–32.

[212] Radiņš, A. Zemgaļu un skandināvu sakari 10.–12. gadsimtā. Tirdzniecības uzbūves daži aspekti. *Pētījumi zemgaļu senatnē*. Rīga, 2004, 79. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti Nr. 10).

[213] http://old-russian.chat.ru/04povest.htm (site last visited 31.05.2016).

[214] Хрусталёв, Д. Г. *Северные крестоносци. Русь в борье за сферы влияния в Восточной Прибалтике XII–XIII вв.*, с. 19.

[215] Vasks, A., Vaska, B., Grāvere, R. *Latvijas aizvēsture 8500. g. pr. Kr. – 1200. g. pēc Kr.*, 181. lpp.

[216] Švābe, A. Nameisis. *Latviešu konversācijas vārdnīca*, 14. sēj. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1936, 28387. sl.

[217] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, IX, 2.

[218] Ibid., IX, 2; XII, 2.

[219] Ibid., X, 10.

[220] *Atskaņu hronika*, 1700. rinda.

then from 1219 onwards he fought vigorously against the crusaders.[221] Viestards led the Semigallians for at least 25 years, starting from 1205 when he was first mentioned in the *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* up until the period 1228–1230 when accounts of his activities are found in the *Rhymed Chronicle.*

In the *Rhymed Chronicle* Nameisis (Nameise, Nameyxe) is presented as a leader (*houbetman*,[222] *houbet*[223]). In his record of investigations written in 1312, Franciscus de Moliano describes the ruler named Nameiks, as King of Semigallia (*rex Semigalie*),[224] alternatively, as a King or Lord from Semigallia (*quendam rex de Semigalia seu dominum*),[225] or even as a nobleman from Semigallia (*vir nobilis de Semigalia*).[226]



Fig. 12. Mežotne hill-fort.2001. Photograph by Juris Urtāns

Both Viestards and Nameisis ruled over a large region, and each had a large army at his disposal. Viestards could give over part of his army to Kaupo, in case of attacks on Kaupo's castle. It is significant that in both *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* and in the *Rhymed Chronicle* mention is made not of a Semigallian army but an army of Viestards and Nameisis. It is underlined in the *Rhymed Chronicle* that Nameisis gathered his army, and not that they had chosen Nameisis as leader.[227]

Nameisis and his followers departed for Lithuania after Semigallia was subjugated.

That both rulers sought to have power over all of Semigallia is incontrovertible fact, yet only Nameisis was ascribed the title of King of all Semigallia (*rex*).[228] At the end of the 12th century, the Semigallians already had resisted German attempts to consolidate a foothold at Ikšķile and even attempted to destroy the stone castle built there.[229] Evidently they saw this as a threat to their port at Daugmale.[230] Although there is no explicit description of this action it may be assumed that it was led by Viestards. In 1219, Viestards grew concerned by German consolidation at Mežotne Castle which he then attacked.[231] It is significant that during the period when Viestards and Nameisis

[221] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XXIII, 4.
[222] *Atskaņu hronika*, 8656. rinda.
[223] Ibid., 9193. rinda.
[224] *Franciska no Moliano izmeklēšanas protokols 1312. gadā: Liecinieku nopratināšana par notikumiem Livonijā 13.–14. gadsimta mijā*. No latīņu valodas tulkojis, priekšvārdu un komentārus sarakstījis Ē. Mugurēvičs. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2010, VII liecinieks, 33. paragrāfs, 415. lpp.
[225] Ibid., XXIII liecinieks, 33. paragrāfs, 415. lpp.
[226] Ibid., XXII liecinieks, 183. paragrāfs, 415. lpp.
[227] *Atskaņu hronika*, 8654.–8657. rinda.
[228] Zeids, T. *Feodālisms Livonijā*, 51. lpp.
[229] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, I, 6.
[230] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Priekšvārds. *Atskaņu hronika*, 17. lpp.
[231] Henricus Lettus. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, XXIII, 4.

were in action, there is no mention of any other Semigallian leaders, with the exception of the elders, Madis and Gailis.[232]

A. Švābe admits that, at least during wartime, Nameisis had power over the other elders of lands (*singali domini*), but there is no information about the nature of these relations in times of peace.[233]

The fact of Viestards being described as high-born, as well as the fact of Tērvete being the principal centre of power in Semigallia for an entire century, may indicate that a Semigallian dynasty was in the process of formation. A. Nikžentaitis assumed that Nameisis descended from Viestards, and, therefore, a Semigallian ruling class might have formed. Formation of dynasty is an important argument favouring the conclusion that a state order had come into existence in Semigallia.[234]

However, in separate cases Semigallians elected their leader. This might explain the recommendation made in 1258 by Schabe to expel the German Vogts and clergymen.[235] There is no indication that Schabe was ruler of the Semigallians because he is simply described as a hero (*vromer helt*).[236]

The question remains unanswered as to whether the Semigallians had developed instruments of public power which ensured governance — tax collection and respect for the law. If in fact, the Semigallians had paid tribute to the Swedes and to the Russians, the territorial division of civil parishes should have appeared, as was the case for Latgalians. Like the Livs and Latgalians ought to have been familiar with the concept of the armed retinue of a leader. Two episodes described in the *Rhymed Chronicle* lead to the conclusion that the interests of a ruler were protected by courts. In 1279, once the Semigallians led by Nameisis regained Tērvete, a court heard the case of a member of the Brethren of the Sword who had insulted the Semigallian leader by slapping him in public.[237] Another episode relates to the battle at Garoze. The Semigallians won a brilliant victory at Garoze (*ad locum Grose)*, a tributary of Lielupe, on 26 March 1287, despite losing their leader, whose name is not recorded in the *Rhymed Chronicle*.[238] In both cases the punishment of someone who had insulted or killed a ruler of the Semigallians was similar: he was to be put into a circle formed by soldiers who then would chop him up with their weapons[239] or strike him down with bludgeons.[240]

This is evidence for a high degree of personal authority of the ruler, as well as a measure of individual legal protection.

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[232] Ibid., XXIII, 8.

[233] Švābe, A. Nameisis, 28387. sl.

[234] Nikžentaitis, A. Zur Frage des Fürstenschicht in der baltischen Gesellschaft des 13. Jahrhunderts, S. 333–334.

[235] *Atskaņu hronika*, 5247., 5255. rinda.

[236] Ibid., 5246. rinda.

[237] *Franciska no Moliano izmeklēšanas protokols 1312. gadā: Liecinieku nopratināšana par notikumiem Livonijā 13.–14. gadsimta mijā*, XXIV liecinieks, 17. paragrāfs.

[238] *Vartberges Hermaņa Livonijas hronika*. No latīņu valodas tulkojis, priekšvārdu un komentārus sarakstījis Ē. Mugurēvičs. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2005, 61, 191.–192., 194. lpp.

[239] *Atskaņu hronika*, 8749.–8755. rinda.

[240] Ibid., 10698.–10706. rinda.

The amount of cereals which were known to have been stored at Tērvete hill-fort also indicates the extent of the personal authority of the ruler of the Semigallians — a 10–25 cm thick layer of stored cereals covered 160 m^2 — or approximately 18 tonnes. These stored cereals may be dated to the 12th century based on articles found near-by. The remains of a number of other grain storage areas or barns were discovered at this hill-fort; barley was found adjacent to one wall, rye and wheat near another wall, and peas near a third wall.[241] These substantial amounts of stored food may be evidence for their being collected in lieu of taxes.

The Semigallians were the only ethnic group living on the territory of Latvia whose ruler controlled practically an entire ethnic territory.

Conclusions

Dynamic processes were under way on the territory of Latvia during the 9th–13th centuries. During the Iron Age, particularly during the middle period (5th–8th centuries) processes set in which resulted in the stratification of society. These processes were fostered by the influx of precious metals during the 5th and 6th centuries and the development of economic contacts, beginning with the 10th century. Gradually rights evolved for the inheritance of movable and immovable goods, and, finally, social status and power. A ruling class emerged imbued with self-importance which was above their sense of ethnic belonging. Rulers extended their sway to ever larger political entities — lands (*terrae*). A ruler enforced his authority through his military retinue of a ruler, while the lands, as was the case in Scandinavia and in the Russian kingdoms, were subdivided into smaller units — civil parishes which defined the area over which taxes were collected as well as court districts. The system of civil parishes is likely to have come from Scandinavia, thanks to close economic and political links, which arose after Scandinavian colonies were established in Western Latvia, in Grobiņa, and, as recent studies have demonstrated, also in a settlement close to Kuldīga. The other way in which civil parishes were set up relates to tribute paid by Eastern Latvia to Polotsk and Novgorod, where they were organised along the same lines as in Russia for the purpose of gathering tribute. However, it is credible that civil parishes in Russian kingdoms took shape after Scandinavian model and, thus, they did not differ substantially from civil parishes in Western Latvia. The efforts of various leaders to extend their rule to larger areas and to retain this power for their descendants met with varying degrees of success. The oldest traditions of statehood appeared in Courland (from the 9th century onwards); however, Kursa remained disunited during the 13th century, consisting of several lands, while the rulers of a larger association of lands (e.g. Lamekins) appear still to have been elected to their position. The Semigallians were closest to exercising consolidated power over their entire ethnic territory. The Latgalians were successful in concentrating power in the hands of a single family, both at Tālava and Jersika, but these early forms of state had lost a key component of statehood — their sovereignty.

[241] *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 247. lpp.

The territory of the Livs contained two relatively different regions — the lands of the Daugava and the Gauja Livs. However, exercise of power here evidently was based on ancient traditions of a military democracy; the attempts of several leaders (i.e. Kaupo) to strengthen their authority by changing their religion, and becoming an ally of Western Christians, only led to armed conflicts.

About the author

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Muntis Auns

LIVONIA AND LATVIANS

The article presents insight into various aspects of the social and economic life of the indigenous peoples of Latvia during the Livonian period. After the end of the 13th century, Crusades in the Baltic, the local inhabitants retained their status as free men, a measure of self-rule and freedom to follow a traditional way of life; however, manors which had already appeared during the 13th century rapidly spread during the second half of the 15th century, which led to an increased corvée and taxes, as well as restrictions on personal freedom. Unification of the political, economic, and cultural space of Livonia generally facilitated the consolidation of its resident Baltic peoples, together with assimilation of the Livs.

Keywords: Livonia, Latvians, Livs, vassals, peasantry, ethnic make-up, demography

The political structure of Livonia

As the result of the Crusades in the Baltic a number of small inter-linked groups of dominions were formed during the 13th century on the territory of modern Latvia and Estonia, which acquired the geographic, and to a certain extent — political, collective descriptive term *Livonia*.[1] These were, in addition to the State of the Livonian Order[2] which was the largest of these in terms of territory, the Archbishopric of Riga, the

[1] The name "Livonia" (in Latin, *Livonia*, in German, *Livland*) at different times has meant different things. It referred to the total territory of modern Latvia and Estonia (13th–16th cent.), or only part of this, for example, the territory inhabited by the Livs, or later also the Governorate of Livonia which comprised the territory of present-day Vidzeme in Latvia and that of modern South Estonia (see also: Koski, M. Kas dažādos vēstures posmos ir slēpies zem nosaukuma Livonija? *Lībieši. Vēsture, valoda un kultūra*. Blumberga, R., Mekeleinens, T., Pajusalu, K. (sast.). Rīga: Līvõ Kultūr sidām, 2013, 65.–94. lpp.). Given that the term has multiple meanings, Livonia in German historiography when referring to the Middle Ages is called Old Livonia — *Alt-Livland*. In this paper the term "Livonia" refers to the late Middle Ages i.e. the territory of modern Latvia and Estonia and all domains within this territory. Another term for Livonia has been introduced into the literature, the Land of Mary (*Terra Mariana*). The Blessed Virgin Mary was indeed chosen as the protector of Livonia, but describing Livonia as *Terra Mariana* is terminology influenced by 19th century romanticism.

[2] The State of the Livonian Order refers to the domains ruled by the German Order in Livonia, in fact, by an autonomous branch of this order — the German Order in Livonia (*der Deutsche Orden in Livland*); the author of this paper employs the traditional shortened form of the Livonian branch, the "Livonian Order".

Bishopric of Courland (in Latvia), the Bishopric of Tartu (Dorpat), and that of Saare–Lääne/Ösel–Wiek (in Estonia). Denmark initially sought to establish a presence in Livonia, but after the uprising of St George's Night (1343–1345) it sold the territory of Northern Estonia to the Livonian Order. Livonia in the form it took during the Middle Ages ceased to exist early during the Livonian War (1558–1583),[3] and its lands were then fought over by Poland–Lithuania, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark.

The subjects of Livonia were closely linked, but this did not prevent frequent conflicts arising among them — up to and including open hostilities. The Livonian Order was most active in this regard, and given its intrinsic military nature, it sought to exert hegemony over all of Livonia. Nevertheless, the root cause of conflicts is to be found in the complex manner whereby Livonia came into being, rather than the ambitions of the Livonian Order, so that the division of competences were unclear between it as a branch of the German Order and those of the Archbishop of Riga.[4] A key issue in this struggle was the rule over the city of Riga, which emerged out of this conflict between the Order and the Archbishop as a third power, switching its allegiance between both of these according to circumstances. However, there were no similar conflicts in Reval (Tallinn), the second largest city in Livonia, where no arguments arose between the city and the Livonian Order, and their relations both economic and political, were largely friendly.[5]

At the same time, Livonian subjects looked for closer cooperation possibilities among themselves, which resulted in creation of the Diet during the early 15th century. Four estates were represented in the Diet: the prelates (the Archbishop and Bishops), the Livonian Order, vassals, and the towns, each of them creating a separate curia. The work of the Diet has led to Livonia often being described as a confederation of states, but the decisions of the Diet being without legal force and their implementation resulting either from acute need or voluntary action tend to oppose use of the description of a "confederation". The primary role of the Diet was to organise the foreign policy and defence policy of Livonia, which was successful, while decisions on internal policy matters could rarely be achieved which were acceptable and binding on all, and

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[3] Gotthard Kettler, Master of the Livonian Order, signed, on 28 November 1561, in Vilnius the Submission Treaty (*Pacta subiectionis*), on the basis of which the lands of the Livonian Order subjected themselves to Sigismund II Augustus, ruler of Poland–Lithuania. Wilhelm, Archbishop of Riga was a co-signatory of this Treaty, whereas the nobility of Northern Estonia, together with the city of Reval, had already sworn allegiance to the King of Sweden, Erik XIV, on 4–6 July 1561.

[4] Eva Eihmane has characterised the situation as "the collision of two truths". The Order of the Brethren of the Sword, which was founded in 1202 as a crusading military force in the Baltic was subordinate to the Bishops of Livonia. This subordination continued after this Order was, in , incorporated into the German Order, following their defeat at the Battle of Saule (1236). At the same time, the German Order was directly subordinate to the Pope and was independent of any other political or spiritual authority, whereupon a contradiction arose between privileges accorded the German Order by the Pope, and the true division of power in Livonia (Eihmane, E. *Rīgas arhibīskapa un Vācu ordeņa cīņas par varu viduslaiku Livonijā*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2012, 13.–15. lpp.).

[5] Hellmann, M. Der Deutsche Orden und die Stadt Riga. Arnold, U. (Hrsg.) *Stadt und Orden: das Verhältnis des Deutschen Ordens zu den Städten in Livland, Preussen und im Deutschen Reich.* Marburg: Elwert, 1993, S. 1–33; Kreem, J. *The Town and its Lord: Reval and the Teutonic Order (in the Fifteenth Century)*. Tallinn: Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, 2002 (Tallinna Linnaarhiivi Toimetised, 6).



Fig. 1. Livonia

their implementation was hampered by the absence of an executive body to monitor their implementation.[6]

The most important foreign policy challenges for Livonia came from Lithuania and Russia. These relations were turbulent, as despite unremitting military conflicts Lithuania and Russian Principalities (Pskov and Novgorod) were both important trading partners of Livonia. After the Battle of Grunewald (1410), and, in particular, after defeats suffered by the Livonian Order at Ukmerge, or Pabaiskas (1435), relations between Livonia and Lithuania improved, this partially due to strengthening of the position of the Grand Principality of Moscow, presenting greater threats to both Livonia and Lithuania. Finally, in 1558, the invasion of Livonia by Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible of Moscow in Livonia initiated the rapid demise of this unique political entity and most of the territory of Livonia becoming first a Protectorate of Lithuania, and after that subject to Poland–Lithuania.

Inhabitants

The indigenous inhabitants of Livonia consisted of two ethnic groups — the Balts (Latgalians, Selonians, Semigallians, Couronians) and the Baltic Finns (Estonians, Livs), while a relatively small German community constituted the absolute majority of the privileged class — the nobility, the clergy, burghers — owners of city property.

The Baltic ethnic groups inhabited the largest part of the territory of modern Latvia, while the Finnish ethnic groups lived in Estonia, as well as in Northern Kurzeme and the north-west part of Vidzeme in today's Latvia. The external borders of Livonia, which changed over time,[7] partially corresponded to the furthest borders of the territory inhabited by Latgalians in Eastern Latvia, while that part of the territory of the Couronians, Semigallians, and Selonians which was not conquered by the Germans was integrated into the Lithuanian state. The territories inhabited by Balts (taking into account assimilation of the Finnish inhabitants and a few corrections of historical origin) can be seen in the ethnographic regions of modern Latvia — in Kurzeme, Zemgale, in Sēlija (part of the modern region of Zemgale), while the territory of the Latgalians covers both Vidzeme and Latgale.

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[6] Misāns, I. Organisation und Ablauf der livländischen Land- und Städtetage. *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands*, Vol. 51, 2005, S. 49–62; Piirimäe, P. Staatenbund oder Ständestaat? Der livländische Landtag im Zeitalter Wolters von Plettenberg (1494–1535). *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, Nr. 8, 2013, S. 40–80.

[7] Stern, C. Livlands Ostgrenze im Mittelalter vom Peipus bis zur Düna. *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, Bd. 23. Riga: N. Kymmel, 1924–1926, S. 195–240; Jakovļeva, M. Robežas un administratīvais iedalījums Latvijas teritorijā 16. gs. otrajā pusē un 17. gs. *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 108.–113. lpp.; Jakovļeva, M. Sēlija Kurzemes hercogistes administratīvajā sistēmā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis, A daļa. Sociālās un humanitārās zinātnes*, Nr. 3–4, 2003, 135.–137. lpp. For details about the borders of Livonia in Estonia see: Selart. A. Zur Sozialgeschichte der Ostgrenze Estlands im Mittelalter. *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, Bd. 47, Nr. 4, (1998), S. 520–543.

Archaeological findings allow determining the borders of territories inhabited by Livs in Western Vidzeme. It is likely that there was an Estonian presence in the surrounding area of Rūjiena in Northern Vidzeme at least until the 13th century, while up to now sites dating from the Late Iron Age in this area have not been investigated by archaeologists. According to Paul Johansen, there is evidence for Latvian presence in this area only from the 15th century onwards.[8]

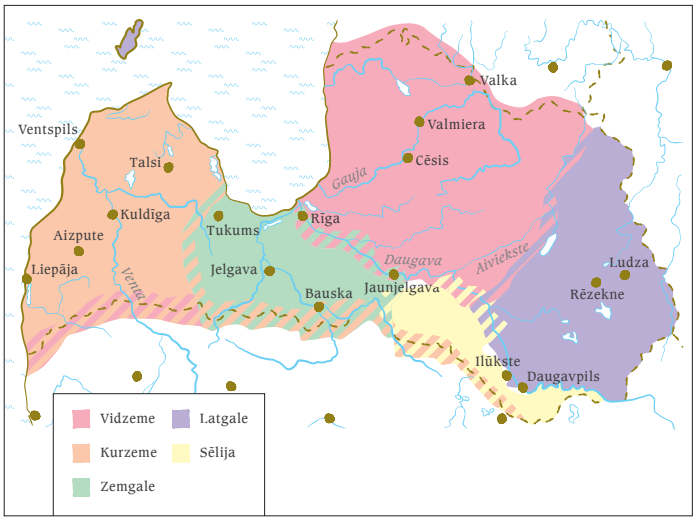


Fig. 2. The historical ethnographic regions of Latvia (Source: *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 46. lpp.)

It is odd that the Baltic Finns or the Livs of Courland are not mentioned in any documents from the Middle Ages, except in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, despite archaeological findings indicating that their presence is distinctly identifiable as separate from that of the Couronians, and, furthermore, that the Liv language was spoken longer in Courland (retention of the language was promoted by contacts between the Livs of Northern Courland including inter-marriage with Estonians from Saaremaa) than elsewhere in Latvia. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* states that Couronians drove out the Vends from the vicinity of the Venta River, and later drove them further away from where the latter had settled near Riga, until the Vends settled among Latgalians at the town of Cēsis (the German name for this town being *Wenden*). Archaeological studies of the burial ground of the Vends in Cēsis have shown these people belonged to Baltic Finnish culture, rather than being Slavs, as stated occasionally, and today the term *Vends* is used in the archaeology of Latvia as a technical term, to refer to the Baltic Finns who lived in Northern Courland.[9]

Another group of Baltic Finnish people came to live in the territory of Latvia during the mid-15th century — the so-called *krieviņi*[10] (in German *Kreewinen*), whom the Livonian Order brought to Livonia, from the region of Ingria after invasion of the

[8] Johansen, P. Bruchstücke des Landbuches der Ordensmeister für Rujen und Helmet. *Beiträge zur Kunde Estlands*, Bd. 21, H. 1. Tallinn, 1937, S. 43–61.

[9] The question of the Vends is discussed in: Vasks, A. Vendu jautājums Latvijas aizvēsturē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 26. laid., 2012, 105.–112. lpp.; Zemītis, G. Lībieši. Senākā vēsture (10.–16. gadsimts). *Lībieši. Vēsture, valoda un kultūra*, 96.–104. lpp. An opinion has been expressed that use of the term *curones* in 13th century sources designates both the Balts living in Courland, and the Finns who also lived there (Koski, M. Kas dažādos vēstures posmos ir slēpies zem nosaukuma Livonija, 74. lpp.).

[10] Phonetically equal to a diminutive form of the Latvian term for Russians, i.e. *krievi*. — Translator's note.

Principality of Novgorod, and settled them in the vicinity of Bauska. According to linguists, these people must have been the Votes, who were related to Estonians, and whose presence was last recorded at the beginning of the 19th century.[11] The Votes also lived as indigenous inhabitants in the vicinity of Narva in Northern Estonia.

Germans started to settle in the Baltic lands during the period of their conquest. In contrast to Prussia where many German colonists settled after this territory was conquered by the German Order, the ethnic composition of Livonia changed only slightly. It is believed that until the mid-16th century the relative number of Germans in the Estonian inhabited areas of Livonia did not exceed 5%, and 10% in the Latvian area.[12] After the Livonian Order was defeated at the Battle of Durbe (1260), the Vice Master of the Livonian Order invited, in April 1261, the inhabitants of Lübeck to go to Courland, so as to help Christianise the pagans (knights and soldiers were promised to gain in fief 10–60 manses (= German *Hufe*) of land, while peasants were promised to be able to cultivate as much land as they could wish[13]; however, this appeal did not produce any response.[14]

The fact of no influx of German peasants into Livonia turned out to be a crucial factor influencing the future ethnic history of this land, since conditions were not created which would have promoted Germanisation of the indigenous ethnos.[15] Failure of any colonisation effort to arise is often rationalised by recalling the peasants' fear of sea voyages. More plausible reasons for the reluctance of German peasants to settle in Livonia, according to Heinz von zur Mühlen, relate to the climate and fertility of the region, political and military insecurity, and a lack of capital.[16] However, even these reasons were cast into doubt some time ago by Hans Mortensen, recalling that, for example, in Prussia, peasant settling did not occur sporadically, but was a planned and stepwise process, with the purpose of securing their dominant position, and the economic stability of the new arrivals; however, this wave did not reach Livonia (thanks also to political complications that set in during the 15th century).[17]

As already noted, the German community was the absolute majority of the privileged class in Livonia. Germans dominated trade, and the crafts in towns were largely

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[11] Blumberga, R. *Lībieši dokumentos un vēstulēs. Somijas zinātnieku ekspedīcijas pie lībiešiem*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2006, 30.–31. lpp.; Zemītis, G. Baltijas jūras somu vēsturiskais liktenis Latvijā (9.–20. gadsimts). *Pa somugru pēdām Baltijas jūras krastā. Starptautiskās zinātniskās konferences materiāli, 2009. gada 23. aprīlis, Turaida*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2009, 18. lpp.

[12] Raag, R. Sprachen der Bevölkerung in den baltischen Landen. *Die Baltischen Lande im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung: Livland, Estland, Ösel, Ingermanland, Kurland und Lettgallen. Stadt, Land und Konfession 1500–1721*. T. 1. Münster: Aschendorff, 2009, S. 16.

[13] LUB [*Liv-, Est- und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch*] henceforward LUB, Abt. 1, Bd. 1–12. Reval, Riga, Moskau, 1853–1910; Abt. 2, Bd. 1–3. Riga, Moskau: J. Deubner, 1900–1914], 1: 362.

[14] This situation was not unique — Gediminas, the ruler of Lithuania had also sent a letter, in 1323, to cities in Germany, and to Gotland, inviting peasants to come to Lithuania, promising them various incentives (*Gedimino laiškai*. Vilnius: Mintis, 1966, p. 43).

[15] Becoming German meant gaining higher social status, but this process was scarcely significant in Livonia.

[16] Mühlen, H. von zur. Livland von der Christianisierung bis zum Ende seiner Selbständigkeit (etwa 1180–1561). Pistohlkors, G. von (Hrsg.). *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*. Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1994, S. 123.

[17] Mortensen, H. Warum fehlt die ordenszeitliche deutsche Bauernsiedlung im Baltikum? *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse*, Nr. 12, 1944, S. 293–298.

in their hands, with the result that they lived principally in towns and administrative centres. The clergy of Livonia originated from Holstein and Northern Saxony, some also from Westphalia and Eastern Saxony, most members of the German Order came from Westphalia and Thuringia, and later from the Rhineland, with places of origin of vassals — regions of Lower Germany, also Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg,[18] whereas Germans came to live in cities — in Riga and in Reval — largely from Westphalia, Lower Saxony, and Rhineland.[19] Given that the immigrants came from different rather autonomous German lands, it is not surprising that the Saxons, Westphalians, Friesians, and others, who came to Livonia (and also those who went to Gotland and elsewhere in Scandinavia) only became Germans once there, i.e. their common identity was based on being different from the local inhabitants.[20]

Swedes who had immigrated from Sweden and Finland settled on islands and in the North-West part of Estonia from the 13th century onwards.[21]

Few Russians lived in Livonia.[22] They stayed in the larger towns chiefly as traders, but some were also house owners-residents (burghers). A community formed in Riga of traders who came from the region of the Upper Daugava River — the Russian settlement (*Russche dorp*), sited within the city walls, and which remained there until the Livonian War. However, in the regulations which governed life of the city Russians are not identified as a separate ethnic group, and this leads to the conclusion that they formed a marginal group within the residents of the city.[23] This refers to Russians as permanent residents of the city; by contrast Russian traders' activities were very significant. It is possible that a few Russians (more as individuals rather than a community) lived in districts bordering on the Principalities of Polotsk and Pskov.[24]

Several estimates have been made of the absolute number of residents of Livonia in the Middle Ages, of which the most authoritative has to be that by F. Benninghoven. In his opinion, there were approximately 215–300 thousand residents in Livonia in the

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[18] Mühlen, H., von zur. Eroberer, Stammbevölkerung und Nachbarn Livlands bis 1561. Schlau, W. (Hrsg.). *Tausend Jahre Nachbarschaft: die Völker des baltischen Raumes und die Deutschen.* München: Bruckmann, 1995, S. 42–43.

[19] Feyerabend, L. *Die Rigaer und Revaler Familiennamen im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Herkunft der Bürger*. Köln, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1985, S. XI.

[20] Blomkvist, N. *The Discovery of the Baltic: the Reception of the Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005, pp. 664–668.

[21] Their numbers could have been 3500–5500 during the 16th–17th centuries (Raag, R. Sprachen der Bevölkerung in den baltischen Landen, S. 16). The majority of Swedes left Estonia for Sweden during the Second World War.

[22] In fact, one ought to speak about a Russian and a Belarusian community, but the border between these two ethnic groups was diffuse.

[23] Selart, A. Russians in Livonian Towns in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. Keene, D., Nagy, B., Szende, K. (eds.). *Segregation – Integration – Assimilation. Religious and Ethnic Groups in the Medieval Towns of Central and Eastern Europe*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009, p. 37.

[24] *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* mentions that Russians lived in Jersika alongside the Daugava trade route at the beginning of the 13th century, and this has led to discussion as to whether these were Orthodox Latgalians or members of a Russian military retinue (different opinions have been expressed about the ethnicity of Vissewalde, ruler of Jersika, and of Vetseke or Vjachko, ruler of Koknese). Archaeological investigations at sites near Jersika and Koknese have failed to provide evidence for the existence of a Russian community at these centres.

13th century, of which 105–147 thousand lived in modern Estonia, and 109–154 thousand, in Latvia; the population density in both Estonia and Latvia was low, 2–3 persons per square kilometre.[25]

Table 1

Population numbers of the territory of Latvia during the 13th–16th centuries

	13th century (according to F. Benninghoven)		Mid-16th century (according to E. Dunsdorfs)
Ethnos	Number of ploughlands	Number of residents, thousands	Number of residents, thousands
Livs (in modern Western Vidzeme)	3000	15–21	179
Latgalians west of the line Aiviekste – Pededze (in modern Vidzeme)	6000	30–42	
Latgalians east of the line Aiviekste – Pededze (in modern Latgale)	4000 ?	20–28 ?	90
Selonians	1000	5–7	135
Semigallians	3500	17–24	
Couronians	4500	22–31	
Total		109–154	404

Edgars Dunsdorfs attempted to estimate the population of Livonia at the end of its existence in the mid-16th century. He calculated these numbers, admitting the results not to be safe, to be around 400 000 inhabitants (at least 340 000, but no more than 465 000), and the average population density — 6.3 individuals/km² (5 individuals/km² in Courland and Semigallia, and 7.1 individuals/km² in Vidzeme and Latgalia).[26] This population density is close to that estimated for neighbouring countries — Lithuania, Finland, and Sweden,[27] but it is lower than, for example, the situation in Germany, where around the year 1600 the average density could have been 30 individuals/km²,

[25] Benninghoven, F. *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: fratres Milicie Christi de Livonia*. Köln, Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1965, S. 389–395. These estimates are based on information on the number of ploughlands in Northern Estonia contained in "*Liber Census Daniae*", and the assumption that a similar situation obtained (subject to various corrections) in Southern Estonia and on the territory of Latvia. The total number of inhabitants is obtained by assuming that one ploughland refers to a single household of 5–7 persons. Although such estimates are not necessarily sound, as conceded by F. Benninghoven, they, nevertheless, give an appreciation of the human resources available, allowing better understanding various 13th century processes.

[26] Dunsdorfs, E., Spekke, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1500–1600*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1964, 209.–219. lpp.

[27] In the 17th century, the population density in Sweden was 4 individuals/km², a figure which was four times lower than overall in Europe, but this density was greater in farming regions — 10 individuals/km² (Eriksson, O., Cousins, S. Historical Landscape Perspectives on Grasslands in Sweden and the Baltic Region. *Land*, No. 1, 2014, p. 305; accessible at: http://www.mdpi.com/2073-445X/3/1).

and, therefore, Latvia may be considered during the Middle Ages to be relatively sparsely populated.[28]

Many factors held back a quicker rise in resident numbers, but the main reasons were not so much related to unceasing internal and external military conflicts (the consequences of which were people killed or taken prisoner, and destruction of food supplies and looting), as the overall trend in demographic movements, as well as ravages due to climate conditions and epidemics.

The crop failure of 1315 and ensuing famine led to a high death rate.[29] It is possible that the events of 1315 had the most unfavourable consequences for later demographic developments — possibly more than the mid-14th century plague, as a result of which, by some estimates, up to 40% of the population of Europe perished. In the records of the period of Livonia only the chronicle of Hermann von Wartberge mentions that "there was a very large death rate" in 1351.[30] The mid-14th century impact of the Black Death on Riga has been studied by F. Benninghoven using indirect references;[31] however, G. Gerhards has cast doubt on whether this epidemic is substantiated by this inference.[32] In the event, there is no convincing evidence that an epidemic seriously touched Livonia in the middle of the 14th century.

A high death rate, inadequate supply of corn and high prices, were recorded throughout Livonia for the year 1420;[33] inadequate supply of corn (as evidenced by the ban on cereal exports), famine and disease influenced life in Livonia in the 1430s, and occasionally also later.[34]

At present there has been no detailed study of demographic movements specific to various areas. Observations relate that dynamic processes associated with the ravages

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[28] According to estimates by H. Sundhausen, during the second half of the 16th century, the population density in the Netherlands was 40, in Germany, 32, in Poland, 9, in Livonia, 6, and in the Principality of Moscow, 4 individuals/km² (see: Schmidt, Ch. *Leibeigenschaft im Ostseeraum. Versuch einer Typologie*. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1997, S. 129).

[29] The years of famine continued in almost all Northern Europe (including British islands) until 1322. This was caused by crop failures, which in turn were due to very rainy summers and unusually cold winters. Freedman, P. Rural society. Jones, M. (Ed.). *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI c. 1300–1415. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 88–89.

[30] "Anno 1351 fuit maxima mortalitas": *Hermanni de Wartberge Chronicon Livoniae. Vartberges Hermaņa Livonijas hronika*. Tulkojis un komentējis Ē. Mugurēvičs. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2005, 88.–89. lpp.

[31] Benninghoven, F. *Rigas Entstehung und der frühhansische Kaufmann*. Hamburg: A. F. Velmede Verl., 1961, S. 99–100.

[32] Gerhards, G. Epidēmijas viduslaiku un jauno laiku Rīgā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 2011, 45.–46. lpp.

[33] LUB, 5: 2515, 2532. It is possible that the report in 1422 by the Master of the Livonian Order refers to the situation in 1420, notably that Livonia was ravaged by famine and disease (*pestilentie*). LUB, 5: 2634, Sp. 874.

[34] According to the data of Jorma Ahvenainen (Ahvenainen, J. *Der Getreidehandel Livlands im Mittelalter*. Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1963, S. 210), poor harvests were recorded in Livonia 33 times over a period of 144 years (1412–1555) — or on average once every four years saw a poor harvest. The most favourable periods were the 1450s as well as the last quarter as well as between 1510 and 1538; whereas the most unfavourable periods were 1412–1416, 1433–1437, 1501–1506, 1539–1542, and 1549–1555, when a poor harvest occurred almost every year. This data, however, does not show whether poor harvest obtained everywhere in Livonia, or only in part of its territory.

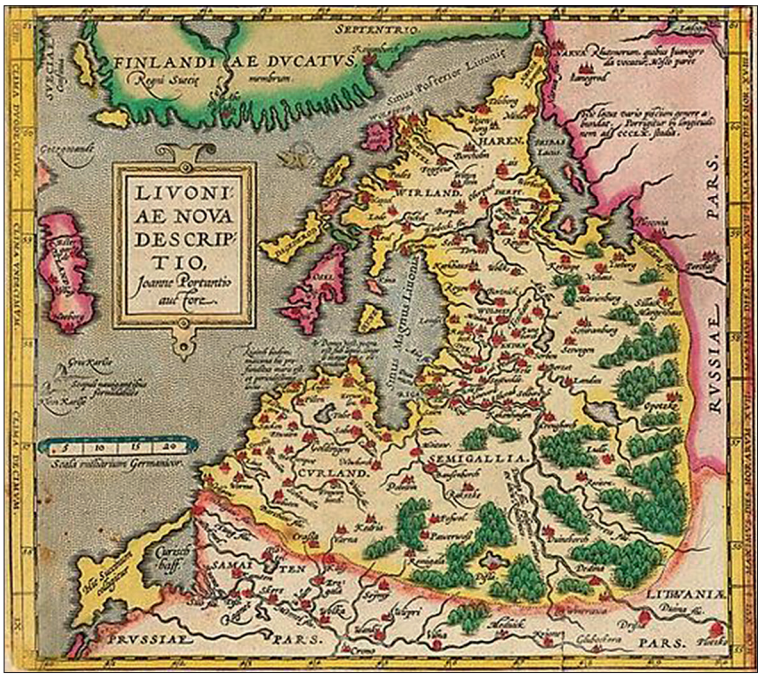


Fig. 3. Map of Livonia by Jan Portant (1573)



Fig. 4. Map of Livonia by Frederick de Wit (1705)

of war and epidemics occurred in times of war mostly in areas close to trade routes and military roads, well as in towns due to population density. A number of cartographic nuances are worthy of note. The map of Livonia by Johannes Portantius, which is found in the 1573 edition of the Atlas by Ortelius, describes the eastern part of Latvia (Latgalia, Selonia) to be a territory covered by forest, with few settled places. Additionally, the map drawn in the 17th century by Frederick de Witt, which was published a second time in 1705 (and many similar maps which can be found), consistently show Latgalia as disproportionately small and relatively "empty".

The depiction of Latgalia must first of all be linked to a lack of information and cartographic inaccuracies, but nevertheless might this not be an unintended indication of a relatively isolated and sparsely populated area? The examples cited above from cartography are in sharp contrast with the relatively dense coverage of this area by archaeological sites of Late Iron Age and the corresponding density of settlements in

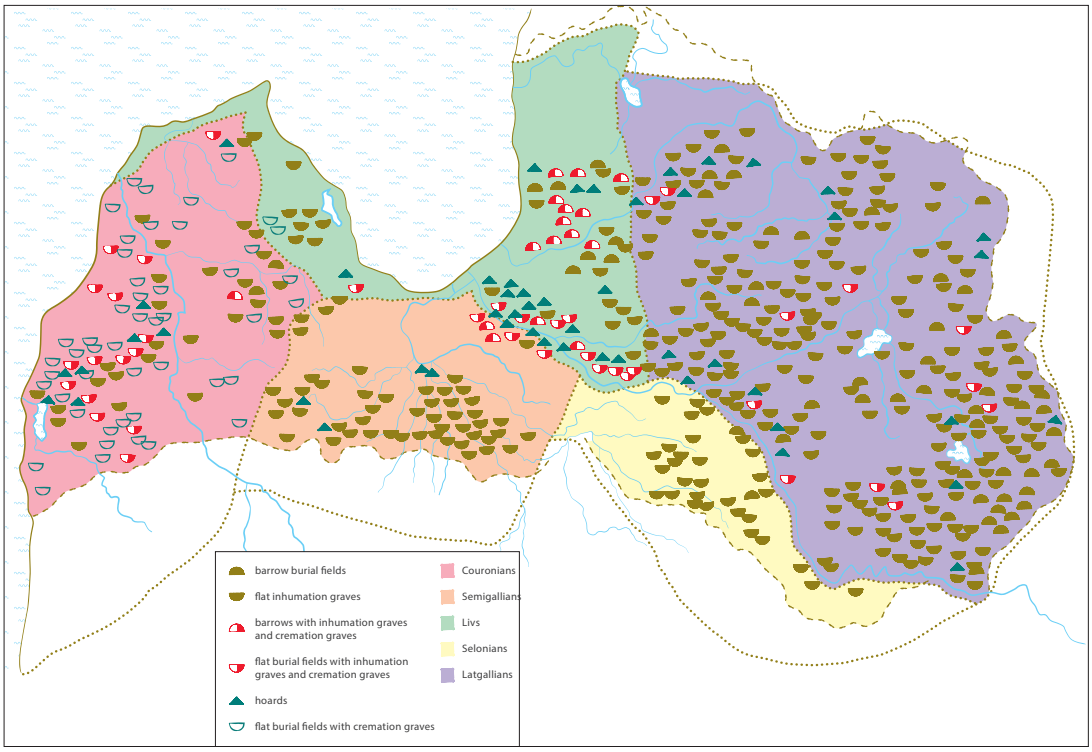


Fig. 5. The disposition in Latvia of burial grounds dating from the Late Iron Age (Source: *Latvijas senākā vēsture 9. g. t. pr. Kr. – 1200. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2001, 298. lpp.)

Latgalia. Castles were built at Dinaburga (*Alt-Dünaburg*) and Mākoņkalns (*Wolkenburg*) during the second half of the 13th century as administrative centres for the relatively extensive territory of the Livonian Order; Mākoņkalns lost importance after castles were built at Rēzekne and Ludza, whereupon only three important centres of the Order remained in Latgalia, while elsewhere the density of the castle network was greater. If the situation as here described testifies to a depopulation that took place in Latgalia at a date which cannot be determined with any precision, then this, and only partially, might explain the reason why in later centuries a slower rate of development was observed in Eastern Latvia in comparison with the other regions of Latvia and also why greater numbers of Russians, Belarusians, and Lithuanians arrived there.

Studies by bioarchaeologists show a rather stable and not very positive picture of demographic movement on the territory of Latvia over a very long period of time. From the Stone Age up until the 18th century, the life expectancy at birth varied over the range between 18.5 and 22.2 years, while the life expectancy of adults (those having reached the age of 20 years) during the 13th–15th centuries was on average 20.4 years for men and 15.2 years for women (thus they had a chance to reach the age of 40.4 and 35.2 years, respectively); later, during the 15th–18th centuries, this rose

slightly to 22.2 and 17.4 years, respectively.[35] Judging by the increased death rate of women during their reproductive years, which was negatively affected by complications in child-birth, a woman could give birth to 4–5 babies, of which only a half would reach reproductive age — the death rate for children and young adults, particularly during their first years, could reach 45–55%. These circumstances determined a rather slow rate of reproduction and increase of the population.

In comparing the population estimates offered by F. Benninghoven and E. Dunsdorfs, we note that the total number of residents increased three-fold between the 13th and mid-16th centuries. This relative increase is credible, but also the maximum possible value.

Villages (hamlets) were the predominant form of a settled place in Livonia, and these underwent a definite evolution.[36] Initially a village existed as a social unit settled compactly, with land held in common and meeting a collective tax obligation; over time individual peasant farmsteads became the majority tax payers and were responsible for economic activity. The village community dissolved and villages continued to exist in the form of a territory with a group of loosely spaced farmsteads while retaining its former name. A number of new villages appeared in addition to dispersed farmsteads (*Streugesinde*). A number of villages disassociated apart as a result of estates taking over the common land of a village. When peasant farmsteads are examined more closely, in terms of taxes and lists of obligations imposed on them (from the mid-16th century onwards), as well as cartographical materials (from the end of the 17th century onwards) several stages in the development of villages become evident. There might be 10–20 farmsteads in large villages, and only 2–3 farmsteads elsewhere.

Livonia was characterised by a relatively modest degree of urbanisation, towns (there were 17, of which 10 were on the territory of Latvia) were small, except for Riga, Reval and Dorpat, and hamlets (*Flecken*, *Hakelwerk*, *Palte*, *Weichbild*), which formed at administrative centres, were also small.[37]

A peasant people?

After the Baltic Crusades came to an end, many of their episodes were uncompromising confrontations, all of the parties involved had to accommodate themselves to a new political situation and arrive at a mutually acceptable form of co-existence: local society accepted certain obligations vis-à-vis the rulers of the land — the Livonian Order and the Bishops, while the new authorities, with their limited resources, had to

[35] Zariņa, G. *Latvijas iedzīvotāju paleodemogrāfija 7. g. t. pr. Kr. – 1800. g.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2009, 150.–151. lpp., 60. att.

[36] For more details about the development of villages in Vidzeme over the period of 13th–17th centuries see: Liepiņa, Dz. Par ciema novadu Vidzemē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 12. laid., 1978, 138.–160. lpp.

[37] For more about this question of small urban settlements in Livonia which has been studied only slightly see: Plētiens, E. Livonijas mazpilsētas: kas tās bija un kāda bija to ietekme? *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2015, 5.–44. lpp.

grant certain concessions to local residents (limited scrutiny of behaviour by the lowest levels of authority, tolerance of traditional religious rituals, etc.) which, at least initially, could have been a condition for survival. Often the Germans and indigenous society are described as opposing poles during the Livonian period, incapable of reconciliation, both in ethnic terms, and, in particular, in social terms (the absolute majority of autochthonous residents were peasants), whereas the situation, as usual, was more complicated.

Peasant unrest (the so-called St George's Night Uprising) which broke out in Northern Estonia, which then belonged to Denmark, and in Saaremaa, in 1343–1345, represented a serious challenge for the residents of Livonia. Both social and political reasons for this uprising have been sought.[38]

An event that took place in Sigulda at that time, in 1345, has been widely discussed in the literature. A leader of the Livs informed Duke Algirdas of Lithuania, who had invaded Sigulda that he had been elected as king (*rex*) by his people, and, were Algirdas to follow his advice, then it would be possible to conquer the country, to expel the Master of the Order, and all of the Germans; Algirdas ordered this individual to be executed.[39] It is not known whether this "election of a king" was in any way related to the uprising in Estonia, or whether this was a local event, but it is unlikely that "election of a king" can be explained simply as a reckless move by peasants — a more likely explanation is that this was evidence of efforts by the Liv elite, which was in the process of disappearing, to assert themselves and to seek power.

Events in Estonia revealed not only social, but also ethnic contradictions in Livonia, between the local peoples and Germans; after suppressing the uprising in Northern Estonia, distrust by German society of the indigenous peoples could only but increase. It is possible that the incident in Sigulda could have led to a serious reaction by the authorities, for example, transfer of the "rebellious" Livs to other areas controlled by the Livonian Order, and bringing in Latgalians, or others, to replace them; this, however, is a theoretical speculation, since we have no information concerning further developments in Sigulda.

Approximately 100 years later a number of seemingly minor events transpired in Sigulda. In 1436, Henneke Hince received in fief from the Master of the Livonian Order, Heinrich von Böckenförde (Shüngel), his estate with the right of transmitting to his children,[40] and in 1447 this fief was renewed,[41] this time with the added proviso, that it was being accorded conforming to Liv laws, which leads to speculation that

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[38] According to the opinion of Heinz von zur Mühlen, only social factors contributed to the uprising, while the underlying cause was the lack of freedom for Estonians, which directly contrasted to their political ability (Mühlen, H., von zur. Eroberer, Stammbevölkerung und Nachbarn Livlands bis 1561, S. 42). See also: Vahtre, S. Die Darstellung des Estenaufstandes 1343 bis 1345 in Deutschordenschroniken. Jähnig, B., Militzer, K. (Hrsg.). *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands. Festschrift für Heinz von zur Mühlen zum 90. Geburtstag.* Münster: LIT, 2004, S. 55–69 (Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission, 12).

[39] *Vartberges Hermaņa Livonijas hronika*, 79.–85. lpp.

[40] LGU [Bruiningk, H., Busch, N. (Hrsg.). *Livländische Güterurkunden*. Bd. 1, Riga: Jonck & Poliewsky, 1908; Bd. 2, Riga: A. Gulbis, 1923], 1: 284.

[41] Ibid., Nr. 324.

Hinze was a Liv.[42] In 1442, the Land Marshal of the Order, in conformity with Liv law, sold an estate and several other plots of land near Sigulda, to a certain Micheell Karidis.[43] The cases of Hinze and Karidis demonstrate that Livs were still living in the area around Sigulda, and also that their elite was still in existence. At the same time, this also shows that the autochthonous elite (*seniores terre*), with status of vassals or otherwise, participated in ruling the area, since, in principle, ethnic prejudice did not then exist, with everyone enjoying the same rights independent of being German or not.[44] Nevertheless, the trend over time was to give preference for persons of German descent: it has been determined that 28 vassals of local origin were accorded fiefs during the 14th century, and at least 24 Germans, while during the 15th century German fiefs were in an absolute majority.[45]

There were a considerable number of vassals of local origin in Livonia, in particular, during the initial period of its existence. Thus, around 1309–1312, the newly converted vassals of the Archbishop of Riga from the district of Aiviekste asked that castles be built to protect them from the pagans, but when their repeated requests were denied, 40 neophyte families moved to live among the pagans in their land,[46] which in this case evidently was Lithuania. It is, however, difficult to judge whether refusals by officials of the Archbishopric were based on any ethnic considerations. The so-called *ķēniņi*[47] families from Salaspils are well-known, whose founders were two brothers of Latvian origin, Aule and Tote (fief granted in 1335) and the brothers Hennike and Vilmas Pytkeyanne of Liv origin (1446).[48] The Couronian *ķoniņi*[49] (*Kurische Könige*) families are also known to have lived in the parish of Turlava and others in the district of Kuldīga — the Tontegode family (fief granted in 1320 and in 1333), the Peniķis family (fief in 1439, 1456, 1500, 1504), the Sirkants family (fief in 1470), the Dragūns family (fief in 1503), the Bergholcs family (fief in1546), the Kalējs/Schmidt family (fief in 1550).[50] Other Couronian vassals of the Livonian Order have been identified in the regions of Tukums, Kandava, and elsewhere. A distinctive burial dated from the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries has been found at the graveyard of Puzes Lejaskrogs

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[42] Granting a fief to vassal of German origin according to Liv rights would have been untypical. The name Hennicke Hinze is not contrary to names current among Livs in Vidzeme during the Livonian period (*Hencke, Henneke, Hennicke, Hincke, Hinze*). It is known that eventually the Hinze family became German.

[43] LGU, 1: 310.

[44] The issue of vassals of local origin has been discussed in: Švābe, A. Kuršu ķoniņi un novadnieki. *Straumes un avoti*, I. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1938, 115.–348. lpp.; Назарова, Е. Л. *История лейманов в Ливонии. Местное землевладение в Латвии и Эстонии. XIII–XVIII вв.* Москва: Институт истории СССР АН СССР, 1990; Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*. [Rīga]: Daugava, 1997, 458.–500. lpp.; Dzenis, A. *Kuršu ķoniņi un citi lēņavīri Rietumlatvijā: septiņsimt gadus ilga brīvības saglabāšanas pieredze.* Rīga: Domas spēks, 2014.

[45] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*, 500. lpp.

[46] *Franciska no Moliano izmeklēšanas protokols 1312. gadā. Liecinieku nopratināšana par notikumiem Livonijā 13.–14. gadsimta mijā / Franciscus de Moliano. Conscriptio inquisitionis testium 1312*. Tulkojis un komentējis Ē. Mugurēvičs. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2010, 359. lpp., 267.–272. §§.

[47] *Ķēniņš* (pl. *ķēniņi*) — Latvian obsolete designation for a king or a lord.

[48] LGU, 1: 63, 320.

[49] *Ķoniņš* (pl. *ķoniņi*) — the same as "ķēniņš".

[50] LUB, 2: 671, 753; 9: 535; 11: 610; 12: 757; 2,1: 1075; 2,2: 589, 673; Švābe, A. Kuršu ķoniņi un novadnieki, 237.–246. lpp.

(30 km east of Ventspils) — in addition to some clothing-related items (silver and bronze brooches, a belt with silver fittings, etc.), a knife, fire steel, and a silver schilling of Bishop Dietrich III Damerow of Dorpat (1379–1400), the bronze head of a club was found that might have been the social status symbol of the deceased.[51] Similar individual items have also been found in Vidzeme (in the ancient burial ground of Kāpurkalns in Jaunpiebalga) and in Latgale (in the ancient burial ground of Vaidi in Bērzgale).[52]

Starting with the 1240s, the Livonian Order Castle at Kuldīga in Courland coexisted with a castle and ancient burial ground at Veckuldīga some 5 km distant, until 1355 when the Couronians were allocated new property in the town of Kuldīga (*Goldingen*), with the rights of the Couronians made equal to those of the other, mostly German house owners of Kuldīga. One of the most powerful Couronian hill-forts, at Talsi, was still inhabited during the 14th century. An ancient town covering 4.5 hectares was located adjacent to this hill-fort, with the most intensive period of habitation dated to the 12th–13th centuries.[53] The Livonian Order Castle at nearby Dzirnavkalns was mentioned for the first time in 1410; this castle could have been built during the 14th century, and, possibly, it could have coexisted for some time with Couronian fortifications. Opinions have been advanced that Livonian Order brethren may have already settled in the hill-fort at Talsi after 1260;[54] nonetheless, in describing the Lithuanian attack on the hill-fort and town at Talsi at the end of the 13th century[55], *The Rhymed Chronicle* contains no mention of the German Order Brethren, and this leads to the likely conclusion that the Couronians by themselves provided for defence of the region.

Hill-forts of the local inhabitants, i.e. castles, continued to exist up until the mid-14th century, and even later at Grobiņa, Matkule, and Sabile.[56] A similar situation can be seen in areas outside Courland; however, additional detailed study is necessary to evaluate more precisely the state of affairs. For example, Livonian Order fortifications were built close to the Eastern borders (at Alūksne and Ludza) only during the 14th century, and this leads to the conclusion that during the first half of the 14th century rule, including defence, in this region was, in fact, in the hands of the Latgalians.

The majority of local inhabitants, however, were peasants. The peasants retained their status of free men which was demonstrated by one of the rights identifying free men — the right to bear arms. In the 1341 inventory book kept by the Komtur of Kuldīga sums of money are mentioned which peasants owed for horses, shields,

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[51] Muižnieks, V., Vasks, A., Vijups, A. Izrakumi Puzes Lejaskroga kapsētā 2001. gadā. *Arheologu pētījumi Latvijā 2000. un 2001. gadā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2002, 352.–353. lpp.

[52] Atgāzis, M. Kaujas vāles Latvijā 10.–14. gadsimtā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 1999, 23.–24. lpp.

[53] Asaris, J. Talsi — from Curonian Central Place to Medieval Town. *Lübeck Style? Novgorod Style? Baltic Rim Central Places as Arenas for Cultural Encounters and Urbanisation 1100–1400 AD. (CCC Papers 5)*. Riga: Nordik, 2001, pp. 69–75.

[54] Caune, A., Ose, I. *Latvijas 12. gadsimta beigu — 17. gadsimta vācu piļu leksikons*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 498. lpp. (Latvijas viduslaiku pilis, IV).

[55] *Atskaņu hronika*. V. Bisenieka atdzejojums, Ē. Mugurēviča, K. Kļaviņa komentāri. Rīga: Zinātne, 1998, 11 812.–11 826. rinda.

[56] Mugurēvičs, Ē. Latvijas viduslaiku piļu klasifikācijas un arheoloģiskās izpētes jautājumi. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 14. laid., 1983, 1. att., 5.–6., 9. lpp.

armour, and helmets,[57] and in 1492, the peasants of Bauska, Mežotne, and Iecava were banned from selling horses, armour, projectile and other weapons to Lithuanians.[58] It would have been illogical to forbid peasants to carry weapons since they constituted an important part of the military forces of Livonia, but not its core, and mercenaries started to be a significant component only from the 15th century onwards.

The first records about mercenaries in Livonia (*soldener*, *knechte*, *landsknechte*) date from 1411,[59] when castles along the Daugava River were reinforced due to deteriorating relations with Lithuania and many mercenaries were stationed there. However, more mercenaries were hired by the Livonian Order and by the city of Riga starting from the end of the 15th century. A decision was taken by the Diet meeting at Valka in 1498 that a levy of 1 mark would be imposed as follows to hire mercenaries: in the lands of the Latvians (*in Letlande*) — from every ploughland in use, in the Estonian lands, from every populated farm; additionally, every 20 farms in Latvian areas and every 15 farms in Estonian areas would have to support one good German soldier. In 1501, the Diet meeting at Valmiera found that levies raised in Livonia would allow hiring 2000 mercenaries.[60]

Despite the rise in the numbers of mercenaries, peasants in future were part of the armed force. In his chronicle Johann Renner stated that with the outbreak of the Livonian War, the Archbishop of Riga gathered 600 well-armed horsemen and 3000 peasants for the defence of Gulbene in the autumn of 1558; a force of 532 horsemen and 2500 peasants was mustered to retake Rakvere in Northern Estonia, which had been captured by the Russians; that same year an armed host of 150 horsemen, 80 mercenaries, and 300 peasants was assembled in Dinaburga and Rēzekne to invade Russia; Russians attacked the castle at Viļaka in December 1559, in which there were no more than seven Germans resident, yet the peasants rallied to defend the castle, which then withstood the attack.[61]

The Diet of Duchy of Courland finally decided, in 1622, that peasants would no longer be allowed to bear weapons, but, nonetheless, peasants continued to take part in various military conflicts together with the Germans; they were even given some military training in domains ruled by the Dukes of Courland.[62]

Information is fragmentary about peasant farmsteads during the Livonian period. An interesting document dating from 1387 describes how locals worked in the context of a dispute which is recounted therein between the Cathedral Chapter of Riga, pro-

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[57] Bauer, A. (Hrsg.). Die Wartgutsteuerliste der Komturei Goldingen. *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, Bd. 25. Riga, 1933, S. 184.

[58] Arbusow, L. Die altlivländischen Bauerrechte. *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, Bd. 23, S. 105–108.

[59] LUB, 4: 1872.

[60] *Akten und Rezesse der livländischen Ständetage*, Bd. 3. Riga: J. Deubner, 1910, Nr. 2, 10, 15.

[61] Hausmann, R., Höhlbaum, K. (Hrsgs.). *Johann Renner`s Livländische Historien*. Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht`s Verlag, 1876, S. 212, 214, 223, 275. The credibility of these figures given by J. Renner is uncertain.

[62] Jakovļeva, M. Deutsche und Undeutsche im Herzogtum Kurland im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert: zwischen rechtlichen Normen und alltäglicher Kommunikation. Heyde J. (Hrsg.). *Das Leben auf dem Lande im Baltikum: elf Beiträge zum 18. Baltischen Semninar 2006.* Lüneburg: Verlag Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft e. V., 2012, S. 26–27.

prietor of the districts of Dundaga and Tārgale in North Courland, and the Bishop of Courland. The document states that the Cathedral Chapter collected every year five lasts of honey, two Schiffpfunds of wax, approximately 10 lasts of corn, 20 oxen, 30 sheep, 16 pigs, 300 chickens, and fish worth 25 marks, the skins of 2000 ermine, martens, and other forest creatures, as well as, firewood, hay, amber, and various cash payments, including fees for lending cows and oxen. The total value of items and cash received was assessed as 313 Riga marks.[63]

The document also gives insight into prices of the times. Expressed as a cash equivalent the income of the Cathedral Chapter was, by type of activity: farming (cereals) — 30 Riga marks, animal husbandry — 31, fishing at sea — 25, fishing in inland waters — 15, hunting — 24, and beekeeping — 126 Riga marks (other income accounted for 62 marks). Although these data refer to the value and nature of what was collected as tithes, they also characterise, to a certain extent, the nature and structure of economic activities of rural peasants and the profitability of certain activities; this, however, relates only to North Courland and cannot mechanically be extended to the rest of the territory of Latvia.

Unfortunately, there is practically no information available about the implements and tools of a peasant farmstead. A document has survived from circa 1300 written by the Bishop of Courland wherein the invasion of the Bishopric is described as led by Wigandus, from the Commandery of Kuldīga, including pillage of the village Barbone, to wit:

> Lembithe has had 2 cows stolen, a horse, 2 kettles, 40 Lofs[64] of corn, 6 swords,[65] 6 scythes, 2 pairs of ploughshares, 4 woollen shawls, 4 men's shirts, 2 containers of butter, meat, and fish valued at two ozerings[66], 2 barrels of beer, 40 large loaves of bread, 2 shields, 2 spears, 2 tanned cow hides, 16 horseshoes, 6 pieces of linen cloth, 3 bags, 10 marks of wool, a hat, 2 women's shirts, 2 saddles, a pot, and 20 chickens;
>
> Jöneke — 3 Lofs of wool, a scythe, leather for 3 pairs of *pastalas* (peasant footwear), a piece of elk skin, one container of hops;
>
> Donseghe — a pair of ploughshares, 5 pairs of peasant footwear, one small knife;
>
> Ludiche — 2 containers of butter, an iron implement, a belt, a hoe, linen cloth, a blanket, a scythe;
>
> Tauryne — 3 Lots[67] of cash, 5 pairs of *pastalas* made of elk-hide, linen footcloths, 2 pairs of boots, a container of salt, a container of butter, a pair of ploughshares, 2 scythes, a sword, 3 balls of yellow wool, 6 distaffs, one-third of a white, tanned elk hide.[68]

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[63] LUB, 3: 1248, Sp. 514–516. 1 last of rye = ~2160 kg, 1 Schiffpfund (Latin *navale talentum*) = ~167 kg.

[64] 1 Lof = 48 kg = ~69 litres.

[65] *Bipennis*. In the literature this term refers to a two-sided sword.

[66] O*sering* — a Livonian monetary unit used in transactions from the 13th to the 16th centuries. It is believed that oserings circulated in the form of silver bars weighing ~100 g.

[67] 1 Lot = ~13 g.

[68] LUB, 1: 603.

This document offers a rare view not only concerning the goods of a peasant farmstead of the period, but also what was considered to be valuable by both the robbers and their victims — brethren of the Order from Kuldīga, who hardly needed part of the loot, took part in this attack, as well as those Couronians whom Wigandus had rallied to his invasion.

V. Dorošenko has presented data that in Vidzeme, at the end of the 16th century, a farmstead had, on average, 1–2 horses, 2–3 cows, 3–4 sheep, 2–3 goats, 3–6 pigs, as well as poultry (chickens, ducks, and geese).[69] It is likely that peasants had been better off before the outbreak of the Livonian War. A complaint about their being robbed lodged in the middle of the 16th century by 16 peasant farmsteads located in the vicinity of Rēzekne allows the inference that farmsteads in this area each maintained at least three horses, 3–4 cows, 10 sheep and goats, 10 pigs; one peasant had lost five oxen stolen, and a further nine peasants — 49 beehives. These farmsteads may be considered overall to be rather prosperous ones.[70]

Winter and summer rye, wheat, barley, oats, buckwheat, peas, beans, hops, hemp, and flax were cultivated. Beekeeping may be mentioned as the most popular and profitable form of ancillary activity — a single peasant might own 10–20, or even more bee-hives, but estates did not bother keeping bees.

Serfdom

The peasants were subject to a number of important risks. Climatic conditions started to worsen from the 14th century onwards, poor harvests occurred more often as did the risks of famine, epidemics also were a serious threat as were war and raiding. The burden of taxes and corvée also gradually increased.

The institution of keeping thralls[71] died out in the 15th century, yet progressively the freedom of peasants was more and more circumscribed which led ultimately to serfdom. The situation changed in particular when structural economic changes in Western Europe led to increased demand for agricultural produce, mainly for corn, which could readily be supplied from Eastern Europe. A market-oriented economy based on manorial estates rapidly developed in Livonia with attendant growth in the worth of a labour force. Enserfment then followed in Livonia.

During the 1920s, A. Transehe-Roseneck postulated the thesis that serfdom in Livonia came about when peasants fell into deep debts, borrowing cereal and animals

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[69] Дорошенко, В. В. *Очерки аграрной истории Латвии в XVI веке*. Рига: Издательство Академии наук Латвийской ССР, 1960, с. 222–223.

[70] Ibid., с. 220–221.

[71] In Livonia these individuals were not free, they were prisoners taken in wars, or people with debts that they could not possibly repay, as well as those condemned to death with sentences commuted by cash payment. In 1424, the Diet at its meeting in Valka decreed that Christians could not henceforward be thralls, and those already held in thrall could not remain so for more than 10 years and that they could be released from being thralls against payment of one silver mark (LUB, 7: 206, S. 144). Thralls are not mentioned in any Livonian document after 1455.

from estate owners in times of crisis and then being unable to repay their debts.[72] Chronic debt led to the flight of peasants, i.e. their mobility, but the subdivision of Livonia into five sovereign districts and the interest of towns to attract workers rendered difficult if not impossible the forcible return of refugee peasants.[73]

The "Debt Theory" was popular in German and Latvian historiography. It was however criticised by Vilho Niitemaa, who pointed out that debts and various crises had affected societies where serfdom did not arise, thus its appearance in Livonia is related to development of the feudal system, wherein around 1400 the view became current that peasants are the private property of their masters.[74] The spread of this attitude and strengthening of legal restrictions on the rights of peasants was promoted by spreading influence of Roman law.[75] At the same time, this process was related to making the status of vassals stronger and their desire for complete alodification of their fiefs (for example, the Mercy of Konrad Jungingen, Master of the German Order[76] granted in 1397 to the vassals of Northern Estonia giving the right to inherit rights to women descendants and distant relatives; a similar privilege — the Mercy of Sylvester, Archbishop of Riga[77] — was obtained in 1457 by vassals of the Archbishop of Riga).

A system of district obligations (in German — *Schollenpflichtigkeit*) was introduced at first: peasants would no longer have the right to leave their homestead or territory of the estate without permission of the estate owner, but a peasant could not be expelled from his homestead, provided that he regularly paid his fees and performed corvée. I. Šterns is of the opinion that district obligations may be hinted at the deeds on enfeoffment from the 1420s, where enfeoffment of land is mentioned together with all of its residents, but actually lords of the land regarded peasants to be free individuals, provided they had no debts outstanding. In this matter he notes a letter written by the Komtur of Kuldīga in 1409 requesting the Grand Master of the German Order to arrange that the town of Memel (now Klaipėda) did not "welcome our fee-paying peasants or those who are in debt to us, but only free persons who are not obliged to pay fees, who are free of debt, and who may go where they please."[78] Yet, distinguishing the "fee-paying peasants" (*czinslute*) from "free people" (*vrie luete*) points to certain constraints on the freedom of peasants.

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[72] Transehe-Roseneck, A., von. Die Entstehung der Schollenpflichtigkeit in Livland. *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, Bd. 23, S. 485–574.

[73] Bosse, H. Der livländische Bauer am Ausgang der Ordenszeit. *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, Bd. 24. Riga, 1933, S. 358–359; Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*, 593.–597. lpp.

[74] Niitemaa, V. *Die undeutsche Frage in der Politik der livländischen Städte im Mittelalter.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemia, 1949, S. 74–88. Among Latvian historians only E. Dunsdorfs supported the view expressed by Niitemaa (Dunsdorfs, E., Spekke, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1500–1600*, 403.–440. lpp.).

[75] Dygo, M. Zur Genese der sog. 'zweiten Leibeigenschaft' in Polen (15.–16. Jahrhundert). Freedman, P., Bourin, M. (eds.). *Forms of Servitude in Northern and Central Europe: Decline, Resistance, and Expansion.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, S. 401–418.

[76] LUB, 4: 1456.

[77] LUB, 11: 644.

[78] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*, 588.–589. lpp. (LUB, 4: 1782: "*... das die vorgescrevene stat [Memel] unsir czinslute und die uns schuldich sin, nicht enthalde, sunder vrie luete, die nicht czinshaftich noch schuldich sin, die mogen czien, wo sie wellen*").

V. Dorošenko from his analysis of the way fiefs were managed in the eastern part of the territory of Latvia during the Livonian period, concluded that a breakpoint in the economic development of estates, i.e. the transition from simple collection of fees to independent economic development of estates, relying on labour through corvée occurred only in the second half of the 15th century, and that this economic system was finalised during the first half of the 16th century. Rapid development started first in the Liv district of the Archbishopric of Riga (i.e. the area where the Mercy of Sylvester was in force), and afterwards — in the rest of Eastern Latvia.[79] E. Dunsdorfs has also concluded that serfdom was introduced into different regions of Livonia at different times, and, furthermore, that in the lands of the Livonian Order, where the influence of the nobility increased slowly, only peasants and their oldest sons were attached to the land up until the collapse of Livonia.[80]

While the estates were relatively week, the institution of corvée typical of serfdom could not take on excessive degrees. More intensive reliance on corvée began in the second half or late 15th century, but already in the mid-16th century the imposition on a farmstead with one ploughshare was to provide one worker (with or without his own horse) for five or six days a week.[81] Fees were also raised gradually — in the 13th century they amounted to 10%, while in the 16th century — 25% or even 33% of the output of the farmstead.[82]

Although during the Middle Ages peasants occupied the lowest level in the hierarchy they constituted the basis for prosperity of the land. In fact, the peasants financed the defence of Livonia, as well as provided resources which were frittered away during conflicts between the Livonian Order and the Archbishop of Riga. In Livonian documents peasants are often described as "non-Germans" (*die Undeutschen*), yet this term did not have a negative connotation, and it was only in the 19th century, when nationalist tendencies arose, that the term "Non-German" gained a new added meaning.[83]

Latvians — seen from the outside

The ethnogenesis of Latvians during and before the Livonian period in the Middle Ages has been very complicated. A number of questions still need to be resolved despite it being known in broad terms. The usual picture concerning events during the Livonian period is that with a decrease in importance of borders between different ethnic groups, and largely due to internal migration, the languages spoken by different

[79] Дорошенко, В. В. *Очерки аграрной истории Латвии в XVI веке*, с. 130–131.

[80] Dunsdorfs, E., Spekke, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1500–1600*, 403.–406., 413.–417. lpp.

[81] Дорошенко, В. В. *Очерки аграрной истории Латвии в XVI веке*, с. 242–251. From the research by V. Doroshenko one can infer that until mid-16th century information about corvée is scarce, and only documents from the turn of 16th/17th centuries confirm that corvée was the dominant norm.

[82] Дорошенко, В. В. *Очерки аграрной истории Латвии в XVI веке*, с. 231; Niitemaa, V. *Der Binnenhandel in der Politik der livländischen Städte im Mittelalter*. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1952, S. 186.

[83] Lenz, W. Undeutsch. Bemerkung zu einem besonderen Begriff der baltischen Geschichte. Jähnig, B., Militzer, K. (Hrsgs.). *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands: Festschrift für Heinz von zur Mühlen zum 90. Geburtstag*, S. 169–184.

ethnic groups living on the territory of Latvia, and their culture, approached one another resulting in the formation of the Latvian people.

Development of the ethnic groups is scarcely mentioned in documents dating from the Livonian period, hence most attention in the literature has been focussed on the starting position and chronologically protracted end position — the ethnocultural situation in the territory of Latvia during the 12th–13th centuries and defining that a "united Latvian people" had emerged (at least in terms of spoken language). According to various authors this happened during the second half of the 16th century or in the 17th century.

Archaeological finds from the Late Iron Age (9th–12th centuries) show clear differences between the local ethnocultural groups. The evening out of these differences, as well as events associated with the advent of Christianity throughout Livonia are rather easy to understand, while the emergence of a common language is a more difficult question. Given that the oldest texts in Latvian date from the first half of the 16th century, only hypothetical assumptions can be formulated about how close or how different were the languages spoken by various Baltic ethnic groups at the beginning of the Livonian period.

The modern Latvian literary language is based on the central dialect in the form of subdialects in Zemgale and Vidzeme, and which was spoken in the areas formerly inhabited by Semigallians and Latgalians. Archaeological evidence and 13th century written records clearly show the Semigallians and Latgalians as two different ethnic groups, but a link existed between the two related to the origin of the Latgalian culture.

Latgalian culture which is evident in burial of the dead in flat burial sites was formed during the 5th–7th centuries in the lower reaches of the Aiviekste River and in the area of the right bank of the Daugava River west of the Aiviekste. Several ethnic components formed the basis for this culture — during the 7th century the Selonians and the closely related Semigallians living in Vidzeme (independent development of Selonians and Semigallians continued south of the Daugava River — in Selonia and in Semigallia) were joined by Eastern Balts who migrated there from the middle stretch of the Daugava River (in present-day Belarus). It is possible that these inhabitants of the middle stretch of the Daugava River brought with themselves the future designation of Latgalians. During the 8th–10th centuries, the flat burial grounds of Latgalians covered all of Eastern Latvia, and during the Late Iron Age Latgalian culture had also integrated the Selonians living south of the Daugava River.[84]

To summarise, those residents of the eastern part of Latvia who are mentioned in the 13th century as Latgalians (*Lethi*, *Letti*, *Lethigalli*, *Lettigalli*, *Letten*, *лотыгола*, et al.), formed through the interaction of various sub-groups and their culture for some reason had an integrating property for other ethnic groups which had previously common origin, but became differentiated. The ethnonym *Latvians* essentially derives

[84] For details of how Latgalian culture emerged see: Ciglis, J. Daži latgaļu etniskās vēstures jautājumi. *Cauri gadsimtiem. Rakstu krājums. Veltīts Valdemāram Ģinteram (1899–1979).* Rīga: NIMS, 2000, 123.–138. lpp. (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, 7); Radiņš, A. *Latgaļi = Латгалы.* Rīga: NIMS, 1999; Radiņš, A. *10.–13. gadsimta senkapi latgaļu apdzīvotajā teritorijā un Austrumlatvijas etniskās, sociālās un politiskās vēstures jautājumi.* Rīga: NIMS, 1999 (Latvijas Vēstures muzeja raksti, 5).

from the name of the ancient Latgalians, we may conclude that it is possible to speak of a Latvian ethnos, as soon as in terms of archaeological materials, it is possible to recognise a distinct Latgalian culture. Consequently, the ethnonyms *Latvians* and *Latgalians* are to be recognised as synonyms.

Latgalian culture (clothing, jewellery, and burial customs[85]) was typically quite uniform, yet its members spoke different dialects. After an analysis of place names mentioned in 13th–14th century documents, Antons Breidaks concluded that in Latgalia, Selonia, and parts of Vidzeme where the Selonian subdialects of the Upper Latvian dialect were spoken during the 13th–14th centuries, the language differed from the one spoken in the rest of Vidzeme and also in Semigallia.[86] With adoption of Latgalian culture in the area formerly inhabited by Semigallians in Vidzeme, local language retained a number of distinct features, which explains the similarity of subdialects spoken in mid-Vidzeme and in Semigallia. The fact that the closest subdialect to the written Latvian language is from the region of Jelgava (in Zemgale) may be explained by the German clergy — who were the authors of the first Latvian Lutheran books (G. Mancelius, Ch. Fürecker, H. Adolphus) — being active in Semigallia.[87]

Due to events of the Baltic Crusades and the division of lands subjugated by the Germans local ethnic groups and the territories which they occupied have been described rather extensively in written records from the 13th century. The Catholic mission and, soon thereafter, the crusade began in areas occupied by Livs, hence, the ethnonym *Livonia* is derived from these people, and later this was applied to the entire region which had been conquered by the new masters. After the 13th century, the geographical designations Kurzeme (Courland) and Zemgale (Semigallia) are found in documents applying to parts of the territory, but the names of other areas of the territory of Latvia or the peoples living there appear only rarely.

The constituent parts and peoples of Livonia have been described by the following selected terms and combinations:

Livonia, *Lettia*, *Semigallia* (1359[88]);
Liflant und Litten (1366[89]);
Livonia, *Letthia*, *Semigallia* (1387[90]);
terra Lettiae et Livoniae, *Selonia* (1393[91]).

Couronians as a people, distinct from the other peoples of Livonia, are highlighted in several 15th century documents in connection with military or other forms of con-

[85] At the end of the 10th century, the custom appeared of burying the dead in mounds, in parallel with burying the dead in flat burial grounds, but over and above heaping up sand, all other characteristic features remained unaltered, the orientation of the bodies, items deposited alongside, the form of the grave, etc.

[86] Западная граница латгальского и селонского племен по данным языка в XIII–XIV в. Breidaks, A. *Darbu izlase*, 2. sēj. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, Daugavpils Universitāte, 2007, 314.–322. lpp.

[87] Endzelīns, J. Latviešu valoda Vidzemē. *Valodas un literatūras institūta raksti*, III. Rīga: Latvijas PSR Zinātņu akadēmijas izdevniecība, 1954, 136. lpp.

[88] LUB, 2: 968. Documents have been selected where the term Livonia refers only to the area inhabited by Livs, not to the entire region.

[89] LUB, 2: 1036.

[90] LUB, 3: 1239.

[91] LUB, 3: 1342.

flict: *Leyflender mitsampt den Kawirn* (Livonians together with the Couronians, 1431[92]), *Kowern und Undeutsche/Cuwern und Undewtschen/Kuren und Undutschen* (Couronians and non-Germans 1446[93]).

It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the 14th century Duke Gediminas of Lithuania styled himself as Ruler of Semigallia[94] and in letters to the Order asked that a priest be sent who spoke not only the Lithuanian language but also that of the Semigallians.

The French knight Guillebert de Lannoy who travelled through Livonia early in the 15th century wrote that he had traversed many villages inhabited by Semigallians, Couronians and Livs (*villaiges des Zamegaelz, des Corres et des Lives*), in each of which there was a separate language, and mentions further, that en route from Riga to Narva close to the border with Russia he found people who spoke one of four different languages, namely, Livs, Semigallians, Latvians, and Estonians (*les Lives, les Tzamegaelz, les Loches et les Eestes*).[95]

One may doubt that Guillebert de Lannoy knew any of the languages that he mentions, or was capable of distinguishing between them — it is more likely that he gleaned this information from some local individuals. These languages certainly existed at the time of the travel of Guillebert de Lannoy, but there is no way of knowing how great the differences were, for example between the language of Semigallians, and the language of the Latvians (Latgalians), and if there is any significance to the order in which the peoples of Livonia have been listed. It is unlikely that Guillebert de Lannoy encountered any Semigallians living deep in Vidzeme on his way to Narva via Cēsis — this text may indicate either that Semigallians lived in a close vicinity of Riga (its rural area), or that they were in Riga for various reasons, and equally this might reflect inaccuracy on the part of the author. Nevertheless, if Guillebert de Lannoy was not wrong, then we may conclude that early in the 15th century three local languages could be heard in Riga — that of the Livs, Latvian, and Semigallian, to which we must add Middle Low German.

Sebastian Münster in his *Cosmographia* also describes the diversity of languages in Livonia during the 16th century, noting that the Liv, Estonian, Latvian, and Couronian languages had nothing in common. (The Semigallian language was no longer mentioned!)[96]

During the second half of the 16th century, the chronicler Johann Renner drew a distinction in Livonia between Estonia (*Eestlandt*), Courland (*Curlandt*) and Litland

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[92] LUB, 8: 507.

[93] LUB, 10: 193, 197, 214.

[94] The full title was: "*lethphanorum ruthenorumque rex, princeps et dux Semigalliae*" — King of the Lithuanians and Russians, Ruler of Semigallia (*Gedimino laiškai*, pp. 29, 37, 47, 51). It is true that this title, for conjuncture reasons, is mentioned in only a few documents in 1323, and Gediminas usually styled himself as King of the Lithuanians and the Russians (*letwinorum et multorum ruthenorum rex/letphinorum ruthenorumque rex*).

[95] Lelewel, J. *Guillebert de Lannoy et ses voyages en 1413, 1414 et 1421*. Bruxelles, Poznan: A. Vandale, 1844, pp. 26, 28.

[96] "*Nunc Liuones, Estones, Letti, Curoni nihil habent in lingua commune.*" Munster, S. *Cosmographiae uniuersalis Lib[ri]*, VI. Basileae, 1552, f. 786. Accessible at: http://purl.pt/13845/1/res-2094-a_PDF/res-2094-a_PDF_01-B-R0150/res-2094-a_0011_734-814_t01-B-R0150.pdf (site last visited 23.08.2012).

(*Litlandt*; Renner styled Latvians as *Litten*). Renner included in Litland the eastern part of Latvia (present-day Vidzeme and Latgale) up to the border region of Estonians and Latvians around Rūjiena, Ērģeme, Karksi, and Helme. Furthermore, he noted that there were additional lands within Litland: the land of the Livs (*Livelandt*), Selonia (*Seellandt*), and Semigallia (*Semegallen*).[97]

The pastor Balthasar Russow of Reval (today Tallinn), a contemporary of Renner, wrote that, alongside Estonia (*Estlandt*), the other major province of Livonia was the land of the Letts, or the Latvians (*Letlandt*), which included the land of the Livs (*Prouintz der Lyuen*); a language was spoken in the land of the Letts, which Estonians could not understand. The third province was Courland (*Churlandt*), which included Semigallia (*Semigallen*); the people of this province spoke the Couronian and Liv languages, and also Lithuanian in certain areas; the Daugava River was the border between them and the Latvians.[98] B. Russow noted in one edition of the chronicles that the Livs lived along the sea coast from the Salaca River to the Daugava River.[99]

Dionysius Fabricius, who was a Roman Catholic priest at Viljandi during the beginning of the 17th century, divided Livonia into Estonia (*Aesthonia*) and Latvia (*Lothavia*). He pointed out that the Latvian language was quite similar to Lithuanian; Estonians could not understand Latvians (*Lothavus*) and vice versa, while the Livs (*Libis*) who lived from the right bank of the Daugava River to the Salaca River spoke a language which was a dialect of the Estonian language.

These descriptions are superficial, and, furthermore, the authors, except the source for S. Munster,[100] lived and worked in modern day Estonia. Dionysius Fabricius, thus, knew of a land named *Lothavia*, which consisted of the Latvian and Liv districts which were part of a Duchy (*Ducatus Ultradunensis*) subordinated to Poland–Lithuania. The views of Bathasar Russow, it appears, had been influenced by a then new political reality — the formation of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, whence Courland and the Couronian language were emphasised, and Semigallia was mentioned only in reference to Courland. The description offered by Russow leads to the tentative conclusion that Couronian was spoken in Semigallia, but this does not at all conform to other linguistic data, so that it appears his description follows from a mechanical chain of reasoning: Duchy of Courland → Courland → Couronians → language of the Couronians.

The most interesting insight is that of Renner. His account does not differentiate between modern Vidzeme and Latgale, regarding them as one land,[101] while at the same time all of the other historical regions of Latvia are named, mentioning Selonia, which in fact has been forgotten, as well as the land of the Livs. The note that Selonia,

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[97] *Johann Renner's Livländische Historien*, S. 7–9.

[98] Russow, B. *Chronica Der Prouintz Lyfflandt*. Bart: A. Seitner, 1584, S. 1–1a.

[99] Russow, B. *Nye Lyfflendische Chronica vam anfanck des Christendoems in Lyfflandt beth vp disses Jar Christi 1578*. Rostock: Augustin Ferber, 1578, S. 1.

[100] After publication in 1550 of *Cosmographia* by S. Münster, information about conditions in Livonia was due to the traveller and literary figure Johann Hasentoter, who lived in Riga around 1547.

[101] It is credible that in addition to differences in dialects which existed earlier, a different rate of economic development was apparent during the Livonian period between the areas inhabited by Latgalians in Vidzeme and in Latgalia.

Semigallia, and the land of the Livs are part of Litland, most likely, indicates that similar languages were spoken there, and that this also applies to territory inhabited by the Livs where Latvians were coming in to settle, and the process of assimilation of the Livs was under way. We may indeed suspect that Renner in describing Semigallia as part of Litland, did not, in fact, know the true state of affairs, since later in this document describing Courland (*Curlandt*), he states that it had become a separate duchy (*koningkrike*), and in listing its castles describes only those in Courland proper, although Semigallia was part of the duchy and is mentioned in the full name of this duchy. Possibly this is not an accident or misunderstanding that Renner has included the Estonian Karksi and Helme as part of Litland, since during the Livonian period the area inhabited by Latvians was being enlarged in this direction, with the regions around Rūjiena and Ērģeme being colonised.

The Couronian language survived the longest among the Baltic languages which disappeared during the Livonian period. A. Breidaks has expressed a position which contradicts that of several linguists (G. Gerulis, V. Kiparsky, J. Plāķis) who insist that the Couronian language was a dialect of Latvian, that the largest similarity in specific linguistic features exists between the Couronian language and the language of the Old Prussians, but contacts with Semigallians and the Samogitians influenced the Couronian language and caused it to become closer to the Eastern Baltic languages.[102] Sigfridus, a pastor at Puze, in his summary of investigations dated 1431 concerning a dispute between the Bishop of Courland and the Cathedral Chapter of Riga about the districts of Dundaga and Tārgale, recorded that Courland, Saaremaa, and Livonia differed in terms of the language spoken there, and that people cannot understand one another beyond their area, i.e. neither a Couronian — a Livonian or someone from Saaremaa, and vice versa.[103] It is not clear what Siegfried considered to be Livonians — most likely Latvians, or the Livs (after all Germans and Estonians were also Livonians). Around 1600, the German chronicler Moritz Brandis wrote concerning Courland: "The peasants spoke a distinct separate language which in some respects was similar to the Latvian language"[104] (A. Breidaks is of the opinion that this refers to the Couronian language); according to other authors who wrote during the 17th century, Latvian was then spoken throughout Courland.[105] For his part Renner noted that the Couronians were forbidden to speak their own language, because, according to him, this language was vulgar, whence the Couronians spoke Latvian.[106] However, Renner is the sole

[102] Breidaks, A. Ievads baltu valodniecībā, 2. daļa. Breidaks, A. *Darbu izlase*, 1. sēj. Rīga: LU Latviešu valodas institūts, 2007, 582. lpp.

[103] "*Se nichil aliud scire quam [quod] iste terre, videlicet, Curonia, Osilia et Livonia, sint distincte in ydeomatibus, ita quod unus alium extra suam terram habitantem non intelligit, videlicet Curo unum Livoniensem nec Osiliensem nec converso.*" (LUB, 8: 440, Art. 10)

[104] "*Es hat unter den Bauern eine eigene Sprache, die doch etlichermassen der Lettischen sich vergleichet.*" (Brandis, M. *Liefländische Geschichte*. Riga, Leipzig: Verlags-Expedition der Monumenta Livoniae antiquae, 1842, S. 13–14 (Monumenta Livoniae Antiquae, Bd. 3))

[105] Breidaks, A. Ievads baltu valodniecībā, 2. daļa, 582. lpp.

[106] "*.. doch hebben de Curen ohre sprake nicht reden moten uth orsaken, dat se etwas schendich (wo ick berichtet) gewesen, davor reden se nu Littisch.*" (*Johann Renner's Livländische Historien*, S. 7). The descriptive term *schendich* used by Renner can be translated either as "vulgar", or "shameful, ugly, nasty".

source of this observation, whence it is difficult to comment as to whether the prohibition on speaking the Couronian language, if there were such a prohibition, was actually implemented in detail.

Couronians (*Kowern*) are last mentioned in documents as those living in the southern part of what was formerly Courland — in the area around Palanga — in 1455, when they, together with the Samogitians, built fortifications along the sea coast; however, they were attacked by the Livonians and were forced to flee.[107] As late as in 1544, Duke Albrecht of Prussia was searching for a pastor to serve in Rusne who would know the Couronian language[108]; however, the Couronians living along the Couronian Spit might have migrated there after formation of Livonia.[109] Later those Couronians, whose lands were integrated into the Lithuanian state, merged with the Samogitians and their language significantly influenced formation of the Samogitian dialect of the Lithuanian language.[110]

Some of the records about the lands and their inhabitants which constituted Livonia need to be used with great caution. Despite many of these authors residing on the territory of Livonia, their view is that of outsiders, and not a self-appreciation by the indigenous ethnic groups. It is unclear what were the criteria chosen to assess the similarity or dissimilarity of ethnic groups and languages, and it is also difficult to evaluate the accuracy of the information used by the authors and also to what extent mention of various regions of Livonia and their residents relate to ethnic belonging or simply geographical. One conclusion is clear enough — in the same way as the name of the land of the Livs became the basis for the designation Livonia of a larger region, so the ethnonyms Latgalians/Latvians began to be used as a generic term for all of the Baltic ethnic groups residing in Livonia.

Ethnic consolidation

The progressive use of the terms *Latgalians/Latvians* to describe the other Baltic ethnic groups residing in Livonia is evidence for the presence of Latvians being at "the centre of events". The actual manner in which the Baltic groups merged is rather unclear. In all events the process was influenced by the presence of the Livonian framework, although neither the unity of the small states comprising Livonia nor the existence of borders ought to be overemphasised. Consolidation of the Baltic peoples of Livonia was evidently facilitated by similarities between languages, which derived largely from a common origin of these peoples (including that of the Semigallians), and by integration processes which were evident in the area inhabited by Latgalians already prior to the Livonian period; the ethnic history of the Couronians was somewhat separate.

[107] LUB, 11: 478.

[108] Zinkevičius, Z. *Lietuvių tautos kilmė*. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 2005, pp. 195–196.

[109] Migration by Couronians to the area of Memel (today Klaipėda) is mentioned, for example, in 1439. (LUB, 9: 489; 10: 128).

[110] Zinkevičius, Z. *Lietuvių tautos kilmė*, pp. 265–266.

Several considerations determined which language was in common use: closer economic contacts in the economic sphere (markets), military cooperation (campaigns, defence of the state), public communication by civil and religious authorities with indigenous peoples. It would be logical that the common language would emerge (as a dialect) which was spoken by the relative majority of inhabitants and who lived in the economically most important areas. Riga and its neighbouring areas in central Vidzeme — Sigulda, Turaida, Cēsis, Rauna, Valmiera, as well as the route along the Daugava River as far as Koknese and Krustpils — evidently merit the greatest attention. This by no means constitutes all, albeit the largest part, of the area formerly inhabited by Semigallians. The area around Limbaži in Western Vidzeme is also noteworthy. The largest concentration of Livonian period towns, castles and churches are located in this part of the territory of Latvia — which point to greater economic activity and a greater density of residents. The administrative centres of the Livonian Order and the Archbishopric of Riga were located there — the main castles of the Archbishop of Riga were located at Rauna, Koknese, Limbaži, and a centre of the Vogt (Lord Protector) at Turaida, the seat of the Cathedral Chapter was located in Riga, with its castle at Krimulda, residences of the Master of the Order were sited in Riga and in Cēsis, the residence of the Land Marshall was Sigulda. Officials of the Order and the Archbishop's office and the clergy, it is thought, first learnt rudiments of the local language at these centres, and later used them in more remote peripheral regions. The fact of the first mention of the Latvian language, in 1387, in an economic document referring to the district of Dundaga,[111] is most likely to reflect the use of an intermediate dialect by the Cathedral Chapter in Riga for communication with local people, rather than as evidence for the residents of Dundaga to speak the Latvian language at that time. Towards the end of existence of Livonia, use of a common language could have been strengthened by the Reformation. Although the prevailing view is that Latvians were indifferent to the Reformation, as well as to the Counter-Reformation, one result was that greater attention was paid to the use of the local language (in this case the Latvian language) in Church activities, as well as publication of religious literature in these languages.

The role played by Riga should not be exaggerated although it was the economic and political centre of Livonia, where people frequently arrived from districts nearby and distant to acquire goods or for other reasons, even to become its residents. During the mid-16th century, there were some 10–15 thousand residents of (central) Riga — taking into account estimates made by E. Dunsdorfs about the total population of the territory of Latvia, this represented 2.2–4.4% of the total, yet approximately 2/3 of the residents of the core district of Riga were Germans. Nevertheless, Riga was an important element in the consolidation of the local ethnic groups.

There has been little study thus far of internal migration within Livonia.[112] The principal examples which have been identified concern the arrival of an individual or

[111] The term *scythe money* found in this document is qualified by the remark that a scythe in the Latvian language (*denominatione Lettonica*) is called a *yscaxten* (LUB, 3: 1248, Sp. 515).

[112] Rita Grāvere has published a number of important compilations of relevant findings, see: Grāvere, R. Apdzīvotības izmaiņas Zemgalē un Dienvidkurzemē pēc krusta kariem. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 20. laid., 2000, 153. lpp.; Lībiešu pārlatviskošanas procesa daži aspekti. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 23. laid., 2006, 99.–112. lpp.

small community in an ethnically different environment. These cases, at least at present, do not point to mass migration or all-encompassing migration within Livonia. It is more credible that small communities (hamlets) of migrants retained their separation for some time, only then gradually to adapt to the local environment, possibly without seriously influencing the latter. If we do not count migration of the population which might have taken place following the 13th century Crusade (the only known instances relate to migration to Lithuania), reliable information about the movement of large groups of people dates from the beginning of the 17th century due to the outbreak of the Polish–Swedish war and the attendant periods of famine and epidemics.

In fact the events seen in Livonia (migration of small communities, ethnically-mixed marriages, movement of prisoners taken in combat, and the like), may be followed, either directly or indirectly, by archaeological materials, and occurred already prior to the 13th century; they continued in the form of increased influx of the Balts into districts inhabited by Livs and Estonians, including in Riga and elsewhere along the lower reaches of the Daugava River.

Several facts lead to suspect that significant changes also took place among the composition of the population within the regions of Livonia occupied by the Balts. One of these is the dispersion of Semigallian dialects in several south-western areas of Courland, although it is not known how and when the Semigallians arrived there. However, out of the names of 40 villages and geographical objects in Western Zemgale, located in the districts of Dobene and Spārnene and which were recorded in a document dating from 1272,[113] only approximately 15 can be identified in modern place names.[114] This is in stark contrast with what is observed in other districts in Latvia, where the transformation over time of almost all of the oldest names of villages can be traced, and this difference suggests that substantial changes occurred in the make-up of the residents in Dobene and in Spārnene, whereupon the earlier place names were supplanted.

It has been found that during the second half of the 14th century and in the early 15th century, the anthropological type of males buried in the cemetery at Dobele, which was located not far from the border with the district of Spārnene, conforms to that of Semigallians, but that the women might have been arrivals from Latgalian regions in Vidzeme, or from Courland, while approximately one-half of all burials from the 15th century at the cemetery at the sanatorium of Tērvete might have been descendants of former Semigallians, whereas approximately one third of burials dating from the 16th century are of this anthropological type, with the rest, possibly, migrants from Southern Courland.[115] The number of monuments thus analysed, including a detailed chronological gradation of the archaeological materials is nevertheless too limited, hence far-reaching conclusions cannot be drawn. Today results which were previously obtained are being reworked, and interpretations are under review, using latest bioarchaeological investigation techniques.

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[113] LUB, 1: 432.

[114] Bielenstein, A. *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes und der lettischen Sprache in der Gegenwart und im 13. Jahrhundert*. St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1892, S. 136–140.

[115] Grāvere, R. Apdzīvotības izmaiņas Zemgalē un Dienvidkurzemē pēc krusta kariem, 154. lpp.

Another argument which is often used as evidence for the merging of the Baltic peoples living on the territory of Latvia into a single ethnos consists of how material and spiritual cultures of the various peoples approached one another. We must exclude from these everything that relates to external influences typical of any period — fashions, spread of technology, stricter supervision of respect for religious rituals, and others, which in equal measure influenced neighbouring territories (for example, Estonia) and which only indirectly could have promoted awareness of a common ethnic identity. For example, pastor Christian Kelch, who worked in Estonia, at the end of the 17th century, wrote that Estonians and Latvians were of different origin and spoke different languages, yet their customs were similar, with similar characteristics, both in their physical form and spiritually.[116] Duly noting this, we may consider a common language as the principal identified factor leading to consolidation of the Baltic peoples of Livonia. At the same time, local cultural features, as well as dialects, were retained, even with some coming into being, in the context of the modernising forces of that period in time.

Outside observers, at the latest in the 17th century, saw the Baltic peoples (or those speaking various dialects of the Latvian language) as a single ethnos — the Latvians, but it is doubtful whether this coincided with the self-identification of the Latvians themselves. Contacts with people from other, even remote districts could lead to the observation that "they also speak a similar language", but the dominant identity was that of the locality. This is evident in the names given to various districts and resident groups therein found in classical Latvian folk-songs.

Only two regions of Latvia are readily identifiable in Latvian folk-songs — Vidzeme and Kurzeme. The latter designation also refers to Zemgale and Sēlija, which are parts of the former Duchy of Courland (later the Governorate of Courland). Folklorist Jānis Rozenbergs has drawn an important conclusion that every individual who passed on the oral folk tradition, "independent of whether he really lived in Kurzeme, or in what today is Zemgale, or even in Upper Latvia [Sēlija], had his own notion of what constituted Kurzeme. Everybody considered the term *Kurzeme* to refer first of all to his place of birth, and its immediate or more distant neighbourhood".[117]

Based on his study of the occurrence of ethnonyms, descriptions of resident groups and areas in Latvian folk-songs J. Rozenbergs concluded that the lexeme *poļi* (Poles) (also "the land of the Poles") usually refers to *Latgale*, and *Latvians in Latgale* , or *Latgalians*, and, furthermore, some Latgalians have referred to themselves as *Poles*. This is a reminder of the fact that after the demise of Livonia, Latgalia was integrated until 1771 into the Polish–Lithuanian state. In like manner Latvians in Vidzeme (or the people of Vidzeme) were called *zviedri* (Swedes) during the 17th century when Vidzeme was ruled by Sweden, while the term *leiši* (Lithuanians) (the Latvian term is *leitis*) was often applied by people in Vidzeme to people living on the opposite

[116] "*Ehsten und Letten/ welches Leute von unterschiedenem Ursprunge" seien, "von ungleicher Sprache/ aber fast von gleichen Sitten/ und von gleicher Natur/ und Beschaffenheit/ so wohl am Leibe/ als am Gemüthe*." (Kelch Ch. *Liefländische Historia, Oder Kurtze Beschreibung der Denckwürdigsten Kriegs- und Friedens-Geschichte Esth- Lief- und Lettlandes* [..]. Reval: J. Mehner, 1695, S. 12).

[117] Rozenbergs, J. *Tautas un zemes latviešu tautasdziesmās*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2005, 326. lpp.

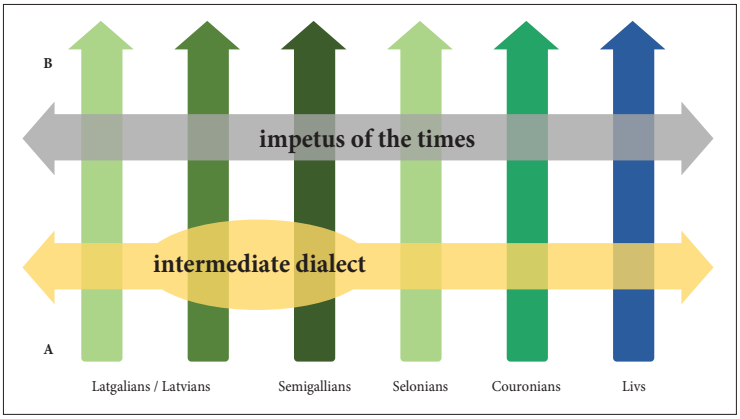


Fig. 6. Ethnic consolidation

(southern) bank of the Daugava River, Selonians (people of Upper Latvia) and Semigallians. According to J. Rozenbergs, this points to a special importance of the Lithuanian element to Latvian culture in Selonia and Semigallia, as much as the political subordination of Selonia and Semigallia to the Polish–Lithuanian state.[118]

We may regard the formation of material and spiritual culture as an intermingling of traditional culture and tendencies from different periods. Some of these features — the spread of an intermediate dialect, Christianity, technology transfer, fashions, etc. — favoured unification, but everywhere new elements were merged into a unique harmonious system with traditional elements particular to a particular place or district. Figure 6 is a schematic representation of this process. The scheme has to be understood that both the intermediate dialect (the Latvian language spoken in the central areas of Latvia — in Zemgale, Riga, and part of Vidzeme) and various outside influences to a greater or lesser extent affected all of the territory of Latvia, promoting a certain degree of unification and ethnic consolidation, and the predominant identity is one based on previous ethnocultural group identity, which evolved towards a regional identity. A confluence of a number of factors had established the preconditions and opportunity for the emergence of a "united" Latvian people, but the organisational agency (to create an ethnocentric power, literary or intellectual activities, etc.), which would create a common identity or national myth, was lacking — and this remained an issue to be resolved considerably later during the 19th wave of national movements.

If we regard the arrow A-B in Figure 6 as a time vector, then many traditional cultural features (for example, the type of clothing and ornaments, or how they are worn) might have disappeared by the time point B is reached and replaced by something "European", the arrangement of which forming a new local tradition. In terms of what was deposited in graves during the 14th century we see strong continuation of Late Iron

[118] Ibid., 20., 68.–69, 75., 236. lpp. Selonia and Semigallia were part of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, a vassal state of Poland–Lithuania.

Age features, but there was a gradual or step-wise introduction of new elements.[119] One of the fields when the ancient traditional legacy intertwined with new, external influences was religious beliefs, or more — world view. The standard view is that the indigenous peoples of Livonia continued until the 17th century or even later to keep to traditional religion, i.e. were pagans, but in fact one must speak of syncretism, where it is often difficult or even impossible to separate the traditional religion and Christianity. In his book *Historia Lettica* Paul Einchorn has described Latvians in the 17th century as follows: "... many among them hold to the word of God as something to be loved and dear (...), therefore, it is regrettable that in many places they are so little instructed and know so little about God and fear of Him. Therefore, their majority today are half-Christians, or Christians in public only — in churches and parishes they are Christian, they listen to the word of God, pray and serve the true God, but at home they retain their pagan superstitions and worship pagan deities..."[120] Traditions of pagan origin are still an important part of Latvian identity.[121]

An important role in sustaining regional and local differences was played by contacts between the regions, which because of its geographical location meant that in Courland they were closer with Prussia, for the Liv areas — with Estonia, elsewhere with Russia, Belarus, or Lithuania. Other factors which could influence the unique aspects of the identity of certain areas or regions were geographical barriers (the larger rivers, extensive marsh or forest), as well as restrictions on the mobility of peasants under conditions of serfdom. There have been few investigations to-date of the common and especially the divergent features of culture in various regions of Latvia during the Middle Ages and the early modern period; however, the evident differences in the expression of culture during later periods (in the 18th–19th centuries) lead to the supposition that a similar situation obtained during earlier times.

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[119] Vitolds Muižnieks has analysed these tendencies in detail (Muižnieks, V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gadsimta apbedīšanas vietu materiāla.* Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais vēstures muzejs, 2015).

[120] "*.. viel unter ihnen sind, die Gottes Wort lieb und werth halten [..], daher es denn zu beklagen, daß an vielen Orten sie so übel unterrichtet seyn, und noch gar wenig von Gott und desselben Furcht wissen. Denn die meisten sind unter ihnen noch diesen heutigen Tag rechte Semi-Christiani, oder Ethnico-Christiani, in der Kirchen oder Gemeine Gottes, sind sie Christen, hören Gottes Wort, beten und dienen dem wahren Gott, wenn sie aber zu Hause sind, gebrauchen sie sich ihrer Heydnischen Abgötterey, und Aberglaubens..*" (*Ueber die religiösen Vorstellungen der alten Völker in Liv- und Ehstland. Drei Schriften von Paul Einhorn und eine von Johann Wolfgang Böckler, aufs neue wieder abgedruckt mit einer seltenen Nachricht Friedrich Engelken's über den großen Hunger 1602.* Riga: N. Kymmels Buchhandlung, 1857, S. 29)

[121] The classical Latvian folk-songs constitute a rich source of Baltic and Indo-European mythology. They have been analysed from a standpoint of research into religion by Haralds Biezais: Biezais, H. *Die Hauptgöttinnen der alten Letten*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1955; Biezais, H. *Die himmlische Götterfamilie der alten Letten*. Uppsala: [Almqvist & Wiksells], 1972; Biezais, H. *Lichtgott der alten Letten.* Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1976, etc. One may question some of the conclusions drawn by H. Biezais as regards the influence of syncretism of Christianity or Western European Christianity, for example, in relating the mythical person Jānis associated with the summer solstice with John the Baptist, but otherwise H. Biezais has characterised commemoration of the summer solstice as a celebration of the Sun and a fertility festival, one which has retained a number of traditions that have largely disappeared among other European peoples. Commemoration of the summer solstice, or *Jāņi* (the Latvian name for this holiday dedicated to Jānis) continues to hold a central place in Latvian culture.

The Livs

The Livs were assimilated and became part of the Latvian people over the passage of centuries.[122] Little documentation exists of this process during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era, thus the process is understood only in broad terms.[123] The assimilation of Livs was not a constant or smooth process in various regions and during the Livonian period affected only part of the total area inhabited by Livs.

Documents from the Livonian period occasionally mention the Livs of Vidzeme or Riga, but no explicit information is available about the Livs of Courland, or the Vends. Apart from the migration by the Vends to Riga and later to Cēsis, mentioned in *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, some information (albeit very fragmentary) about the Livs of Courland is found in 17th and 18th century sources. A brief note is found in the work *Historia Lettica* by Paul Einhorn: Livs live by the sea at Engure,[124] and call themselves Livs (*Liwen*), speak both the Liv language and Latvian, but their religious services are in the Latvian language.[125] Johann Heinrich Teureck the pastor of the parish at Engure, and Ulrich Johann Zimmermann, pastor at the parish of Irbe-Ģipka, provide slightly more information about the Livs in their reports of 1767.[126] According to them Livs lived in villages located by the sea coast between the estuary of the Roja River and the border with the district of Ventspils (presently near Lūžņa). J. H. Teureck received his information from Latvians who came to fish near the Liv-inhabited coast and who asserted that the Livs wore the same kind of clothes as the Latvians, spoke Latvian, that religious services were in the Latvian language, while at home they spoke "their own", i.e. the Liv language (*mehs runnajam Liebeeſſchu wallodu*) and called themselves Livs — *Liebeeſſchi*. U. J. Zimmermann, who worked among the Livs wrote much the same: in terms of their customs the Livs scarcely differed from Latvians, their attire was similar to that of Dutch sailors; among themselves they only spoke in the Liv language, however, when they had to study the rudiments of religion, they learned the Latvian language.

The view is current that the largest part of the Baltic Finns living in Courland, the Vends, assimilated during the 12th–13th centuries and accepted Couronian culture, but — unlike the Couronians, who cremated the dead — they retained the custom of

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[122] The Livs have not disappeared entirely — in the 2011 Latvian census 250 persons described themselves as Livs. For the present day status of Liv culture and language, see: Blumberga, R. Lībieši 19.–21. gadsimtā. *Lībieši. Vēsture, valoda un kultūra*, 193.–204. lpp.

[123] The authoritative summary in: Grāvere, R. Lībiešu pārlatviskošanas procesa daži aspekti. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, 23. laid., 99.–112. lpp. Some aspects are to be found in: *Lībieši. Vēsture, valoda un kultūra*. Rīga: Līvō Kultūr sidām, 2013 (parallel version published in Estonian: *Liivlased. Ajalugu, keel ja kultuur*. Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2011).

[124] If one can rely on the description of the situation due to J. H. Teureck, then only Latvians were living in Engure around 120 years later.

[125] Einhorn, P. *Historia Lettica, Das ist Beschreibung der Lettischen Nation...* Dorpt: Johann Vogel, 1649, Cap. 1, S. 2.

[126] Schlözer, A. L. Gesammelte Nachrichten von den Ueberresten der Liven in Livland und Kurland. *M. Johann Joseph Haigold's Beylagen zum Neuveränderten Rußland*, 2. Riga–Leipzig: Verlegts Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, 1770, S. 351–360.

burying the bodies. According to conclusions drawn by Vitolds Muižnieks, differences in burial customs during the 13th–14th centuries and the collection of items deposited in graves point to differing transmission vectors for material culture, but do not allow safely to decide on ethnic belonging, including any legacy of Vend culture, since many of the features found in the area inhabited by the Vends could have come about under influence of Semigallian culture, or even through migration by Semigallians themselves.[127] Thus, the question remains open concerning the further history of the Vends during the Livonian period.

The studies of Courland by P. Johansen are to be mentioned here. He concluded, based on the given names recorded by clerks of the Commandery of Kuldīga in their lists of taxpayer over 1355–1362, that in many areas of Central Courland — the neighbourhoods of Cīrava, Kuldīga, Valtaiķi, which have never been traditionally associated with regions inhabited by Livs — as many as 20–30% of the residents might have been Livs, and, furthermore, there were 18 hamlets (principally around Cīrava and Kuldīga, as well as around Aizpute), inhabited only by Livs.[128] These observations agree well with the route taken by Guillebert de Lannoy and his noting the presence of Livs in Courland. However, it is still unclear when and why Livs had settled in Central Courland during the 14th century — was this directly caused by the Baltic Crusade or the disturbances of St. George's Day, or they were descendants of the autochthonous Vends? P. Johansen looked for Finnish parallels for many place names of Courland, while Valentin Kiparsky saw in the distribution of place names throughout Courland more of a Baltic, rather than of Finnish origin.[129] The observations of P. Johansen have not, regrettably, led to further studies which would provide new arguments to support or to contradict his conclusions.

In Vidzeme the assimilation of the Livs is associated mostly with the influx of Latgalians/Latvians, in some areas, also of Semigallians to form majorities in areas settled originally by Livs. This process is seen to have happened during the Late Iron Age along the Daugava River and around Lake Burtnieks, with the formation of ethnically mixed regions, for example, in the district of Idumeja. Most of the names of landmarks mentioned in the book of 1357 setting out the borders of fiefs of Katvari Estate (to the east of Limbaži) located in the civil parish of Umurga, are of Latvian origin or contain traces of the Latvian language,[130] which demonstrates that a substantial Latvian community existed in Umurga already in the mid-14th century. Two villages inhabited by Latvians existed in the neighbourhood of Krimulda from at least the first half of the 13th century onwards, i.e. Kuršu (Couronian) village (*Cursiculle*), and Aizgale village, both of these names are of Latvian origin.

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[127] Muižnieks, V. *Bēru tradīcijas Latvijā pēc arheoloģiski pētīto 14.–18. gadsimta apbedīšanas vietu materiāla*, 2015, 186.–188. lpp.

[128] Johansen, P. Kurlands Bewohner zu Anfang der historischen Zeit. *Baltische Lande*, Bd. 1. *Ostbaltische Frühzeit.* Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1939, S. 280–282, Abb. 168–169.

[129] Kiparsky, V. *Die Kurenfrage*. Helsinki: Finnische Literaturgesellschaft, 1939.

[130] LGU, 1: 82: *Osolltetz* (ozols + tece), *Apsetetz* (apse + tece), *Stropeuppe* (strops? + upe), *Margellsall* (sala), *Peschenpurwe* (purvs), *Kaysterkalln* (kalns), *Tellemuggur* (teļš + mugura) etc.

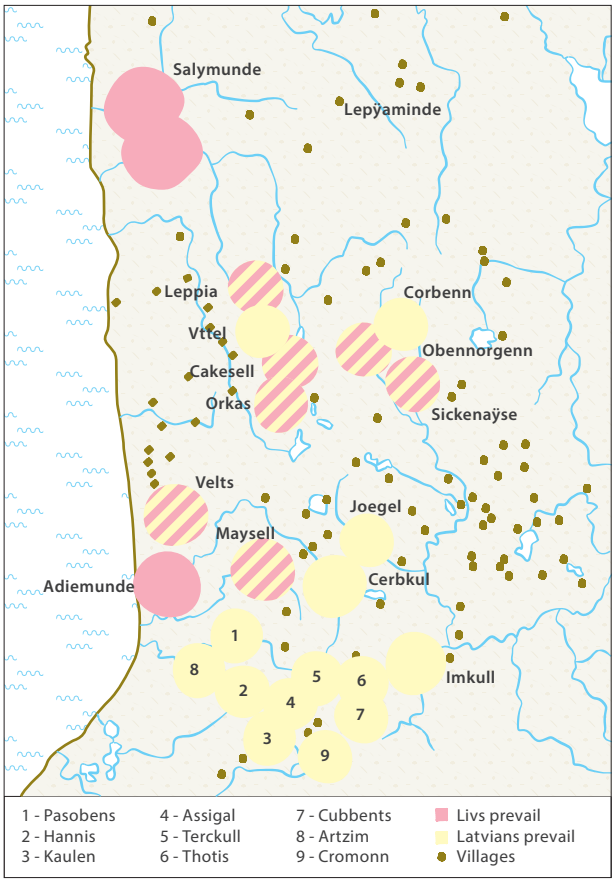


Fig. 7. Vakas of the Archbishopric of Riga in 1550 referring to the Liv area. (Source: Auns, M. Turaidas un Krimuldas novada apdzīvotība un iedzīvotāju etniskā piederība Livonijas laikā. *Pa somugru pēdām Baltijas jūras krastā. Starptautiskās zinātniskās konferences materiāli, 2009. gada 23. aprīlis, Turaida*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2009, 57. lpp., 2. att.)

Compilation of the place names of Liv areas during the Middle Ages and their analysis in terms of chronology could to a certain degree reflect the penetration by Latvians of the Liv environment; this, however, is a future task.

The *Book of Accounts* (*Wackenbuch*) compiled around 1550 by the Archbishopric of Riga, is a unique document in that it lists homesteads by their names and also the head of the household.[131] In parallel with place names of Liv linguistic origin the document also lists place names of Latvian origin. Of particular interest is a series of names which in either the Latvian or Liv language refer to the social status of the resident of a farmstead, occupation or family kinship *(dels/-poy, poye* `son`, *brall, brale* `brother`, *tawe/-isat* `father`). The contents of this document provide credible evidence that a Latvian or Liv form is not random, and may point to the ethnic belonging of the bearer; however, not all entries can be so readily interpreted, precluding a categorical conclusion to be drawn.

The entries in the *Book of Accounts* for the *vakas*[132] of *Cerbkul*, *Imkull,* and *Joegel*, located in the region around Turaida Castle, show that Latvian forms dominate in names which relate to the social status or kinship (in 30–40% of all homesteads, in the region of *Joegel*, as much as 70%), and number of Liv forms are considerably fewer. In the regions of *Cerbkul* and *Imkull* we may note approximately 20 other names of Latvian origin. This evidently reflected the significant proportion of Latvian residents, even a dominant presence.

[131] The original is deposited at the Schwerin Landeshauptarchiv in Germany, with a photocopy held at the Latvian State Historical Archives (LVVA, 4060. f., 2. apr., 483. l.). This document has been analysed in detail in: Auns, M. The Livs in Livonia in the Middle of the 16th century. Alenius, K., Honkala, A., Wunsch, S. (eds.). *On the Eastern Edge of the Baltic Sea. Borders and Integration in the History of the Fenno-Baltic Region.* Rovaniemi: Pohjois-Suomen historiallinen yhdistys, 2009, pp. 29–37 (Studia Historica Septentrionalia, 58).

[132] *Vaka* (German *Wacke*) — territorial and taxation unit consisting of one or several villages or a group of seperate homesteads.

From the information about accounts for *Adiemunde* we discover there to have been a large relative number of Liv residents — owners of farmstead with Liv names comprise 48% of all such individuals, and furthermore three homesteads are noted named *Ratstep*, i.e. houses of coach builders (although one may question these to be the name of the profession of the owner, or the village name in the Liv language). If account is taken of neutral names we infer there to have been at least a small majority of Livs over Latvians in the *Adiemunde* area.

In the *Book of Accounts* for the castle area of Krimulda the majority of the names of homesteads can be divided into two categories: either of Latvian origin, or of "neutral" origin. Names derived from Latvian in this area comprise at least 25%, of the total, whereas a relatively small number are based on the Liv language; however, a more profound linguistic analysis has to be done for a better appreciation of matters.

The ethnic situation in the Liv part of the Archbishopric of Riga, during the 16th century, may very cautiously assessed as follows. In the castle regions of Krimulda and east of Turaida, as well as the Utele area around Limbaži and the Korbe area of Umurga, the majority of Livs had already been assimilated and most of the residents were newcomers Latvians and assimilated Livs, while in the *Adiemunde*, *Salymunde* and *Lepyaminde* areas Livs were predominant. Elsewhere Livs were a large part of the local residents but it is not possible to ascertain whether they were still in a majority there.

In much the same way as in the areas close to Turaida and Krimulda, the assimilation of Livs took place rather quickly along the lower reaches of the Daugava River. Burials have been unearthed in cemeteries dating from the 13th–14th centuries in Riga which have been identified as associated of the Livs of the Daugava area, Livs from Courland (Vends), Couronians from Northern Courland and Semigallians,[133] and this, together with the presence of a German community in Riga, provide evidence for the ethnic diversity of Riga; however, a distinct presence of Latgalian culture is seen in the Liv districts along the Daugava River.[134] Both the ethnic diversity (there are indications that there was a Scandinavian component in the ethnic origins of Livs along the Daugava River), as well as the lower reaches of the Daugava being attractive as a centre for trading purposes, meant that ever increasing numbers of migrants tended to dilute the relative number of Livs could have been a contributing factor to assimilation of the Livs in this region.

Several documents, dating from the middle of the 14th century, deserve mention[135] that they regulate the property rights to bee-trees in the patrimonial area of Riga in which the Livs are mentioned and their ancient legal rights to property.

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[133] Denisova, R., Gerhards, G., Zariņa, G. 12.–14. gadsimta Rīgas iedzīvotāju antropoloģiskais sastāvs un etniskā piederība. *Senā Rīga: pētījumi pilsētas arheoloģijā un vēsturē*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1998, 144.–157. lpp.; Muižnieks, V. 14., 15. gs. ugunskapi Kurzemē. *Pētījumi kuršu senatnē. Rakstu krājums*. Rīga: NIMS, 2008, 46.–49. lpp. (Latvijas Nacionālā vēstures muzeja raksti, Nr. 14); Celmiņš, A. Iekšrīgas 13.–18. gadsimta apbedīšanas vietu arheoloģiskā izpēte. *Senā Rīga: pētījumi pilsētas arheoloģijā un vēsturē*, 7. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2012, 109.–116. lpp.

[134] Vilcāne, A. Latgaļu senlietu atradumi Daugavas lejtecē un Rīgā (10.–13. gs.). *Senā Rīga: pētījumi pilsētas arheoloģijā un vēsturē*, 159.–170. lpp. On ethnical heterogeneity of Daugava Liv district see also: Zemītis, G. Izmaiņas lībiešu dzīvesvietu izvietojumā Ikšķiles apkārtnē 13.–15. gadsimtā. *Ikšķiles almanahs*, 4. Ikšķile: Ikšķiles novada pašvaldība, 2012, 89.–100. lpp.

[135] LGU, 1: 71; Caune, A. *Rīgas lībieši un viņu īpašumzīmes*. Rīga: Jumava, 1998; Napiersky, J. G. L. *Die Libri redituum der Stadt Riga*. Leipzig: Duncker & Humbolt, 1881, S. 58–61.

Historians, archaeologists, bioarchaeologists, and linguists have produced a number of important findings concerning assimilation of the Livs, but this question still must be considered as inadequately studied. The principal driving force facilitating the assimilation of the Livs was the physical expansion of Baltic ethnic groups in a northerly direction, which had started in Courland and in what later became Vidzeme before German aggression. The change in ethnic make-up in the lower regions of the Daugava River was altered by the development of Riga as the metropolis of Livonia and as a multi-ethnic centre. Depopulation crises resulting from famine and epidemics could have had a certain effect, as this was compensated by incomers from other areas. However, the decisive changes in the demographic and ethnic situation occurred after the collapse of Livonia. Judging by the census records (the so-called registration of ploughshares) of the first half of the 17th century for Vidzeme, the more severe deleterious effect was not so much the Livonian war as the devastating periods of famine and epidemics which occurred at the very start of the Polish–Swedish war (1600–1629).

It is impossible to determine at what time the Latvian language predominated in areas inhabited by the Livs, i.e. becoming the only language used in church rituals — this was unmistakeably another factor which hastened the assimilation of the Livs.

Conclusion

Expansion into the Baltic by Crusaders created a new geopolitical situation. The Western European political, legal and social system was transferred to Livonia, where the privileged class almost entirely consisted of the numerically small German community. Nevertheless, the local elite was also integrated into public authority, with retention to a certain extent the former rights, system of self-rule and the freedom to pursue a traditional life style.

New commercial and crafts centres were formed, yet overall Livonia remained an agrarian state. Peasants kept for some time their status of free men; despite recourse to mercenaries, peasants formed an important part of the Livonian army. At the beginning of the 15th century, estates oriented towards a market economy began to appear more frequently and peasants gradually became serfs. Given that there was no influx of German peasants into Livonia (this turned out to be important as regards the future development of the indigenous ethnic groups), social polarisation coincided with ethnic polarisation. Ethnic polarisation also was evident among vassals — initially many vassals in Livonia were of autochthonous extraction, from the 15th century onwards Germans were in the absolute majority of fiefs. Some local autochthonous residents Germanised, became German, in order to attain a higher social status, but this process did not involve significant numbers.

There might have been 400 000 inhabitants of the territory of present-day Latvia in the mid-16th century (6.3 persons/km^2), and this renders the territory as not a particularly densely populated; nevertheless, this population density was consistent with geographical and climatic conditions.

It certainly is impossible to assess how ethnic developments might have transpired otherwise, the invasion and conquests of the 13th century substantially influenced processes. The formation of Livonia established a generally united political, economic and cultural space in which the formerly extant borders between ethnic groups lost much of their importance and within the frontiers of the new space appreciation began to dawn that commonalities, in some if not all aspects, possibly, started to take preference over the differences. It is possibly too much of an exaggeration to state that the Livonian framework determined emergence of the Latvian nation in its present form, this framework certainly influenced consolidation of ethnic groups resident on the territory of Latvia.

Recognising the framework of Livonia to be the most important factor which promoted consolidation of the Baltic peoples living on the territory of Latvia, the next most important factor must be highlighted to have been the emergence of the Latvian (Latgalian) language as the common language or intermediate dialect. This process evidently was less effective in the peripheral areas of Eastern Latvia (Latgalia), while, after the collapse of Livonia, spread of the intermediate dialect was hampered by political and confessional differences.

We cannot speak of a fully united consolidated Latvian people during the 16th century. In fact, the criterion of a "united" people is not decisive — what is more important is that there is a clear link between the current ethnic consciousness of Latvians and those elements of the Latvian people which are the basis for this identity to form. Various subsequent political changes, including the political divisions between the territories inhabited by Latvians, opened the prospect of ethnic divisions appearing on the basis of religion, as well the threats of assimilation by the Germans or becoming a Slavic people. Nevertheless, out of all of the historical options, either deliberately or by chance coalescence of probabilities, the result, our modern Latvian nation, emerged after a long period of time.

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Mārīte Jakovļeva

STATEHOOD ON THE TERRITORY OF LATVIA DURING EARLY MODERN TIMES: THE DUCHY OF COURLAND AND SEMIGALLIA

The article presents the history of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia from its formation in 1561–1562 to its inclusion in the Russian Empire in 1795, examining historical developments in an internal political and foreign policy context. Information is presented concerning the basis for the political and administrative system of the Duchy, important events in its life, and the activities of several of its Dukes.

Keywords: the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, Agreement of Submission, "Formula of Rule", nobility, the Kettler dynasty, colonies, the Biron dynasty, protectorate of Russia.

Up until the end of the Soviet period, the historiography of the Duchy of Courland[1] was influenced by the level of investigation of each period, as well as the ideological requirements of the times. This resulted in an evident imbalance in the extent to which several issues have been studied. The overall conclusion may be drawn that investigations have predominantly considered political history, while there have been relatively few publications devoted to social, economic, and daily life issues. It must be noted that the historical controversies of the 20th century led to the appearance of several ideologically different historiographic tendencies, namely, the contradictory emphasis on the German and Latvian factor, which also considerably impacted the historiography of the Duchy of Courland. After the formation of the independent state of Latvia (1918–1940), research into the Duchy of Courland, on the one hand, was coloured by a search for the roots of the new Latvian national statehood, while on the other hand, the Baltic German historiography tradition persisted. After the Second World War, both of these historiographic tendencies carried on outside the territory of Latvia. In turn, an adaptation was enforced in Soviet Latvia of the results of earlier pre-war investigations by Baltic German and Latvian historians to comply with

[1] For details see: Zeids, T. Kurzemes hercogiste historiogrāfijā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, 1994, Nr. 2, 16.–26. lpp.

Marxist guidelines, while more recent studies with a very narrow scope were pursued of the history of the Duchy of Courland. However, new research directions were opened up after recovery of Duchy Courland-era archives from Germany at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s.[2] After the collapse of the USSR (1991), a new wave of studies of the Duchy of Courland arose in both Germany and Latvia, and they were joined by researchers from Poland, France, and other countries. In recent years, a number of studies based on historical sources have been carried out where the history of the Duchy has been examined in the context of the history of Europe. Nevertheless, much remains to be done, and many questions still require investigation.

The formation and first phase of existence of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia

The 16th century in the history of Latvia was a period of great commotion. From the second half of the 15th century onwards, various factors began to impact mediaeval Livonia with progressively greater consequences for this confederation of clerical feudal states[3], and they led to collapse of the confederation shortly thereafter. On a political level, there was no consensus between the rulers of Livonia — the Master in Livonia of the German Order, the Archbishop of Riga, and various Bishops — and a mutual struggle for power took place. The very fact of authority wielded by different types of spiritual masters, namely religious prelates and members of a Christian order of knights, resulted in irreconcilable contradictions, which were exacerbated by a vaguely defined power hierarchy. Nominally supreme political power accrued to the Archbishop of Riga, while the German Order and its Livonian branch were directly subordinated to the Pope, a fact which allowed, in cases of disputes, appeal for support by the Curia. Both competing political powers sought to demonstrate their supremacy in Livonia; similarly, the Bishops of Dorpat (Tartu) and Ösel-Wiek periodically attempted to expand their spheres of interest to the detriment of their neighbours.[4]

The increased demand for agricultural produce in Western European markets meant that the vassals of Livonia became increasingly occupied with economic

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[2] For more about the history of the collection of documents of the Duchy of Courland see: Krajevska, B., Zeids, T. Zwei kurländische Archive und ihre Schicksale. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*. Oberländer, E., Misāns, I. (Hrsg.). Lüneburg: Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1993, S. 13–28.

[3] Livonia during the Middle Ages consisted of the territory of modern Latvia and Estonia; it comprised lands belonging to the Livonian branch of the German Order, as well as those of the Archbishopric of Riga, the Bishopric of Courland, the Bishopric of Dorpat, and the Bishopric of Ösel-Wiek.

[4] For details see, e.g.: Jähnig, B. *Verfassung und Verwaltung des Deutschen Ordens und seiner Herrschaft in Livland*. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011; Eihmane, E. *Rīgas arhibīskapa un Vācu ordeņa cīnas par varu viduslaiku Livonijā*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2012; for the historiography of this issue see: Eihmane, E. Livonijas zemes kungu savstarpējās attiecības: historiogrāfijas stāvoklis un perspektīvas. *Latvijas vēsture krustcelēs un jaunu pieeju meklējumos:* Latvijas vēsturnieku I kongresa materiāli. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2014, 195.–222. lpp.

matters, neglecting their military service to the Order. Estates which belonged to vassals, the Order, and to prelates, were gradually transformed into centres of agrarian production, through expansion of the area of arable land, which was tilled by peasants under corvée. New estates were created rapidly at the end of the 15th century and during the early 16th century. For example, documents show that prior to 1500, a total of 123 estates existed on the territory inhabited by Latvians located north of the Düna (Latv. Daugava) River; in the following 60 years, 210 more new estates were created at the cost of the land reserves of demesnes, given that land was sold or granted in fief, a process which particularly affected the lands of the Order in Livonia, and those of the Archbishop of Riga. In parallel, the rights of peasants were restricted more and more. Their freedom of movement was constrained with a view to ensuring the requisite labour force; the contract concluded in 1494 by Michael Hildebrand, Archbishop of Riga, with his vassals, for the first time characterised peasants as "descendible subjects". In the same way vassals and other owners of estates gained ever greater legal rights over peasants, up to and including meting out a death penalty.[5]

The existing political and social system in Livonia was upset by the rapid progress of the Reformation in Livonia during the first third of the 16th century. First of all, the Reformation took hold in the large cities of Livonia. For example, a small Lutheran parish came into being in Riga in 1522, and already in 1525 it was granted by the city the right of freedom of religious belief.[6] Step by step Lutheranism spread not only among vassals, but also among members of the Order, and even touched the officials of the Bishopric.[7] Although initially the ruling circles of Livonia still hoped to combine the new religion with the old political system, successive events demonstrated these hopes to be unrealistic.[8]

Neighbouring states were quick to take advantage of the internal political instability of Livonia — at that time processes taking place in these states were opposite to those in Livonia, namely centralisation of authority and a tendency towards hegemony in the region. Consequently, with the outbreak of the Livonian War (1558–1582), Old Livonia proved incapable of offering serious opposition to the armies of Tsar Ivan IV of Muscovy. Therefore, in 1559, Livonians sought the protection of Sigismund II

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[5] Dorošenko, V. Latviešu zemes XVI gadsimtā. *Latvijas PSR vēsture. No vissenākajiem laikiem līdz mūsdienām*. 3. pārstr. un papildin. izd. 1. sēj. Rīga: Zinātne, 1986, 54.–55. lpp.; see also the articles by M. Auns in this volume. For a comparison see also: Melton, E. Gutsherrschaft in East Elbian Germany and in Livonia 1500–1800: A Critique of the Model. *Central European History*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1988, pp. 315–349; Schmidt, Chr. *Leibeigenschaft in Ostseeraum: Versuch einer Typologie*. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1997.

[6] For details see: Pabst, M. *Die Typologisierbarkeit von Städtereformation und die Stadt Riga als Beispiel*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2015.

[7] An essential work on how the Reformation took hold in Livonia is: Arbusow, L. *Die Einführung der Reformation in Liv-, Est- und Kurland.* Vol. 1, 2. Leipzig; Riga: G. Löffler, 1919, 1921; See also: Kreem, J. Der Deutschen Orden und die Reformation in Livland. *The Military Orders and the Reformation. Choices, State Building and the Weight of Tradition*. Mol, J. A., Militzer, K., Nicholson, H. J. (eds.). Hilversum: Verloren, 2006, pp. 43–57.

[8] Despite the existence of a considerable historiography on the topic of the Reformation in Latvia, there is nevertheless a dearth of studies of problems associated with this period. See: Kļava, V. Reformācija Livonijā: pētniecības tradīcijas un perspektīvas. *Latvijas vēsture krustcelēs un jaunu pieeju meklējumos:* Latvijas vēsturnieku I kongresa materiāli, 214.–222. lpp.

Augustus, King of Poland and Grand-Duke of Lithuania. Two years later almost all of Livonia, with the exception of the northern part of Estonia including Reval (Tallinn), which was controlled by Sweden, came to be dominated by Sigismund Augustus.[9]

Gotthard Kettler, the Master of the Livonian Order, was the principal actor initiating this subjection to Sigismund Augustus.[10] He was unable during negotiations held in the autumn of 1561 in Vilnius, to gain consent by the king to creation of a new state which would comprise the entire territory of the former Livonia. Following several weeks of negotiations, the Livonian Order concluded, on 28 November 1561, the so-called Agreement of Submission, or *Pacta Subiectionis*[11], with Sigismund II Augustus. The territories formerly held by the Order in Courland (Kurzeme) and Semigallia (Zemgale)[12] became a descendible Duchy, while Gotthard Kettler became a vassal of Sigismund Augustus. The remaining territories of the Order located north of the Düna River, and part of the territories of the Archbishopric of Riga and the Bishopric of Dorpat were under the direct authority of the King.[13] The Agreement of Submission entailed complete collapse of the Old Livonia and was one of the events which heralded the start of Early Modern Age on the territory of Latvia.[14] At the same time 28 November 1561 must be considered as the date on which the Duchy of Courland

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[9] See, for example: Hirscheid, M., von. Die Säkularisationen der Geistlichen Staaten Livlands 1558–1561. Typologie und Vergleich. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis,* 67. sēj., Nr. 3/4/5, 2013, 90.–107. lpp.

[10] The German researcher Udo Arnold asserts that Gotthard, unlike the Master of the German Order in Prussia, had no other alternative but to try and create a new state in Livonia. See: Arnold, U. Hochmeister Albrecht von Brandenburg-Ansbach und Landmeister Gotthard Kettler. Ordensritter und Territorialherren am Scheideweg in Preussen und Livland. *The Military Orders and The Reformation. Choices, State building and the Weight of Tradition,* pp. 11–29.

[11] The Agreement of Submission, which in the Duchy of Courland was usually referred to as the *Provisio Ducalis* (literally, "Provision for the Duke's livelihood"), contained provisions similar to those in an agreement signed in 1525 transforming the German Order state of Prussia into a Duchy. The text of the Agreement of Submission has been published in: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz. Dokumente zur Verfassungsgeschichte 1561–1795*. Oberländer, E., Keller, V. (Hrsg.). Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2008, S. 54–71. For views on the issues raised in this book see also the virtual exhibition, *From Duke Gotthard till Duke Jacob,* on the home-page of the Latvian National Archives, accessible at: www.archiv.org.lv/hercogiste/ (site last visited 30.03.2017).

[12] Courland (Kurzeme) and Semigallia (Zemgale) are regions in Latvia located south of the Daugava River. At the end of the Middle Ages, the Livonian branch of the German Order owned two-thirds of Courland and all of Semigallia. The small Bishopric of Courland lay outside of the territory controlled by the Order; after secularisation, this territory was named the district of Pilten (Piltene). At the beginning of the 17th century, Pilten came under direct control by the King of Poland–Lithuania.

[13] Initially, the King accorded Kettler control over these territories. However, when the so-called Duchy of Livonia was formed in 1566 (*Ducatus Transdunensis or Ultradunensis*), the King nominated a different individual as administrator, and Kettler lost his position. Riga struggled for a further 20 years to gain special status, and only submitted to the King of Poland in 1581.

[14] For more about the concept of "the Early Modern Age" and aspects unique to the Baltic region, see: Oberländer, E. Das Konzept der Frühen Neuzeit und die Geschichte Estlands, Livlands und Kurlands 1561–1795. *Die Baltischen Länder und Europa in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Angermann, N., Brüggemann, K., Pöltsam-Jürjo, I. (Hrsg.). Köln; Weimar; Wien: Böhlau, 2015, S. 11–36 (Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte, Bd. 26); See also: Kļava, V. Kurzemes un Zemgales hercogistes izveidošanās un jauno laiku sākums Latvijas vēsturē. *Ventspils muzeja raksti,* 1. sēj., 2001, 27.–35. lpp.; additionally see: Kļava, V. Ceļa sākums uz moderno sabiedrību Latvijas vēsturē. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 4, 2008, 39.–56. lpp.

and Semigallia (*Ducatus Curlandiae et Semigalliae*)[15] was founded *de iure*. When in 1569 the Union of Lublin created the united Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, or "The Republic of Both Nations" (*Rzeczpospolita*), the Duchy of Courland was incorporated into this state, which meant that it became a fief of the joined Polish–Lithuanian state.[16]

The Agreement of Submission entered into force on 5 March 1562, when the Livonian Order was secularised in a solemn ceremony held in Riga Castle.[17] This was followed by the oath of fealty to Sigismund II Augustus sworn by Gotthard Kettler in his new capacity as a secular Duke. In turn, former members of the Order and their vassals, who constituted the nobility (*Ritterschaft und Landschaft*), swore allegiance as subjects of the new Duke. They were guaranteed the following by the Agreement of Submission: 1) freedom of religious belief conforming with the Confession of Augsburg; 2) retention of existing rights and privileges, as well as their estates were descendible both to male and female family members; 3) preference for allocating posts given to local German residents (*ius indigenatus*). Gotthard Kettler was granted the same title, regalia, and honours as the Duke of Prussia in 1525.[18] Officially the title of the Duke was, by the Grace of God, Duke of Courland and Semigallia in Livonia (*Von Gottes Gnaden in Liefland zu Curland und Semgallen Herzog*).

At the start of his reign the Duke was confronted with serious challenges. Ducal authority had to be established under conditions of the Livonian War, the territory of the new state had to be secured, an administrative structure had to be established, and the Duke had to care for continuation of the dynasty. The last of these tasks was accomplished by marriage in 1566 of Gotthard with Anna, sister of Duke Johann Albrecht I of Mecklenburg, in this way founding the Kettler dynasty.[19] Lutheranism was a tool successfully wielded by the Duke, thus religion became the bond uniting the nobility with the Duke. The Duke guided setting up the organisational structure of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Duke also headed this organisation. A massive campaign of building new churches and renovating extant churches took place in the Duchy following a decision taken in 1567 by the Diet (*Landtag*). An order by Gotthard

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[15] In reference to the Duchy, it is customary for reasons of brevity to use the terms "Duchy of Courland", or "Courland". It is evident from context when the terms "Courland" and "Semigallia" are used in a geographical sense.

[16] During the negotiations in 1561, the Polish Sejm, seeking to avoid war with Russia, did not give its support for eventual surrender and submission of Livonia. Therefore, until the Sejm would concur, Sigismund II Augustus promised to provide military support to Livonia using Lithuanian forces and accepted the submission of Livonia in the name of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. At that time, Poland and Lithuania were in a personal union in the person of the Ruler, which in 1569, in Lublin, was transformed into a true union. The document of 3 August 1569, signed in Lublin incorporating the Duchy of Courland. In Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f.,1. apr., 25. l.

[17] Thus, the creation *de facto* of the Duchy of Courland took place on 5 March 1562.

[18] See also: Wörster, P. Die Pacta Subiectionis als Gründungsurkunde des Herzogtums Kurland. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis*, 67. sēj., Nr. 3/4/5, 2013, 108.–118. lpp.

[19] Gotthard had conceived the idea of marriage with the Princess of Mecklenburg already in 1563; however, due to the Livonian War the marriage took place in March 1566 in Königsberg. After two weeks of celebrations, the newlyweds departed for Courland, where celebrations continued in the castle at Goldingen (Kuldīga). Five sons and two daughters were born of this marriage; however, three sons died in early childhood.

resulted in the most important tasks involved in organising the Church and in the introduction of Christian morality summarised in documents with titles, "Church Reformation" (*Kirchen-Reformation*), and the "Church Laws" (*Kirchen-Ordnung*), and these were promulgated in 1570.[20] Laws regulated how pastors were established in post, and how church audits would be carried out, the content of church services, church ceremonies, etc. Special attention was paid to work in non-German (Latvian) parishes. Inasmuch as one of the precepts of the Reformation was holding church services and sermons in a language comprehensible to the people, Duke Gotthard ordered translation and publication of church books and hymns in the Latvian language.[21]

The administrative system of the Duchy was based on the system of administration instigated by the Order, excepting that the designation rulers of castle districts during the Livonian period — commander and bailiff — were replaced by the terms captain (*Hauptmann*), and senior captain (*Oberhauptmann*). The Duke along with the nobility decided political, economic, and legal issues at meetings of the Diet.[22] Decisions taken by the Diet had legal force. Approximately one-third of the territory of the Duchy of Courland consisted of demesnes, or the Duke's estates (*Ämter*), while the remaining two-thirds of the territory were held by former vassals of the Order, who now were part of the nobility of the Duchy. The Ducal Court became the most important political, administrative, and cultural centre, it was the meeting place of officials and members of institutions: the councillors to the Duke, the Chancellery and Supreme Board of the Economy or Fiscal Chamber (*Rent-Cammer*, *fürstliche Cammer*). Servants at the ducal court included both Latvians and Germans.[23]

In 1570, Gotthard, attentive to request by the nobility, and for his own part honouring promises made by the King, published the so-called Privilege of Gotthard (*Privilegium Gotthardinum*). The Duke guaranteed thereby freedom of religion to the nobility in compliance with the Confession of Augsburg, as well as the right of succession and freedom of action concerning the estates granted in fief by the Order, both along the male and female line. This had the effect of transforming estates previously held in fief to become private property, although legally the status of fief was retained, inasmuch as the owners still had to meet their obligations as vassals to provide the so-called horse service (*Rossdienst*), which meant that for every 20 units (a carucate or plough) of land they had to maintain one armed horseman. Whoever received an

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[20] Their manuscripts are held at Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 4038. f., 2. apr., 930. l.

[21] Concerning the issue of Latvian popular religious beliefs of the times see: Boetticher, M. von. "Deutsche" und "Undeutsche" in der Kurländischen Kirchengesetzgebung von 1570 und die damalige Volksfrömmigkeit der Letten. *Kurland*. No. 23, 2016. Hrsg. von Vereinigte Kurländische Stiftungen im Auftrag der Kurländischen Ritterschaft. S. 17–39.

[22] In contrast to the practice current during the Livonian period, the Diet in the Duchy of Courland no longer invited representatives of the clergy and cities to attend meetings. These were represented by the Duke. The Duke would also approve granting the rights of a city and confirm regulations for the city police (*Polizey-Ordnung*).

[23] For example, out of the mentioned 113 members of the court at Mitau (Jelgava), in 1576, 42 were non-Germans — the gardener, cooks, master brewers, blacksmiths, sawhands, and other servants. See, Hercoga Gotharda Ketlera ļaužu saraksts Jelgavas pilij 1576. gada 20. janvārī. *Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 3, 1937, 20. lpp.



Fig. 1. Initial page of Duke Gotthard's will. 1587. Parchment. (LVVA, 554. f., 1. apr., 39. l.)

estate in fief from the Duke, could, however, dispose of it following rules set by the Duke. Over and above this, the Privilege of Gotthard confirmed the power over the peasants of the highest and lowest court of the nobility.[24]

The nobility considered the Duke was only the "first among equals", and, therefore, resisted any increase in ducal power. At the same time, the Duke was forced from the start to defend the territory of the Duchy against designs of his neighbours. Particularly serious problems existed on the border with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, because the Lithuanians sought to enrich themselves to the detriment of the Duchy, often forcibly taking over land which belonged to subjects of the Duke. Regulation of the border between the Duchy of Courland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was begun in the 1580s, but the process remained incomplete, and border clashes did not stop right up until the liquidation of the Duchy of Courland.[25]

The Agreement of Submission specified that the Duchy was descendible solely along the male line, which drastically narrowed the field of potential successors. Recognising the fact of existing external threats, and the unstable internal political situation, Duke Gotthard sought therefore, in a very timely way, to ensure continued existence of the Duchy, in case of his demise. In a will written already in 1573 Gotthard stated that, after his death the Duchy might be ruled by two Dukes (and no more than two Dukes), this despite the fact that at that time Duke Gotthard had only a single male heir. A similar provision was included in the last version of his will which Gotthard[26] signed on 23 February 1587, i.e. just a few months before he died.[27] He be-

[24] The text of the Privilege consisted of 12 articles which had been worked out as a joint effort by the Duke's councillors and representatives of the nobility during a session of the Diet held in Mitau during June 1570. The original of this document has not survived, but its complete text was reproduced in the confirmation of these privileges by Stephen Batory, King of Poland–Lithuania, on 28 November 1580, at a military encampment close to Pskov. This text has been published in: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz. Dokumente zur Verfassungsgeschichte 1561–1795,* S. 98–103.

[25] For more details about these problems see: Jakovļeva, M. Territorium und Grenzen des Herzogtums Kurland und Semgallen im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, Bd. 2. Oberländer, E. (Hrsg.). Lüneburg: Verlag Nordostdt. Kulturwerk, 2001, S. 69–104; Jakovleva, M. Granice Księstwa Kurlandzkiego w epoce nowożytnej. Wybrane zagadnienia. *Klio*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2008, S. 29–40.

[26] In historiography the activities of Duke Gotthard have been assessed ambiguously. The overwhelming majority of researchers express a negative view about the role he played in the partition of Livonia, but are positive about him as Duke. See: Plüer, S. Gotthard Kettler, letzter Ordensmeister in Livland und erster Herzog von Kurland — eine umstrittene Persönlichkeit in der Geschichtsschreibung. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, Bd. 2, S. 11–53.

[27] The original of the will is held at Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f., 1. apr., 39. l.; published in: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz,* S. 104–116.

queathed rule of Semigallia to his oldest son Frederick (*Friedrich*), and that of Courland to a second son, William (*Wilhelm*) — stipulating, however, that the Duchy could not be divided into two separate parts, and that investiture, including taking the oath of fealty at the court of Poland–Lithuania must take place jointly.[28]

Threats to the existence of the Duchy of Courland during the reign of the sons of Gotthard

Conflicts between Dukes William and Frederick and the nobility, and the Polish–Swedish War (1600–1629)

After the death of Duke Gotthard on 17 May 1587, power passed to his son Frederick, who was then not quite 18 years old, together with the councillors specified in the Will and his mother the dowager Duchess Anna. In July Frederick, both in his own name and that of his brother William, promised to respect all of the rights and privileges which Duke Gotthard had confirmed for the nobility receiving in return the oath of fealty from the latter. In April 1589, in Warsaw, King Sigismund III of Poland–Lithuania concurred to joint rule of the Duchy by the brothers. Frederick received the Diploma of Investiture in person, while William, who had not yet reached the age of majority, was represented by his advisers. At the same time, the Sejm of Poland–Lithuania adopted a law that allowed, in the case of the Kettler dynasty coming to an end, for the Courland–Semigallia fief not to be granted to a new Duke, but instead for the Duchy to be divided into provinces (voivodeships), and these to be joined to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This decision rather quickly resulted in threats to the existence of the Duchy.

Having reached the age of majority of 20 years, William returned to Courland in 1594 from his studies in Germany. On 23 May 1595, the brothers met in Mitau (Jelgava) and reached agreement on sharing power in compliance with the provisions of their father's last will.[29] William received the authority to rule the Courland part of the Duchy, with his residence in Goldingen (Kuldīga), while Semigallia was given over to Frederick, with his residence in Mitau. Each Duke had his own separate court, economic administration and lower judicial system, while their highest court remained a single joint institution. In addition, nobles from the both parts of the Duchy met at joint sessions of the Diet.

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[28] It is to be noted that the decision of Gotthard to pass on power in the Duchy to two of his sons rather than just to the elder son is judged to have been an error. However, such division of territory among several heirs was accepted practice by many rulers, in particular, among German princely courts of the times. See also: Bues, A. Die kurländische Thronfolge im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. *Der frühmoderne Staat in Ostzentraleuropa*. Weber, E. E. J. (Hrsg.). Augsburg: Wißner-Verlag, 2000, S. 53–72.

[29] The original text was written on vellum, Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 5561. f., 4. apr., 719. l.; published in: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz*, S. 117–120. See also: Keller V. "... certis legibus convenisse ...". Zum Vertragswerk der Herzöge Friedrich und Wilhelm von 1595. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, Bd. 2, S. 55–68.



Fig. 2. Coat of arms of the Duchy of Courland. 1615. (Photograph from the collection of Rundāle Palace Museum.) In the coat of arms of the Duchy the lion impersonated Courland and the elk — Semigallia. The mid-shield displays a hook taken over from the coat of arms of Kettler family, which includes a monogram SA topped by a crown — initials of the Polish King Sigismund II August. In 1579, the mid-shield was supplemented with a detail from the coat of arms of the Polish King Stephen Bathory — a wolf's jaw.

William facilitated dynamic economic activity in his part of the Duchy, at the same time trying to restrict the rights of the nobility. For example, he forbade them to engage in the trade of timber, stating this to be a ducal privilege. William also appointed foreigners to important positions and without cause inspected military forces maintained by the nobility. However, the nobility was particularly incensed by audits of estates instigated by the Duke whereupon the Duke refused to recognise title of some nobles to tenure of estates. Powerful opposition to the Duke arose, headed by the brothers Magnus and Gotthard Nolde, with whom the Duke had long-standing personal issues. Duke Frederick sought, unsuccessfully, to reconcile both sides.[30]

The conflict culminated in 1615 when William ordered the Nolde brothers' arrest on the night to 10 August while they were in Mitau to attend a regular meeting of the Diet, accusing them of organising an uprising by the nobility. Both brothers were killed resisting arrest. Subsequently, the nobility complained to the King of Poland–Lithuania. A special Royal Commission was sent to Courland to investigate the killings and complaints made by the nobles, with both Dukes compelled to stand in judgement before the Royal Court of Justice. The King of Poland–Lithuania deposed both Dukes. William lost his right to be Duke, while Frederick succeeded, with difficulty, in being acquitted, and preserved the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia as a single state.

However, Frederick was only able to remain on the throne by yielding before several political demands made by the nobility. The outcome was formalised in the constitution of the Duchy, or the "Formula of Rule" (*Formula Regiminis; Regimentsformel*), which was worked out during 1617, with guidance provided by the King's Commissioners. The "Formula of Rule" specified the political system of the state, established limits to the power of a Duke which favoured the nobility, and this remained in force until the Duchy was abolished in 1795.[31] Furthermore, the nobility was entitled to establish a closed, "truly noble" (*vera Nobiles*) Corporation, whose members were

[30] For more details about the relations between the nobility and dukes see: Hübner, M. Herzog und Landschaft. Die Verfassung im Herzogtum Kurland bis 1617. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, Bd. 1, S. 29–55; Keller, V. *Herzog Friedrich von Kurland. Verfassungs-, Nachfolge- und Neutralitätspolitik*. Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2005, S. 11–105.

[31] Text of the *Formula Regiminis* has survived in numerous copies. Published in: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz*, S. 122–145.

enumerated in a special list or knightage (*Adels-Matrikel oder Ritterbank*).[32]

The institution of the Duke's advisers was reduced pursuant to the "Formula of Rule", and a new government was instituted for the Duchy. This comprised a Council of senior advisers or the Supreme Ducal Council (*Oberräte*), which included the Land-Steward (*Landhofmeister*), a Chancellor (*Kanzler*), the Supreme Burggrave (*Oberburggraf*) and Land-Marshal (*Landmarschall*), all of whom had to be members of the knightage, and two learned Doctors of Law.[33] The Duchy was divided for administrative purposes into four districts each administered by a senior captain (*Oberhauptmannschaft*), which were further subdivided into the so-called political parishes (*politisches Kirchspiel*),[34] and eight captaincies (*Hauptmannschaft*). The post of senior captain and captain could only be filled from the local nobility. In their districts, they also had the function of the main administrative official and military commander, carried out various diplomatic tasks, and assisted by assessors sat in judgement.[35] Henceforward, the Diet was to meet at least once in every two years. If previously any country gentleman could attend, now only deputies could attend, who were selected from among the group of privileged knights.

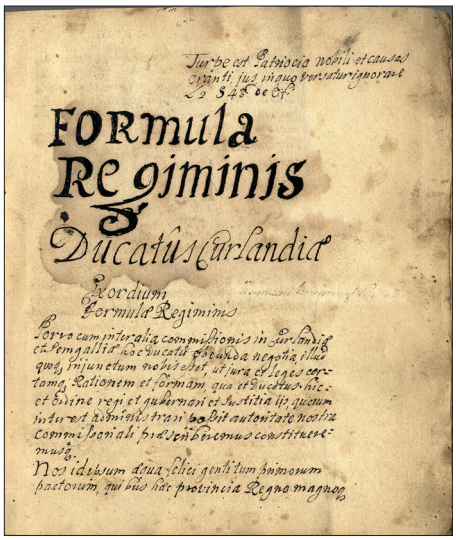

FORmula
Regiminis
Ducatûs Curlandiæ

Fig. 3. "Formula of Rule" of the Duchy of Courland. Declared in Jelgava, 18 March 1617. Transcript from the 17th century. Fragment. (LVVA, 640. f., 3. apr., 630. l.)

[32] In 1620–1624, proofs of nobility were examined by a Bench (Court) of Nobility, with the Diet subsequently deciding on their acceptance into the corporation. Up until 1642, 119 families of the nobility were immatriculated as members of the nobility of Courland, with a further 100 families not accepted — largely supporters of Duke William and owners of miniscule estates. Henceforward, only registered members of the nobility could fill the highest state administrative posts and take part in the Diet. Protocols of the Court of the Knightage are held at Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 640. f., 4. apr. 228., 229, a.o files.

[33] Appointment to the Council was for life. Duke Frederick appointed the first supreme councillors from among his existing advisers, who could in future be replaced, according to the constitution, by one of the senior captains. The Doctors of Law ought also to have been members of the nobility, but as there were relatively few educated members of the latter, this position could be filled by a commoner. Over time the Doctors of Law were progressively marginalised in the work of the Council, and often there was only one such member.

[34] Political parishes in the Duchy of Courland did not coincide with Church parishes, of which there were many more. In this regard the situation in the Duchy differed from that in Swedish-ruled Livonia (Vidzeme), where from the end of the 17th century onwards, Church parishes constituted the administrative units of the territory.

[35] The court of the senior captain was the court of first instance for all residents of the Duchy who enjoyed personal freedom. Its rulings could be appealed at the Duke's Court of Justice (*Hofgericht*), which consisted of supreme Councillors and senior captains, and later at the Royal Relations Court. Captains had jurisdiction over all free persons living in the Duchy, as well as peasants in criminal matters. Civil matters involving peasants in ducal estates were judged by the appropriate reeve. The owner had jurisdiction over the peasants in private estates. However, in serious criminal cases the owner could not unilaterally pass sentence, but only after consultation with representatives of the peasants and assessors from among his neighbours.

All previous decisions of the Diet were rescinded. The "Formula of Rule" also introduced use in the Duchy of the Gregorian, or new calendar from 1 January 1618 onwards.

A compendium of laws, "The Statutes of Courland", was proclaimed simultaneously with the "Formula of Rule". The drafting of a code of laws had been mooted from the 1570s onwards, but the code was promulgated in practice only in 1617.[36] The first part of the code dealt with functions of the courts, the second part comprised civil law, and the third part, criminal law. The "Statute of Courland" stipulated, inter alia, that a noble's authority over his serfs was a matter of private law. Moreover, a child whose father was a serf, and whose mother enjoyed personal freedom, was also designated a serf. Serfs who had escaped were to be returned to their masters without delay, including any children who might have been born in the interim. A noble who discovered his escaped serf on the territory of another noble was entitled to recover his "property" but could not do so unilaterally. Thus, in practice the extradition of peasants took years to be resolved through the courts. Nobles were permitted to issue their own laws with regard to their serfs, but these were not to contradict the statute.[37]

The Polish–Swedish War, which had broken out in 1600 exacerbated the internal situation in the Duchy. Both Dukes were engaged in military activities during the first phase of this war, discharging their duties as vassals. Thus, for example, Duke Frederick personally led a unit from Courland helping the Lithuanians secure a victory at the famous battle of Kirchholm (Salaspils) in September 1605. However, this victory did not prevent partial devastation of the Duchy, which was due not only to the Swedish, but also to the Polish–Lithuanian army. The Duchy was saved from complete devastation only by the engagement of Poland–Lithuania and Sweden in the military resolution of the internal crisis of authority in Russia (the so-called Smuta) and the Danish attack on Sweden in 1611. However, later when in 1617 Sweden and Russia concluded the Treaty of Stolbovo, the Swedish king, Gustavus II Adolphus, again turned his attention to the Baltic. He was able to capture Riga in September 1621, and then advanced on Courland and Lithuania. The Swedes occupied part of Semigallia in 1621 and 1625, including the important ducal seat of Mitau.[38] The protracted war forced Duke Frederick to seek solutions that would ensure defence of the Duchy. He not only sought to organise

[36] Despite the demands of the Courland nobility already in 1622 for revision of the statutes, no new code was ever approved and the version of 1617 remained in force until the 19th century.

[37] No unambiguous description can be made of the situation peasants found themselves in the Duchy. On the one hand, a considerable layer of free peasants had survived from the time of the Order, who were joined by a number of peasants freed by the Duke; while on the other hand, the power of feudal lords over serfs was strengthened during the 16th-17th centuries. Runaway peasants had to be returned to their owners without the slightest delay, but an owner had to take care of his peasants and could not sentence them to death without a court ruling. Furthermore, peasants on ducal estates could complain about the actions of the reeve, and this right was exercised. This leads to the conclusion that the actual condition of peasants during the 17th century was better than their legal standing. However, during the 18th century, war, the plague, and political chaos led to their actual conditions substantially worsening.

[38] Jakovļeva, M. Jelgava kā militārs nocietinājums poļu-zviedru karu laikā 17. gadsimtā (1600–1661). *Pētījumi un avoti par Livonijas ordeņpilīm.* Ose, I. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2011, 323.–353. lpp. (Latvijas viduslaiku pilis, VII).

Swedish and Polish truce negotiations, but also, at least from 1625 onwards, attempted to obtain the status of neutrality for the Duchy.[39]

Negotiations to recognise neutrality of the Duchy dragged on over several years, with both sides regularly promising not to wage war on the territory of the Duchy, but these promises were rarely kept. Military clashes continued on the territory of the Duchy, and even during a truce soldiers often robbed the local residents and engaged in other acts of violence. As mentioned above, in addition to striving to gain recognition of its neutrality, Courland was actively engaged in achieving reconciliation of Poland–Lithuania and Sweden. It was largely due to the diplomatic efforts of Courland that a Truce was achieved on Christmas 1628, which after several extensions was crowned in September 1619 by the Truce of Altmark valid for six years.[40]



Fig. 4. "Maiden of Courland". Circa 1600. Drawing in the memorial album of Johann Hieronymus Rörscheidt. (LVVA, 5759. f., 2. apr., 1403. l.)

The Swedes remained in Courland until after the Peace of Altmark was signed, since it was agreed that the Duke of Courland would have to come separately to an agreement with the Swedes. The agreement reached in June 1630 provided for the Swedes returning Mitau to the Duke, but were to retain a number of territories of the Duchy which were located on the left bank of the Daugava River opposite Riga, as well as the Island of Dalen (*Doles sala*). These territories were to be held by the Swedes only for the duration of the Peace but in fact they were never relinquished. In advance of the Polish–Swedish negotiations at Stumsdorf in 1635, where the Peace was extended for further 26 years, Duke Frederick and the Duchess Elisabeth Magdalena engaged in active diplomatic efforts to regain the parts of the Duchy occupied by the Swedes, but their efforts were in vain.[41]

Struggle over the right of Duke Jacob to inherit the throne

An aristocratic form of governance resulted with implementation of the "Formula of Rule" in the Duchy of Courland. Nevertheless, the difficult compromise with

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[39] For more about these hostilities and the activities of Duke Frederick during this war, see: Balcerek, M. *Księstwo Kurlandii i Semigalii w wojnie Rzeczypospolitej ze Szwecją w latach 1600–1629*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2012, 448 s. (The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia in the War between Poland and Sweden in the Years 1600–1629).

[40] For details of the policy of neutrality pursued by Duke Frederick see: Keller, V. *Herzog Friedrich von Kurland. Verfassungs-, Nachfolge- und Neutralitätspolitik,* S. 146–198.

[41] Jakovļeva, M. Territorium und Grenzen des Herzogtums Kurland und Semgallen im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, Bd. 2, S. 74–89; Jakovļeva, M. The Duchy of Courland: the Struggle for Survival during the Rule of the Kettler Dynasty 1561–1737. *Zones of Fracture in Modern Europe: the Baltic Countries, the Balkans and Northern Italy*. Bues, A. (Ed.). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005, pp. 81–82.

the nobility, which Duke Frederick was compelled to make, protected Courland from being subdivided into provinces (voivodeships) and appended to Lithuania, in conformity with the 1589 decision of the Sejm. However, this did not suffice to meet all challenges. In 1600, Duke Frederick had married Princess Elizabeth Magdalene of Pomerania-Wolgast, but their marriage did not result in any children. The only potential heir was Jacob (German *Jakob*, Engl. also James), the issue of the marriage of Duke William with Sophie, daughter of Duke Albrecht Frederick of Prussia.[42] However, after his father had been deposed, Jacob had lost his right of succession. Thus, the question of a recognised heir to the throne became vital to continued existence of the Duchy. Hence from 1618 onwards, one of the major tasks addressed by the diplomacy of Duke Frederick was reinstatement of the exiled William to the throne,[43] or at least, recognition by Poland–Lithuania of the right of Prince Jacob to his inheritance.

The effort to reinstate the right of Jacob to be Duke lasted for more than twenty years. Frederick, in 1624, invited Jacob, who until then had been living with his mother's relatives in Germany, to return to Courland as a first step in securing the Jacob's ducal rights. The knightage of Courland actively supported restitution of the inheritance rights of Jacob, because once they had secured their victory over the Dukes, it was in their interest to keep the *status quo* and not to allow incorporation of the Duchy of Courland into Poland–Lithuania upon the death of Frederick. Efforts in Courland to secure dynastic succession were supported by several European royal families related to the Kettlers, or their allies — those ruling in Brandenburg-Prussia, Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Saxony, England, and even in France, as well as the influential Radziwiłł clan in Poland–Lithuania.

Progress was made only after King Sigismund III passed away, since he was personally ill-disposed vis-à-vis William. The senators of Poland–Lithuania, gathered, on 16 July 1632, to elect the new King, pardoned Duke William.[44] This remission was confirmed by the newly elected King of Poland–Lithuania Wladysław IV, adding, however, the proviso that William never return to Courland. Nevertheless, the most important outcome was that, together with the reinstatement of his father, Jacob became the legitimate heir apparent. Duke Jacob was in attendance when in 1633 Duke

[42] Over the period of 1605–1607, Duke William travelled abroad, and after his return to Courland he took part in fighting against the Swedish expeditionary force near Riga. In early 1609, the marriage of William and Sophie took place in Königsberg, but William brought his wife to Courland only several months later. Their happiness was short lived in that Sophie died on 24 November 1610, i.e. less than one month after giving birth to Prince Jacob). William did not seek to remarry after the death of Sophie. In 1612, he sent his son to live with his relatives in Germany.

[43] William had travelled abroad after being deposed hoping that support from other rulers might convince the King of Poland–Lithuania of his innocence in the killing of the Noldes and achieve his reinstatement as Duke. William lived for nearly two decades in Pomerania and died in 1640 in Kukulovo (presently located in Poland north of Stettin). In 1642, Duke Jacob arranged for his father's remains to be returned to Mitau.

[44] A copy of the Declaration by delegates and senators of the Sejm of Poland–Lithuania, in Warsaw, on 16 July 1632, is found at the Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 27. l., 8. lp.; for more details about the role of the Duke in the restitution of Jacob's rights see also: Keller V. *Herzog Friedrich von Kurland. Verfassungs-, Nachfolge- und Neutralitätspolitik,* S. 105–145.

Frederick in Vilnius received personally the fief from King Wladysław. This was symbolic confirmation of Jacob as the heir apparent. At the end of the same year, Frederick gave over to Jacob several estates which were located in the territory formerly ruled by Duke William. Jacob felt that maintaining two courts was not sensible, he decided to go on an extended voyage abroad on which he embarked in September 1634 and spent in all two and a half years away from Courland.[45]

His right of inheriting the Duchy, and its very existence, were again threatened during the time Jacob spent travelling around Europe. In 1635, King Wladysław IV of Poland, demanded several territories, including the Duchy of Courland, as compensation for damage suffered by the royal house during the Polish–Swedish war. Much to the relief of Courland, the Sejm of Poland–Lithuania rejected this demand, not wishing to see aggrandisement of royal power. Several years later the brother of King Wladysław IV, Jan Kazimierz demanded the right to become Duke of Courland, and this demand had royal support.[46] Once again Courland was fortunate, as in 1638 Jan Kazimierz was arrested in France on political grounds.

In order to prevent any existing or future claims to rule the Duchy of Courland, Duke Frederick abdicated in 1638, citing health reasons, in favour of Jacob. In fact, Duke Frederick, Jacob and the nobility had come to a very specific agreement. Duke Frederick announced that owing to his venerable age and with concurrence by the King Jacob was raised to be a co-ruler of the Duchy, with the stipulation that while he, Frederick was still able to do so, rule would be effected by himself acting alone.[47] The agreement was confirmed by Wladysław IV, who in February 1639 in the castle at Vilnius issued Jacob the Diploma of Investiture. Achieving the grant of fief was not easy as the Polish–Lithuanian senators convoked to Vilnius for negotiations demanded that Duke Frederick abdicate fully, which was rejected by the representatives of Courland.[48] In this way, up until the death of Duke Frederick two courts were again active in Courland, with rule by two Dukes. Despite there being magnates in Poland–Lithuania who expressed their dissatisfaction at the grant of fief to Jacob, this dissatisfaction resulted only in weak actions.

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[45] First Jacob visited his father, then spent several months in the Netherlands, and arrived in Paris in June 1635. Jacob remained in France for more than a year, and the possibility cannot be excluded that he also visited England, or Spain, during this time. In June 1636, Jacob signalled his intention to depart for Italy that autumn, but was uncertain about this. He returned to Courland in the spring of 1637.

[46] In January 1638, John Casimir invited the nobility of the Duchy of Courland to request the King to confirm his status as Frederick's Heir Apparent. The refusal of the nobility of Courland to support this step is understandable.

[47] The Agreement, or the "Instrument of Cession" (*Instrumentum Cessionis*), was signed on 20 July 1638 at the Diet held in Mitau. LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 27. l., 15., 16. lp.; Jacob was granted the right, at his convenience, to take part in all sessions of the ducal High Court and in case of need to stand in for his uncle, but all rulings had to be issued in Fredrick's name.

[48] Additionally the demand was made that four Catholic churches be built in the Duchy. The representatives of Courland were able to stand on their positions, but had to agree to building two Catholic churches, in Goldingen and Mitau. Report on these negotiations in Vilnius, 2–16 February 1639, is held at the Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 27. l., 24.–28. lp.



Fig. 5. Duke Jacob. Unknown artist. 1670s. Copy from the 18th century in Gripsholm Palace in Sweden. (Photo from the collection of Bauska Castle Museum)

The reign of Duke Jacob (1642–1681)

When, on 16 August 1642, Duke Frederick departed from this world, before legal accession to rule Duke Jacob Kettler, had to await arrival of a special Royal Commission dispatched by the King of Poland conforming to the provisions of the Investiture in 1639. This commission had to listen to complaints from the nobility, as well as to confirm that the "Formula of Rule" was being respected, and, also that the promised number of Catholic churches were being built.[49] Although at first Duke Jacob refused to convene the Diet in advance of the residents of the Duchy swearing allegiance to him, he agreed under pressure by the nobility, which was augmented by the Royal Commissioners of Poland, to convene an exceptional meeting of the Diet, as the forum to resolve differences. Representatives of the nobility were able over a few days in November 1642 to develop a list of complaints which they submitted to the Duke, and which provoked fierce discussions between the senior advisers of the Duke and the nobility. There were 59 complaints in all, which consisted of claims by the nobility in church matters, issues of governance, justice and the economy, and aimed at retaining the previous privileges won by the nobility. Bowing to pressure by the nobility, consideration of complaints from representatives of the cities of the Duchy was deferred to a later date.

With assistance by the Commission headed by Jan Zawadski, Voievod of Pernau, the Diet was able to bring about reconciliation — the so-called Decision of the Commission, or the Act of Composition (*Compositionsakte*), which was signed on 29 November 1642 by Jacob and deputies representing the nobility.[50] Provisions in this document include a number pertaining to administrative matters, for example, Mitau was recognised as the sole seat of the Duke, i.e. the sole capital city. Goldingen lost thereby its status as the second capital city of the Duchy. In a solemn ceremony held in the castle at Mitau the Royal Commissioners from Poland formally confirmed on that same day the rule of Jacob over the Duchy, while he in turn gave a written commitment (*Guarantees, or Reversales*) to respect the existing privileges of the nobility, the newly finalised Agreement, and the constitution of the Duchy, i.e. the "Formula of Rule".[51]

[49] In Goldingen church construction began in June 1641, while building the Catholic church in Mitau started in 1643.

[50] The Act of Composition has been published in: *Curländische Landtags- und Conferential Schlüsse von 1618 bis 1759.* Rummel, C. (Hrsg.). Dorpat, 1851, S. 73–85 (Sammlung der Rechtsquellen Liv-, Esth- und Curlands, Bd. 2).

[51] See the account of the events of 1642 by Gottfried Fabricius, City Secretary of Mitau, held at the Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 436. l.

Jacob did not wish to engage in active conflict with the nobility at the outset of his rule, but instead sought to strengthen ducal authority through economic means. Insofar as the nobility in accord with its privileges was free of paying taxes, except in exceptional circumstances which were agreed by the Diet, Duke himself had to ensure functioning of the administrative structures of the Duchy. The ducal estates constituted the basis for the economy of the Duchy of Courland[52], which constituted approximately one third of the territory of the Duchy. With a view to increasing his income Jacob actively took part in the international trading network, developing trade in products from the ducal estates and attempting to attract to Courland the transit trade associated with the district of Smolensk, Belarus, and the bordering regions of Lithuania and which up to then had been the prerogative of Riga, then controlled by Sweden.

Water routes were then the most important arteries for the transport of goods. Shipping played a major role in trade conducted by Courland. Windau (Ventspils) and Libau (Liepāja) had become the principal ports of Courland already during the second half of the 16th century.[53] Regrettably, very little is known about the first ships which

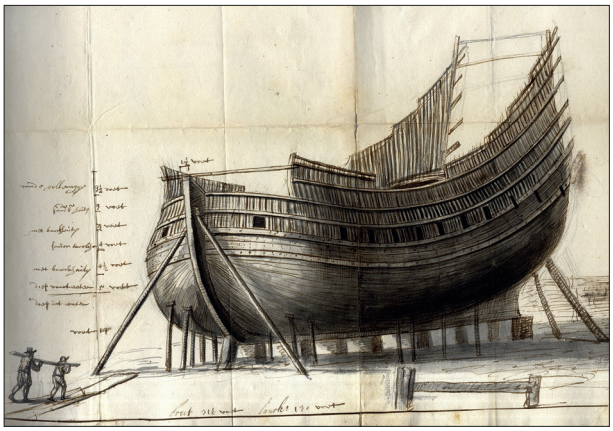


Fig. 6. Process of ship building. Drawing by Johann Streck in the collection of Duke Jacob. The first half of the 17th century. (LVVA, 554. f., 1. apr., 850.d. l., 6. lp.)

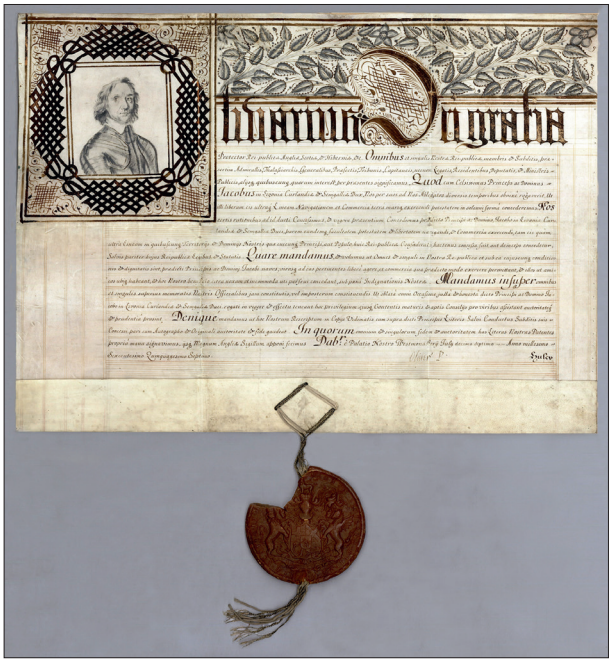


Fig. 7. Duke Jacob's trade and shipping agreement with Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell. Westminster, 17 July (old style) 1657. Original on parchment. (LVVA, 5561. f., 2. apr., 158. l.)

[52] There was no formal distinction made in the Duchy of Courland between estates owned by the Duchy, and those owned by the Duke. All income accrued to the Treasury of the Duchy.

[53] By way of contrast with Windau, which was the second oldest city in Courland, after Goldingen, the rapid development of Libau only started during the 16th century. In 1560, Libau together with the castle district of Grobin (Grobiņa) were pledged to the Duke of Prussia. The Duchy was only able to recover sovereignty over this territory in 1609, when it was part of the dowry of the wife of Duke William, Princess Sophie of Prussia. In turn, Duke Frederick conferred on Libau the rights of a city in 1625.

belonged to the Dukes of Courland. It is known that Frederick and William owned ships, but mostly goods were exported using foreign-owned ships — belonging to the Dutch, Swedes, Germans, etc. However, Duke Jacob emulating the example set by the Dutch developed his own shipbuilding capacity. The basis for his fleet was established in 1639, when the first ship — a three-mast pinnace "Fortuna" — was built in Libau, which was then followed by the two-mast vessel, "St. Jacob". However, the shipyard facility was transferred to Windau in 1640, where the environment was more favourable for its operation. Shipwrights were recruited by Jacob from Lübeck, Amsterdam, and Colberg (today Kolobzeg in Poland); additionally many locals, mostly Latvians, worked at the shipyard as carpenters, blacksmiths, and auxiliaries. Frederick Casimir (*Friedrich Casimir*), the oldest son of Duke Jacob, restarted shipbuilding activities at Libau in 1677. In all, the two shipyards launched circa 90 vessels during the reign of Duke Jacob — fluyts, frigates, galleasses, pinnaces, yachts, etc., since the shallow Baltic Sea admitted only ships with a shallow draught. Nevertheless, the Duke's ships successfully completed long voyages reaching the coasts of America and Africa. During the mid-17th century, which may be regarded as the maximum peak of activities of the Duke's fleet of ships, 15–30 ships were simultaneously engaged. Most were equipped with cannons, but they did not take part in battles, since Jacob strictly adhered to the policy of neutrality begun by his predecessor.[54] The Duke was represented in the major ports of Europe by shipping agents (factors) whose duties included, over and above buying and selling of goods, reporting to the Duke about political developments.

Jacob followed the example set by his father — Duke William — and set up various manufacturing facilities and workshops for artisans in the Duchy of Courland, including ironworks to treat ore found in bogs and lakes. Blast furnaces were established on the territory of estates at Baldon (Baldone), Neugut (Vecmuiža, today Vecumnieki), Luttringen (Lutriņi) and Angern (Engure), to produce cast iron, for use in the manufacture of cannons, cannon balls, pots, pans, iron plates for ovens, and various other items, including spare parts. Mechanical forges were in use at these places, and also at Turlau (Turlava), Gross-Buschhof (Birži), and Klingen (Kliņģi), with water-powered hammers and these produced bar-iron, swords, knives, nails, wire, etc. A workshop for rifles has been found at Schrunden (Skrunda), and a forge to produce steel, at Mitau.[55] Jacob also promoted manufacture of glass, various types of fabrics, wallpaper, canvas for sails, rope (for tow ropes), etc. The Duke recruited the requisite master craftsmen from Germany, Sweden, France, Holland, and Poland–Lithuania; however, quite a number of local craftsmen were also employed, and the supply of raw materials depended on the work of Latvian peasants. However, the output of all the various industrial sectors was primarily intended to further the aims of the Duke, and to satisfy the needs of his Court, and not for local sale. Export from the Duchy — by the Duke, and

[54] Jakovļeva, M. Mythos und Realität: Zur Flotte und zum Schiffbau im Herzogtum Kurland. *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, Bd. 8. Laur, M., Brüggemann, K. (Hrsg.). Tartu: Akadeemiline Ajalooselts, 2013, S. 81–102.

[55] Jakovļeva, M. Industry in Early Modern Times. Iron Production in the Duchy of Courland. *Industrial Heritage Around the Baltic Sea*. Nisser, N., Isacson, M., Lundgren, A., Cinis, A. (eds.). Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2012, pp. 31–43.

by private traders — predominantly consisted of agricultural products and timber.

Acquisition of colonies in distant continents was of vital importance in the political and economic plans of the Duke. These plans generally exceeded the real abilities of the Duchy to be sustained; nevertheless, in October 1651 representatives of Jacob were able to acquire various footholds in the estuary of the Gambia River — the island of St. Andrew (today Kunta Kinteh Island, around 30 km from where the river flows into the Atlantic Ocean), the village of Jillifree on the right riverbank opposite St. Andrew Island (today Juffureh) and Bajon (today the capital city of Gambia, Banjul). People sent by the Duke built small forts at these locations and trading facilities. Meanwhile they sought out information about the possibility of finding gold, including sailing up the Gambia River. Duke Jacob intended to set up a plantation over time in Bajon, to build a fort on one of the largest islands in the Gambia River — on Elephant Island, which is located 60 km upstream of the river mouth, as well as to rebuild and to enlarge the fort on St Andrew Island. In setting up the plantation it was the intention of the Duke to send Latvian peasants to Gambia; they would teach the natives and soldiers of the garrison how to work and obey their superiors.[56] However, these plans could not be realised, since the Swedish army occupied Courland during the autumn of 1658 as part of the Polish–Swedish war, and the Duke was taken prisoner. The following year, the Dutch, exploiting the fact that Courland was without any support, occupied properties held by the Duke in Gambia. After the Peace of Oliva was concluded, in June 1660 Courland briefly regained its facilities, but these had to be relinquished to the English in March 1661.[57]

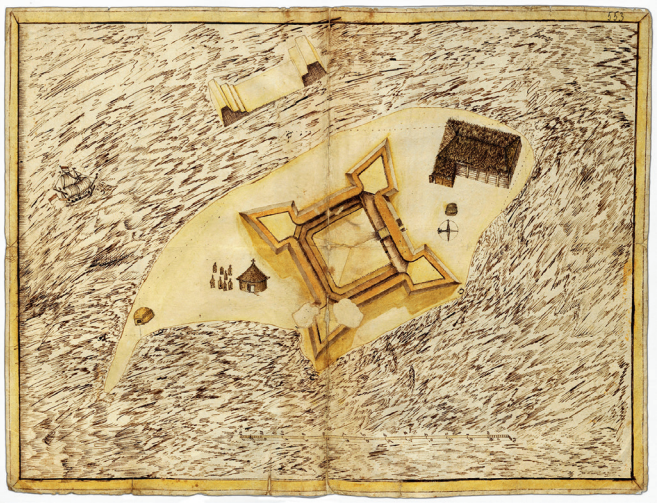


Fig. 8. Fort of the Duke of Courland in St. Andrew Island in the estuary of the Gambia River. (LVVA, 7363. f., 3. apr., 111. l.)

The dream of Duke Jacob about colonial possessions stretched outwards to all points of the compass; the only realistic possibility for Courland to establish another support base lay in the West Indies — in the form of Tobago, a small island in the Caribbean Sea. The first ships sent by Jacob, the "Wallfisch", and the "Wappen der

[56] A report on the colonies of Courland by the Duke's Agent, Albert Schulte submitted to the Elector of Brandenburg, 22 February 1659. Geheimes Saatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (GStA PK), I Haubtabteilung (HA), Repertorium 11, Nr. 5251, Bl. 3. The author is grateful to the Belarusian researcher Aleh Yeustratsyeu for bringing this document to her attention.

[57] A report by the Duke's former Commander in Gambia, Otto Stiel. London, [1661.]. Held at the Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f., 2. apr., 2994., l. 5.–8. lp.



Fig. 9. Map of Tobago or "New Courland". 1654. (LVVA, 7363. f., 3. apr., 111. l.)



Fig. 10. A fragment of the map of Tobago of 1654, with the Jacob Fort and Ventspils village near the present-day Plymouth.

Herzogin von Kurland", reached Tobago on 20 May 1654, bringing 120 soldiers and 80 families of free men.[58] The expedition was led by a Dutch Captain, Willem Mollens.[59] The arrivals named the island *Neew Coerlande*, and built the Jacob fort (*Jacobo foort*) on the shore of what later was named the Great Courland Bay, as well as Windau hamlet (*dorch Windoo*).[60] Previously the Spanish, the French, the English, and the Dutch had been unsuccessfully colonising the island of Tobago. A few months later colonists sent by Dutch traders, the brothers Lamsins (Lampsins), arrived to join the colonists from Courland on the island of Tobago. Subsequently competition set in between the two groups of colonists, with the Dutch gaining the upper hand, as the plans of the Duke were essentially spoilt by the Polish–Swedish War (1655–1660). In the same way, as was the case for Gambia, the war and captivity of the Duke put an end support from the continent to the colony from Courland on Tobago, and it soon withered away.

Strengthening his economic position was important to Duke Jacob, as was international prestige. Starting from his first years as a ruler he established and broadened contacts with many

[58] LVVA, 554. f., 1. apr., 287. l., 128. lp.

[59] There are no written records that allow clearly identifying the ethnic make-up of the colonists. It is noteworthy that ships' crews and soldiers to serve in the colony were recruited largely in Holland, Germany, and Denmark, while Germans from Courland were members of the expeditions. In later years colonists were sought in British islands and among French Huguenots. There are no indications in available sources that Duke Jacob might have sent Latvians to the colonies.

[60] See the map of the island of Tobago, 1654. Held at the Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 7363. f., 3. apr., 111. l.; the map was drawn some time before 11 August 1654 when Mollens wrote to Jacob, informing him that a small map was being sent. The shape of the island is only approximately correct, and it is evident that the expedition from Courland had not yet fully explored the island. During the 20th century, this map was thought to be lost. See: Mattiesen, O. H. *Die Kolonial- und Überseepolitik der kurländischen Herzöge im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1940, S. 451–457, 471. Research by M. Jakovļeva led to recovery of this map for use.

European courts. After the wedding, in 1645, of Jacob with Louise Charlotte, sister of Frederick William of Brandenburg, called the Great Elector, the House of the Duke of Courland entered the realm of the dynastic relations of Brandenburg-Prussia, which was proven by later marriages of the children of Jacob and Louise Charlotte with Princes and Princesses from Hessen-Kassel, Hessen-Homburg, and Brandenburg.[61]



Fig. 11. Jacob Fort. Drawing on the reverse side of the map of 1654. (LVVA, 7363. f., 3. apr., 111. l.)

The economic achievements of Duke Jacob reached their apogee during the first half of the 1650s. Regrettably, successful development of the Duchy was interrupted by the outbreak of war. Hostilities were opened in 1654 by Poland–Lithuania, and in the following year, Sweden joined the fight against Poland–Lithuania, while in 1656 war broke out between Sweden and Russia. Although Duke Jacob had sought from the 1640s onwards to reconcile Poland–Lithuania and Sweden, his efforts were not crowned with success.[62] Furthermore, the Duchy possessed weak defence capabilities of its own. Fearing any increase in power wielded by the Duke, the nobility refused to reform the archaic military system, which was based on service rendered by vassals, and did not permit the Duke to increase the number of mercenaries in his employ.[63]

Jacob was successful in gaining during the initial years of the war a written confirmation of the neutrality of the Duchy from Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich of Russia, and from King John Casimir of Poland, who both found the territory of the Duchy to be a useful channel for diplomacy, which various envoys were able to traverse the Duchy in

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[61] Būsa, A. Kurzeme – Brandenburga – Hesene. *Ventspils muzeja raksti.* Jakovļeva, M., Vijups, A. (sast.). 1. sēj. Rīga, 2001, 63.–73. lpp.; the marriage of Jacob and Luise Charlotte resulted in 11 children, of which 6 reached the age of 20. The House of the Dukes Kettler had family ties with the courts of Sweden, Denmark, Poland–Lithuania, and with several other European courts. King Frederik I[st] of Sweden was a grandson of Duke Jacob.

[62] In the 1635 Truce of Stumsdorf the Elector of Brandenburg and the Duke of Courland were designated as the so-called peace procurators, who were responsible for transforming the 26 year old truce into a peace treaty. After protracted diplomatic effort on the part of Jacob, a Peace Congress was convened in Lübeck in 1651. This Congress deliberated, with interruptions, over a period of two years, and failed to produce a result, largely due to refusal of Poland–Lithuania to recognise Swedish occupied Livonia (Vidzeme) as Swedish territory.

[63] Jakovļeva, M. The Duchy of Courland: the Struggle for Survival during the Rule of the Kettler Dynasty 1561–1737, pp. 83–85; Jakovleva, M. Organizacja sil wojskowych Kurlandii i próby ich reformowania przez księcia Jakuba Kettlera w połowie XVII wieku. *Wojny północne w XVI–XVII wieku. W czterechsetlecie bitwy pod Kircholmem.* Dybaś, B. (Red.). Toruń: UMK, 2007, S. 105–112. .



Fig. 12. A tablet with the street name which bears the name of Duke Jacob's daughter Louise Elisabeth, in Bad Homburg vor der Höhe, the former capital of the Landgraviate Hessen-Homburg (Photograph by Mārīte Jakovļeva. 1999)

both directions.[64] King Charles X Gustav of Sweden gave only an oral promise to spare the Duchy of Courland, although the latter had to pay money for this and supply food. However, the Swedes soon reneged on this promise, and on 10 October 1658 (30 September, old style) Swedish Field Marshall Robert Douglas, acting on a command by the King, captured the castle of Mitau, and took Jacob prisoner.[65] One month later the Duke and his family were brought to Riga, and later they were incarcerated in the Ivangorod fortress at Narva.[66] During his period of captivity Jacob repeatedly petitioned the King of Sweden for his release. A number of rulers of other countries supported releasing the Duke from arrest, for example, the Electors of Brandenburg-Prussia, Saxony, Mainz and Cologne; the Dukes of Braunschweig-Lüneburg and Braunschweig-Calenberg; the Landgrave of Hessen, and even the Holy Roman Emperor. Nevertheless, the King of Sweden ignored all these requests.

By the end of 1658, the Swedes had occupied all of the territory of the Duchy of Courland, but they soon faced opposition by locals and by army units from Poland–Lithuania and Brandenburg. The flames of war devastated almost the entire Duchy, most of the facilities set up by the Duke were demolished, castles and manors were looted.[67] Furthermore, a plague epidemic substantially affected the region in 1657; for example, during the 22 weeks between 17 July and 2 December, 901 individuals perished in Mitau, the capital city of the Duchy.[68]

At the end of the war, none of the warring parties had proved capable of achieving uncontested superiority. During peace talks which lasted through the winter and spring of 1660, the Swedes insisted on retaining Courland for themselves, and there were those on the Polish–Lithuanian side who would welcome incorporation of Courland by Lithuania. It was only with great difficulty that Melchior von Fölckersam, Chancellor of the Duchy, was able to achieve restoration of the rights of Duke Jacob.

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[64] For more details about the diplomatic efforts of Duke Jacob during the First Northern War see: Jakovļeva, M. Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Herzog Jakob von Kurland und Russland. *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*. Bd. 2. Tartu: Akadeemiline Ajalooselts, 2007, S. 24–56.

[65] Jakovļeva, M. Jelgavas pils kā militārs nocietinājums poļu-zviedru karu laikā 17. gadsimtā (1600–1661). *Pētījumi un avoti par Livonijas ordeņpilīm*, 339.–342. lpp.

[66] Küng, E. Die Gefangenschaft Herzog Jakobs von Kurland in Ivangorod 1659–1660. *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, Bd. 10. Tartu: Akadeemiline Ajalooselts, 2015, S. 69–91.

[67] For more about the events of the war, see: Seraphim, A. Die herzogslose Zeit und ihre Vorboten 1655–1660. *Aus der kurländischen Vergangenheit*. Stuttgart: Gotta, 1893, S. 157–355.

[68] A list of the living and deceased burgers of Mitau, 1657, held at the Latvian State Historical Archives: LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 2154. l., 1. lp.

Furthermore, this result would not have been possible without the support of France and Brandenburg-Prussia. Once the Peace Treaty of Oliva was signed by Poland–Lithuania and Sweden, Jacob was allowed to leave Ivangorod and return to Courland.[69] On 8 July 1660, Jacob and his family crossed the border of Courland and headed for the palace at Grobin (Grobiņa), which became, until November 1661, the principal residence of the Duke, as his other castles and palaces had been excessively damaged. The Duke, immediately after his return from captivity, set about renewing the properties which had been wrecked. This demanded great effort and substantial financial resources, and the Duke's health had been seriously impaired by the time spent in captivity; in addition, prices for agricultural products had fallen in Europe since the 1660s, and, thus, he was not able to repeat the achievements of the first period of his reign.

As has been mentioned already, the Duke was unsuccessful in the matter of colonies. They were easy prey for more powerful states and adventurers during the period of the Duke's captivity. The English and the Dutch were the principal competitors to acquire the colonies of Courland, and in this they were successful: Gambia was gained by England, while the Dutch acquired Tobago. One of the first diplomatic efforts made by Jacob after his return to power was to engage in negotiations to recover his overseas properties, as well as to obtain from the King of England written confirmation of his legal rights to Tobago.

The only result that he was able to achieve was an Agreement of 17 November (old style) 1664 King Charles II of England.[70] The Duke renounced his claims to his existing forts in Gambia in favour of the English, receiving in return the right to engage in free trade with the territories under the Dominion of the King along the coast of Guinea. Nevertheless, this agreement notwithstanding ships sent by the Duke to Gambia were not admitted to ports controlled by the English, where the principal actor was the Royal African Company, led by the Duke of York, brother of the King, which did not wish to see unnecessary competition. Faced with this situation Jacob instructed his representatives in London to achieve restitution by the King of England, of facilities in Gambia, or, at least, some compensation for these. Unfortunately, these efforts over many years did not produce any result.[71]

The situation in respect of the rights of the Duke to Tobago was no less complicated. The agreement of 1664 mentioned above wherein the King of England declared recognition of Jacob's rights to Tobago contained the stipulation that it would be colonised only by citizens of Courland and those of the King of England, while all trade with the island would have to pass through the ports of Courland and England, or via Danzig (Gdansk). The agreement had little practical significance since the Dutch in fact dominated the island, with episodes of competition with the British and the

[69] Before releasing Jacob from captivity the Swedes demanded that he sign a special document or guarantee containing a promise to abstain from future hostile activities directed at Sweden. Guarantee by Duke Jacob. Ivangorod on 3 June 1660 (new style). LVVA, 5759. f., 2. apr., 1323. l., 64. lp.

[70] See the Contract between Duke Jacob and King Charles II of England, done at London, 17 May 1664 (old style). LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 6. l., 81., 83. lp.

[71] See for example: The letter from London by Abraham Marin, representative of the Duke, to Duke Jacob, 17 February 1680 (old style). LVVA, 5759. f., 2. apr., 1326. l., 43.–44. lp.

French. The majority of expeditions sent by the Duke to Tobago were unsuccessful,[72] and the same holds for court proceedings in Holland launched to regain property rights to the island — all of this meant vast expenditure by the Duke.[73]

However, up until his last day in this world Duke Jacob sought to have his colony in Tobago set down roots. Even on 20 September (old style) 1681, Abraham Marin, representative of Jacob in London, signed on his behalf a contract with an English Captain, John Poyntz. Poyntz and his companions undertook within three years to bring 1200 colonists to Tobago, who were to till the soil on the island under the aegis of the Duke, in all receiving title to 120 000 acres of land.[74] Although Jacob ratified this contract on 24 October, certain questions remained unresolved, for example, the English wished to appoint their own governor to act in parallel with the governor designated by the Duke. The death of Duke Jacob on 31 December 1681, as well as obstacles put by the government of England, resulted in this contract remained on paper, although Poyntz sought its implementation over many years.

Despite the problems which he encountered, Duke Jacob attempted, in addition to strengthening his position in colonies which he had nominally recovered, to obtain new colonies. Thus, for example, Jacob asked as compensation for two of his ships and their cargos confiscated by a Spanish privateer near Dunkirk, to be given one of the islands without the presence of colonists and under control of Spain; later he asked to be granted Trinidad.[75]

Duke Jacob must be admired for his daring, persistence, and dynamism, but, when he left this world on the last day of 1681 he left his heir, his oldest son, Frederick Casimir, not the politically and economically simplest of inheritances.

Duke Frederick Casimir and the end of the Kettler dynasty

Duke Jacob had started to familiarise his oldest son, Frederick Casimir, in administrative matters immediately after his return from participation in the so-called Dutch War (1672–1678), where during the first years of the war Frederick Casimir, together with several regiments of soldiers raised in Courland, had taken part in fighting the

[72] According to Edgars Andersons, only 17 out of 32 expeditions which set out for the island in the period 1653–1688 arrived in Tobago. Andersons E. *Senie kurzemnieki Amerikā un Tobāgo kolonizācija*. Stockholm: Daugava, 1970, 332. lpp.; the second colony in Tobago by Courland was established 1689–1690, and it endured until approximately the beginning of the 18th century.

[73] See: Mattiesen O. H. *Die Kolonial- und Überseepolitik der kurländischen Herzöge im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1940, S. 1015.

[74] Contract between Jacob, Duke of Courland, and Captain John Poyntz. LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 388. l., 2.–5. lp. It must be said that provisions of this agreement were fantastic, since Tobago was not as vast as made out in the contract.

[75] Furthermore, Jacob agreed not to harm Spanish interests and to respect on the island the right to religious freedom, and not to persecute Catholics. See the Instruction by Duke Jacob sent to his representative plenipotentiary in Spain, Christofer Hagedorn, Baron de Estroe, at Mitau, 13 August 1675. LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 724. l., 1.–2. lp.

French.[76] In 1676, encouraged by his father, Frederick Casimir left service with the Dutch and returned to Courland. However, just before this, in October 1675, he married Princess Sophie Amalie of Nassau-Siegen in the Hague.

After the death of Duke Jacob, young Duke Frederick Casimir found himself in a difficult situation because following stipulations in his father's will he had to pay out several hundred thousand thalers to his brothers and sisters;[77] the money had to be recovered calling in debts owed to the Duchy by Sweden, Poland, England, Brandenburg, Spain, and Portugal. It is understandable that the large states which in part did not recognise the calls on debts made by Jacob, and which deliberately were tardy in repaying their debts, kept to similar practices when faced by demands made by Frederick Casimir. For their part, the brothers and sisters wished to receive payment as quickly as possible, whereupon there were protracted arguments and negotiations over the inheritance, with Ferdinand being the most insistent who first introduced a court case in Poland, and who subsequently sought support from the Elector of Brandenburg.[78] As a result Frederick Casimir had to borrow using several estates as collateral, thus adding to the debts of the Duchy incurred by Jacob. Certain efforts had to be exerted by the Duke to smooth relations with the nobility which had become strained during the final years of the reign of Duke Jacob.[79] The nobility refused to swear allegiance to Frederick Casimir before their complaints were to be heard. Resolution was achieved only in 1684 when Frederick Casimir gave a written promise to respect all of the nobility's rights and privileges, and the nobility finally swore allegiance. Nevertheless, problematic relations with the nobility persisted, since the Duke had a tendency to purchase estates of knights, which he then subsequently mortgaged, or let out to persons who did not enjoy the same rights as the nobility.

On the whole, Frederick Casimir continued to apply the same economic and political principles as had his father, and did this not out of filial respect, as has been often asserted in historical literature. He reorganised the metal industry taking that of Sweden as an example which at that time had the most progressive metallurgical industrial sector. The Duke continued to build ships — not only in Windau, but also in

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[76] In 1672, France began a war with Holland, more precisely, with the General States. Soon afterwards the Duke's envoy in the Hague signed an agreement to supply several regiments recruited in Courland for service with the Dutch, these to be subsidised by the Dutch.

[77] At that time the following were candidates to benefit from this legacy: Louise Elizabeth (1646–1690), married to Frederick, Landgrave of Hessen-Homburg; Charlotte Sophie (1651–1728), who had been elected, in 1688, Abbess of the secular Abbey of Herford; Marie Amalie (1653–1711), married to Charles, Landgrave of Hessen-Kassel; Ferdinand (1655–1737); Alexander (1658–1686).

[78] The Will of Duke Jacob and many documents related to its execution, in particular with regard to demands from beneficiaries, in particular those relating to Hessen-Kassel and Hessen-Homburg have been published: *Eine schwierige Erbschaft. Die Verhandlungen nach dem Tode Herzog Jakobs von Kurland 1682/83*. Bues, A. (Hrsg.). Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag 1995 (Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau: Quellen und Studien, Bd. 1).

[79] Thus, in October 1678, Duke Jacob called upon the nobility to take up arms to prevent the march through the Duchy of a Swedish corps from Livonia (Vidzeme) to Prussia, but the nobility refused to act. Jacob, therefore, wrote to his envoy in Poland requesting that the King declare as traitors those nobles who refused to do their military service: Jacob's letter to Nicolaus Chwalkowsky, Mitau, 4 October 1678. LVVA, 554. f., 3. apr., 449. l., 9. lp.

Libau (starting in 1677). Frederick Casimir also attempted to sustain the colony in Tobago, which had been revived shortly before the death of Duke Jacob; however, the great distance and financial difficulties forced the Duke to look for other solutions.[80]

Although the closing decades of the 17th century passed off without major military confrontations in the vicinity of the Duchy, a complete absence of conflicts with the neighbours proved to be impossible. The greatest differences in opinions derived from the Swedish fight, encouraged by Riga, against the small so-called unauthorised ports along the Courland coastline, as Riga considered the creation of any new port outside Libau and Windau as an infringement of its privileges.[81]

Frederick Casimir died after a week-long illness on 22 January 1698 leaving as the heir apparent his six-year old son Frederick William (*Friedrich Wilhelm*). According to the "Formula of Rule" the Duchy was to be ruled by the Supreme Councillors until the prince reached the age of majority; however, the widow of the Duke, Elizabeth Sophie, whom Frederick Casimir had wed in 1691, with support by her half-brother, the Elector of Brandenburg Frederick III, later King Frederick I of Prussia (from 1701), considered that she ought to be the Regent. Ferdinand, the brother of the deceased Duke also sought power; he had pursued a military career in Poland, and enjoyed good contacts at the Royal Court. Already in February 1698 the King of Poland–Lithuania and Elector of Saxony, Augustus II empowered him to act as the Guardian of Frederick William and Administrator of Courland. However, diplomatic moves by Brandenburg led to Augustus II granting a Mandate which confirmed Elizabeth Sophie as an additional Guardian of Frederick William. Both Regents had their own supporters among the nobility of Courland, and, although Ferdinand had acquired greater authority, the political crisis only deepened in the Duchy.[82]

With the outbreak of the Great Northern War (1700–1721), Ferdinand was forced to abandon the neutrality policy which his predecessors had initiated, since Augustus II used the territory of the Duchy to gather troops for an attack on the Swedes. The Duke did not necessarily support the King's intentions, however, he joined the army of Saxony in order to retain support by Augustus in internal political struggles as well as to protect, as much as possible, his citizens from the depredations of soldiers.[83] However, the inconstancy of Augustus in military operations at Riga proved to be fatal for the Duchy of Courland. After the Swedish victory at the Battle of Spilwe (Spilve) in July 1701, Ferdinand departed from Courland and attempted, thereafter, to obtain

[80] For example, he attempted to interest the Elector of Brandenburg in joint management of the island of Tobago. An Agreement was signed to this effect in 1691, but in the end the Elector had second thoughts, see: GStA PK, I HA, Rep. 9 (Polen), Nr. 7 e 1.

[81] The book of minutes of the Sweden–Courland conference is held at: LVVA, 673. f., 1. apr., 421. l.; at the end of the 1680s, the Swedish warships began patrolling the sea off the coast of Courland and arrested several ships owned by the Duke which had used ports at Angern and Kaugern (Kauguri). Bilateral negotiations took place 1694–1696 in Riga between Swedish Livonia (Vidzeme) and the Duchy of Courland to resolve outstanding problems, but the sides were unable to reach a common understanding.

[82] Jakovļeva, M. Das Herzogtum Kurland nach Herzog Frederick Kasimir. *Kurland*, Nr. 13, 2005, Hrsg. von Vereinigte Kurländische Stiftungen im Auftrag der Kurländischen Ritterschaft, S. 20–44.

[83] Augustus II began the war against Sweden as Elector of Saxony. Despite the presence in battles near Riga of several units of the Polish and Lithuanian armies, officially Poland–Lithuania had not yet entered the war.

restitution of his rights and de-occupation of the Duchy by diplomatic means.[84] The entire territory of the Duchy was very quickly occupied by Sweden. With a brief period at the turn of 1705/1706 when a Russian army was in Courland, Swedish occupation lasted until mid-1709. Victory at the Battle of Poltava permitted Tsar Peter I to concentrate his forces so as to conquer the Baltic, and Russian influence in Courland increased after absorption of Livonia (Vidzeme) by Russia in 1710.

The fact that Peter I had to take into account the position of his allies, who at the same time were his rivals, meant that the Tsar then did not dare to achieve outright annexation of the Duchy of Courland. However, Duke Frederick William, who in 1710 returned to Courland, was compelled to marry Anna Ioannovna, Peter's niece, as gratitude for recovery of the Duchy. Unfortunately, the newly wed Duke died in January 1711 on the return journey from his marriage in St Petersburg, but this did not prevent the Tsar from dispatching Anna to Courland.[85] The Duchy which had been devastated by compulsory contributions, hostilities and the plague, were forced to pay various fees to the Russians, as well as the Widow's Money to Anna Ioannovna called for in the marriage contract. Others vying for power included not only Duke Ferdinand, living in Danzig, and Duchess Anna Ioannovna, as well as the Council of Supreme Councillors who constituted the government of the Duchy and sought to shape their own policy, and the nobility, which had fractured into several parties. Furthermore, aspirations of the surrounding countries rested on the imminent end of the Kettler dynasty, since Ferdinand was childless.[86] Therefore, a search for the next Duke began soon after the fact of the death of Duke Frederick William. Saxony, Brandenburg-Prussia, Hessen-Kassel, and other states actively put forward candidates for the position. However, the outcome was dictated by Russia, with the stipulation that any successful candidate would definitely have to marry Anna Ioannovna.[87] In 1726, Prince Maurice, Count of Saxony, gained the support of the nobility of the Duchy; however, as a result of intrigues by Russia and Poland–Lithuania, the Sejm of Poland–Lithuania annulled in 1727 the decision of the Diet of Courland, and Maurice had to flee from Courland to escape Russian arrest.

Anna Ioannovna was crowned Empress of Russia in February 1730, and she moved to Moscow. Russian residents in Mitau continued to manage her estates in Courland. For their part representatives of interested states resident in Danzig awaited the death of Ferdinand. They had a long wait ahead of them — the last Duke of the Kettler dynasty died on 4 May 1737.

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[84] In January 1701, Duchess Elizabeth Sophie, together with her son departed for Königsberg to attend the coronation of her half-brother as King Frederick I of Prussia. She never returned to Courland. The daughters of Frederick Casimir from his first marriage, Maria Dorothea (1684–1743), Eleonora Charlotte (1686–1748), and Amalie Louise (1687–1750) also left the Duchy at the end of August or in September 1701.

[85] The order for Anna Ioannovna removal to Courland was issued by the Tsar already in 1712; however she moved to take up permanent residence in Mitau in October 1716. She was allocated several ducal estates for her maintenance.

[86] Duke Ferdinand at the age of 75 wed the 22-year old Princess Johanna Magdalena of Saxe-Weissenfels. However, it had long been known that Ferdinand could have no children, as he had suffered the mumps as a child.

[87] Čerpinska, A. Kurzemes un Zemgales hercoga troņa mantošanas jautājums 1711.– 1718. gadā. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3 /4, 2011, 210.–234. lpp.



Fig. 13. Duke Ernst Johann von Biron. Unknown artist, after the painting by Loius Caravaque. 1730s. (Photograph from the collection of Rundāle Palace Museum)

The Biron dynasty and inclusion of the Duchy of Courland into Russia

The fate of the Duchy of Courland was decided as a result of the so-called War of the Polish Succession (1733–1735) when Russia by force of arms imposed election of its candidate, Augustus III, son of Augustus II, as King of Poland–Lithuania. The new king had in 1734 and 1736 secretly offered the throne of the Duchy of Courland to Ernst Johann Biron, a favourite of Anna Ioannovna. Although he did not accept these offers, he agreed, after the death of Ferdinand to his candidacy publicly advanced in the election for Duke, which took place at the so-called Fraternal Conference[88] in June 1737. The other candidates had no chance of success thanks to Russian influence.[89] So that Anna Ioannovna would not have to part from her favourite, the King of Poland allowed Biron to rule the Duchy without leaving St Petersburg for Mitau.

Early during his period of rule, Ernst Johann signed an agreement with the knightage of Courland about respecting their privileges.[90] Taking recourse to all possible resources, including those in Russia, he was able to settle financial claims by the heirs of the House of Kettler. Ernst Johann sought to rationalise economic activities at separate estates, merging these into so-called *Oeconomies*, which were managed by officials appointed by the Duke.[91] Similarly Ernst Johann, with the help of his representatives, developed trade in goods manufactured on estates, and exported via the ports of Libau and Windau. Construction was started in 1738 of a new residence in Mitau, pulling down the old castle of the Order, while work continued at Ruhenthal (Rundāle) on a palace started two years earlier. However, the authority of Ernst Johann vanished with the death of Empress Anna Ioannovna in 1740.

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[88] In contrast to meetings of the Diet, Fraternal Conferences admitted attendance by any member of the knightage, not just selected members only. Fraternal Conferences were first held in the Duchy from the beginning of the 18th century, when it was difficult, in the absence of the Duke, to convene a "normal" session of the Diet.

[89] Other candidates, besides Biron, included family members of the Princes of Hessen-Homburg and Braunschweig-Bevern, with Maurice of Saxony also expressing his claim to the throne.

[90] Documents related to Ernst Johann coming to power have been published: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz*, S. 183–223; See also: Aschkewitz, M. *Die Wirksamkeit Hermann Karl Keyserlings bei der Erhebung Ernst Johann Birons zum Herzog von Kurland*. Tartu: K. Mattiesens Buchdruckerei, 1934, S. 104.

[91] For more about the manorial economies during the 18th century, see, for example: Barzdeviča, M. Gutswirtschaft im Wandel: Die herzogliche Domäne Grendsen im 18. Jahrhundert. *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795. Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, Bd. 1, S. 129–152.

As a result of yet another power upheaval in Russia, Ernst Johann, together with his family, were arrested in November 1740, and in mid-1741 they were exiled to Siberia. When the Empress Elisabeth, daughter of Peter I, came to power, she lessened the severity of the provisions for the incarceration of Biron and countenanced his move to Yaroslavl'. Officially Ernst Johann of Courland had not been removed from his throne. Russia exploited this fact to sequester all of the Duke's properties in Courland.[92] During the sequestration process the *Oeconomies* were dismantled, individual estates were let, and most of the revenue wound up in the Russian State Treasury.[93] During that period there was an absence of consensus in the internal political life of the Duchy. The Supreme Councillors were in conflict with part of the knightage over the period 1744–1756, the latter opposing return of Ernst Johann to the throne, and who protested against actions of the Supreme Councillors and nobles supporting them who asked the King of Poland to remove the Duke from office.[94] Periodically new candidates for the ducal throne presented themselves. Finally, in 1758, Empress Elisabeth agreed to confer the Duchy on Prince Charles of Saxony, a son of King Augustus III of Poland, as Saxony was one of the allies of Russia during the Seven Years War (1756–1763) against Prussia.

In November 1758, the King of Poland proclaimed the throne of the Duchy to be vacant, and Charles was formally elected as Duke at a Fraternal Conference held in December. He was ceremoniously welcomed to Mitau at the end of March 1759. Charles began to put the economy of Courland into order, but his good intentions were doomed not to be realised. After the death of Russian Empress Elizabeth early in 1762, Peter III came to power, and a radical change took place in the foreign policies pursued by Russia. The Emperor recalled Biron from exile, but only that he might abdicate from his position as Duke in favour of his uncle, Prince Georg Ludwig of Holstein-Gottorp. A few days after the document of abdication was signed, Catherine II, the spouse of Peter III, took power in Russia; in August 1762, she renewed the right of Ernst Johann to the ducal throne.[95] At first he had to live in Riga, since Charles was still in residence in Mitau, being also desirous of retaining his status. The nobility of Courland was divided into the supporters of one or the other Duke. In January 1763, Ernst Johann moved to Mitau, while Russia sent an army to blockade

[92] For details see: Skilters, S. "Zwangsverwaltung" oder inofizielle Landesherrschaft? Die Tätigkeit der russischen Sequestrationskommission in der sog. herzogslosen Zeit (1740–1758). *Kurland*. Nr. 10, 2002, S. 5–19.

[93] Thus, in February 1742, the sum of 32 000 thalers from the amount collected from lease of estates had to be given to Riga Treasury (*Kayserliche Rigische Rentey*), together with 665 thalers from the income of Ducal representatives in Windau and Libau. LVVA, 554. f., 2. apr., 3096. l., 55. lp.

[94] Since less than half of the knightage supported the Supreme Councillors they were labelled the minority, while holders of the opposing position were the majority. For more about related political events during the mid-18th century see, e.g.: Strohm, K. *Die kurländische Frage (1700–1763): eine Studie zur Mächtepolitik in Ançien Régime*. Berlin: Verlag Dissertation.de, 1999.

[95] Text of the agreement between Catherine II and Ernst Johann has been published: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz*, S. 232–237. Among everything else Ernst Johann had to concede free trade rights to Russian traders, Russian warships would be free to enter the ports of Courland, and its army allowed free passage through the territory of the Duchy.



Fig. 14. Summer residence of the Biron family. (Photograph by Mārīte Jakovļeva. 2012)

the residence of Charles. In April, Charles departed from Courland, and, when in 1764 Stanisław Poniatowski, a puppet of Russia became King of Poland, all claims by Charles came to nothing.[96] Russia had become the only power determining matters in the region, and the Duchy, while legally retaining its status as a vassal of Poland–Lithuania, was, in fact, a protectorate of Russia.

The exile period left its mark on Ernst Johann who proved unable to recover his past authority and respect neither in Russia, nor in Courland, and his attempts to deal with the still extant opposition by members of the nobility were not successful. Health problems added to this, which led Ernst Johann, in November 1769, to resign from his position in favour of his son Peter.[97] The reign of Peter Biron was marked by conflicts with the nobility, who had become accustomed to a great deal of freedom over the long years of political chaos.[98] In addition to political discord other issues arose — estate property rights[99] and administrative questions which were inspired by intrigues concocted by separate individuals. The Act of Composition of 8 August 1776 did not pacify the situation.[100] For her part, in 1783, Empress Catherine II reminded the Duchy of Courland of the tenuous nature of its position by imposing on it a Convention of Trade and Frontiers.[101] Recognising the futility of his efforts, Duke Peter,

[96] Носов, Б. В. Курляндское герцогство и российско-польские отношения в 60-е годы XVIII века: К предистории разделов Речи Посполитой. *Славяноведение*, № 5, 1993, с. 54–66.

[97] Peter Biron participated in the administration of the Duchy even before he officially took power. In January 1765, he received, in Warsaw, the Diploma of Investiture as Duke, renewed in his own name and on behalf of his father, and on 16 January he signed the document with the promise that the "Formula of Rule" of 1617 would remain in effect.

[98] For more about the life style of the knightage of Courland see, for example: Mösenholler, M. *Ständische Modernisierung: Der kurländische Ritterschaftsadel 1760–1830*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009.

[99] Duke Peter too amalgamated demesnes for economic reasons, in this way decreasing the number of state estates which the nobility could let.

[100] Act of Composition. LVVA, 640. f., 4. apr., 78. l., 181.–187. lp. The nobility had been encouraged to come to a reconciliation with the Duke by the plans of Catherine II to install her favourite, Prince Grigory Potemkin, on the throne.

[101] Jakovļeva, M. Eine einfache Annexion? Die Handels- und Grenzkonvention zwischen dem Herzogtum Kurland und Russland vom 10–21 Mai 1783. *Forschungen zur Baltischen Geschichte*, Bd. 5. Tartu: Akadeemiline Ajalooselts, 2010, S. 95–108.

together with Duchess Anna Charlotte Dorothea, born von Medem,[102] and his oldest daughter, went abroad in 1784.[103] Peter only returned to Courland in May 1787, and immediately came into conflict with the Supreme Councillors who had acted during his absence in a manner completely contrary to his orders. But, independent of the nature of relations between the Duke and the nobility, the days of the Duchy as a separate state were numbered after the Second Partition of Poland in 1793.[104]



Fig. 15. Ice bowl from "The Set of Courland". Royal Porcelain Factory of Berlin. 1790s. (Photograph from the collection of Rundāle Palace Museum). Chinaware with the so-called Courland ornament is being produced in Berlin up to nowadays.

The last years of existence of the Duchy were marked by various periods of unrest. Drawing inspiration from the French Revolution there was a widespread struggle by residents of cities to gain political rights, which culminated after the *Bürgerliche Union* was founded in 1790. The uprising in Poland led by Tadeusz Kościuszko, which started in 1794, presented a more serious challenge for the Duke and the nobility, as well as for Russia, and it soon also affected Courland.[105] These events demonstrated that a powerful ruler was necessary to maintain the *status quo*. If initially most of the knights of Courland still hoped that one feudal Lord (Poland–Lithuania) would be replaced by another one, Russia, it then soon became apparent that Catherine II desired complete annexation of the Duchy. On 18 March 1795, the Diet of Courland adopted a declaration of submission to the Empress of Russia.[106] No one took any notice of the protests of Duke Peter who at that time was in St Petersburg, and on 28 March he signed the document abdicating from his throne. On 15–26 April 1795, Catherine II declared the Province of Courland and Semigallia to be an integral

[102] Duchess Dorothea was Peter's third wife, whom he married in 1779. Both previous marriages ended in divorce — with Louise Caroline von Waldeck, and with Princess Evdokiya Jusupova — as both marriages were childless.

[103] For details see: *Kurzemes hercogienes Dorotejas vēstules*. Kvaskova, V. (zin. red.). Rīga: Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs, 1999 (Vēstures avoti, I).

[104] The First Partition of Poland had given Russia Polish Livonia (Latgale), the Second — land in Byelorussia and in Ukraine, while Prussia gained the territory of so-called Greater Poland, including Poznan and Torun. At the same time Prussia recognised that Russia was in a favoured position in regard to the Duchy of Courland.

[105] Stepermanis, M. *Lielās liesmas atblāzma. Latvija Franču buržuāziskās revolūcijas laikā 1789–1798*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1971; Donnert, E. *Kurland im Ideenbereich der Französischen Revolution. Politische Bewegungen und gesellschaftlichen Erneuerungsversuche 1789–1795*. Frankfurt am M.: Verlag Peter Lang, 1992; Rubina, E. Kostjuško sacelšanās Kurzemē. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3/4, 2011, 235.–265. lpp.

[106] Although the knightage of Courland styled its submission as "voluntary", in fact it occurred in the context of the Third Partition of Poland.

part of the Russian Empire, and named Baron Peter von der Pahlen to be its Governor-General.[107] With this act the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia ceased to exist.

Conclusion

In contrast to the other parts of the territory of modern Latvia which after the collapse of Old Livonia came under direct rule of large neighbouring states, the Duchy of Courland represented, with a few exceptions, a local form of statehood. The dependence of the Duchy as a mediaeval vassal of Poland–Lithuania and its internal politics developing into a "republic of the nobility" largely determined the fact that the Dukes of Courland were unable to acquire strong authority as rulers. In the same way in Courland as in Poland–Lithuania the Duke had to compete for authority with the so-called nobility, in fact with the aristocratic part of the nobility, where the latter gained the upper hand. In forming a tight corporation, these descendants of brethren of the Order and vassals were able not only to retain their ancient privileges, but also to exclude from political power the cities and the clergy. For their part, Latvians who were a majority of the population and ensured the economic basis of the Duchy enjoyed no political rights.

At the same time, society already during the 16th century showed signs of modernisation. Thus, for example, the organisational structure of the evangelical Lutheran Church in Courland clearly demonstrated changes in traditional thinking. In contrast to the situation which obtained during the Middle Ages when the state served religion, the advent of Early Modern Times brought a new approach — religion became one of the political instruments of the state, and the ruler — head of the Church.[108]

The external political and military disturbances over the 16th–18th centuries notwithstanding, the Duchy of Courland was successful in sustaining its statehood for more than two centuries. It proved possible, thanks to the political skills of Duke Frederick, for the territory inhabited by Latvians to avoid being joined to Lithuania during the first half of the 17th century, failure to do so might have in a historical perspective created problems for formation of the Latvian state in the 20th century. Furthermore, one of the principal factors which ensured continued existence of the Duchy of Courland during military confrontations was the function of the Duchy as a buffer zone and the ability for the Dukes to use this argument in negotiations with the surrounding large states. Neighbouring states were interested in the buffer area retaining a semi-sovereign state status, but only as long as the local balance of power was not broken. The short-lived Swedish supremacy during the mid-17th century almost resulted in the Duchy being incorporated into Sweden, but Poland–Lithuania and Russia

[107] Documents about submission to Russia have been published as: *Kurland. Vom polnisch-litauischen Lehnsherzogtum zur russischen Provinz,* S. 306–318.

[108] There are still studies which need to be carried out about specific examples of modernisation in the Duchy. For details see: Oberlenders, E. Kurzemes hercogiste Eiropas vēstures kontekstā — pētījumu perspektīvas. *Ventspils muzeja raksti,* 1. sēj., 19.–26. lpp.

were successful in restoring the *status quo*. However, during the 18th century when Russia became the uncontested leading force in the region, the Duchy of Courland became ever more dependent on its powerful neighbour. Under these circumstances the possibilities were vanishingly slight that the Duchy of Courland might retain its state independence, which logically led to its inclusion in the Russian Empire as part of the Third Partition of Poland.

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Jānis Lazdiņš

ABOLITION OF SERFDOM AND ORGANISATION OF CIVIL PARISH COMMUNITIES

This article describes the abolition of serfdom in the territory of contemporary Latvia during the 19th century and the associated problem of emancipation of the peasants and agrarian reform. Peasants living in the Baltic provinces (governorates, or gubernias) of the Russian Empire were granted the status of free persons without receiving legal title to the land that they had previously lived on prior to their purchase of this land (colloquially known as *being free as birds*). Relations were reduced to those established in a free contract between landlords and peasants. Despite initially having to pay the price for freedom through a fall in their standard of living, personal freedom greatly contributed to the fate of the Latvian people. The history of Latvians as individuals living in captivity came to an end; serfdom was abolished much earlier (1816–1819) in the Baltic provinces than was the case (1861) in the rest of the Russian Empire, with the ensuing land reform based on different principles than was the case for the Russian heartland. These conditions facilitated development of a national consciousness and established a border between two different systems of economic thought.

Keywords: serfdom, abolition of serfdom, emancipation of serfs, peasant laws, freedom, personal freedom, civil parish

Introduction

The lands inhabited by the Balts and Livs were colonised during the 13th century by Catholic Christians (most originating from Germany). During this Crusade, or expansion eastwards (*Drang nach Osten)*[1], the newcomers overcame resistance offered by indigenous peoples and destroyed the mini-states that had been formed by the Balts

[1] Seraphin, E. *Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands von den „Aussegelung" des Landes bis zur Einverleibung in das russische Reich.* Bd. I. Die Zeit bis zum Untergang livländischer Selbständigkeit. Reval: Verlag von Franz Kluge, 1895, S. 3–12.

and Livs.[2] The organisation of society within these mini-states cannot readily be compared with the monarchical forms that had then developed in Western Europe. The Baltic and Liv mini-states were based on the authority of a particular individual or family with this leadership acknowledged by other members of the community.[3]

Most members of the local aristocracy perished during the roughly century-long military skirmishes with the newcomers. The survivors either left their homeland or assimilated into German culture.[4] The natives were baptised as Roman Catholics and their lands were transformed into feudal fiefs of the newcomers (mostly coming from Western Europe). The Latvian nation emerged over the course of several centuries on the basis of Baltic and Liv peasants and the lowest order of city dwellers.

The Livonian Union was established in 1435 in order to ensure cooperation between the Bishopric of Livonia, the cities and the Livonian Order.[5] This Union was a combination of Bishoprics and Orders dependent upon the feudal German Empire[6]. The Livonian Union never developed into a consolidated state. It ceased to exist on 28 November 1561 during the course of the Livonian War (1558–1583). All of the lands inhabited by Latvians became part of Poland–Lithuania (*Rzeczpospolita*; hereinafter — Poland) as the Duchy of Livonia (*Ducatus Transdunensis;* in Latvian — *Pārdaugavas hercogiste*)[7] and the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia (*Ducatus Curlandiae et Semigalliae*; hereinafter — the Duchy of Courland).[8]

The Duchy of Livonia ceased to exist during the course of the Polish–Swedish War (1600–1629). Sweden acquired Livonia[9] (the so-called Swedish Livonia, henceforward Livonia) as a result of the Truce of Altmark concluded on 16 September 1629), while

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[2] Historical records describe several Baltic and Liv leaders who were highly regarded in their societies as kings (*rex*), for example, Lamekins who ruled the Cours (*Lammekinus rex*), Visvaldis, who ruled the Latgalians (*Wissewaldus, rex de Gercike*), Namejs, ruler of the Semigallians (*rex nomina Nameyxe*), and others are thus described (*Latvijas vēstures avoti*. Latvijas vēstures institūta izdoti. II. sējums. *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti.* Rīgā: Latvijas Vēstures Institūta apgādiens, 1937, Dok. Nr. 162, 141., 142. lpp.; Švābe, A. Jersikas karaļvalsts. *Straumes un avoti.* III. Sakārtojusi Lidija Švābe. [Lincoln, Nebraska]: Pilskalns, 1965, 8., 15., 33. lpp.; Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture. 1180–1290. Krustakari.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2002, 109.–111. lpp.).

[3] Misāns, I. *Klio Latvijā: raksti par historiogrāfijas problēmām. Klio in Latvia: Articles on historiography problems.* [Rīga]: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2012, 47.–75. lpp.

[4] The exception were a small number of descendants of rulers of the Cours (*kuršu ķoniņi*) and some of their compatriots; however, their economic and political influence was slight (Lazdiņš, J. Krievijas Senāta judikatūras nozīme Baltijas tiesību piemērošanas problēmu jautājumos (1864–1917) (kuršu ķoniņu lieta). *IUS EST ARS BONI ET AEQUI. Aktuālās tiesību realizācijas problēmas.* LU 69. Konferences rakstu krājums. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2011, 176.–183. lpp.).

[5] The territory of the Livonian Union encompassed approximately the whole of modern Estonia and Latvia.

[6] The Order of the Brothers of the Sword was founded in 1202. Survivors of their defeat in the 1236 Battle at Schaulen joined the Teutonic Order in 1237. The Livonian Order was created as a branch in the Baltic of the Teutonic Order. (Šterns, I. Latvijas vēsture, 168.–173., 261., 415., 416., 419., 420., 638. lpp.).

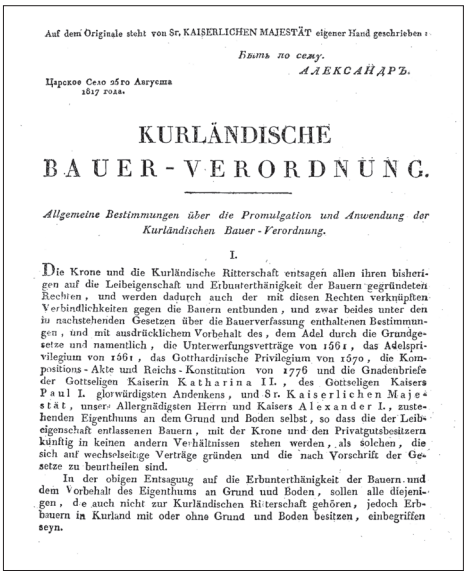
[7] *Latvijas tiesību avoti. Teksti un komentāri.* 2. sēj. *Poļu un zviedru laiku tiesību avoti (1561–1795).* Blūzma, V. (red.). Authors: Apsītis, R., Blūzma, V., Lazdiņš, J. Rīga: Juridiskā koledža, 2006, 49. lpp.

[8] Ziegenhorn, Ch. G. *Staatsrecht der Herzogthümer Curland und Semgallen.* Königsberg: Kanter, 1772, S. 51–56.

[9] The convention has been established in Latvian academic publications of referring to the Russian Imperial Governorate (Gubernia) of Livonia as the Governorate of Livonia. This has led to associating the present-day administrative region of Vidzeme as part of the Republic of Latvia to be continuation of the Russian Imperial entity. This is incorrect, since the Governorate of Livonia of the Russian Empire included part of the present-day Republic of Estonia, notably its southern part in addition to the territory inhabited by Latvians.



Fig. 1. Russian Emperor Alexander I and the people (*Senatne un Māksla*, Nr. 1, 1938)



Auf dem Originale steht von Sr. KAISERLICHEN MAJESTÄT eigener Hand geschrieben:

Быть по сему.
АЛЕКСАНДРЪ.

Царское Село 25го Августа
1817 года.

KURLÄNDISCHE
BAUER-VERORDNUNG.

Allgemeine Bestimmungen über die Promulgation und Anwendung der Kurländischen Bauer-Verordnung.

I.

Die Krone und die Kurländische Ritterschaft entsagen allen ihren bisherigen auf die Leibeigenschaft und Erbunterthänigkeit der Bauern gegründeten Rechten, und werden dadurch auch der mit diesen Rechten verknüpften Verbindlichkeiten gegen die Bauern entbunden, und zwar beides unter den in nachstehenden Gesetzen über die Bauerverfassung enthaltenen Bestimmungen, und mit ausdrücklichem Vorbehalt des, dem Adel durch die Grundgesetze und namentlich, die Unterwerfungsverträge von 1561, das Adelsprivilegium von 1561, das Gotthardinische Privilegium von 1570, die Kompositions-Akte und Reichs-Konstitution von 1776 und die Gnadenbriefe der Gottseligen Kaiserin Katharina II., des Gottseligen Kaisers Paul I. glorwürdigsten Andenkens, und Sr. Kaiserlichen Majestät, unsers Allergnädigsten Herrn und Kaisers Alexander I., zustehenden Eigenthums an dem Grund und Boden selbst, so dass die der Leibeigenschaft entlassenen Bauern, mit der Krone und den Privatgutsbesitzern künftig in keinen andern Verhältnissen stehen werden, als solchen, die sich auf wechselseitige Verträge gründen und die nach Vorschrift der Gesetze zu beurtheilen sind.

In der obigen Entsagung auf die Erbunterthänigkeit der Bauern und dem Vorbehalt des Eigenthums an Grund und Boden, sollen alle diejenigen, die auch nicht zur Kurländischen Ritterschaft gehören, jedoch Erbbauern in Kurland mit oder ohne Grund und Boden besitzen, einbegriffen seyn.

Fig. 2. Fragment of the Law on Emancipation of Courland Peasants

Poland retained only part of the Duchy of Livonia, the so-called Polish Livonia/Inflanty or Latgale[10] (hereinafter — Latgale). Latgale, the eastern part of Latvia, remained separate from the rest of the territory inhabited by Latvians up until the proclamation of the independence of Latvia on 18 November 1918[11], and was not considered to be part of the territory labelled as the Baltic.

The lands inhabited by Latvians were integrated during the 18th century into the Russian Empire — Swedish Livonia in 1721[12] as the Governorate (*gubernia*) of Livonia and the Duchy of Courland and the autonomous territory of Piltene[13] as the Governorate of Courland in 1795. In addition to the Governorates of Livonia and Courland, the Baltic region included the Governorate of Estonia. Latgale was attached to the Russian Empire as part of the First Partition of Poland in 1772. In 1802, Latgale was integrated into the Governorate of Vitebsk.[14] The inhabitants of Latgale had to await their emancipation from serfdom as part of this Governorate.

[10] The equivalence of Latgale with Polish Livonia/Inflanty was established in 1900. (Dunsdorfs, E. *Latvijas vēsture. 1600–1710.* Uppsala: Daugava, 1962, 70., 127.–131. lpp.)

[11] Latvijas Tautas Padomes politiskā platforma. LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 327. l., 27.–29. lpp.; Latvijas pilsoņiem! *Pagaidu Valdības Vēstnesis*, 1918, 14. (1.) dec., Nr. 1, 1. lpp.

[12] Livonia was absorbed into the Russian Empire as a former province of Sweden on the basis of the Peace of Nystadt of 30 August 1721 between the Kingdom of Sweden and the Russian Empire (Schmidt, O. *Rechtsgeschichte Liv-, Est- und Curlands.* Jurjew (Dorpat): In Commission bei E. J. Karow, 1895, S. 311.

[13] Courland and Semigallia as part of the Duchy of Courland, and the autonomous region of Piltene, were absorbed into the Russian Empire as part of the so-called Third (and final) Partition of Poland. See Schmidt, O. *Rechtsgeschichte Liv-, Est- und Curlands*, S. 311.; *Latvijas tiesību avoti. Teksti un komentāri*, 2. sēj., lpp.

[14] Dunsdorfs, E. *Latvijas vēsture. 1710–1800*, 215.–216., 218., 221.–222. lpp.

"Emancipation from serfdom" took place in the Baltic Governorates during the reign (1801–1825) of Emperor Alexander I Romanov as follows:

1) on the basis of the Law of 23 May 1816 applicable to the Governorate of Estonia (*Учрежденіе для Эстляндскихъ крестьянъ*, hereinafter — the 1816 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Estonia)[15];

2) on the basis of the Law of 25 August 1817 applicable to the Governorate of Courland (*Учрежденіе о Курляндскихъ крестьянахъ*, hereinafter — the 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland)[16];

3) on the basis of the Law of 26 March 1819 applicable to the Governorate of Livonia (*Положеніе о Лифляндскихъ крестьянахъ*, hereinafter — the 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia)[17].

In Latgale "emancipation from serfdom" took place at the same time as in gubernias located in the heartland of the Russian Empire during the reign (1855–1881) of Emperor Alexander II Romanov on the basis of the Manifesto issued on 19 February 1861[18]. The Manifesto itself only set out the general principles to be followed in the abolition of serfdom. Therefore, a series of special laws and other legal acts followed to implement the Manifesto.[19] These several acts were required to strike a balance between specific regional features and achieving the overall goals of agrarian reform.



Fig. 3. Ķussian Emperor Alexander II (Божеряновъ, И. *Невскій проспект, 1703–1903: Культурно-исторический очеркъ жизни С.-Петербурга за два века — XVIII и XIX*: Юбилейное изданіе, поставчика двара его императорского величества А. И. Вильборга, т. 1. 1901, с. 452)

Serfdom was historically a feature of most European states. However, "emancipation from serfdom" was a process common to European civilisation in regard to developing respect for natural human rights and issues of personal freedom. Abolition of serfdom was not an internal reform specific to

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[15] *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*. Санктпетербург: Типографія II Отдѣленія Цобственной Его Императорскаго Величества Канцелярии, т. XXXIII, 1830, № 26278. Accessible at: http:// www.nlr.ru/e-res/law_r/content.html (site last visited 1.04.2016).

[16] *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXXIV, № 27024.

[17] *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXXVI, № 27735 (see also documents № 27734 and 27736).

[18] Манифест 19 февраля 1861 года. Божиею милостию Мы, Александр Второй, император и самодержец всероссийский, царь польский, великий князь финляндский, и прочае, и прочае, и прочае. *Хрестоматия по истории отечественного государства и права*. X век – 1917 год. Томсинов, В. А. (сост.). Москва: ЗЕРЦАЛО-М, 2004, с. 241–247; О Всемилостивейшем даровании крепостным людям прав состояния свободных сельских обывателей и об устройстве их быта 19 февраля 1861 г. Accessible at: http://doc.histrf.ru/ 19/manifest-o-vsemilostiveyshem-darovanii-krepostnym-lyudyam-prav-sostoyaniya-svobodnykh-selskikh-obyva/ (site last visited 12.02.2016).

[19] Положеніе о сельскомъ состояніи. *Сводъ законовъ Россійской имперіи*. Все 16 томовъ со всеми относящимися къ нимъ продолженіями въ одной книге. Подъ редакціей А. Ф. Волкова и Ю. Д. Филипова. Второе стериотипное изданіе. С.-Петербург: Изданіе товарищества "Общественная польза", 1899, Т. IX (Особое Приложеніе к тому IX Законовъ о Состояній) a.o. regulations.

the Russian Empire, but rather a response to the demands of the times. The necessity to abolish serfdom arose during the 18th and 19th centuries derived from new economic needs, notably the transition to capitalist economic relations. As a result of new socio-economic issues, the Russian Empire was constrained to reform its form of governance and system of courts based on law. Structural reforms fundamentally strengthened the Russian Empire in terms of meeting new challenges, as well as, paradoxical as it might seem, sowing the seeds among Latvians of thinking along national state lines.

The ancestors of today's Latvians had been from the end of the 13th century no longer sovereign masters in their land[20]; hence, even in the mid-19th century ideas about a Latvian state were only a dream. It is therefore unsurprising that Professor Carl Schirren opined at the time that: "There has never been and still today there is no nation in this land. The fact of being without a nation is a characteristic of this territory. Therefore, it has remained today as it was originally, a colony. In Livonia there are only the defeated and the victors."[21]

The Balts and the Livs were not victorious in the conflicts of the 13th century. Loss of the ability to rule in their land, it is likely, significantly slowed the process of emergence of the Latvian nation. It is therefore remarkable that the Latvian people were nevertheless able to develop their own language, national self-awareness and to safeguard their historical memory. Georg von Nolken, a conservative ideologue of the aristocracy of Livonia, was forced, in 1842, with great bitterness, to admit this fact: "The separation between the lords and the peasants is today as deep as it was 600 years ago. Peasants regard their masters to be foreigners who have taken their land and who illegally retain it today — they have never acquiesced to our rights."[22]

Latvians did not enjoy an easy time after the abolition of serfdom either. National awakening initially was hindered by the threat of Germanisation, but later, at the end of the 19th century, by the Government enforcing a policy of Russification, carried out in the interests of centralising state rule[23]. For a variety of reasons many Latvians were induced to leave their country or to migrate to the heartland of the Russian Empire.

Nevertheless, the author would insist that it is incorrect to associate emancipation solely with serfs gaining the "freedom of birds", as is often asserted in scholarly studies assessing abolition of serfdom in a negative light. Emancipation from serfdom was an important event in the history of the Latvian people, one that put an end to the period

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[20] Despite recognition by the Russian Imperial Ruling Senate in 1884 of the descendants of Courland rulers (*kuršu ķoniņi*) as belonging to the nobility, these individuals possessed no political or economic influence in Courland (Lazdiņš, J. Krievijas Senāta judikatūras nozīme Baltijas tiesību piemērošanas problēmu jautājumos (1864–1917) (kuršu ķoniņu lieta), 176.–183. lpp.).

[21] "Es gab nicht und hatte nie gegeben und giebt auch heute kein Volk im Lande. Kein Volk. Darin liegt seine Geschichte besiegelt. Darum ist es geblieben, was es von Anbeginn gewesen: Kolonie. (...) In Livland gab es von jeher nur Sieger und Besiegte." See: Schirren, C. *Livländische Charaktere. 1: Walter von Plettenberg. Baltische Monatsschrift*. Bd. 3. Riga: Verlag von Nicolai Kymmel's Buchhandlung, 1861, S. 444–445.

[22] Cited from: Švābe, A. Latviešu vēstures uzdevumi. *Straumes un avoti*, II. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1940, 55. lpp.

[23] Concerning Russification policies in Latvia see, Volfarte, K. *Rīgas latviešu biedrība un latviešu nacionālā kustība no 1868. līdz 1905. gadam*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2009, 45.–70. lpp.

of their personal captivity, and one which led to the National Awakening. The New Latvians began to develop a national culture. Their efforts were largely adopted by the "New Current" movement, which advanced *inter alia* the idea of Latvian autonomy within the Russian Empire. Proclamation of the State of Latvia in 1918, during the aftermath of the First World War, expressed the will of the Latvian people and was the fulfilment of a dream.[24] Abolition of serfdom was the first step along the road that led to the independent Latvian state.[25]

Freedom as an expression of natural rights

Philosophical discussions about legal rights as an expression of natural rights — freedom, equality, justice, etc. — have been around since antiquity[26] They were recorded in the works of Plato[27], Aristotle[28], Cicero[29], and many others, but it was only during the Enlightenment of the 18th century that acceptance of the existence of natural human rights paved the way for revolutionary changes which set in with the storming of the Bastille in Paris on 14 July 1789, and which are still on-going. Concepts such as the rule of law, democracy, and state social responsibility, are inalienable principles underpinning modern legal culture. Historically the situation has not always been such.

Before the French Revolution, there was neither any economic basis nor was there any political will in favour of the abolition of serfdom. Debate about natural human rights was largely limited to court circles and among a number of religious ministers and/or the academic environment. Notwithstanding that 18th century Europe (particularly the Western region) was ripe for political, economic, and structural reform its implementation needed a "push" so that traditional social relations which had come about during the Middle Ages, in particular, economic laws were to change irreversibly. The French Revolution provided this impetus.[30] One of the most widely appreciated

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[24] The Republic of Latvia was proclaimed on 18 November 1918. See: Latvijas pilsoņiem! *Pagaidu Valdības Vēstnesis*, 1918, 14. (1.) dec., Nr. 1, 1. lpp.; *Latvijas Pagaidu Valdības Likumu un Rīkojumu Krājums*, 1919, 15. jūl., [Nr.] 1, dok. Nr. 1, 1.–3. lpp; Latvijas Tautas Padomes politiskā platforma. LVVA 1307. f., 1. apr., 327. l., 27.–29. lpp.

[25] Lazdiņš, J. Dzimtbūšanas atcelšana, pagasta sabiedrības organizācija un nacionāli valstiskas domāšanas pirmsākumi. *Latvieši un Latvija*. II sējums. *Valstiskums Latvijā un Latvijas valsts — izcīnītā un zaudētā*. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2014, 173.–196. lpp.

[26] See, for example, Coing, H. *Grundzüge der Rechtsphilosophie*. Vierte Auflage. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1985, S. 5–22; Gumplowicz, L. *Geschichte der Staatstheorien*. Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1905, S. 39–64, 77–80; Rüthers, B., Fischer, Ch. (unter Mitarbeit von) Birk, A. *Rechtstheorie. Begriff, Geltung und Anwendung des Rechts.* München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2010, S. 276–278.

[27] Platons. *Valsts.* Pagātnes domātāju darbi. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1982, 47.–53. lpp.; Platons. *Dialogi.* No sengrieķu valodas tulkojis Ābrams Feldhūns. Rīga: Zinātne, 2015, 46.–81. lpp.

[28] Aristotelis. *Nikomaha ētika*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1985; Аристотель. *Политика. Метафизика. Аналитика.* Санкт-Петербург: Эксмо. Москва: Мидгард, 2008, ч. III, с. 694, 697.

[29] Cicerons Marks Tullijs. *Par valsti*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2009.

[30] Mueller, O. *Die Livländische Agrargesetzgebung*. Riga: Verlag von Alexander Stieda, 1892, S. 30.

revolutionary slogans was the demand for liberty. Slavery, serfdom, or their equivalent, came into irreconcilable contradiction with the spirt of the times.

The Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen adopted by the French National Assembly on 26 August 1789 was a clarion call for such reforms.[31] The first two articles of the Declaration are: "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can be founded only on the common good (Article 1). The goal of any political association is the conservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, safety and resistance against oppression (Article 2)."[32]

Professors Werner Frotscher and Bodo Pieroth point out that individual liberty is afforded a central role in the Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Liberty is listed as the first in the list of rights in Articles 1 and 2, followed by other basic rights, i.e. equality, property, safety, and the right to resist oppression.[33] Thus, all other rights must derive from the right to be free[34] and liberty would have to become the cornerstone of civil society, the basis for its constitution[35]. The concept of liberty is further set out in Articles 4 and 5 wherein liberty is described as the right to behave in any manner that does not do harm to others and which is not at same time forbidden by law. Laws were needed to lay down what is harmful to society. Therefore, it was legitimate that personal freedom be circumscribed, but these limits would have to be defined by legal acts.[36] In other words: the right to act freely would have to follow clauses set out in laws — what is not forbidden is allowed (or it must be allowed).[37] It is evident that personal freedom as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen has priority among other rights, which include equality.[38] Thus, for example, "equality" is not explicitly referred to in Article 2, wherein the principal natural and imprescriptible rights are listed.

The author is of the opinion that the right to property called up in the Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen was particularly significant in the process of emancipation from serfdom in the Baltic. Article 17 of the Declaration states that Property was an inviolable and sacred right. However, exceptionally property can be deprived of private usage, when the public necessity, legally noted, evidently requires it, and under the condition of a just and prior indemnity. Prior to emancipation of the

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[31] *La Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, France, 26 aoūt 1789*. Accessible at: http://www.magnacarta plus.org/french-rights/french1789.htm (site last visited 14.03.2016).

[32] "Article premier — Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits. Les distinctions sociales ne peuvent être fondées que sur l'utilité commune. Article 2 — Le but de toute association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme. Ces droits sont la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté et la résistance à l'oppression."

[33] Frotscher, W., Pieroth, B. *Verfassungsgeschichte*. 11., überarbeitete Auflage. München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2012, S. 31–32.

[34] Hattenhauer, H. *Europäische Rechtsgeschichte*. 2. Verbesserte Auflage. Heidenberg: C. F. Müller Juristischer Verlag, 1994, S. 509.

[35] Hattenhauer, H. *Europäische Rechtsgeschichte*, S. 508.

[36] Frotscher, W., Pieroth, B. *Verfassungsgeschichte*, S. 29–33.

[37] See also: Hattenhauer, H. *Europäische Rechtsgeschichte*, S. 508.

[38] Frotscher, W., Pieroth, B. *Verfassungsgeschichte*, S. 32.

serfs the prevailing opinion in the Baltic provinces was that peasants only used the land. This axiom largely determined how, following their emancipation, peasants would have the right to acquire the land that they had previously used.

The Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen was a source of inspiration to the hearts and minds of all of the civilised nations at the time.[39] The influence of the Declaration is evident in many world-famous codices based on natural human rights such as, for example, the Civil Code adopted in 1804 by France (*Code civil*)[40], the Austrian Civil Code adopted in 1811 (*Allgemeines Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch für die gesamten Deutschen Erbländer der Österreichischen Monarchie*"[41], or ABGB[42]), and others. For example, the prohibition on one person being the slave of another person or his serf is expressed in a poetic fashion in paragraph 16 ABGB: "Every individual is born with rights that have been now formulated in an enlightened and logical manner and thus are individuals recognised to be a person. Slavery or serfdom as well as power controlling these is not tolerated [on the territory of Austria]."[43] Professor Joachim Rückert has stated that inclusion of this provision in fulfilled a constitutional rights function, if we regard these laws in today's light.[44]



Fig. 4. Female costume of Kabile. *Austrums*, 1894, 2. sēj.

We cannot find any analogous examples of equally uplifting expression of the ideas of the Enlightenment as found in Paragraph 16 of the ABGB concerning natural rights in any legal act in force on the territory inhabited by Latvians during the 18th and 19th centuries. Nevertheless, the acts of emancipation applicable to the Baltic provinces and later to Latgale are based on the same principles of natural rights as was the case elsewhere in Europe. For example, Paragraph V of the Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia states: "All children born of peasants in Livonia after this edict

[39] See also the USA Constitution of 1787, and the 1791 USA Bill of Rights.

[40] Schlosser, H. *Grundzüge der neueren Privatrechtsgeschichte. Rechtsentwicklungen im europäischen Kontext.* 9., völlig neu bearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage. Heidelberg: C. F. Müller Verlag, 2001, S. 125–135.

[41] *Allgemaines bürgerliches Gesezbuch für die gesammten deutschen Erbländer der Oesterreichischen Monarchie.* Wien: Aus der k.k. Hof- und Staatsdruckerey, 1811. Accessible at: https://books.google.lv/books?id=CAwMAAAYAAJ&pg=PA1&lpg=PA1&dq=abgb+allgemeines+b%C3%BCrgerliches+gesetzbuch+1811&source=blots=P8ebfpxhtN&sig=0USuO1nEwlBegwA1MvR946Hqe7A&hl=lv&sa=X&ved=0CEkQ6AEwBmoVChMIi-Wc7IfqxwIVSWkUCh0Ltgfe#v=onepage&q=abgb%20allgemeines%20b%C3%BCrgerliches%20gesetzbuch%201811&f=false (site last visited 14.03.2016).

[42] Ibid.

[43] "Jeder Mensch hat angeborne, schon durch die Vernunft einleuchtende Rechte, und ist daher als eine Person zu betrachten. Sklaverei oder Leibeigenschaft und die Ausübung einer darauf sich beziehenden Macht wird in diesen Ländern nicht gestattet."

[44] Rückert, J. Die Historische Rechtsschule nach 200 Jahren – Mythos, Legende, Botschaft. *Juristen Zeitung*, Jg. 65, Heft 1, 2010, S. 7.



Fig. 5. Latgalians in the first half of the 19th century. *Сборник антропологических и этнографических статей о России и странах ей принадлежащих.* Москва: Типографія В. Готье, 1873. Книга 2.

[law] will be promogulated are *ipso iure* free; peasants who were in hiding before promulgation of this law and who voluntarily return to their place of residence will not be punished and will benefit from the legal status of peasants in Livonia."[45]

After Peter I the Great, Romanov succeeded as a result of victory in the Great Northern War (1700–1721), to open a window to Europe, the Russian Empire was able to engage in European political intrigues, thereby strengthening and extending its presence in all aspects of international relations, and this process continued until the Bolshevik coup of 24–25 October 1917 (old style). With a view to becoming a recognised political actor and member of the club of great powers, the Russian Empire was obliged quickly to adopt, in addition to the rules of war and the newest financial and economic techniques, spiritual values of the Western Christian world. At the end of the 18th century and during the early 19th century, personal freedom was one of these values.

The "export" of ideas born during the French Revolution reached the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 19th century. The Peace Treaty of Tilsit of 7–9 July 1807 provided for creation of a new political entity, the Duchy of Warsaw (hereinafter — Poland). The constitution presented to Poland as a gift of the Emperor of France, Napoléon Bonaparte, provided for all citizens to be equal before the law as well as for the protection of the courts. "Napoleon as heir to the French Revolution freed all peasants who were subject to his rule."[46] Studies carried out by Benno Ābers show that Polish peasants were freed without title to land.[47] After defeating the French, the Russian Empire "politically inherited" Poland. The author has seen no direct evidence that what transpired in Poland during the process of emancipation set an example for freeing Balts from serfdom; however, the process for Latvians (excepting those living in Latgale) and Estonians followed the same principles as were applied in Poland: landlords retained the land, peasants were given

[45] "Alle Kinder Liefländischer Bauern, welche nach Bekanntmachung dieser Verordnung geboren werden, sind ipso iure frei; Läuflinge, die vor Bekanntmachung dieses Gesetzes entlaufen sind, und freiwilig zurückkehren, werden nicht bestraft, und treten in die Rechte des Liefländischen Bauernstandes." See, *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXXVI, № 27735.

[46] Mueller, O. *Die Livländische Agrargesetzgebung*, S. 30.

[47] Ābers, B. *Vidzemes zemnieku stāvoklis 19. g.s. pirmā pusē*. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1936, 52.–53. lpp.; See also: Transehe-Roseneck, A. Von. *Die lettische Revolution.* Mit einem Geleitwort von Professor Dr. Theodor Schiemann. Teil, I. Der Schauplatz. Treibende Kräfte. Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1906, S. 43.

their freedom, in other words, the land belongs to me, your time is your own (*Land mein und Zeit dein*[48]). In this way, a precedent was established that gaining the status of a free citizen is disjoint from gaining title to the land that one formerly worked.[49]



Fig. 6. Two images of men. CVVM arh. Nr. 104, 106

It was intended that during the reign of Alexander I important reforms would be carried out in the Russian Empire. A project was drafted for reform of state administration which would then conform to the theoretical ideas on the separation of state powers as advanced by Charles-Louis de Montesquieu. It was foreseen therein that a two-tier parliament would be convoked, the people would be granted political freedom, etc.[50] Much thought went into preparation for reform as regards personal freedom and the inviolability of property in the spirit of the US Constitution and the French Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.[51] Regrettably, the intended liberalisation of state governance could not overcome the implacable resistance put up by the nobility. Alexander I was obliged to retreat from implementation of his plans and the reform process remained incomplete.[52] Granting freedom to the peasants throughout the Empire appeared particularly frightening to the conservative nobility.

The Russian Empire had recently (1773–1775) weathered the uprising led by Yemelyan Pugachev. Was there any guarantee that no analogous event might transpire

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[48] Sivers, J., von. *Zur Geschichte der Bauernfreiheit in Livland*. Riga: Nicolai Kymmel's Buchhandlung, 1878, S. 68.

[49] Hamilcar Baron Foelkersahm propounded the thesis that the process of emancipation of serfs in Livonia and Courland bore "similar features" to the emancipation of peasants in Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein and their similar rights to own land. However, no detailed evidence was presented for this comparison. See: Foelkersahm (Baron) H. *Die Entwicklung der Agrarverfassung Livlands und Kurlands und die Umwälzung der Agrarverhältnisse in der Republik Lettland.* Greifswald: Verlag Ratsbuchhandlung L. Bamberg, 1923, S. 41.

[50] Графский, В. Г. *Всеобщая история права и государства*. 2-е издание, переработанное и дополненное. Москва: Норма, 2007, с. 562.

[51] *Власть и реформы. От самодержавной к советской России.* Российская Академия наук. Институт Российской истории. Санкт-Петербургский филиал. С-Петербург: ДБ, 1996, с. 207, 209.

[52] Графский, В. Г. *Всеобщая история права и государства*, с. 562.

under conditions of economic decline resulting from the intended reform? Alexander I in the same way as his mother Empress Catherine II the Great saw the Baltic provinces as a suitable place to try out his reform ideas.[53] Therefore, the Baltic provinces which benefitted from a degree of autonomy as regards legal issues, self-government and rule-of-law, were an almost ideal venue for economic and legal experiments ("a laboratory for experiments"[54]). This approach also had political advantages. Alexander I could thereafter assert that the Russian Empire was not ignoring Enlightenment processes common to European states and emphasise that "We are moving forward slowly, but nevertheless we are closing in on liberal ideas."[55] Therefore, Alexander I first tried out emancipation from serfdom in the Western Baltic provinces. This caution was, quite possibly, a historical political error, demonstrating government vacillation. The Russian Empire, had only "put its nose" (i.e. in Poland and the Baltic provinces) into the club of new European states, but with the "rest of its body" it remained, until the second half of the 19th century, a state full of social and religious contradictions, mired in the Middle Ages. Hurried attempts at state centralisation, in particular, after the death of Alexander II (1881), and pursuit of a policy of Russification, led to state collapse during the closing stages of the First World War (1917–1918); the ensuing Civil War permitted the Bolsheviks to come to power.

Neighbouring Prussia offered an example, in particular to the Balts, in how to resolve a number of issues[56]; there the political will of the government in abolishing serfdom and land reform was significantly more purposeful than was the case for the Russian Empire. In Prussia the process of emancipation was completed with the edict of 9 October 1807.[57] The transition period was very short. All residents of Prussia were free as of the feast day of St Martin, 1810.[58] Paragraph 10 of the October Edict forbade thereafter personal freedom to be restricted in any form: "After entry into force of this law, no relations equivalent to serfdom may be established either by birth, or through marriage, or by acquiring a dwelling meant for serfs, or by means of a contract."[59]

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[53] Transehe-Roseneck, A., von. *Die lettische Revolution*, S.

[54] Rey, M.-P. *Alexandre I-er.* Paris: Flammarion, 2009 / Рей М.-П. *Александр I.* Москва: РОССПЭН, 2013, с. 140.

[55] Cited from: Ābers, B. Vidzemes zemnieku stāvoklis 19. g.s. pirmā pusē, 57. lpp.

[56] See, for example: Lazdiņš, J. Die Einfluss des Geistes des Allgemeinen Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuches für die gesamten Deutschen Erbländer der Österreihischen Monarhie auf das baltische zivilrechtliche Denken. *200 Jahre ABGB — Ausstrahlungen. Die Bedeutung der Kodifikation für andere Staaten und andere Rechtskulturen*. Hrsg. Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael Geistlinger, O. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Friedrich Harrer, Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Rudolf Mosler, O. Univ.-Prof. DDr. Johannes M. Rainer. Wien: Manzsche Verlags- und Universitätsbuchhandlung, 2011, S. 211–224.

[57] *Edikt den erleichterten Besitz und den freien Gebrauch des Grundeigentums sowie die persönlichen Verhältnisse der Land-Bewohner betreffend*, § 12. Accessible at: http://www.verfassungen.de/de/preussen/gesetze/grundeigentums freiheit07.htm (site last visited 14.03.2016).

[58] Ibid., § 12.

[59] Ibid. § 10. "Nach dem Datum dieser Verordnung entsteht fernerhin kein Unterthänigkeits-Verhältniß, weder durch Geburt, noch durch Heirath, noch durch Übernehmung einer unterthänigen Stelle, noch durch Vertrag."

Paragraph 11 amplified the provisions of paragraph 10 that abolished relations characteristic of serfdom. Serfs were set free once the law entered into force, as were their wives and children, and their dwellings which they had inherited, through a hereditary lease, quitrent or title.

The Prussian aristocracy hoped that once serfdom was abolished they would gain title to all of the land. However, these hopes were not immediately fulfilled. The Edict of 14 September 1811 gave the peasants not only their freedom, but also between one-half to two-thirds of the land that they had previously worked.[60] Thus, peasants in Prussia in contrast to peasants in Poland, and later in the Baltic provinces, were freed together with title to land.[61] The edict formally established an economically independent group of small holdings.[62] Agrarian reform in Prussia was the result of a certain compromise. Both the landed nobility and the peasants had "to pay" for the reform. On the one hand, overt legal serfdom was at an end, on the other hand, peasants had to be content with working less land than they had previously. One can agree with the view of Professor Ulrich Eisenhardt that the reforms achieved their goal of averting the threat of an uprising by realising revolutionary goals.[63]

Emancipation of the peasants in the Baltic was also a compromise, but one struck between different legal persons. Professor Arveds Švābe has written about this process, at the same time remarking on the conservative sentiments of the Baltic nobility: "This law is clear to any legal specialist: it is an agreement between two legal entities — the Emperor and the nobility. This is a door that swings in two directions: the Emperor would enter from one direction, the other direction led to the nobility. The Emperor defended the fruits of the French Revolution. The nobility defended the old privileges dating from the rule of Sigismund Augustus. The other side of this law was that the nobility retained unfettered rights to the peasants' land as a fundamental aspect of this law recognised by the legislating authority. (…) The essential content of the law is revealed as "boundless" personal rights, "unlimited" rights to property and gradual emancipation of the peasants."[64]

If the nobility was somehow able to countenance setting the peasants free, then they baulked at "providing" land for their former serfs. The most conservative members of the nobility even remarked that were this to be the case then the Governorate of Livonia would become the land of milk and honey where "cooked partridges would fly into their open mouths" (*wo den Leuten die gebratenen Tauben in den Mund fliegen*[65]).

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[60] Ābers, B. *Vidzemes zemnieku stāvoklis 19. g.s. pirmā pusē,* 48. lpp.

[61] Loening, E. *Die Befreiung des Bauernstandes in Deutschland und in Livland.* Riga, Moskau, Odessa: Verlag von J.Deubner, 1880, S. 32, 39.

[62] Eisenhardt, U. *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte.* 3., überarbeitete Auflage. München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuch handlung, S. 307–309.

[63] Ibid., S. 308.

[64] Švābe, A. Latviešu zemnieku brīvlaišanas politiskās un tiesiskās idejas. *Pagātne un tagadne*, II: Latvijas Vēstures skolotāju biedrības rakstu krājums. Prof. Dr. theol. L. Adamoviča un Dr. phil. N. Vīksniņa redakcijā. Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures skolotāju biedrība, 1938, 131.–132. lpp.

[65] Sivers, J., von. *Zur Geschichte der Bauernfreiheit in Livland*, S. 148.

In this way peasants in the Baltic provinces after emancipation gained "the same freedom as birds in a forest to be chased from tree to tree"[66], the so-called freedom of a bird. The old adage had come to pass — to each his own (*Jedem das Seine*), i.e. the land — for the nobility, freedom — for the peasants.[67] In many ways one may agree with Edgar Loening, that "abolition of serfdom was replaced by a new form of servitude"[68], one that would be borne "voluntarily". Without any doubt this outcome was unjust. Baltic German liberals recognised this. The nobility often assessed this process as "a good deal" (*ein gutes Geschäft*).[69] Therefore, the majority of the nobility had formal grounds to rejoice. In fact, this marked the beginning of the end of privileges and influence of the landed gentry, and, in particular, of the nobility, from a political and economic stand point. This was evident to the 19th century Slavophile Yuri Samarin in his work *Письма изъ Риги и Исторія Риги* (Letters from Riga and the History of Riga). He wrote that "they [the Baltic Germans] do not deserve a better historical fate, but they do not have the courage to admit this."[70]

In order to ascertain the significance of abolition of serfdom without title to land we must first examine the legal status of Latvians before emancipation.

A report by the Landtag of Livonia of 26 February 1765 concerning the legal status of peasants in the Baltic provinces stated: "Peasants are the slaves (serfs) of their masters in the sense of Roman law, who can as chattel be reclaimed, ceded and sold [by their masters]. Although King Stefan and King Charles XI wished to ease the lot of peasants, the nobility convinced them otherwise, that this was not possible since serfdom reflects "the character of this people"."[71]

This justification is unsurprising. Legally it does not significantly differ from the declaration written in 1739 by Landrat Otto Fabian von Rosen wherein it is stated that a serf and his belongings are the property of his master[72], i.e. a slave in the sense of Roman law[73]. The attempt to confer a civilised veneer on slavery by referring to Christian moderation on the relations between a lord and his servant does not pass scrutiny. Adoption of the Russian model for relations between the nobility and peasants does

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[66] Cited from: Ābers, B. Vidzemes zemnieku "putna brīvība" pēc 1819. g. likuma. *Tieslietu Ministrijas Vēstnesis*, 1936, Nr. 3, 463. lpp.

[67] Kahk, J. *Bauer und Baron im Baltikum.* Versuch einer historisch-phänomenologischen Studie zum Thema "Gutsherrschaft in den Ostseeprovinzen". Tallinn: [Wistinghausen], 1999, S. 129.

[68] "Die Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft war nur die Begründung einer neuen *Knechtschaft*." See: Loening, E. *Die Befreiung des Bauernstandes in Deutschland und in Livland,* S. 39.

[69] Leonids, P.-ais. *Likums un eeraschas Baltijā*. Nitaure: P. Weidemans, 1915, 9. lpp.; Zutis, J. *Cīņa par agrārām reformām XIX gadsimteņa pirmā pusē: kapitālisma pirmatnējās uzkrāšanās posms Latvijā*. Rīga: VAPP, 1945, 43. lpp.

[70] "... лучшей исторической судьбы они не умели заслужить, но признаться въ томъ не достаетъ духа (...)" (Самарин, Ю. Ф. *Сочиненія*, т. 7: *Письма изъ Риги и исторія Риги*. Москва: Д. Самарин, 1889, с. 37)

[71] Cited from: Švābe, A. *Zemes attiecību un zemes reformu vēsture Latvijā*. Rīga: Novilkums no Zemkopības ministrijas izdevuma "Latvijas agrārā reforma". [Rīga]: Zemkopības ministrija, 1930, 125. lpp.

[72] Vīgrabs, J. *Landrāta Rōzena 1739. gada deklarācija par Vidzemes dzimtkungu tiesībām uz zemnieku miesu un mantu*. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1937, 94. lpp.

[73] Loening, E. *Die Befreiung des Bauernstandes in Deutschland und in Livland*, S. 22.

not justify inhumanity.[74] Legally this explanation is unimportant. Thus, a peasant was not a legal subject, but rather, a chattel. It is not credible that this account was without serious intent. Evidence for this is found, for example, in the work *Topographische Nachrichten* by August Wilhelm Hupel, published shortly before emancipation, wherein it is recorded that: "Moonlighters (illicit workers) and their children are here occasionally sold or bartered for other objects — horses, dogs, pipe bowls, etc.; people here are not as expensive as Negroes in the American colonies, a bachelor may be bought for 30–50 roubles, but if he has a trade (or semblance of one) such as cook, weaver, etc., the price might be as high as 100 roubles; the same amount buys an entire family (parents and their children); a serving girl rarely fetches more than 10 roubles, and a child, approximately 4 roubles."[75]



Fig. 7. Latvian men and women from Aizkraukle (1839). CVVM arh. Nr. 660

On 20 February 1803, Alexander I signed a decree on "the free tillers of the soil" that allowed land owners to privately free their peasants. This edict found no takers in the Baltic provinces. As Professor Jānis Zutis has written, to the contrary, "the Baltic barons were able to prevent publication of the edict in Latvian and Estonian translation"[76]. Even the call for restricting trade in human beings to within the borders of a single province went unheard and was, in the opinion of the author, rejected with incredible cynicism: "The sale of peasants being restricted to the nobility of the province of Riga, it appears, not only to contradict the principle of free trade and movement, but (…) will also suppress competition among buyers, and thus drive down the price of a peasant (…)."[77] There was no other option open to the Russian Empire than to follow the advice of the liberal Karl von Bruiningk that only positive rights compel the insensitive and unjust to respect natural rights[78], and to insist on legal measures to abolish serfdom.

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[74] Mueller, O. *Die Livländische Agrargesetzgebung*, S. 16–17.

[75] "Lostreiber und deren Kinder werden zuweilen verkauft, oder gegen andre Sachen, gegen Pferde, Hunde, Pfeifenköpfe u.d.g. vertauscht: die Menschen sind hier nicht so theuer als ein Neger in den amerikanischen Kolonien, einen ledigen Kerl kauft man für 30 bis 50; wenn er ein Handwerk versteht, Koch, Weber u.d.g. ist, auch wohl für 100 Rubel; eben so viel giebt man für ein ganzes Gesinde (die Eltern nebst ihren Kindern); für eine Magd selten mehr als 10, und für ein Kind etwa 4 Rubel." (Hupel, A. W. *Topographische Nachrichten*. Bd. 2. Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, 1777, S. 127–128)

[76] Zutis, J. *Vidzemes un Kurzemes zemnieku likumi XIX gadsimta sākumā (1804–1819)*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1954, 19.–20. lpp. (Essays on the history of the Latvian SSR).

[77] Cited from: Švābe, A. *Zemes attiecību un zemes reformu vēsture Latvijā*, p. 132. See also: Baron Foelkersahm H. *Die Entwicklung der Agrarverfassung Livlands und Kurlands und die Umwälzung der Agrarverhältnisse in der Republik Lettland*, S. 28–29.

[78] Cited from: Ābers, B. *Vidzemes zemnieku stāvoklis 19. g.s. pirmā pusē*, 24. lpp.

Certainly, not all Baltic Germans were so reactionary in their outlook. But unfortunately, the liberals were a minority. Thus, for example, Johann Georg Eisen had already in the mid-18th century called for abolition of serfdom and even drafted the text of a constitutional law along the lines of respect for natural rights.[79] Additionally, in 1765, Landrat Carl Friedrich Schoultz stated his opinion of peasants in a speech as: "With the spread of spiritual Enlightenment and the retreat of barbarism, individuals immediately start to insist on their natural rights. I regarded as repellent to human nature that any person, similar to a creature or inanimate object, may be the unquestioned property of another individual… And, therefore, slavery has been partially lifted in all civilised countries, and, partially, substantially eased."[80]

As already indicated previously, although the institution of serfdom was present in most European states, the dependence of serfs varied considerably. As shown by Stephan Meder, this ranged from a few restrictions on personal freedom to outright slavery without any rights.[81] When analysing the situation that Latvians found themselves in the land that they inhabited, it is evident that they were subject to the heaviest, most inhuman form of serfdom, in that they had a status that was equivalent to a slave (chattel) in the sense of Roman law.[82] J. Zutis has coined the concept of a serf-slave (*dzimtvergi* in Latvian)[83] and stated that: "(…) considering a person to be the same as an animal, (…) and on a whim to confiscate all that he and his children have earned and saved, the fruits of their labour and sweat, to present these and to sell them as if they were a horse or hunting dog — that was inhuman."[84]

Many Baltic German scholars were of a similar opinion. The situation of serfs worsened considerably during the 18th century, after the end of the Great Northern War. For example, Hamilcar Baron Foelkersahm has written that the status of peasants in Livonia became identical with complete serfdom.[85] Leonid Arbusow expressed

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[79] Eisen, J. G. *Lehrbegriffe der drey verschiedenen Verfassungen der Bewohner eines Staats (...)*. (Torma, 1767). Рига: Латвийский университет, 1991. For more about J. G. Eisen see: Stepermanis, M. *J. G. Eizens un viņa darbi par dzimtbūšanas atcelšanu Vidzemē*. Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures skolotāju biedrība, 1934; Stepermanis, M. Latviešu stāvoklis XVII un XVIII g.s. un apgaismotāju kustība Latvijā. *Latviešu literatūras vēsture*. Bērziņš, L. (virsred.). Egle, K., Kārkliņš, K., Mauriņa, Z. (red.). II. Rīga: Literatūra, 1935, 74.–76. lpp. etc.

[80] "So wie aber das Licht der Vernunft sich nach und nach ausbreitete, und die Barbarei verdrängte, so fingen auch die Menschen gleich an, das Recht der Menschheit uz reclamiren. Man fand es der menschlichen Natur entgegen, daß ein Mensch gleich einem Vieh oder einer todten Sache, eines anderen Menschen unbedingliches Eigenthum wäre. (...) Und so ist denn die Sclaverei in allen civilisirten Staaten theils aufgehoben, theils sehr mitigirt worden." (Samson von Himmelstiern, R. J. L. *Historischer Versuch über die Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft in den Ostseeprovinzen, in besonderer Beziehung auf das Herzogthum Livland*. Dorpat, 1838, S. 75. Cited from the translation into Latvian of the above mentioned: Ābers, B. *Vidzemes zemnieku stāvoklis 19. gs. pirmā pusē*, 17. lpp.

[81] Meder, S. *Rechtsgeschichte*: Eine Einführung. 2. völlig überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2005, S. 215–218.

[82] Stepermanis, M. *J. G. Eizens un viņa darbi par dzimtbūšanas atcelšanu*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures skolotāju biedrība, 1934, 31.–33. lpp.

[83] Zutis, J. *Vidzemes un Kurzemes zemnieku brīvlaišana XIX gadsimta 20. gados*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1956, 8. lpp.

[84] Zutis, J. *Baltijas jautājums XVIII gadsimtā*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1951, 234. lpp.

[85] Baron Foelkersahm, H. *Die Entwicklung der Agrarverfassung Livlands und Kurlands und die Umwälzung der Agrarverhältnisse in der Republik Lettland*, S. 27–28.

similar views, notably, that the degree of dependence of peasants verged on slavery.[86] Thus, we must concur with E. Loening that there were few places elsewhere in Europe where peasants were similarly without rights as in Livonia.[87]

Were the majority of Baltic land owners really so inhuman? Certainly, these individuals were arrogant and sought to preserve the status quo[88], nevertheless, a partial explanation for their lobbying to stop emancipation was the sentiment that serfs benefitted from the care of their masters... It is remarkable that such considerations are also to be found in the work *The Principles of Communism* by Friedrich Engels: "A serf has a guaranteed existence, the existence of the proletarian is not ensured. A serf works without considerations of competition, the proletariat is subject to competition."[89]

Although peasants enjoyed more freedom in practical matters than is evident from reading documents, it is likely that a serf was regarded as his master's unquestioned property. Therefore, it is impossible to underestimate the importance of emancipation to the history of the Latvian people. Enslavement of citizens has been regarded as a state-wide calamity from at least the times of Solon, the lawgiver of Athens, i.e. during the 7th–6th century BCE.[90] Respect for other legal principles such as fairness, equality, justice, etc., are not imaginable without personal freedom.[91]

When the Russian Empire by the Decree of 19 February 1861 abolished serfdom throughout the land, it was possible to take advantage, in part, of the experience of the Baltic provinces from earlier in the century. As regards subsequent land ownership, this experience was deemed inapplicable. A legal mechanism had to be found that would strike a balance between the interests of the landed gentry and those of the peasants. While the right of the nobility to own land was not questioned, a way had to be found to ensure the subsistence of the freed peasants. Therefore, the example of European countries was followed so that emancipated peasants retained certain rights

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[86] Arbusow, L. *Grundriß der Geschichte*, S. 263.

[87] Loening, E. *Die Befreiung des Bauernstandes in Deutschland und in Livland*, S. 8.

[88] Duhanovs, M. *Baltijas muižniecība laikmetu maiņā. Baltijas muižniecības politika 19. gs. 50.–70. gados un tās apoloģētiskās historiogrāfijas kritika*. (Translated [with added material] from the 2nd Russian edition.) Rīga: Zinātne, 1986.

[89] Markss, K., Engelss, F. *Darbu izlase* [trijos sējumos]. 1. sēj. Rīga: Liesma, 1979, 86. lpp.

[90] Böckenförde, E.-W. *Geschichte der Rechts- und Staatsphilosophie: Antike und Mittelalter*. 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, S. 36–39; Bojārs, J. *Politiskās stratēģijas māksla un demokrātija*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2002, 124.–133. lpp.; Gumplowicz, L. *Geschichte der Staatstheorien*, S. 24–25 [etc.]

[91] The following legal principles are included, for example, in Section 4 of the Administrative Procedure Law currently in force in the Republic of Latvia (observance of the rights of private persons, equality, rule of law, reasonable application of legal norms, the exclusion of arbitrariness, confidence in legality of actions, lawful basis, democratic structure, proportionality, priority of laws, procedural equity). Accessible at: http://www.likumi.lv/doc. php?id=55567 (site last visited 23.03.2016, English translation available); in Sections 18–281 of the Law on Judicial Power of the Republic of Latvia (15.12.1992) (truth, openness, collegiality, language of proceedings, presumption of innocence, equality of parties, adversary proceedings, objective investigations, direct and oral review, procedural economy, division of matters, etc.). Accessible at: http://www.likumi.lv/doc.php?id=62847 (site last visited 23.03. 2016, English translation available), etc.

to the land that they had previously worked.[92] In contrast to the approach taken in the Baltic provinces earlier in the century, the reform of 1861 gave peasants the right of continued access to the land they previously worked in return for the emancipated serfs having to discharge fixed obligations to the landlords prior to the peasants buying outright the land that they worked. Nonetheless, neither the Russian peasants, nor other peasants in the Empire received any land outright as a gift. The government took the initiative in buying land by paying 80% of its value to the landlord in place of the peasant in the form of 6% promissory notes. The peasants thus incurred a debt with the government. The outstanding 20% of the cost of the land would have to be paid by the peasant directly to the landlord. Initially it was foreseen that the debt would have to be cleared within 49 years.

One of the distinguishing features of this agrarian reform in the Russian Empire was the carry over of collective responsibility of the peasants. Debts repayments were not collected from each individual farmer, rather "from the whole village collectively. (…) Even with the beginning of the purchase of peasants' land from the landlords, this was done collectively on behalf of the commune. Members of the village could request that particular pieces of land be allocated to them as their private property, but agreement to do this required a two-thirds vote of those having the right to vote."[93]

Property rights to land varied throughout the Russian Empire. For example, the peasants in Latgale did not live in the Russian communal way with the periodic redistribution of land to be worked. However, the land here was not in one parcel, but could be scattered in segments throughout the settlement territory. The ability of Latgalians to acquire title to land was abetted by the Polish–Lithuanian Uprising against the Russian government (1863–1864). A state decree issued on 1 March 1863 sought to reduce support for Polish and Lithuanian patriots among peasants in the rebellious provinces (including among Latgalians) by easing the conditions for gaining title to land.[94] After receiving credit, a peasant in Latgale received the title to the land and as owner he was able to make use of this property, subject to various restrictions in force until the debt was cleared.[95] This government decree ruptured economic relations between landlord and freed the peasants in Latgale. It was for this reason that on 1 May the freed peasants of Latgale were given the status of land owners, despite their not yet having fully bought land.[96] Boļeslavs Brežgo has written in this regard that:

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[92] Захарова, Л. Г. *Александр II и отмена крепостного права в России*. Москва: РОССПЭН, 2011, с. 325, 326.

[93] Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1800–1914*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1958, 290.–291. lpp.; see also,: Ключевский, В. О. *Сочинения в девяти томах. Курс русской истории*. Ч. V (Том 5), лекция LXXXVI. Москва: Мысль, 1989, с. 276–277.

[94] Правила о прекращеніи обязательныхъ отношеній крестьянъ къ ихъ помещикамъ въ девяти западныхъ губерніяхъ. *Сводъ законовъ Россійской имперіи*. Все 16 томовъ со всеми относящимися къ нимъ продолженіями въ одной книге. Подъ редакціей А. Ф. Волкова и Ю. Д. Филипова. Второе стериотипное издание. С.-Петербург: Изданіе товарищества "Общественная польза", 1899, Т. IX (Особое Приложеніе къ тому IX Законовъ о Состояніяхъ).

[95] Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1800–1941*, 293.–297. lpp.

[96] Правила о прекращеніи обязательныхъ отношеній крестьянъ къ ихъ помещикам въ девяти западных губерніяхъ, § 2–3.

"The Law of 19 February 1861 did not oblige peasants to buy out the land, but made it a voluntary act, and the process had to be agreed to by the landlord. Now this concurrence was no longer needed, and the peasant had to buy out the land."[97]

Thus, political motives are evident in the emancipation of the serfs in Latgale and the associated agrarian reform over and above resolution of social and economic issues.

A free labour force as a prerequisite for transition to new economic relations

The abolition of serfdom was both a triumph for the Enlightenment ideas of natural rights in respect to personal freedom, as well as a prerequisite for transition to new economic relations, i.e. capitalism.

The early stages of a market economy in the Baltic provinces and Latgale largely co-existed with the previously dominant class structure and family model. Studies carried out by Professor Ursula Floßmann show that, for example, the new form of economic relations co-existed in the Austrian Empire with the previous socio-political structure and remnants of family patriarchal relations[98]. Hence reform policies implemented in the Russian Empire were by no means an exception in Europe.

In this way humanist ideas and the Enlightenment went hand in hand with demands for new economic relations. Emancipation was only one, albeit an essential aspect of this process.[99] Simultaneously, a free labour force was created once demands were met for personal freedom. Previously manor land was freed from the fetters of feudal law, which imposed a number of constraints on the mobility of title to land.[100] Feudal law had lost its force in the Duchy of Courland (1570/1776)[101] and in Latgale (1768)[102] prior to these territories being absorbed by the Russian Empire. Finally, on 3 May 1783, Catherine II the Great, by means of an Act of Allodification renounced

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[97] Brežgo, B. *Latgales zemnieki pēc dzimtbūšanas atcelšanas. 1861–1914*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1954, 31. lpp.

[98] Floβmann, U. *Österreichische Privatrechtsgeschichte*. Sechste, aktualisierte Auflage. Wien, New York: Springer, 2008, S. 15.

[99] Loening, E. *Die Befreiung des Bauernstandes in Deutschland und in Livland*, S. 28–30.

[100] Feudal law provided the so-called divided form of ownership, ie. ownership (*dominium derectum*) and the right to use *(dominium utile*). Sub-tenants, actual users were constrained by the right of owners to buy out the land, as well as the buy-out rights of close relatives, restrictions on using land as collateral, etc. See: Coing, H. *Europäisches Privatrecht*. Bd. 1: *Älteres gemeines Recht (1500–1800)*. München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1985, S. 353–361; Eisenhardt, U. *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*, S. 18–23; Mitteis, H., Lieberich, H. *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*. 19., ergänzte Auflage. München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1992, S. 178–188; Osipova, S. *Viduslaiku tiesību spogulis*. Rīga: Tiesu namu aģentūra, 2004, 107.–127. lpp., etc.

[101] Des Hercogs Gotthardt Privilegium für curländischen Adel vom 20.ten Juni 1570. (Ziegenhorn, Ch. G. *Staatsrecht der Herzogthümer Curland und Semgallen*. Königsberg: Kanter, 1772, S. 85–88, Nr. 76); 1776. gada Alodifikācijas diploms (Blūzma, V. (red.). *Latvijas tiesību avoti. Teksti un komentāri*, 2. sēj., 196.–206. lpp.).

[102] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1972, 1. daļa, 118. lpp.

her rights under feudal law to ownership of land in favour of the nobility of the Governorate of Livonia.[103] In this way, restrictions on large landholders' transactions with their land were basically revoked already before manumission of peasants.

At the start of the Modern Age, the liberal economic theory due to Adam Smith gained adherents throughout Europe. The most prominent work by Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776)[104] was well-known throughout the Russian Empire.[105] Concepts such as, "the division of labour", "the wealth of nations", "free competition", etc. were particularly popular. Smith's premise that freedom brings prosperity was particularly keenly taught in German institutions of higher education[106], which had students from the Baltic region. Therefore, it is unsurprising that Balts were especially attracted to ideas such as freedom and free competition. The solution to all their problems was thought to be found in these concepts.[107] The fact of the state being unprepared to put into practice the theories of A. Smith was a separate matter. The goal nevertheless was clear: in order that the state raise itself from deepest barbarism to the highest level of prosperity it would be necessary that "there was perfect liberty, and where every man was perfectly free both to choose what occupation he thought proper, and to change it as often as he thought proper. Every man's interest would prompt him to seek the advantageous, and to shun the disadvantageous employment."[108]

Expressions of liberal ideas could also be found in the Baltic provinces. An example dating from 1817 is due to Reinhold Johann Ludwig Samson von Himmelstiern who wrote that: "Land is the capital of the landed gentry, whereas for peasants it is their hands and diligence. The former will seek to overvalue his capital, to gain the greatest rent, the latter will try to find the cheapest capital and utilise it to the full, i.e. competition will enliven production and increase zeal; mutual benefit will fix the relationship between demand and execution."[109] Many in Livonia were of like mind. Particular emphasis was put on free competition. Thus, Heinrich August von Bock concluded: "Free competition will always be beneficial. Privileges and monopolies usually stifle any expression of zeal in turning a profit and hence rarely are beneficial."[110]

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[103] *Полное собрание законов*, т. XXI, № 15719; Zeids, T. *Senākie rakstītie Latvijas vēstures avoti līdz 1800. gadam*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1992, 193. lpp.; Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 208.–209. lpp.

[104] *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. In two volumes. London: Printed for W. Strahan; and T. Cadell, in the Strand, 1776.

[105] This work was translated into Russian during the rule of Alexander I: *Власть и реформы. От самодержавной к советской России*, с. 211.

[106] Mueller, O. *Die Livländische Agrargesetzgebung*, S. 30.

[107] Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert*. I. Band: *Die Bauerverordnung von 1804 und 1809*. Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1899, S. 340.

[108] Smith, A. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. In two volumes. Vol. I. The second edition. London: Printed for W. Strahan; and T. Cadell, in the Strand, MDCCLXXVIII, p. 121.

[109] Cited from: Ābers, B. *Vidzemes zemnieku stāvoklis 19. g.s. pirmā pusē*, 34. lpp.

[110] "Die freie Konkurrenz wird überall aushelfen; Privilegien und Monopole ersticken in der Regel allen Erwerbfleiss und tragen selten gute Früchte." Cited from: Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert*. Bd. I, S. 340.

Such optimism expressed at the beginning of the 19th century was unfounded. Equality was impossible under circumstances where one party (landlords) had exclusive rights to the means of production (the land), and the other party only had labour to offer. It is for this reason that living standards actually fell immediately after the abolition of serfdom.[111] Unlike in Western Europe there were no substantial industrial centres in the Russian Empire, and "creation" of an industrial proletariat and raising the standard of living, particularly for peasant farmers had to be put off until the second half of the 19th century.[112] An irreversible change had occurred in spite of a diminished standard of living. Before emancipation the adage was "all that the serf gains benefits his master"[113], whereas afterwards it was: all that the peasant gains he keeps for himself. This personal and economic freedom was reflected in legal acts:

1) through lease agreements which were defined as free lease contracts for land[114];

2) through service contracts which were defined as free contracts for service[115].

Externally little change occurred immediately upon emancipation. Peasants remained peasants and landlords remained landlords. Tenants' rights to use (lease) land had still to be compensated by corvée and/or payment in kind. Lease contracts for land against cash payment were rare, and, in fact, there were no possibilities to obtain cash credit.

After the law on emancipation was adopted, the Law on Peasants in Livonia of 20 February 1804 was no longer in force; this law provided correlation between the amount of corvée and/or fees and the fertility of the land.[116] Land fertility was calculated based on the land cadastre method which had been used during the period of Swedish rule. The landlords and tenants were constrained by "fixed" calculations which had been written down in registers (*Wackenbücher*) of peasants' allotments and their seigneurial obligations, i.e. the extent of corvée and/or fees was fixed, with no derogations allowed. Eviction of a tenant from his home was difficult.[117]

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[111] Creutzburg, H. *Die Entwicklung der kurländischen Agrarverhältnisse seit Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Privatbauern*. Königsberg i. Pr.: Ostpreussische Druckerei und Verlagsanstalt Aktiengesellschaft, 1910, S. 36.

[112] Cimermanis, S. *Laukstrādnieku dzīves veids Kurzemē un Zemgalē 19. gs. otrajā pusē*. Rīga: Latvijas PSR ZA izdevniecība, 1959; Mieriņa, A. *Agrārās attiecības un zemnieku stāvoklis Kurzemē 19. gs. II pusē*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1968; Svarāne, M. *Saimnieks un kalps Kurzemē un Vidzemē XIX gadsimta vidū: Sociālekonomisks apcerējums.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1971; etc.

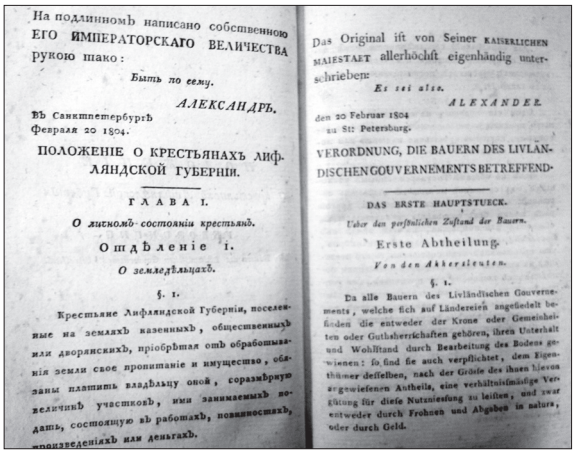
[113] "(...) was der Leibeigene erwirbt, erwirbt er dem Herrn" (Meder, S. *Rechtsgeschichte*, S. 216).

[114] Prior to the First World War (1914), there were six different forms of contracts to lease land — vassal, fee-based, mixed (a combination of corvee and fees, or part of the rent would be paid in cash) contracts, lease against payment, life-long lease and family lease. See: Lazdiņš, J. *Baltijas zemnieku privāttiesības (XIX gs.): Baltijas latviešu zemnieku civiltiesiskais stāvoklis XIX gs. un zemes reforma*. Rīga: Biznesa augstskola Turība, 2000, 276. lpp.

[115] Before emancipation service meant corvée; thus, after emancipation it was important to specify that the labour would be freely provided.

[116] *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXVIII, № 21162.

[117] Arbusow, L. *Grundriß der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands*. Vierte, verbesserte und ergänzte Auflage. Riga: Jonck & Poliewsky, 1918, S. 290; Lazdiņš, J. *Baltijas zemnieku privāttiesības (XIX gs.)*, 88.–96. lpp.



На подлинномъ написано собственною ЕГО ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА рукою шако:

Быть по сему.

АЛЕКСАНДРЪ.

Въ Санктпетербургѣ
Февраля 20 1804.

ПОЛОЖЕНІЕ О КРЕСТЬЯНАХЪ ЛИФЛЯНДСКОЙ ГУБЕРНІИ.

ГЛАВА I.

О личномъ состояніи крестьянъ.

Отдѣленіе 1.

О земледѣльцахъ.

§. 1.

Крестьяне Лифляндской Губерніи, поселенные на земляхъ казенныхъ, общественныхъ или дворянскихъ, пріобрѣтая отъ обрабатываемой земли свое пропитаніе и имущество, обязаны платить владѣльцу оной, соразмѣрную величинѣ участковъ, ими занимаемыхъ по дачѣ, состоящую въ работахъ, повинностяхъ, произведеніяхъ или деньгахъ.

Das Original iſt von Seiner KAISERLICHEN MAJESTAET allerhöchſt eigenhändig unterſchrieben:

Es ſei alſo.

ALEXANDER.

den 20 Februar 1804
zu St: Petersburg.

VERORDNUNG, DIE BAUERN DES LIVLÄNDISCHEN GOUVERNEMENTS BETREFFEND.

DAS ERSTE HAUPTSTUECK.

Ueber den perſönlichen Zuſtand der Bauern.

Erſte Abtheilung.

Von den Akkerleuten.

§. 1.

Da alle Bauern des Livländiſchen Gouvernements, welche ſich auf Ländereien angeſiedelt befinden die entweder der Krone oder Gemeinheiten oder Gutsherrſchaften gehören, ihren Unterhalt und Wohlſtand durch Bearbeitung des Bodens gewinnen: ſo ſind ſie auch verpflichtet, dem Eigenthümer deſſelben, nach der Größe des ihnen hievon angewieſenen Antheils, eine verhältnißmäßige Vergütung für dieſe Nutznieſſung zu leiſten, und zwar entweder durch Frohnen und Abgaben in natura, oder durch Geld.

Fig. 8. The 1804 Law on Peasants in Livonia. Available at Misiņš Library

Revisions were made to the Law on Peasants in Livonia of 28 February 1809, which were historically significant, in that these included provisions regulating the work carried out by servants[118]. These provisions fixed the remuneration of servants (for providing services) and outlined limitations on working hours.[119] Alexander von Tobien justifiably points out that these normative acts in many ways were still based on rights defined during the period of Swedish rule. Therefore, this law had significantly greater provisions for peasant rights, than was the case, for example, for peasants tied to private manors in Eastern Prussia up until their emancipation.[120] Astaf von Transehe-Roseneck assessed the importance of the 1804 Law on Peasants in Livonia as being even greater. In his opinion this law abolished the slave-like aspects of serfdom (*Leibeigenschaft*), putting in its place a moderate form of corvée in favour of the manor (*milde Gutsunterthänigkeit*)[121].

No detailed laws on peasants living in the Governorate of Courland and in Latgale were adopted prior to the abolition of serfdom there. Peasants in Latgale were subject to the same laws as peasants in the western provinces of the Russian Empire, i.e. there were no laws in force specific to their status.

Even after abolition of serfdom in Livonia, landlords and peasants alike briefly followed the "compulsory" norms of the 1804 Law on Peasants. In time many landlords began to raise uncontrollably the extent of corvée and/or fees. For this reason, Latvian national memory recalls the period up until the 1840s as particularly onerous for peasants subject to corvée. Buying out houses as family homes remained for many peasants an unrealisable dream up until the 1860s. Studies carried out by Austra Mieriņa demonstrate that social tension was heightened by means of the so-called demolition

[118] *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXX, № 23505.

[119] Lazdiņš, J. *Baltijas zemnieku privāttiesības (XIX gs.)*, 96.–101. lpp.; Lazdiņš, J. Darba tiesību pirmsākumi Latvijā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa*, Nr. 1/2, 2000, 129.–131. lpp.; Lazdiņš, J. Darba tiesību ģenēzes un evolūcijas aspektu analīze Latvijā (XIX–XXI gs.). Analysis of aspects related to genesis and evolution of employment law in Latvia (XIX–XXI centuries). *Tiesību harmonizācija Baltijas jūras reģionā XX–XXI gs. mijā / Harmonization of Law in the Baltic Sea Region in the Turn of the 20th and 21st Centuries.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes Juridiskā fakultāte, 2006, pp. 128–134.; Zutis, J. *Vidzemes un Kurzemes zemnieku likumi XIX gadsimta sākumā (1804–1819)*, 70.–88. lpp., etc.

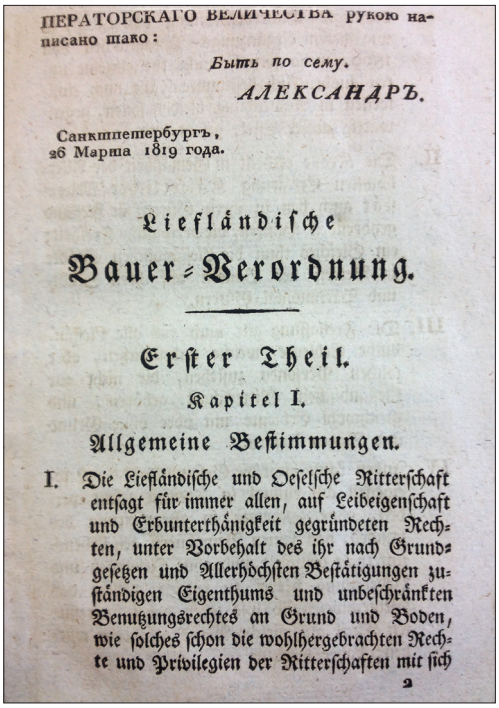
[120] Tobien, A. *Die Bauernbefreiung in Livland*. Tübingen: Verlag der H. Laupp'schen Buchhandlung, 1905, S. 15–16.

[121] Transehe-Roseneck, A. von. *Gutsherr und Bauer in Livland. Im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*. Strassburg: Verlag von Karl J. Trübner, 1890, S. 224–225.

of homes, i.e. eviction of peasants by manors increasing the area under cultivation.[122]

Most peasants had no surnames before their emancipation. Usually they were addressed by their Christian name, adding to it the name of the farmstead that they lived in as their family name. Thus, changing their place of residence meant a change in family name. After emancipation, the surname was fixed and identified an individual without change due to a new place of residence. The concept of registration of place of residence appeared at the same time as the allocation of surnames. All emancipated peasants were registered at a civil parish. Taxes had to be paid at the place of registration as well as discharging other obligations.[123]

The 1819 Law on Peasants in Livonia specified under paragraphs 5 and 11 that every peasant could choose his surname and register the fact according to legal provisions in force. However, surnames were often given by landlords, manor clerks or by civil parish courts. In this way, many ugly, even demeaning surnames appeared, or were allowed to be registered due to lack of proper supervision, e.g. Kuce, or *Kuzze* (Bitch), Lops, or *Lope* (Animal), Neratnis (Naughty), etc.[124] The granting of surnames took place in the Governorate of Livonia between 1822 and 1826. The Courland Landtag had not included provisions in the 1817 Law on Peasants in Courland on attribution of surnames to former serfs, and consequently, this process was determined by orders issued by the governor. In Courland, attribution of surnames was completed between October 1834 and 1 July 1835.[125]



ПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА рукою написано шако:

Быть по сему.

АЛЕКСАНДРЪ.

Санктпетербургъ,
26 Марта 1819 года.

Liefländiſche

Bauer-Verordnung.

Erſter Theil.

Kapitel I.

Allgemeine Beſtimmungen.

I. Die Liefländiſche und Oeſelſche Ritterſchaft entſagt für immer allen, auf Leibeigenſchaft und Erbunterthänigkeit gegründeten Rechten, unter Vorbehalt des ihr nach Grundgeſetzen und Allerhöchſten Beſtätigungen zuſtändigen Eigenthums und unbeſchränkten Benutzungsrechtes an Grund und Boden, wie ſolches ſchon die wohlhergebrachten Rechte und Privilegien der Ritterſchaften mit ſich

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Fig. 9. The 1819 Law on Peasants in Livonia. *Журнал законодательства на 1819 годъ, издаваемый по Высочайшему Повеленію. Коммисіею составленія законовъ. Книга. Отделеніе 2. Месяцъ мартъ*. Санктпетербург: Въ типографіи коммисіи составленія законовъ, 1820 года.

The first important reforms in the Baltic provinces that followed on from emancipation began with revisions adopted 30 March 1842 and on 23 January 1845, to the 1819 Law on Peasants in Livonia. These revisions are known in the specialised literature as the laws of "22 additional paragraphs" (1842) and "77 additional paragraphs" (1845) (henceforward — the Revisions). The Revisions restored the previous "compulsory" norms, i.e. the extent of corvée and/or fees was again regulated. Included

[122] Mieriņa, A. *Agrārās attiecības un zemnieku stāvoklis Kurzemē 19. gs. II pusē*, 14.–49. lpp.

[123] Lazdiņš, J. *Baltijas zemnieku privāttiesības (XIX gs.)*, 72. lpp.

[124] For details see: Upelnieks, K. Uzvārdu došana Vidzemes un Kurzemes zemniekiem. *Tieslietu Ministrijas Vēstnesis*, 1936, Nr. 2, 284.–292. lpp.

[125] Ibid., 225., 239., 242.–245., 252. lpp.

among these revisions was a demand that all lease agreements be in written form. Henceforward these agreements would enter into force only when the judge of a parish had verified the concurrence of the agreement with legal provisions. The judge would also have to assess whether the lease agreement contained provisions that could variously be interpreted, i.e. to the detriment of the tenant. With a view to minimising economic instability, lease agreements for land were to be concluded for at least six years, and the time to be spent in corvée every day limited to 12 hours.[126]

Further reforms disturbed the peace of the Governorate of Livonia just four years later. Alexander II, acting on the recommendation of the liberal Hamilcar von Foelkersahm, adopted, on 9 July 1849, a Law (provisional) on Peasants in Livonia [127] (*Лифляндское крестьянское поземельное уложеніе,* hereinafter — Provisional Law), and 11 years later, on 13 November 1860, the Law on Peasants in Livonia [128] (*Положеніе о крестьянахъ Лифляндской губерніи*, hereinafter — the 1860 Law on Peasants in Livonia). The intent of both of these laws was to create a class of sustainable small holdings as well as to introduce new "nuances" in the agrarian constitution of Livonia.[129]

Henceforward a manor owner needed to have an agreement to use land belonging to a civil parish, to sell it or to leave it untilled as of his right.[130] The exception was the land deemed to be a quota that a manor could use to pay its servants.[131] In this way the rights of landlords to access and belonging to a parish were restricted in favour of parish society. These developments prove that liberal norms inserted into the acts of emancipation which strengthened the legal aspects of free lease contracts had been reversed and that a return was made to the "compulsory" norms of the 1804 Law on Peasants in Livonia. The revisions carried out in mid-century, in contrast to the legal situation at the beginning of the century, no longer protected the rights of a tenant to use land. Everything was done to safeguard the land held by a civil parish: landlords had the right to change tenants occupying homes once the legal delay foreseen in civil law had passed, but had no right to reduce the extent of civil parish lands.[132]

Although the practice of corvée was not formally prohibited, a transition set in from "a constitution for lease of land subject to corvée" to "a constitution for leasing land against cash payment". With land leasing against cash payment the possibility ap-

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[126] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 262. lpp.; Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands in 19. Jahrhundert*. Bd. II: *Die Vollendung der Bauernbefreiung*. Riga: Kommissionsverlag von G. Löffer, 1911, S. 66–81, 96–112.

[127] *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXIV, № 23385. See also, *Livländische Agrar- und Bauern-Verordnung*. In Uebereinstimmung mit der vom dirigirenden Senat im Jahre 1849 erlassenen Original-Druckschrift in russischer Sprache. Riga: Gedruckt bei Wilhelm Ferdinant Häcker, 1850.

[128] The decree (*указъ*) on implementation of the law was issued to the Ruling Senate on 13 November 1860. See, *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXXV, № 36312; *Livländische Bauer-Verordnung am 13. November 1860 allerhöchst bestätigt.* Riga: Gedruckt in der Livländischen Gouvernements-Tipographie, 1861.

[129] Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert.* II. Band, S. 195, 237–240.

[130] See Paragraphs 3 and 101 of the 1860 Law on Peasants in Livonia.

[131] Kahk, J. *Bauer und Baron im Baltikum*, S. 166; Lazdiņš, J. *Baltijas zemnieku privāttiesības (XIX gs.)*, 183. lpp.

[132] Švābe, A. *Zemes attiecību un zemes reformu vēsture Latvijā*, 166. lpp.

peared that a truly sustainable and economically independent peasant class might emerge. Thereby personal freedom might be combined with economic independence.[133] Land held by manors and that which belonged to civil parish would still not be equal in that land belonging to a manor was not taxed by the state.

Landlords and peasants in Courland usually sought to carry on in good faith, according to the adage "live and let live"[134]. Whether, in fact, matters were always arranged in good faith is another question; however, detailed legal norms were not required in Courland as was the case for the Governorate of Livonia. No study has been made thus far as to whether this was the result of the doctrine of legal positivism finding "significantly greater appeal" in Livonia, or whether the residents of Livonia did not trust one another. These features of the mentality of the people of Courland may be explained, first, by the fact of Livonia being absorbed by the Russian Empire much earlier (1721) than was the case for Courland (1795), and, second, the nobility of Livonia pursued their careers to a considerably greater extent in Russia, and in its state administration. Individuals from Courland were historically more oriented towards cooperation with Prussia than were their counterparts from Livonia.[135]

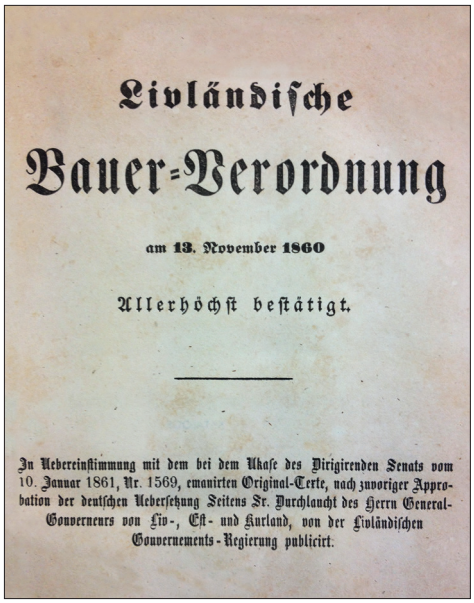

Livländische
Bauer-Verordnung
am 13. November 1860
Allerhöchst bestätigt.
In Uebereinstimmung mit dem bei dem Ukase des Dirigirenden Senats vom 10. Januar 1861, Nr. 1569, emanirten Original-Texte, nach zuvoriger Approbation der deutschen Uebersetzung Seitens Sr. Durchlaucht des Herrn General-Gouverneurs von Liv-, Est- und Kurland, von der Livländischen Gouvernements-Regierung publicirt.

Fig. 10. The 1860 Law on Peasants in Livonia. *Livländische Bauer-verordnung am 13. November 1860. Allerhöchst bestätigt.* Riga: Gedruckt in der Livländischen Gouvernements-Tipographie, 1861.

However great the extent of good faith, and the importance of the mentality of people in Courland, stimulating the process of land reform could not avoid some legal normative intervention. Revisions to the 1817 Law on Peasants in Courland, as adopted on 6 September 1863, were intended to ensure greater stability and transition towards long-term lease agreements, i.e. "The draft regulations approved at the highest level on the basis for peasants to acquire title to land belonging to manors (Gesinde) and lease agreements to be closed in the Governorate of Courland"[136], henceforward the revisions of 6 September 1863 to the 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland).

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[133] Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert.* II. Band, S. 195.

[134] Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert.* I. Band, S. 319.

[135] Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert.* I. Band, S. 319–320.

[136] "*Высочайше утвержденный проекъ Правилъ, на основаніи которыхъ могутъ быть пріобретаемы крестьянами въ собственность участки помещичьей земли (Gesinde) и заключаемы арендные договоры в Курляндской губерніи.*" *Полное собраніе законовъ, see Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. XXXVIII, № 40034а; *Сборникъ узаконеній о крестьянахъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній.* Составилъ В. Е. Рейтернъ. Томъ I, ч. 1 и 2: Положенія о крестьянахъ Курляндской и Лифляндской губерній. С.-Петербург: Общественная польза, 1898.

Even after entry into force of the 1860 Law on Peasants in Livonia and the revisions of 6 September 1863 to the 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland, buying a home for the family encountered psychological and financial hurdles. Psychologically landlords were not prepared to sell their land and the peasants were not ready to buy land. Furthermore, both sides were often content with carrying on with matters as before. This situation changed once credit became available in the 1860s to peasants and corvée contracts were prohibited in 1867 in the Governorate of Courland and in 1868 in the Governorate of Livonia. This meant that landlords lost their "cost-free" labour force, i.e. those undergoing corvée. The combination of these processes in the 1860s led to a rapid buying out of houses to be later transmitted to heirs.

Broadly speaking, agrarian reform was complete before the outbreak of the First World War. It is true that not all farm holdings had fully repaid the credit taken out[137], but Latvians again were land owners. For many peasant farmers the long-held hope for "one's own corner, one's own piece of land" had come true[138], yet for most servants and other members of the rural proletariat the right to own land remained only theoretical prior to proclamation of the Republic of Latvia.

Latvians by their nature are farmers, one can say, farmers-individuals. In spite of the fact that the majority of the Latvian people had prior to the end of the First World War (1918) little prospect of owning their land, it was precisely in the Baltic provinces that land reform with all of the attendant faults conformed to the Latvian national character. A. Švābe has precisely formulated the significance of land reform in the Baltic provinces in terms of its impact on farming as: "(…) Russian communes lay to the east of these [the Baltic provinces] with common land which periodically was re-allocated, to the west there lay privately-owned individual farms"[139]. The Baltic region became the border between two different economic systems, also the border between two different ways of thinking. To the east of the Baltic were the lands where collective identity and responsibility was emphasised, while to the west were lands where the accent was on people as individuals.

Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin sought shortly before the First World War to implement reforms throughout the Russian Empire along the lines of what had been done in the Baltic provinces, by breaking up communes into individual holdings. If this reform were to have been completed it is possible that modern history in Europe could have been very different. It was the good fortune of the Latvian people that, as Boris Nolde has put it, "the Czar wanted the Russian peasant to be a Communist [!]"[140].

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[137] Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture. 1800–1914*, 313.–329. lpp.

[138] Lazdiņš, J. Zemes nacionalizācijas un denacionalizācijas pieredze Latvijā (19.–21. gadsimts). *Likums un Tiesības*, 7. sēj., Nr. 6, 2005, 171. lpp.

[139] Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture. 1800–1914*, 226. lpp.

[140] Cited from: Lazdiņš, J. Profesors Arveds Švābe: politiķis, vēsturnieks, jurists un… (1888–1959). *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 2/3, 2009, 89. lpp.

Peasant self-rule and system of district courts

The basis for peasant self-government and the court system at the level of positive rights was set before the serfs were emancipated. The 1804 Law on Peasants in Livonia defined the administrative structure and courts at the level of civil parishes. This law bore great resemblance with that on the rights of peasants belonging to country manors during the period of Swedish rule. In the opinion of Hans Prutz, the 1804 Law on Peasants in Livonia simply transposed the rights defined during Swedish rule for peasants belonging to a country manor to apply to all peasants.[141] Special attention was paid during the emancipation process to setting up courts dealing with cases involving peasants. In 1802, shortly before adoption of this law, Alexander I emphasised the importance of peasant courts, addressing Landrat Friedrich von Sivers as follows: "The goal of justice for the peasants will not be reached if every gentleman [landlord] will be recognised as their [the peasants'] sole judge. This post ought, justifiably, to be entrusted to a judge selected by the peasants themselves."[142]

This was not the full extent of the significance of rights dating from "the good time of Swedish rule". "The 1804 Law was henceforward an example for acts freeing serfs and which set up local governance."[143] This meant that the process set in train by the 1804 Law on Peasants in Livonia allowing the peasants "to reach the age of majority" by means of the acts of emancipation, the latter covering all of the Baltic provinces. Step by step peasants were being "brought up" to become full members of society, with all of the attendant civil rights — an obvious state goal. The same goal was evident in emancipation elsewhere in Europe.[144] In emancipating all of its serfs, the Russian Empire shared this goal. The rights granted to peasants to henceforth determine their own destinies was a crucial driving force behind emancipation. This was most evident in the right of peasants to elect and to be elected to civil parish council and to become judges.

The 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland and the 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia provided for the following institutions:

1) the assembly of a civil parish;
2) civil parish elder (or elders) and assistant;
3) the court of the civil parish.

Civil parish assemblies were held at the request of civil parish officials with permission of the manor police or upon the initiative of the manor police. All decisions were to be confirmed by the manor police. All peasants belonging to a single class were invited to take part in parish assemblies.[145] In Livonia the invited individuals were

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[141] Prutz, H. *Der Kampf um die Leibeigenschaft in Livland.* München: Verlag der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1916, S. 49.

[142] "Der Zweck in Betreff der Rechtspflege für den Bauern kann nicht erreicht werden, wenn der Herr allein als sein Richter anerkannt wird. Dieses Recht könnte füglich Richtern, welche der Bauer selbst erwählt, übertragen werden." Cited from: Tobien, A. *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert.* I. Band, S. 163.

[143] Mucinieks, P. *Latvijas pašvaldību iekārta*. Rīga: L.U. Studentu padomes grāmatnīcas izdevums, 1938, 120. lpp.

[144] For details see: Eisenhardt, U. *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*, S. 307–309.

[145] The 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia, at para. 72.

usually tenants — farm owners.[146] Members of both the peasant and servant classes were invited to attend assemblies in the Governorate of Courland, but with peasant and servants voting separately. In case of conflicting results, the matter was settled by the manor police.[147] Research by Professor Voldemārs Kalniņš has demonstrated that, until the reforms of the 1860s, the principal task of these assemblies was to elect civil parish officials.[148] The abolition of serfdom notwithstanding the manor retained significant power over the peasants. Thus, the acts abolishing serfdom did not complete, nor did they begin, fully emancipating the peasants; rather, they were an important step in the process.[149]

The work of parish peasant councils in the governorates of Courland and Livonia proceeded in a similar fashion as did the respective civil parish courts; however, a number of historically formed differences were evident.

Civil parish councils in the Governorate of Courland were not separated from the courts. These circumstances reflected the "heritage" bequeathed by the former Duchy of Courland. The civil parish elder also chaired court sessions, as well as assemblies and carried out other duties associated with ensuring the function of the civil parish. In addition to electing the elder, a civil parish assembly also selected (at least) three additional representatives to the civil parish council (corporation).[150]

In the Governorate of Livonia the civil parish council was disjoint from the courts. This was a novel, enlightened legal feature introduced during the period of Swedish rule. One of the most important consequence of these reforms in terms of advance in legal thought was the separation of executive authority (parish administration) from the legal branch (the courts). The civil parish council was represented by one or two individuals (elders).[151] In the Governorate of Livonia civil parish elders were on the one hand, representatives of the civil parish community (an early form of the later deputies), and on the other hand, responsible for managing parish affairs (precursors of the later institution of civil parish elder).[152]

The 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland provided for the civil parish assembly to elect members of the court of the civil parish for a term of three years. This court comprised the civil parish elder as chairman of the court and several assessors, with a total number of members of between three and seven depending on the number of the civil parish residents. It was recommended that a member of the tenant class be elected as chairman of the court, but other members were elected by the peasants and servants from among their midst. Three persons were elected as prospective members — the same as in the Governorate of Livonia — out of which one was confirmed in post by the manor police.[153]

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[146] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 264. lpp.
[147] The 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland, at paras. 28, 46, 47.
[148] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 264. lpp.
[149] Prutz, H. *Der Kampf um die Leibeigenschaft in Livland*, S. 51.
[150] The 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland, at paras. 31, 32.
[151] The 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia, at paras. 88, 91.
[152] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 265. lpp.
[153] The 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland, at paras. 29–31, 33. See also the following paras. 34–56.

In the Governorate of Livonia, in contrast to the situation in the Governorate of Courland, the chairman of a civil parish was elected for a term of three years from among the group of tenants with attendant assessors.[154] Any civil parish resident might be elected to be an assessor. Usually two assessors were elected. The practice in both Courland and in Livonia was that all members of the court of the civil parish swore an oath in church before taking office.

Civil parish courts examined civil cases, disputes, as well as administrative or criminal transgressions, ones that would receive a maximum penalty of a warning, small cash fines, or corporal punishment (beating with a rod, whip or cane), or incarceration for a few days. In his study of judgements handed down by civil parish courts, Voldemārs Kalniņš concluded that penalties were determined in part by legal provisions and in part by custom. Thus, persons found guilty in the Governorate of Courland, even for some time after emancipation, were sentenced to spend a period in the stocks or to wear a collar. This was a customary penalty in Courland over several centuries.[155]

Civil parish courts also were called upon to decide inheritance issues. Such courts in the Governorate of Courland could also oversee discharge of the duty of being a guardian. In the Governorate of Livonia this duty fell to a religious parish court.

One of the most unpleasant and difficult duties of this court was to evict an "unsuccessful" tenant from his home (provided that the matter came before the court). The reasons for economic failure might be several, for example, an inappropriately high rent (the amount of corvée and/or fees); short lease periods; the weight of unpaid debts, etc.[156] It appears likely that Latvians otherwise were reluctant to leave their family homes. From her analysis of archival material Melita Svarāne has found instances that demonstrate the attachment that peasants had to "their piece of land". For example, Mārcis Dravnieks, living in Dauguļi civil parish, in Zīlēni farmstead, was finally chased out of his house after he had received corporal punishment on several occasions, in all receiving 100 strokes in the process. "In 1863, Jānis Grīviņš, who lived in the same civil parish in Penči farmstead, declared that if he was evicted by force, he would return to the same house."[157]

Eviction of a tenant was rarely in the interest of either the manor or the civil parish court. For example, the civil parish court in Matkule reported in 1823 that the Pūri farmstead has fallen into a poor state and that "it would serve no purpose to evict the tenant Krišs living there since no one else would be able to repair this dwelling since it lacked many items, the buildings were partially collapsed, the surrounding fields overgrown and not mowed, and furthermore there were large debts outstanding"[158]. There were even instances where the manor would clear the house debts of a tenant and/or advance credit in the form of farm animals or forming implements so that the house could be put into good order.[159]

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[154] The 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia, at para. 98.
[155] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 266. lpp.
[156] Svarāne, M. *Saimnieks un kalps Kurzemē un Vidzemē XIX gadsimta vidū*, 71.–88. lpp.
[157] Ibid., 85. lpp.
[158] Ibid., 141. lpp.
[159] Ibid., 72.–73. lpp.

In the Governorate of Courland appeals of civil parish court judgements could be lodged at a district court. The latter was the court of second instance, as well as being the court of first instance for disputes between peasants and landlords. The chairman of this court had to be drawn from among the rank of landlords, but the assessors would be in equal numbers landlords and peasants. A justice of the peace also operated at regional courts with the principal task to find a compromise between peasants and landlords.

In the Governorate of Livonia civil parish court judgements could be appealed in the religious parish court. The latter also had the role of a magistrate's court in disputes between peasants and landlords. If agreement could not be reached, the case, together with the opinion of the parish court, would be sent to the district court which examined the matter according to the substance of the case. An individual from the ranks of landlords chaired a parish court, with three assessors who were peasants chosen from the ranks of peasants (tenants) resident in the civil parish. Judges of the parish court as well as members of the district court were elected to their post for a term of three years. The chairman was elected by the landlords of the parish, while the assessors were elected by members of the civil parish courts.[160]

Appeals against judgements of the parish court could be lodged at a district court. In the case of disputes between landlords and tenants the district court served as the court of first instance. The chairman of a district court was elected from among the nobility, while the four assessors were elected two by two by the landlords of the county and by parish court assessors from among their midst.[161]

Decisions taken by district courts were final both in the Governorate of Courland and that of Livonia. Exceptionally, revision of a judgement in the Governorate of Courland could be sought in the High Manorial Court (*Oberhofgericht*), whereas this could be done at the Manorial Court (*Hofgericht*) in the case of the Governorate of Livonia.

In theory an appeal could be made to the Ruling Senate or to the provincial government, both of which could insist that the case be retried, or the Czar personally might overrule a decision if the court were to be found to have acted illegally.[162]

The people of Latgale, as was the case for other peasants in the Russian Empire were "presented with" their own self-regulating authority as part of the process of emancipation. This authority was different in its form when compared with similar institutions in the Baltic provinces its structure being considerably more complicated. This is the most likely reason why later on the model was not adopted when setting up regional self-government in the Republic of Latvia, some similarities notwithstanding. The authorities empowered to implement self-rule were based on village gatherings (*сельский сход*). These were assemblies of residents (tenants) who lived in villages and who then elected their village elder, other officials, and representatives to attend civil parish assemblies. Participants at a civil parish assembly (*волостной сход*) included

[160] The 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia, at paras. 157–182.

[161] Ibid., at paras. 183–196.

[162] The 1817 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Courland, at paras. 395, 402–403; The 1819 Law on Peasants in the Governorate of Livonia, at para. 247.

representatives (deputies) from several villages. A civil parish typically comprised 300–2000 male members. Village and civil parish officials took part in these assemblies; additionally, one individual represented every ten homes, and one — every 20 servants. The civil parish council was elected at this assembly for a term of three years, as well as members of the civil parish court for a term of one year.[163] The civil parish council comprised the district elder, village elders, a tax collector, and a clerk. The civil parish court was independent of the district council, i.e. there was separation of legal and executive powers.[164]

Management of civil parish affairs not only conferred powers on individuals, but also charged them with certain responsibilities. The institutions of self-rule by peasants, officials and "men of the court" had to take decisions about village and/or civil parish matters and in addition to care for minors, poor members of the community, and the sick, deal with military service issues, etc. The manors continued to supervise peasants in the same way as before during the first years after the abolition of serfdom. This supervision took the form of looking through the decisions taken by the peasant self-rule institutions and limiting the right to free movement. One of the new obligations for peasants was to pay taxes.[165]

The 1860s are known as the reform decade of the Russian Empire. This fully applies also to the Baltic provinces. Reforms of the second half of the century altered completely the relations between the state, estate owners and civil parish.

The Law, "On Public Administration at the Level of Civil Parishes in the Baltic Provinces", was adopted on 19 February 1866 (*Положеніе о волостномъ общественномъ управленіи въ губерніяхъ Остзейскихъ / Прибалтійскихъ*, hereinafter the Law of 19 February 1866).[166] The aim of the Law of 19 February 1866 was to free civil parish society from tutelage by estate owners.[167] Experience of nearly 50 years of liberty had demonstrated the ability of Latvian peasants to act and to think independently. A "peasant aristocracy" had formed, one that was progressively more insistent in demanding the right to participate in taking decisions not only at civil parish or district level, but at governorate (gubernia) level as well. The custodial function of estate owners had become superfluous

The Law of 19 February 1866, together with rights instituted during the period of Swedish rule have an enduring place in the history of law in Latvia. The law has to a certain extent served as the basis for regulating the legal basis for self-government of civil parishes in the Republic of Latvia. The "Provisional Basic Law for the Civil Parishes of Latvia" was adopted by the People's Council on 4 November 1918[168]. Pēteris Mucinieks in a comparison of both laws has written that: "the law adopted in

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[163] Švābe, A. Latvijas vēsture, 1800–1914, 1958, 298. lpp.; Ключевский, В. О. *Сочинения в девяти томах*, часть V, лекция LXXXVI, с. 271.

[164] Захарова, Л. Г. *Александр II и отмена крепостного права в России*, с. 234.

[165] Brežgo, B. *Latgales zemnieki pēc dzimtbūšanas atcelšanas. 1861–1914*, 14.–16. lpp.

[166] Положеніе о волостномъ общественномъ управленіи въ Остзейскихъ губерніяхъ. See: *Полный сводъ законов Россійской имперіи,* (1825–1881), т. 41, № 43034. In later editions the term "Остзейскихъ губерніяхъ" was replaced by "губерніяхъ Прибалтійскихъ".

[167] Schmidt, O. *Rechtsgeschichte Liv-, Est- und Curlands*, S. 265.

[168] *Latwijas Pagaidu Waldibas Likumu un Rihkojumu Krahjums*, Nr. 1, 1919 (15. jūl.), 7. dokuments, 4.–8. lpp.



Fig. 11. Livs in Mazirbe. CVVM arh. Nr. 119

1918 has excised all reference to the role of class in self-government. (…) The law adopted in 1918 to a certain extent has been formulated following the example of the law adopted in 1866, retaining the outline of the latter, but while rejecting its spirit it has to be admitted that the influence of the 1866 law is evident in places."[169]

There is no doubt that the Law "On Public Administration at the Level of Civil Parishes in the Baltic Provinces" could not fully conform to the legal spirit of the Republic of Latvia. This legal act entered into force in a class-ridden society and from the very outset ordering individuals by class was unacceptable in the Latvian state.[170]

According to the Law of 19 February 1866, a civil parish community included all peasants-tenants registered in the civil parish, servants, as well as individuals who were not of the peasant class but who owned or leased farm lands (houses).[171] Members of the manor remained external residents of a civil parish.

Self-government of a civil parish comprised:

1) a general civil parish assembly (henceforward — the assembly) and a contingent of deputies;

2) the civil parish elder and his assistants.[172]

Attendance at the assembly was mandatory for all farmers (tenants) and every tenth elected representative from among the servants. An assembly was convened by the civil parish elder together with the manor police, and later on the basis of permission granted by the commissioner for peasant matters (1889), and whose competence included election of civil parish officials — the civil parish elder, his assistants, a group of deputies and the civil parish court. The assembly was competent to decide also other important issues arising in district life, for example admitting or expelling a person from the civil parish.

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[169] Mucinieks, P. *Latvijas pašvaldību iekārta*, 129.–130. lpp.

[170] *Latwijas Tautas Padomes politiską platforma*. II sadaļas "Walzts forma un atteezibas pret zitąm tautam", esp. Point 2 (Latvia is defined as a "Republic based on democracy" (LVVA 1307. f., 1. apr., 327. l., 27.–29. lpp. vai *Pagaidu Valdības Vēstnesis*, 1918, 14. (1.) decembrī)).

[171] Mucinieks, P. *Latvijas pašvaldību iekārta*, 124. lpp.

[172] The text of the Law of 19 February 1866 lists district courts as a third institution. The 20th century edition of this law omits reference to district courts. See: Положеніе о волостномъ общественномъ управленіи въ губерніяхъ Прибалтійскихъ. *Полный сводъ законовъ Россійской имперіи*. Все 16 томовъ со всеми относящимися къ нимъ Продолженіями и съ дополнительными узаконенміями по 1 сетября 1910 года. Подъ редакціей А. А. Добровольскаго, Оберъ-Прокурора Судебнаго Департамента Правительствующаго Сената. Составилъ А. Л. Саатчіанъ. Книга первая. Томы I–VIII. С.-Петербургъ: Изданіе книжного магазина "Законоведеніе". Коммиссіонеръ государственной типографіи, 1911, т. 2, с. 679–686.

The group of deputies was elected according to the size (population) the civil parish as 4–24 in number. Seen in the light of practice of today, these individuals had the same functions as modern local authority deputies; for example, they decided on dealing with property belonging to the civil parish, capital, reacted to complaints and petitions, set wages for officials, etc.

The civil parish elder and his assistants constituted the executive branch of the civil parish (additionally the so-called tenth persons could be elected as assistants to help ensure order and to resolve other important issues), and furthermore the civil parish elder represented the civil parish as well as headed the civil parish police.



Fig. 12. A man from Nīca (1820). CVVM arh. Nr. 118



Fig. 13. Couronian *ķoniņiene* from Pliķu Village. CVVM arh. Nr. 128

In the interests of centralising power in the Russian Empire, the position of Commissioner for Peasant Affairs was created in 1886 with remit "partially to ease the dependence of civil parishes on estate owners whereas subjecting to arbitrary rule by Russian officials".[173] This commissioner was tasked with ensuring that all laws were correctly implemented by civil parish community, and to annul any illegal decisions.[174] P. Mucinieks has highlighted the ensuing substantial reduction in the role played by manors, and the growth in power exerted by the state, as follows: "Supervisory bodies had to confirm all officials in their posts. Despite the law stating that conformation could only be denied in cases where electoral procedures were not correctly followed or inappropriate individuals were selected and, therefore, would be denied taking office; in practice confirmation was also refused to individuals who had been correctly elected. The same applied to decisions rescinded based on considerations of relevance."[175]

During the reign (1881–1894) of Alexander III Romanov (*Александр III Романов*), a policy of Russification and centralisation of state authority was implemented in the

[173] Mucinieks, P. *Latvijas pašvaldību iekārta*, 128.–129. lpp.
[174] Kalniņš, V. *Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture*, 1. daļa, 295.–296. lpp.
[175] Mucinieks, P. *Latvijas pašvaldību iekārta*, 129. lpp.

Baltic governorates by means of a decision on 9 July 1889 to apply to the latter the ruling of the Russian Imperial Court handed down on 20 November 1864 ("On the applicability of the court ruling of 20 November 1864 to the Governorates of Livonia, Estonia and Courland and reorganisation of peasant offices there").[176] Reform of courts led to unification of the system of peasant courts in the Baltic provinces.

The Act of 9 July 1889, "On Civil Parish Courts in the Baltic Governorates" (*Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній*[177], henceforward — the Act on Civil Parish Courts), established a two-tier court system:

1) civil parish court;

2) civil parish high court.

The territorial remit of a civil parish court was not aligned with that of the particular civil parish; the area covered by more than one civil parish could comprise this remit. A civil parish court was foreseen to be able to deal with issues arising from 1000 to 2000 male inhabitants, and it could not be sited more than 12 *versts* from the most distant settled place under its jurisdiction.[178]

Civil parish judges and candidates for this post were elected through secret ballot for a term of three years at an assembly of a single civil parish (or several). Provisions were made for at least four judges to be elected. Members of the civil parish court elected the court chairman from their midst.[179] The posts of chairman, judge and candidate to the position of the judge of a civil parish court were positions of great honour, and resignation was only allowed under conditions set by law.[180]

The assembly of magistrates confirmed in post the chairmen, judges and candidates to the post of judges of civil parish courts after these had been elected. A candidate judge acted in place of a judge if the latter had been struck out or other legal reasons were present for a judge to be absent from court sessions. These provisions

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[176] О примененіи къ губерніямъ Лифляндской, Эстляндской и Курляндской Судебныхъ уставовъ 20 ноября 1864 года и о преобразованіи местныхъ кретьянскихъ учрежденій. *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. IX, № 6187; I. О преобразованіи судебной части въ Прибалтійскихъ губерніяхъ и II. О преобразованіи крестьянскихъ присутсвенныхъ местъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. *Полное собраніе законовъ Россійской имперіи, съ 1649 года*, т. IX, № 6188; Lazdiņš, J. Die Justizreform vom Jahr 1889 und ihre Bedeutung für die Baltischen Provinzen Russlands und (später) Lettland. Schäfer Frank, L., Schubert, W. (Hrsg./eds.). *Justiz und Justizverfassung / Judiciary and Judicial System. Siebter Rechtshistorikertag im Ostseeraum,* 3.–5. Mai 2012 Schleswig-Holstein / 7th Conference in Legal History in the Baltic Sea Area, 3rd-5th May 2012 Schleswig-Holstein. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, PL Academic Research, 2013, S. 91–106.

[177] Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. Книга первая. Учрежденіе волостныхъ и верхнихъ крестьянскихъ судовъ. *Полный сводъ законовъ Россійской имперіи*. Все 16 томовъ со всеми относящимися къ нимъ Продолженіями и съ дополнительными узаконеніями по 1 ноября 1910 года. Въ 2-хъ книгахъ. Подъ редакціей А. А. Добровольскаго, Оберь-Прокурора Судебного Департамента Правительствующаго Сената. Составилъ А. Л. Саатчіан. Книга вторая. Томы IX–XVI. С.-Петербург: Изданіе юридического книжного магазина И. И. Зубкого под фирмою "Законоведеніе". Коммиссіонеръ государственной типографіи, 1911, т. XVI, ч. 1, Книга 1, с. 4403–4412.

[178] Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. Книга первая. Учрежденіе волостныхъ и верхнихъ крестьянскихъ судовъ, § 1–2.

[179] Ibid., § 7–10.

[180] Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. Книга первая. Учрежденіе волостныхъ и верхнихъ крестьянскихъ судовъ, § 12.

meant loss of influence exerted on the courts by the estate owners. Civil parish courts were subjected to scrutiny by the state. Supervision by magistrates of the work of civil parish courts symbolised the separation of administrative and judicial power.

A civil parish court heard civil cases concerning matters less than 100 roubles in value. Civil parish courts did not have competence to consider cases involving title to property, use as collateral, servitudes, etc., a.o. cases arising with regard to real estate.[181] Civil parish courts also heard cases that would lead to various kinds of punishment.[182] Up until 1904, persons found guilty could be sentenced to corporal punishment.[183]

Appeals of decisions taken by a civil parish court could be launched at the civil parish high court, which consisted of a chairman nominated by the Justice Minister and invited chairmen of civil parish courts. A case would be heard by at least three judges.[184]

The assembly of magistrates was responsible for supervising the work of civil parish courts, as well as civil parish high courts.[185] Any decision to revise a court decision was taken by the assembly of magistrates and, according to the category of the case, by the chairmen of civil parish high courts or magistrates.

A fundamental feature of the emancipation process of the liberated peasants was their right to organise and lead civil parish management and administer justice. This was particularly significant for Latvians who, from the 13th century onwards, had had neither economic nor political influence in the state. In this way the right to take part in the civil parish administration and administration of justice served to "educate Latvians in the concept of statehood". Peasants henceforward were obliged to think in terms not only of their personal interests, but also in terms of the interests of their "state", i.e. their civil parish. Emancipation had not only granted rights but also allocated responsibilities to individuals, a combination of factors that was useful later when founding the independent State of Latvia.

Conclusion

Emancipation was a common undertaking of European civilisation. Emancipation not only made tangible the Enlightenment ideas on natural rights, leading to personal freedom for individuals, it also opened the way for new market economic relations, i.e. capitalism. With this serfdom in the Russian Empire had come to be in opposition to the spirit of the age.

In contrast to what transpired in Latgale and in most of the rest of the Russian Empire, the emancipation of the serfs in the Baltic provinces took place without

[181] Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. Книга вторая. Правила о производстве гражданскихъ делъ, § 7–9.

[182] Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. Книга третія. Правила о производстве делъ о проступкахъ, § 9.

[183] Kalniņš, V., Apsītis, R. Latvijas PSR valsts un tiesību vēsture. II. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1980, 46. lpp.

[184] Волостной судебный уставъ Прибалтійскихъ губерній. Книга первая. Учрежденіе волостныхъ и верхнихъ крестьянскихъ судовъ, § 29, 30, 34.

[185] Volfarte, K. *Rīgas latviešu biedrība un latviešu nacionālā kustība no 1868. līdz 1905. gadam*, 59. lpp.

peasants granted the right to use land that they formerly had worked, or to buy it outright as their private property. Therefore, this emancipation without title to land that occurred in the Baltic provinces is often disparaged as "the freedom of birds". This opinion may only be shared with some reservations.

First, "the freedom of birds", i.e. simple personal manumission ruptured relations between the manor and civil parish which were based on serfdom and enabled the freed individuals to begin thinking in economic terms. Whereas before emancipation everything that a serf gained was for the benefit of his master, then after emancipation everything that he gained he kept for himself.

Second, land reform in the Baltic provinces proceeded without any tangible support by the state. Formally, land reform in the Baltic provinces was significantly harsher than the reforms carried out later throughout the Russian Empire. In fact, in the Baltic provinces, these hard lessons transformed freed serfs into peasants who were able to embark on market economic relations without support from the state or from any other class. This experience forced individuals to think and to act independently.

Third, land reform in the Baltic provinces drew an economic boundary between the east and west. The Russian communal society characterised by periodic re-allocation of land owned in common lay to the east of the Baltic region, whereas to the west lay lands with privately-owned holdings.

Fourth, the abolition of serfdom foresaw the establishment of peasant self-government and peasant-class courts. A peasant was thereafter responsible not only for the well-being of his property, but that of the entire civil parish. The right to vote and to be elected to the council and court of a civil parish led to growing appreciation of a democratic state.

Fifth, emancipation allowed freedom of movement. Movement allowed Latvians to communicate with others throughout the entire territory inhabited by their ethnos, encouraging formation of a national consciousness.

Therefore, the abolition of serfdom, even in the form of "the freedom of birds", was thus the first step along the road to an independent Republic of Latvia.

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Vita Zelče

THE NEW LATVIANS

This article considers a key 19th century phenomenon in Latvia — the New Latvians and their role in the emergence of the modern era. The New Latvians played an important role in the creation of a Latvian national identity. This identity formed in the context of a crisis which resulted from anomie in the face of social and economic change, and it allowed Latvians to adopt modern collective and individual identities. The article examines the theoretical basis of the Latvian nation as conceptualised by the New Latvians, as well as developments in the national life of Latvians from the 1850s to the 1880s.

Keywords: New Latvians, Latvians, national identity, anomie, national symbols, national rituals.

The concept of the *New Latvians* (also Young Latvians, *jaunlatvieši* in Latvian) is a key element of the modern history of Latvia. It usually designates active members of the first Latvian national movement. The term may also be used in a wider sense to describe a certain period, the 1850s to the 1890s, in the history of Latvia. These decades are referred to as the time of the New Latvians, or as the New Latvian Era.

The term *New Latvians* is not always used with the same meaning, i.e. it has been used to describe different persons and groups, with differing connotations. The label New Latvians was first used publicly in 1856 in a review written by Gustav Brasche, a Lutheran pastor in Nīca and Bārta, of the collection of poems *Dziesmiņas* (Little Songs), written by Juris Alunāns, a student at the University of Dorpat (today Tartu). At the end of his review, Brasche expressed his incomprehension as to why the author bothered to address Latvians as potential readers of his poems, with the ironic remark, "…if there are people for whom New Latvia (*ein junges Lettland*) "is a beautiful maiden sitting on high", then we must heartily warn them of the fate of Lorelei."[1] In his opinion, Latvians could not be the persons for whom the book of poems was meant, since they were lacking in culture, and their sphere of interests did not overlap with poetry. The clergyman likened the literary activities of Alunāns with those of the German political and literary movement "Young Germany" (*Junge Deutschland*), which was based on the ideas taken over from the French Revolution, demanded social emancipation and criticised absolutism and obscurantism. The German movement had among its

[1] [Brasche G.] Literärisches. *Das Inland*, No. 39, 1856, 24 September, S. 637.

ranks brilliant literary figures such as Karl Gutzkow, Heinrich Laube, Theodor Mundt, Ludolf Wienbarg, and Heinrich Heine, whose works were filled with longing for change and a sense of anticipation. "Young Germany", together with "Young Italy" (*La Giovine Italia*) and other movements were, for a time, members of a secret organisation called "Young Europe" (*La Giovine Europa*). These movements demanded the right of the peoples of Europe to create their own states. Giuseppe Mazzini, leader of "Young Europe" and "Young Italy", insisted that there be "a state for each nation. Ideas of national liberation were at the heart of the1848 revolutions, "the spring time of the peoples" of Europe.[2] Despite their modest direct influence on contemporary politics, the symbolic impact of movements such as "Young Germany", "Young Italy", etc. was considerable, which according to the historian Erik Hobsbawm[3] is shown by the later inclusion of similar designations to identify other European national movements (for example, the Young Czechs, Young Poles, Young Turks, Young Finns).

When seen in the context of future historical developments, G. Brasche's use of the term *New Latvia (Young Latvia)* was appropriate and timely. The poems by Alunāns in *Dziesmiņas* demanded the emancipation of Latvian culture — the right of the people to read high poetry in their mother tongue, the right of intellectuals to produce translations and to create new original works in this language. For their part, the top ranks of society in the Baltic considered such rights to be utopian and inconsistent with their view of the social order in Kurzeme and Vidzeme. We must recall that there was a strict sociolinguistic separation between the highest and lowest orders of society in the Baltic. The Latvian language was used only by the lowest orders. The distinction between *Germans* and *non-Germans*, or *Latvians,* was not only of an ethnic, but also of a social nature. Movement out of the peasant order meant entry into the group of *Germans*. Furthermore, local tradition and public opinion meant that belonging to the group of *Germans* carried special value. Communication between the various social groups in the Baltic was so negligible that each group lived apparently on its own, in its own information space.

The designations 'New Latvia' and 'New Latvians' were used initially to refer to Latvians who opposed the local elite and the existing social order, thought critically, and who were active in public and cultural life. Krišjānis Barons, one of the New Latvians, wrote in his memoirs in 1919 that: "Back then this label was not as innocent as it seems to us today — it referred to those who would overturn the old order and served for many years as evidence for the police."[4] The ideas of the 1848 revolutions in Europe were perceived as threats to the Russian Empire and its autocratic rule, such that many political and repressive measures were implemented so that these would not reach

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[2] Alter, P. *Nationalism.* London: Edward Arnold, 1989, pp. 32–33; Hobsbawm, E. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality.* 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 101–102; Nipperdey, T. *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck. 1800–1866.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, pp. 330–331, 511–512.

[3] Hobsbawm, E. *The Age of Revolution. 1789–1848.* New York: Vintage Books, 1996, p. 132.

[4] [Barons K.] Krišjāņa Barona atmiņas. Arājs K. (sakārt.). *Atmiņas: Stāsta Krišjānis Barons un laikabiedri.* Rīga: Liesma, 1985, 27., 28. lpp.

Russia and "poison" its citizens.[5] Indeed, at the beginning of the 1860s the Tsarist secret police and administrative bodies in the Baltic governorates identified a secret society called *New Latvia*, compiled a list of its likely members and put them under surveillance.[6] In reality, no such organisation ever existed. But for many Latvians, being labelled as an imagined member meant police surveillance, even deportation from where they lived, with their right to work in and even to enter the Baltic governorates revoked for several years, in addition to conflicts with administrative bodies and acquiring the status of being a disloyal citizen of the Russian Empire.

The New Latvians never called for violent forms of struggle, nor for changes in the political system or change of ruler, only for social and national emancipation which was then to become the basis for prosperity, economic growth, and an educated and cultural society. They were necessary and inalienable social actors of their time. The fundamental task for the New Latvians in the process of modernisation, whereby former serfs became a society which was socially, professionally, and geographically differentiated, was to establish a political and cultural basis for its identity. Previously, the serfs had lived attached to rural manors, belonging generation after generation to the nobility, and they had not given much thought to their identity, language, politics, and the common aims of society, rather they saw themselves as their manor owner's peasants, farmers, householders or servants. After emancipation, issues relating to identity became a part of the daily life of the former serfs.[7] Answers had to be found in order to live in a modern society, to redefine their individual and collective existence as part of the state, the nation and the community. Social and individual identity, as well as national identity, are analysed from a social constructionism perspective as a discursive social construction, namely a process wherein notions about oneself, belonging to social groups, as well as about others are formed discursively. Identity is constantly being (re)created in a specific context and takes the form of interactive relationships. Construction of the latter leads to the processes of inclusion and exclusion, notably, definition of what constitutes "us" and "them".[8]

The political scientist Montserrat Guibernau asserts that national identity is a fluid and dynamic modern-day phenomenon, which can however remain constant over rather a long time during the phase of nation formation. In her opinion, national identity derives from a set of attributes common to all members of a nation, such as awareness of community formation, common culture, territory, a common past and a common project for the future. There are several dimensions to a national identity: 1) the psychological dimension (emotional ties of belonging, ones which have no need of a

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5 For details see: Voronkova, S., Tsimbaev, N. *Istoriya Rossii. 1801–1917.* Moscow: Aspekt Press, 2007, pp. 87–88.

6 Duhanovs, M. *Baltijas muižniecība laikmetu maiņā: Baltijas muižniecības politika 19. gs. 50.–70. gados un tās apoloģētiskās historiogrāfijas kritika.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1986, 216.–224. lpp.

7 Davies, N. *Europe. A History.* New York: Harper Perennial, 1998, p. 777.

8 Hall, S. Introduction: Who Needs Identity? Hall, S., Du Gay, P. (eds.). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications, 1996, pp. 1–17; Hall, S. Introduction. Hall, S. (Ed.). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* London: Sage Publications, 2003, pp. 1–12; Wodak, R. *The Politics of Fear.* Los Angeles: Sage, 2015, p. 71.

rational explanation), 2) culture (values, beliefs, traditions, habits, languages, actions), 3) the dimension of territorial belonging, which involves the notion of home, the environment and its resources, 4) the dimension of history, which must be a source of pride and roots, 5) the political dimension, which consists of duties, rights, values and loyalty.[9] The historical mission of the New Latvians in the Baltic governorates of the Russian Empire was to create the basis for a Latvian national identity spanning these dimensions during the second half of the 19th century.

The processes of national identity formation in the Baltic region were similar to processes in many other parts of Europe. During the 19th century, nationalism was one of the most powerful and successful political forces, and a major shaper of the culture of various peoples.[10] However, this century cannot be only described as the century of "national states", since to a considerable extent it was also the century of empires. Many ethnic groups which lived within the borders of an empire and who were not the titular nationality became national minorities. Their national identity was formed not by the ruling authorities and their attendant political and cultural resources, but resulted from resistance to hegemonic national unification and from demands for autonomous national cultural and public social life.[11] The model developed by the Marxist Czech historian Miroslav Hroch is often employed to compare the national movements of small peoples in Eastern Europe.[12] According to this model, the evolution of national movements passes through three stages: A – the period of scholarly interest, B – the period of patriotic agitation, and C – the period when mass national movements emerge. In his book, Hroch does not devote a separate chapter to the Latvian national movement (in contrast to the Estonian and the Lithuanian national movements), but instead offers a superficial description based on secondary sources.[13] The Hroch model allows for identifying the development stages of the Latvian national movement, but it is not possible to draw clear dividing lines between different stages as postulated by Hroch, since the three development stages of the Latvian national movement did not occur consequentially but in parallel, and with some interaction between stages.

For the purposes of this article, the New Latvian Era is taken to consist of two extended periods: an initial phase when the theoretical concept of Latvian identity was formulated, together with the creation of symbols and rituals (from the 1850s to the end of the 1860s), followed by a period of mass popular acceptance of Latvian national identity, creation of the national public and culture space, and extensive cultivation of

[9] Guibernau, M. *The Identity of Nations.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007, pp. 11–25.

[10] Salmi, H. *Nineteenth-Century Europe. A Cultural History.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008, Ch. 4.

[11] Osterhammel, J. *The Transformation of the World. A Global History of the Nineteenth Century.* Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014, Ch. 8.

[12] Hroch, M. *Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegungen bei den kleinen Völkern Europas.* Prague: University Karlova, 1968. In 1985, this book was translated into English, and, subsequently, Hroch's model was even more frequently called up in the study of the history of small nations. See: Hroch, M. *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

[13] For more about the views of Hroch concerning the Latvian national movement and analysis of the applicability of his model, see: Raun, T., Plakans, A. The Estonian and Latvian national movements: An assessment of Miroslav Hroch's model. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, No. 2, 1990, pp. 137–141.

national symbols and rituals (the end of the 1860s to the 1880s). However, with the end of the New Latvian Era, the process of creating the modern Latvian nation did not come to an end, rather this was only the beginning.

Beginnings

Latvian national identity began to emerge several decades before the New Latvians appeared, and there are several dimensions of national identity which they had no hand in creating, neither theoretically nor practically. In publications during the 18th century, a handful of Enlightenment intellectuals writing and debating in German began to touch upon the social problems of Latvian peasants, primarily economic issues resulting from serfdom, their low standard of living and their lack of rights, factors which prevented development, well-being, and individual freedom. These intellectuals who lived in the Baltic, as well as others who came to the region, "discovered" the Latvians, a group of people living alongside them, with their own language and culture, who did not possess a written record and about whom little was known. Although Latvians geographically lived in Europe, the status of this culture was similar to that of many cultures present in lands colonised by Europeans in other continents. Latvians aroused an ethnographic and missionary interest in these intellectuals. In their debates about agrarian and social reform, individuals seeking to bring about Enlightenment (in particular Heinrich von Jannau, Wilhelm Friebe, Karl Snell, and Garlieb Merkel) compared the lot of Latvian serfs with that of slaves, claiming that this had deformed the national character of Latvians and made them victims of German aggression, oppression, and exploitation.[14] At the end of the 18th century, Latvians came to be defined by these radical exponents of Enlightenment as a national group with their own language, history, culture, and traditions.[15] In the eyes of these German intellectuals, ethnolinguistic differences and the fact of an existing Latvian community (not a local estate in a socio-political hierarchy with the social status of peasants) increasingly came to be accepted as factors defining their national status.

However, at that time the concept of a *Latvian* did not exist in a modern and national sense. The term was used in conjunction with designations such as "the common people", "peasants", and "agrarian estate", which were employed when discussing the layers of society without privileges. The term *Latvians* was synonymous with the term *peasants*. Latvians living in cities and German-speaking Latvians were excluded from this discourse about Latvians. Latvians were equated with peasants up until the mid-19th century, even by those seeking to bring Enlightenment. The latter group consisted for the most part of Lutheran pastors and literary figures who addressed mostly the peasants and sought by means of books and periodicals published in Latvian, as

[14] Daija, P. *Apgaismība un kultūrpārnese. Latviešu laicīgās literatūras tapšana.* Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2013, 32.–37. lpp.

[15] Blumbergs, A. *The Nationalization of Latvians and the Issue of Serfdom. The Baltic German Literary Contribution in the 1790s and 1790s.* Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2008, Ch. 4, Concl.

well as by schooling, to enlighten the peasants' minds and raise their standards of morality.[16] The quintessence of this ideology may be found in a four-line verse, published in 1822 in *Latviešu Avīzes* (Latvian Newspaper)": "Appreciate what God has given Thee, / Do not covet what is not Thine. / Every estate has its own worries. / Every estate has its own honour."[17]

Serf emancipation and agrarian reform during the second decade of the 19th century preserved the existing socio-political hierarchy, with the nobility retaining their privileges and control over most of the land, and the social position of Latvians as peasants also unchanged. However, the beginnings of reforms in the governorates of Kurzeme and Vidzeme held out the prospects of modernisation. This meant that all who lived in these governorates gained a new identity as new social groupings began to form, which established a new relationship with the state, the governorate, their district, manor, and home. Various associations came into being during the second half of the 18th century resulting from a search for identity, such as Masonic lodges, clubs, societies and peer groups. The issue of the new order in the Baltic was debated in the most important public institutions of the period, for example, at the *Landtags* (provincial Diets) and gatherings of the nobility, and at synods of Lutheran pastors. The Riga Union of Literary and Practical Citizens (*Die Literärisch-praktische Bürgerverbindung*) (founded in 1803), the Courland Society for Literature and Art (*Kurländische Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst*) (1815), and the Latvian Literary Society (*Lettische-literarische Gesellschaft*), also known as the Society of Friends of Latvians (1824), which produced scholarly work and also advocated reform policies. For example, discussions held during 1819 at the Courland Society for Literature and Art attested to the fact that the Baltic Germans considered themselves as a national group, one possessing highly developed culture, cultural traditions, and a legal right to their status. The key to their identity was opposing Latvians as "them", who had an inferior social and national status.[18] The activities of the Latvian Literary Society also reflected the subordinate position of Latvians vis-à-vis Germans in the form of patriarchal relations — pastors had the role of an authoritarian "father" and teacher, while Latvians were assigned the role of children. In carrying out their work, Baltic German pastors and literary figures began to set up basic infrastructural elements for modern Latvian culture, i.e. they published newspapers and books in Latvian and organised public events. A large part of this effort had a Christian orientation, which was in contradiction with the secularising tendencies of modern times, therefore this initiative could not be sustained over the long term.[19]

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[16] Daija, P. *Apgaismība un kultūrpārnese. Latviešu laicīgās literatūras tapšana*, 58.–60. lpp.

[17] [Vatsons K.]. No Kurzemes, septītā izteikšana. *Latviešu Avīzes*, Nr. 39, 1822, 28. septembris, 3. lpp.

[18] Šķiņķe, I. Kurzemes Literatūras un mākslas biedrība un latviešu valodas attīstības jautājums 19. gadsimta 1. pusē. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3/4, 1996, 85.–90. lpp. For more details on the work of this society, in particular, its contribution to the advance of science, see: Stradiņš, J. *Zinātnes un augstskolu sākotne Latvijā.* Rīgā: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2009, 371.–390. lpp.

[19] Zelče, V. Auf dem Wege zu einer lettischen Nation. Deutschbaltische Pastoren in den sozialen und nationalen Prozessen von der ersten Hälfte bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts. *Nordost-Archiv*, No. 2, 1998, S. 425–439.

Despite the slow pace and partial implementation of reform, it was noted that the social group of Latvian peasants began to disintegrate quite rapidly, with differentiation setting in based on social and financial standing. Individuals emerged from among the peasants with different social status — craftsmen, traders, village clerks, publicans, millwrights, church servants, doctors and apothecaries, foresters, manor administrators and tenants. These persons were no longer dependent on landlords, but they were not farmers either.[20] In his study of the role in society played by the intelligentsia of Latvian origin during the 1830s–1850s, its reading habits, and its publicly expressed views, literary historian Aleksejs Apīnis notes that it was faced with a choice — to remain Latvian, or to become German. Social mobility up to that time had meant that anyone leaving the peasant estate had to abandon their Latvian ethnic origin and "become" Germans. The choice of remaining Latvian was facilitated by increased economic prosperity, and by a growing awareness of the power of culture, as well as knowledge gleaned from books and recognition based on personal experience with the New Latvians and Latvian identity.[21] During the 1830s and 1840s, Latvian society witnessed the first instances of associations being formed and the development of a public sphere. Latvian public life in Kurzeme and Vidzeme developed in village governing bodies and courts, through the work of school teachers, as well as through parish life. Public "recruiting shops" and the first cooperatives were set up in various locations. A new network was established for public links and as well as new types of solidarity. Farmers had to ensure local administration, which meant that village leaders had to acquire new ways of organising community life. Local administration took place in the Latvian language, which for its users was no longer simply a "peasant language".[22]

Intensification of public contacts led to the appearance of peer groups with a narrow or wide range of common interest, and the creation of centres of spiritual life. The Moravian Brothers movement was still active in Vidzeme, holding gatherings at their meeting houses, and producing hand-written literature.[23] During the 1830s, Kristaps Kaktiņš led a movement in Mazsalaca District to establish a Society for Sobriety.[24] During the 1840s, Latvian public activities in Riga and its surroundings were concentrated around St John's (*Sv. Jānis*) Parish and its parish school, where the pastor was Indriķis Pēšs, a Latvian.[25] In 1848, Krišjānis Valdemārs, a clerk in Ēdole District, was inspired by a project for transforming the world expressed by the principal hero in the

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[20] Apīnis, A. *Grāmata un latviešu sabiedrība līdz 19. gadsimta vidum.* Rīga: Liesma, 1991, 137. lpp.

[21] Apīnis, A. Agrienā: Inteliģences loma latviešu sabiedrības lasīšanas vēsturē 19. gadsimta 30.–50. gados. Apīnis, A. *Soļi senākās latviešu grāmatniecības un kultūras takās.* Rīga: Preses nams, 2000, 136.–163. lpp.

[22] Plakans, A. The Latvians. Thaden, E. C. (Ed.). *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland. 1855–1914.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981, p. 207; Apīnis, A. *Grāmata un latviešu sabiedrība līdz 19. gadsimta vidum*, 137.–138. lpp.

[23] Straube, G. Reliģiskās institūcijas. Bērziņš, J. (red.). *Latvija 19. gadsimtā: vēstures apceres.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2000, 382.–384. lpp.

[24] Apīnis, A. Tas latvietis Kristaps Kaktiņš Vidzemē. Apīnis, A. *Soļi senākās latviešu grāmatniecības un kultūras takās*, 164.–185. lpp.

[25] Apīnis, A. Indriķis Pēšs – pārejas laikmeta cilvēks, teologs, domātājs. Apīnis, A. *Soļi senākās latviešu grāmatniecības un kultūras takās*, 186.–200. lpp.

tragedy *Faust* by Wolfgang Goethe and founded the Society to Drain the Baltic Sea, an undertaking at once exuberantly youthful, and yet critical in the context of Baltic social relations. In addition, he opened a public library.[26]

Dissatisfaction with traditional (pre-modern) identity appeared in the mid-19th century, as well as with the equating by the Baltic social elite of peasant and Latvian identity, which it proclaimed publicly together with its denial of the possibility of formation of a Latvian nation. This dissatisfaction resulted from a discrepancy between the existing definition of social order, and the experience of Latvians as social actors, their existence, and future hopes. Using a definition proposed by the sociologist Émile Durkheim, this situation corresponds to what he terms *anomie*, denoting a structural contradiction in which publicly proclaimed dominant values and norms contradict the way the structural elements of society function in reality. This discrepancy caused a large part of society to become alienated from the ruling social order, and made their personal existence seem pointless. Anomie is a fundamental structural contradiction of the modern age; it often appears during times of fundamental and rapid socioeconomic change. Anomie usually leads to a change in culture and the creation of new identities. Seeking resolution to the social crisis attendant with anomie, a large part of society comes to rely on a value system and norms which correspond to social reality and give a purpose to life. Many national identities were formed in Europe during the 19th century in response to anomie[27]; the Latvian national identity is one of these.

New Latvians and the beginning of a national movement

By the 1850s, nationalism as the basis for the identity of large social groups was no longer a novelty. Nationalism had begun to spread in Europe during the 18th century. England is considered the cradle of how a modern nation is constituted; its commanding position in Europe, and throughout the entire Western world, meant that nation formation became a canonical social process. Although the basic concept of nation formation was taken over by one culture from another culture, the sociologist Liah Greenfeld insists that nationalism in every country was rooted and developed locally.[28]

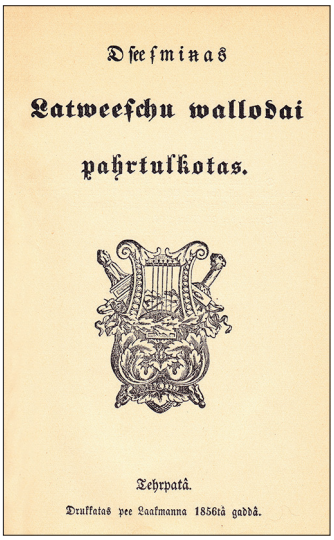
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[26] For details see: Birkerts, A. *Krišjānis Valdemārs un viņa centieni: Biogrāfiski–kritiska studija.* Rīga: A. Raņķa grāmatu tirgotava, 1925, 48.–52. lpp. Together with other Latvian youths, K. Valdemārs founded a Society to Empty the Baltic Sea, whose formal objective was to drain the Baltic Sea and to make the Sahara Desert fertile. Members of this society held meetings, wrote up minutes of these, and, as a joke, dug ditches at the seaside, the latter for the alleged purpose of catching diverted sea water. The real purpose of these meetings was education, lectures and exchange of books. State authorities closed the Society to Empty the Baltic Sea and proscribed its activities.

[27] Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity.* Cambridge; London: Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. 15–17; Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism and the Mind: Essays on Modern Culture.* Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006, pp. 72–73, 212–213. I am grateful to my colleague Agita Misāne for pointing out the concept of anomie and providing presentations on theory at seminars and conferences supported by the National Research Programme "*SUSTINNO*".

[28] Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, p. 14.

Historians traditionally date the birth of Latvian nationalism to be the 1850s, because there was a concentration of separate developments of unique significance over this decade. The first book of Latvian national poetry, the aforementioned collection by J. Alunāns, *Dziesmiņas*, was published in 1856. Alunāns had chosen to translate and to transpose poems by Horace, Ovid, Goethe, Heine, Uhland, Rückert, Lermontov, etc., as well as German and Italian folk songs. The poems in *Dziesmiņas* covered diverse themes. Some dealt with social issues, others were full of philosophical reflections, and there were also verses about nature and lyrical love poems. The principal challenge that Alunāns faced as a translator was to assess the abilities of the Latvian language in successfully tackling poems from antiquity as well as modern poems, and how to develop the language by coining new words and introducing new forms of words and sentences.[29] The appearance of *Dziesmiņas* attested to the fact that Latvian national poetry was at the same level as world literary achievements. At the end of the 20th century, the Latvian literary critic Guntis Berelis commented that thanks to this event, "Poetry then gained the same significance that it has today."[30]


Dſeeſminas

Latweeſchu wallodai

paħrtulkotas.

Tehrpatâ.

Druckatas pee Laakmanna 1856tâ gaddâ.

Fig. 1. The collection of poems by Juris Alunāns, *Dziesmiņas*. 1856

Latvian national journalism started in 1856 with the publication in Riga of the weekly, *Mājas Viesis* (House Guest). Ansis Leitāns, then already a popular literary figure, became its editor. He made a living as a district court clerk, spending his spare time in transposing sentimental German stories to local settings, becoming thereby a true celebrity among the Latvian language reading public. Leitāns was also the first editor of Latvian peasant stock in the history of Latvian media. The position taken by *Mājas Viesis* in regard to the national idea was expressed in a poem printed in one of its first issues: "We, Latvians! And to this name / We, friends, ever shall remain. / Those who trample on the people's honour, / We shall pity, this weakling."[31] The appearance of *Mājas Viesis* greatly perturbed and baffled the local Baltic German nobility and clergy and provoked countermeasures. The very fact of the existence of such a newspaper, whose content was determined by a Latvian, was deemed to be unnatural, abnormal, and incompatible with the existing social order. The Baltic German clergy, who had previously been the only persons to release Latvian press publications, regarded this journalism to be beyond the pale and a threat to their monopoly. They hindered

[29] Grudule, M. Jura Alunāna "Dziesmiņas" (1856) kā literatūra, "kurā prāta pūliņi atronami". Cimdiņa, A. (red.). *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti*, 731. sēj.: Literatūrzinātne, folkloristika, māksla. Krājumam "Tā Neredzīgā Indriķa dziesmas" (1806) – 200 gadi. Jura Alunāna "Dziesmiņas" (1956) – 150 gadi. Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 2008, 50.–57. lpp. In 1867, the second part of the collection of poems, *Dziesmiņas*, was published in Riga after the death of Juris Alunāns. The tradition established in the first volume was continued; the second volume consisted of the best examples of classical and modern world poetry, folk songs of different peoples, and original poetry, all in the Latvian language.

[30] Berelis, G. *Latviešu literatūras vēsture. No pirmajiem rakstiem līdz 1999. gadam.* Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 1999, 22. lpp.

[31] [Bez aut.] Latviešu biedrība. *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 2, 1856, 9. jūlijs, 16. lpp.

the distribution of *Mājas Viesis*, and Lutheran pastors declared a boycott on cooperation with this newspaper. Nevertheless, the weekly continued to appear; its content improved with every issue, and the number of correspondents and readers rose. Latvian intellectuals took an active part in creating *Mājas Viesis*. The authors of the articles lived not only in Riga, i.e. close to the editorial office, but also included Latvian students at the University of Dorpat (Tartu), school teachers in various districts, vergers, and scribes. The opportunity for educated Latvians to be involved in producing *Mājas Viesis* — the first example of independent Latvian mass media — was one of the preconditions for the start of a purposeful Latvian national movement. The staff and editor were Latvians and their level of national self-awareness determined the general national orientation of the newspaper and defined the problems it dealt with. The priorities of this weekly were contemporary Latvian needs, i.e. the creation of a Latvian national identity. For this reason, the pages of *Mājas Viesis* contained, in addition to news, didactic intended to promote national, social, and economic development. The priorities of this weekly were education, national pride and sense of belonging to the Latvian people, and the creation of a Latvian literature, as well as developing economic life and spreading prosperity.[32] *Mājas Viesis* was a communication channel for the idea of Latvian national identity as a social value. The newspaper became the first Latvian national public intermediary for the concept of the Latvian nation, becoming part of a wider geographical and social movement. In a poem published in *Mājas Viesis,* school teacher Juris Dauge acclaimed the existence of the weekly newspaper: "A Latvian presents it to me, / Being a Latvian I read it."[33]

A number of socially active Latvian peer groups were formed during the 1850s, united by nationality and recognition and manifestation of their national identity. Around 1853, a socially active Latvian community formed in a factory owned by Georg Adolf Thilo located near Riga. It housed an elementary school, a Sunday school, a sports club (skittle-alley) and a library, and evenings of song took place there. The school teacher Juris Caunītis organised Latvian social life, and around 17 Latvians regularly attended events like the song evenings. Members of this group had direct contacts with the editorial office of *Mājas Viesis*, and they regularly published articles in the newspaper. The writer Augusts Deglavs portrayed these first national efforts of Latvians living near Riga and the feeling of solidarity typical of identity as follows: "The words of Johans Rātminders [the school teacher also known as Jānis from Zasulauks], to our countryman were, "How glad I am," (…) "to meet another Latvian, no matter how tattered, or how poor — that we might all of us Latvians assemble under a single hat!""[34]

Another socially active Latvian peer group worked at the University of Dorpat (Tartu). The calling card placed by Krišjanis Valdemārs on the door of his dormitory room, "*C. Woldemar. Stud. cam. Latweetis*" (C. Valdemārs. Student. A Latvian), has become legendary. His friend Krišjānis Barons assessed this as follows: "He demon-

[32] Zelče, V. The establishment and early activities of the weekly *Mājas Viesis* in the second half of the 1850s: A declaration of Latvian nationalism. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1, 2007, 139.–161. lpp.

[33] -e [Dauge J.] Vidzemnieka prieks par "Mājas Viesi". *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 21, 1856, 19. novembris, 168. lpp.

[34] Deglavs, A. *Latviešu attīstības solis no 1848. līdz 1875. g.* Rīga: M. Jakobsons, 1893, 40.–41. lpp.



Fig. 2. Ansis Leitāns, editor of the newspaper *Mājas Viesis* (from the collection of the RMM)



Mahjas weesis.

Nr. 1. Pirmdeenâ 2. Juhli 1856.

Meers!

Pirmais wahrds, ko Mahjas weesî laſſa!
Meers! Meers! wirs ſemmes, zilwekkem labs prahts!
Meers! Meers! irr tas, pehz kurra katris praſſa,
Kam prahts jel maſ no Deewa dahwinahts!
Meers irr ta ihſta ſwehtiſchanas raſſa,
Eeſch kurras tohp wiſs labbums ſpirdſinahts!
Meers irr tas dahrſs, kur ſalko mihleſtiba,
Seed zerriba un pee-aug uſtizziba!

Schis ſwehtais meers it kà no jauna dſimmis
Nu atkal nahzis muhſu rohbeſchôs.
Tas breeſmigs pohſta negaiſs weenreiſ nimmis,
Zaur ko puiſs paſaul' kritta ſird'ehſtôs.
Wiſs karſch nu tumſchà nahwes bedrê grimmis,
Lai grimſt, lihdſ nogrimſt elles dſilumôs!
Lai walda meers pa wiſſahm ſemmes mallahm!
Lai walda meers lihdſ paſcham paſaul's gallam!

Zik tuhkſtoſchi, kas zeeta karra breeſmas,
No ſchahda puhka rihtkles ſwabbadi,
Kas dſihwu nahw' un elles-ugguñ' leeſmas
Teem wiſû ſplaudija neganigi,
Nu pazelt ſawas ſaldas meera dſeeſmas
Ar preeka pillu ſird' un dwehſeli,
Tam uzdſeedaht, zaur ko ſchîs behdas beidſahs
Un lihdſ ar teem itweens lai dſeedaht ſteidſahs:

Alleluja! Lai gohds un ſlawa
Ar augſtahm dſeeſmahm ſkanneht ſkanu
Tam, kas to ukſu karru kawa
Un beidſa affins iſleeſchan'!
Kas nemeerni un kappâ wehlis
Un jauku meeru karrogu
Ar mihlahm Tehwa rohkahm zehlis
Wahr wiſſu plaſchu Eiropu!

Tam kungu Kungam, kurra rohka
Pahrwalda wiſſu paſauli,
Kas Weens pehz Sawa prahta lohka,
Par labbu wiſſu brihniſchki —
Tam, lai pee kahjahm pakriſdama
Nu uzdſeed wiſſu Eiropa,
To mihlu meeru ſanemdama
Ar teiſchamu Alleluja!

Lai kalni, leijas, meſchi, lauki
Un dahrſi, plawas, paleijas
No meera dſeeſmahm atſkanu jauki —
Wiſs radditjums lai preezajahs;
Lai wiſſi weenâ kohri ſtahjahs,
Tam kungu Kungam uzdſeedaht,
Ka mihlais meers un atkal mahjas
Un eenaids wiſs pee galla klaht!

Meers debbeſs behrns no Deewa Garra —
Karſch elles ſehrs, ko ſahtans ſplauj!
Meers wiſſu dabbu dſihwu darra —
Karſch wiſſu dſihwib' ſemmê kauj!
Meers ſwehtibu wirs ſemmes kaiſa —
Karſch atwelk badd' un truhkumu;
Meers lauſchu dſihwi jaukt kaiſa —
Karſch negantu un nejauku!

Meers uzturr' wiſſus dſihwotajus,
Meers ſemm' un tautas ar laimo;
Meers ſtipro walſt' un walditajus,
Meers lauſchu dſihwi atweg'lo.
Meers peepild' pagrabbu un klehti,
Meers wairo gohd' un tikkumu;
Meers meeſ' un dwehſeles mantas ſwehti,
Meers peeſchkirr weeglu ſtundiņu!

Fig. 3. The first issue of the weekly *Mājas Viesis*. 1856 (from the collection of the LNB)

strated thereby that, despite having been educated at a university, he still remained a Latvian. I found in him a responsible Latvian, not an ashamed Latvian — someone I had been looking for."[35] In emphasising his Latvian nationality, Valdemārs was protesting against the social stereotypes of the times. Other Latvians studying at the University of Dorpat supported Valdemārs' public declaration of his Latvian ethnic origin. A group of 15–25 Latvian youths, with Krišjānis Valdemārs, Juris Alunāns and Krišjānis Barons as its core members, began to assemble in the evenings, partly for social and partly for literary reasons. Discussions at these gatherings covered problems in the Baltic and the circumstances under which Latvians lived, their needs and future prospects. These idealistic young people were brimming with protest. They earnestly sought to work for the benefit of their people. Barons later recalled that: "My wish was that the Latvian people as a nation stand alongside the Germans and other nations."[36] These students also began the work of educating Latvians by publishing articles in *Mājas Viesis*, as well as a number of books.

[35] [Barons K.] Krišjāņa Barona atmiņas, 24. lpp.
[36] Ibid., 27. lpp.

The weekly *Mājas Viesis* supported consolidation efforts by Latvian intellectual organisations with a national orientation. A long-anticipated Latvian Literary Society was founded after preliminary work performed by Valdemārs in 1860 and 1861 to meet nationally-oriented Latvians living in Riga.[37] A request signed by 21 Latvians seeking permission to establish a Latvian language and literature society, including a description of its proposed status, was submitted on 7 September 1861 to Alexander Suvorov, the Governor-General of the Baltic. All the signatories stated their professions: an official, a trader, an agronomist, a gardener, a bookkeeper, a school teacher, a book publisher, an organist, a student, a newspaper editor, a Catholic priest, and a lecturer at an Orthodox Seminary. This petition mentioned that it was thanks to the Tsar that the Latvians of the Baltic governorates had reached a level of material well-being which made it inevitable that the development of the intellectual capabilities of the people and widening the scope of education required qualified persons from among their midst for the purpose of furthering Latvian culture and enlightenment.[38] On 1 December, the newly appointed Governor-General of the Baltic, Wilhelm von Lieven, after listening to negative reports by the governors of Vidzeme and Kurzeme, which were exclusively based on the views of the local privileged elite, decided that founding such a Latvian Society was not possible.[39]

The next stage of the national movement was the creation of a new newspaper. St. Petersburg was chosen as the location of the editorial office, given that many young and energetic members of the Latvian intelligentsia, who were also the most competent publicists, lived there, and in addition conditions there were more favourable in terms of censorship and publication possibilities. Valdemārs initiated a new newspaper, *Pēterburgas Avīzes* (Petersburg News), with the financial support by Latvians who had acquired a measure of prosperity. Krišjānis Barons, another individual responsible for founding this newspaper, later recalled that: "The only weapon at the disposal of those who wished to lead Latvians forward and to facilitate their education consisted of serious didactic articles, as well as free-thinking newspapers."[40] The task of this newspaper was to educate Latvians about modern day society and help them free themselves from many preconceptions of society dating from the period of serfdom which they had retained in their mindset. The newspaper was a means of multi-lateral communication with the public, and it promoted Latvian self-definition as individuals and as a nation and integration into world economic and social political processes. *Pēterburgas Avīzes* stated as its goal, "to read newspapers simply because there is nothing else to read, as for the issue of socialisation, whether it be a state, a nation, or a tribe of which one a part of, to gain information, to empathise with it and think, and to say, that is: to take part in this society building and in the life of all mankind".[41] While

[37] Deglavs, A. *Latviešu attīstības solis no 1848. līdz 1875. g.*, 50. lpp.

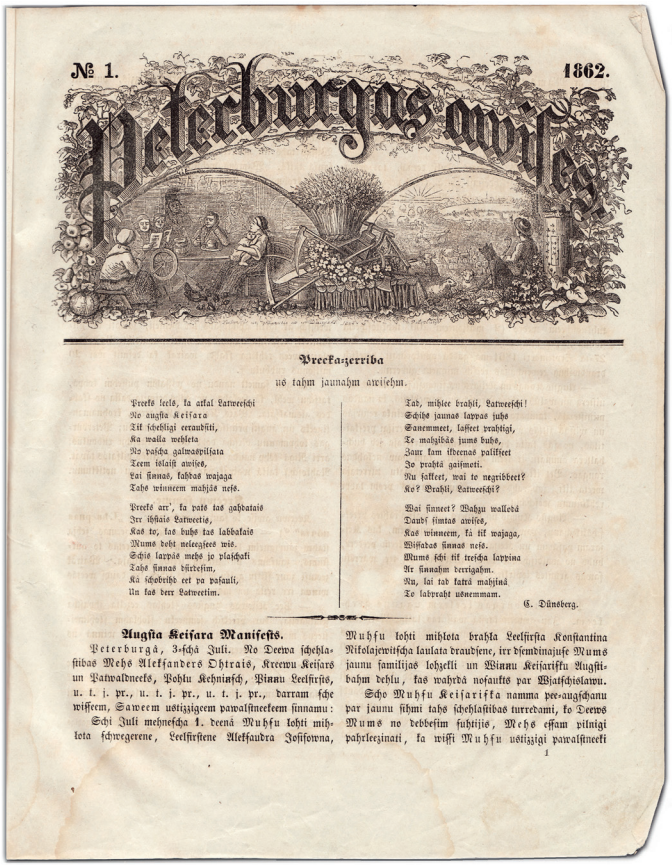
[38] Altements, A. (sast.). *Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 5. sēj.: Dokumenti par tautas atmodas laikmetu 1856.–1867. g. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgādiens, 1939, 138.–144. lpp.

[39] Ibid., 151.–156. lpp.

[40] Barons, K. Druskas priekš V[aldemāra] biogrāfijas. Arājs, K. (sast.). *Krišjānis Barons*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1984, 35. lpp.

[41] [Bez aut.]. Valstību un tautu ziņas. *Pēterburgas Avīzes*, Nr. 2, 1862, 11. lpp.

the first issue of this newspaper appeared on 14 July 1862, its operation subsequently proved to be very difficult. The pages of the first fifteen issues of *Pēterburgas Avīzes* were full of articles of great social significance. The situation changed when the first censor of the newspaper, Valdemārs, was replaced by officials from the Chancery of the Governor General of the Baltic. *Pēterburgas Avīzes* provoked a strong response from society and aroused dissatisfaction among members of the top ranks of Baltic society. The latter succeeded in having the newspaper banned for four months in 1863. After restarting publication, the editors of *Pēterburgas Avīzes* stopped advancing the idea of emancipation, and the content of the newspaper was progressively taken over by popular science and educational articles. It ceased publication on 17 July 1865.[42]



№ 1. 1862.

Peterburgas awises

Preeksrunna

üs tahm jaunahm awisehm.

Preeks leels, ka atkal Latweeschi
No augsta Keisara
Lik schehligi eerunbiti,
Ka walla wehleta
No patscha galwaspilsata
Teem isleekt awises,
Lai finnas, kahdas wajaga
Tahs wainneem mahjäs neß.

Preeks arr', ka pats tas gahdatais
Irr ihsthais Latweetis,
Kas to, kas buhs tad labbakais
Mums debt meleegtees wis.
Schis lappas mehs ja plaschaki
Tahs finnas dürtesim,
Ka schobrihd eet pa pasauli,
Un kas derr Latweetim.

Tad, mihlee brahli, Latweeschi!
Schihs jaunas lappas juhs
Sanemmeet, lasseet prahtigi,
Te mahzibäs jums buhs,
Zaur kam ihdenas palikteet
Jo prahta gaismeti.
Nu sakleet, wai te negribbeet?
Ko? Brahli, Latweeschi?

Wai finneet? Wahgu walledä
Daudß simtas awißes,
Kas winneem, ka kit wajaga,
Bißkadas finnas neß.
Mums schi kit kit treeha lappina
Ar finnahm derigahm.
Nu, lai tad katrs mahjinä
To labpraht ußnemmam.

C. Dünsberg.

Augsta Keisara Manifests.

Peterburgâ, 3-schâ Juli. No Deewa schehlastibas Mehs Alekßanders Otrais, Kreewu Keisars un Patwaldneeks, Pohlu Kehninsch, Pinnu Leelkirsts, u. t. j. pr., u. t. j. pr., u. t. j. pr., darram sche wiſſeem, Saweem ustizzigeem pawalſtneekeem ſinnamu:

Schi Juli mehneſcha 1. deenâ Muhſu lohti mihlota ſchwegerene, Leelkirſtene Alekſandra Joſifowna, Muhſu lohti mihlota brahla Leelkirſta Konſtantina Nikolajewitſcha laulata draudſene, irr ſchimbinajuſe Mums jaunu familijas lohzekli un Wiſnu Keiſariſku Augſtibahm dehlu, kas wahrdâ noſaukts par Wjatſchislawu.

Scho Muhſu Keiſariſka nanma peeaugſchanu par jaunu ſihmi tahs ſchehlaſtibas turredami, ko Deews Mums no debbeſim ſuhtijis, Mehs eſſam pilnigi pahrleezinati, ka wiſſi Muhſu ustizzigi pawalſtneeki

Fig. 4. The first issue of the newspaper *Pēterburgas Avīzes*. 1862

In contrast with the weekly *Mājas Viesis*, which focussed on Latvian culture and language issues, *Pēterburgas Avīzes* devoted particular attention to social and national emancipation themes. Both newspapers insisted that the factors determining the worth and place in society of individuals were independent of their origin and social status inherited from the period of serfdom. Everyone is first of all a human being, not someone who belongs to a particular estate. *Pēterburgas Avīzes* took the position that every Latvian should be individually set free, and criticised the stereotype rooted in the period of serfdom, whereby Latvians were equated with the peasant estate, and that Germans had a false sense of superiority vis-à-vis Latvians, which was determined by the master-servant model of relations applied to individual members of the two peoples.

Every event organised by nationally-oriented members of the Latvian intelligentsia encountered opposition during the 1850s and 1860s. The privileged estate of Baltic

[42] Zelče, V. *Latviešu avīžniecība: laikraksti savā laikmetā un sabiedrībā. 1822–1865*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2009, 347.–375. lpp.

Germans, the nobility and the clergy, regarded the demand by Latvians to be accepted as an equal people as a threat to their social and cultural position. The radical confrontation between the interests of the privileged estate in the Baltic and that of the titular people, together with a conviction that in equality between Germans and non-Germans was a natural state of affairs, underpinned the policies pursued by landlords and the clergy vis-à-vis the Latvians in the fields of education, culture, and science. Furthermore, during the first half of the 19th century, the Baltic German nobility has gained control of most of the land in Kurzeme and Vidzeme and strengthened the legal basis for their privileges.[43] The ideologues of the privileged estate categorically denied the possibility of Latvian national and cultural autonomy, let alone their own state. August Bielenstein, a clergyman, held the opinion that Latvians were a people in the ethnographic sense of the term, but not in a political sense. They had never had the necessary national energy to establish an independent state entity.[44] At meetings of the Society of Friends of Latvians, Lutheran pastors debated such topics as: "Are Latvians today still a people? (…) Latvians are peasants; the Latvian language is a peasant language. A Latvian sees himself simply as a peasant (…) today they are nothing other than an estate of society, the local peasant estate."[45]

Representatives of the Baltic German nobility and clergy complained about the efforts and activities of the New Latvians at all administrative levels of the Russian Empire. The political police, i.e. the Ministry for the Interior and the 3rd Section of His Majesty's Own Chancellery, were entreated to combat an imaginary organisation called "New Latvia". This effort resulted in prohibition of Valdemārs to contact residents of the Baltic, and several of his co-workers came under police surveillance.[46] Furthermore, the school teacher Kaspars Biezbārdis was deported in 1863 from Riga to the Governorate of Kaluga,[47] while another school teacher, Ernests Dinsbergs, was moved from Dundaga to Jaunjelgava, and lost his licence to teach.[48] A list of New Latvians compiled in 1863 by Georg von Kotzebue, Lieutenant Colonel of the Kurzeme Gendarmerie, names 73 individuals. They were of different professions and had different levels of education; they lived in both Kurzeme and Vidzeme, and elsewhere.[49] Any individual once labelled a "New Latvian" could not subsequently find a well-paid job, or pursue a professional career, as a result of blocking activities by the nobility and the clergy.[50]

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[43] Whelan, H. W. *Adapting to Modernity. Family, Caste and Capitalism among the Baltic German Nobility.* Köln; Weimar; Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1999, p. 83.

[44] [Bielenstein, A.] *Die lettisch-nationale Bewegung und die kurländische Geistlichkeit. Eine unparteiische Stimme aus den Ostseeprovinzen.* Leipzig: Böhme, 1886, S. 25.

[45] Duhanovs, M. *Baltijas muižniecība laikmetu maiņā*, 190. lpp.

[46] Ibid., 216.–224. lpp.

[47] Sočņevs, M., Jansons-Saiva, A. *Kaspars Biezbārdis sabiedriskās domas un kultūras vēsturē.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1986, 32.–33. lpp.

[48] Līgotņu Jēkabs. *Ernests Dīnsberģis*. Rīga: Latvijas Kultūras Veicināšanas b-ba, 1928, 32. lpp.

[49] Altements, A. (sast.). *Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 5. sēj.: Dokumenti par tautas atmodas laikmetu 1856.–1867. g., 176.–180. lpp.

[50] Kaudzīte, M. *Atmiņas no "tautiskā laikmeta" un viņa lielākiem aizgājušiem darbiniekiem*, 1. sēj. Cēsis; Rīga: O. Jēpe, 1924, 93. lpp.

The views held by leaders of the Latvian national movement about the future of Latvians were influenced by various social processes, events, personal experience, and by their own level of education. The first generation of Latvians with academic education were either of peasant origin, or whose parents had failed to complete their education. Education meant leaving the peasant estate and entry into a higher social estate. Along the way to completing their studies they encountered social and ethnic prejudice; in fact, their careers took the form of a struggle against circumstances, and they possessed an unremitting need to prove themselves, to affirm their worth. The path usually followed by Latvians to get educated and to gain social standing was more difficult than for their Baltic German counterparts. It was necessary to acquire knowledge and to rather quickly master foreign languages, as well as to learn a new way of life and manners. Leaders of the Latvian national movement were fully aware of the phenomenon of anomie, and this was one reason for their firm conviction that it was necessary to develop a more just social model, one which would allow all peoples and all individuals to develop freely. Works published by the New Latvians show that their political ideals were closely related to advanced Western governance models, in particular parliamentarianism. The New Latvians held that the borders of a state should be drawn respecting the territory inhabited by a people. Their sympathies were with the processes whereby the German and Italian national states were formed.[51] However, these sympathies were not achievable given that the territory inhabited by Latvians lay within the monarchist Russian Empire. Leaders of the Latvian national movement favoured a policy of state reform in the conviction that the measures that would be implemented would stimulate Latvian economic development and greater equality of social opportunity. They were enthused by reforms carried out in the Russian Empire, in particular the freeing of the serfs throughout the empire. The New Latvians were convinced that gaining the status as citizens of Russia would support Latvian endeavours and grant them the same rights as all other nationalities of the Russian Empire.

The core of the concept of national identity as developed by the New Latvians comprised language and ethnic origin. This concept was presented in articles which appeared in *Mājas Viesis* and *Pēterburgas Avīzes*. A theoretical basis for national identity was expounded most effectively by the brilliant Latvian poet, linguist, and publicist, Juris Alunāns. He made use of ideas from German romantic nationalism,[52] as well as knowledge drawn from world culture, mythology, and folklore, to create resources which Latvian nationalism was in dire need of — glorification of their native tongue, sources of national pride, drawing the contours of a national territory, historical stories, and myths. These were simultaneously a mix of myth and knowledge, which on an individual and collective level aroused emotions and provided rational arguments in favour of Latvian national identity and a way to positively identify their uniqueness. The leaders of the national movement expressed their conviction that the Latvian

[51] Apals, G. *"Pēterburgas Avīzes". Latviešu pirmā saskare ar Eiropas politiskajām idejām.* Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2011, 105.–106. lpp.

[52] See: Ijabs, I. Another Baltic Postcolonialism: Young Latvians, Baltic Germans, and the emergence of Latvian National Movement. *Nationalities Papers*, No. 1, 2014, pp. 88–107.



Fig. 5. Juris Alunāns (from the collection of the LNB)

language was the basis for Latvian unity. It was, therefore, a responsibility to honour and respect their native tongue, to use it in daily life, instead of doubting its capabilities and refusing to use it once a higher social status was reached. Language is sacred, and it is God-given. Alunāns reminded his readers that, "Language is sacred as it derives from the people who speak it, honour it, and respect it. People may be deprived of everything they have acquired, but no one can strip them of their God-given language."[53] He was ironical about the attitude expressed by Baltic German nobles and intellectuals about the Latvian language: "People have thought about it and concluded that Latvian is the language of ploughmen. Based on this they have further concluded that the Latvian language must die out."[54] According to Alunāns, history shows that there are equal chances that the Latvian, German, Russian, French or the English peoples and their languages may die out, since no one can ever be sure of immortality.

The New Latvians considered that forming an ethnic community was the way to socialise individuals. Therefore, everyone must make his contribution to the common good of the people. They were convinced that the national community would be the means for individuals to realise their common interests. Hence, national identity is also a resource for personal identity. Alunāns wrote that the social value of being a Latvian would increase alongside a rise in his self-awareness. However, this would be entirely up to each individual. Alunāns recognised that many educated Latvians had denied their origin and mother tongue and "now a few Latvian fathers tell their cosseted sons starting from early childhood that Latvians are stupid, mischievous, and people that one is ashamed to deal with. (…) our advice is: honour and respect the language of your fathers, and you will do well on this Earth. Others will not respect those who do not respect themselves".[55] Alunāns also emphasised the need for solidarity, unity, national brotherhood, and volition. Choice of a national future is a collective decision — it is a road to be followed jointly and with solidarity. He also noted that the existence of "real Latvians" will be proven when "one Latvian will no longer look askance at another Latvian who has seen the light, but instead will be proud of him, that from their midst have come educated and praiseworthy men, since educated Latvians will no longer denigrate their fellow Latvians, but seek to bring them to the light, and enlightenment will rapidly spread among them".[56] According to Alunāns creation of a modern social structure was possible in conjunction with development of national self-awareness and national identity.

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[53] A-n [Alunāns J.] Latviešu valoda. *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 19, 1858, 12. maijs, 150. lpp.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

Alunāns also wrote a story about how Latvians came into existence, with the purpose of instilling pride in history and roots as the basis for the emerging national identity. In his version of history, Latvians came to their land when "there was unbounded misery in the land. There were no hints of arable land or meadows". Latvians were responsible for "felling the forests, seeking out clearings, digging ditches, drawing down water from lakes and draining swamps, tilling the land and mowing the meadows, building houses and villages, raising cattle".[57] In this story Latvians, are the true masters of the land and its keepers. In another article Alunāns pointed out that Latvians "were after the Greeks and the Romans the first people who after working their fields sought out clearings in forests".[58] In his publications he strongly emphasised the fact that Latvians were not a people without history, as proclaimed by Baltic Germans in many of their publications about history. Alunāns was tireless in recalling that Latvians were an old farming people, and that this was something to be proud of. He continued to develop the romantic images created by Merkel at the end of the 18th century and early 19th century of the idyllic life of the ancient Latvians which was destroyed by the Crusader conquest. The task of the generation of the New Latvians was to recover this idyll. In their view, ancient times were a source of pride and strength for Latvian national identity.

As early as the 1850s, the New Latvians created the first symbols of the Latvian nation so that the people might identify one another. First, a common identifier was created to denote the ethnic territory of the Latvian people. In 1857, J. Alunāns coined a name for the land of the Latvian people, *Lātava*, or *Latva*.[59] The term *Latvija* (Latvia) first appeared in 1862, in *Pēterburgas Avīzes*,[60] and it came into general use a few years later. The term *Latvia* was a new political concept, as it referred to a territory which was not then identified administratively. National symbols are used to express values of a national community; they serve to identify the community as well as to represent it and identify its borders.[61] The New Latvians also offered descriptions of the Latvian national character. Alunāns wrote that the Latvian people "live harmoniously".[62] *Pēterburgas Avīzes* emphasised on a number of occasions that "the Latvians are a peaceful people".[63]

The activities of the New Latvians during the 1850s and 1860s fundamentally influenced the formation of the Latvian nation. Their efforts at establishing notions about national values and the first architecture of national identity laid the foundations for social mobilisation of Latvians on route to the status of a fully-fledged nation. In 1860, Alunāns wrote that: "Latvians presently are awakening from a long period of sleep,

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57 A-n [Alunāns J.] Kāds vecu latviešu stāsts. *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 22, 1856, 26. novembris, 174. lpp.

58 A-n [Alunāns J.] Ko tas vārds "latvietis" apzīmē. *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 40, 1857, 7. oktobris, 322. lpp.

59 Ibid.

60 [Zvaigznīte, J.] Par skolām. II. *Pēterburgas Avīzes*, Nr. 6, 1862, 52. lpp.

61 Elgenius, G. *Symbols of Nations and Nationalism. Celebrating Nationhood.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 2–5.

62 A-n [Alunāns J.] Ko tas vārds "latvietis" apzīmē, 322. lpp.

63 [Bez aut.] *Ziņas par Pēterburgas jaunām latviešu avīzēm*. Pēterburga: R. Golike, 1862, 3. lpp.

they are desirous of light and recognition ..."[64] The metaphor "awakening of the people from a deep sleep" came to describe Latvian national life. The staff of *Mājas Viesis* and *Pēterburgas Avīzes* comprised the first team of Latvian "awakeners". Peter Alter, a student of nationalism, asserts that the role of "awakeners" was decisive in the process of awakening European peoples.[65] Their articles, the topics discussed in the press, manner of expression and skilful use of language confirms the hypothesis of Benedict Anderson that the period of national movements was simultaneously a time of philological-lexicographic revolution and a professional use of words.[66] National agitation by newspapers and books created conditions for the diffusion of new ideas (about national identity and innate values).

Leaders were highly important to the formation of the national movement during the 1850s–1860s. During this period, the movement rested upon the courage of patriotic Latvian intellectuals willing to demonstrate their nationality, thus initiating a period of confrontation with the social norms and opinions prevailing in the Baltic at this time. Without a doubt, Krišjānis Valdemārs was the most distinguished and influential personality of the period and he was at the centre of all events and processes from the late 1850s to the first half of the 1860s. Valdemārs was born into a peasant family in Kurzeme. When Krišjānis was ten years old his family left farming and being peasants, and moved to the hamlet of Sasmaka. Valdemārs attended local Latvian primary schools and tried, unsuccessfully, to enter the Gymnasium at Jelgava, with the rejection most likely due to his social origin. At the age of 15, Valdemārs established a private school in Sasmaka, while working simultaneously as a clerk. He continued to educate himself during this time since he had not abandoned his ambition to be admitted to a gymnasium. Latvian youths, Valdemārs' peers who by virtue of their profession were no longer peasants, were eager to find a meaning for their lives and an appropriate identity. Through his work as a clerk, Valdemārs was able to appreciate the legal and economic predicament of the peasants and the considerable dependence that they still had vis-a-vis landlords, as well as the equivalence of Latvians and peasants. The efforts of Latvians who had abandoned farming to live a meaningful life ran counter to the social order prevailing in the Baltic. During the 1840s, success in this struggle for their rights seemed to be just as utopian as the aforementioned project to drain the Baltic Sea in order to transform it into a flowering land.

In 1848, Valdemārs wrote to the newly appointed Governor General of the Baltic, Prince Alexander Suvorov, seeking his support for studying at a gymnasium. He received a positive reply and in 1849 he was admitted to the Gymnasium in Liepāja. Valdemārs received his diploma in 1854, and, at the age of 29, he began to study public administration and economics at the University of Dorpat (Tartu). Valdemārs had endured difficult times as a youth, thanks to the contradiction between his identity and the system of norms and values prevailing in the Baltic. After completing his univer-

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[64] Alunāns, J. Cienījami lasītāji. Alunāns, J. *Izlase.* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1956, 162. lpp.

[65] Alter, P. *Nationalism*, pp. 57–58.

[66] Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* 2nd ed. London; New York: Verso, 1991, pp. 77–78.

sity studies, he started to work in St. Petersburg as an official in the Russian Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education. Valdemārs became known to reformers in Russia as a result of his publications and his ideas about maritime development and he also came to the notice of several senior officials. Valdemārs gained the favour of Grand Prince Konstantin Nikolayevich, who was justifiably regarded as the "brains" behind the reforms begun by Emperor Alexander II. However, the role played by Valdemārs in promoting the Latvian national movement resulted in his confrontation with Baltic German circles ruling in the Baltic, and endeared him to Russian nationalists. In 1867, after suffering many financial and professional setbacks due to persistent harassment by the nobility and the clergy, Valdemārs moved to Moscow and began work at the conservative newspaper, *Moskovskie vedomosti (*Moscow Times*),* owned by Mikhail Katkov. While working there he adopted the position that the special status of the Baltic governorates within the Russian Empire be abolished and for a more active state policy to be implemented there. Valdemārs did not take part in Latvian national life over the coming decades, although he followed events with great interest and helped with advice. Valdemārs retained great authority among Latvians throughout his life. On several occasions, he used his contacts in the highest administrative circles of Russia to influence the implementation of state administrative policy in the Baltic in a manner which he felt benefited Latvians. However, the principal theme of his professional life was promoting development of the commercial shipping fleet of Imperial Russia and organising a system to turn out qualified sailors. Valdemārs felt that the basis for the future well-being of Latvians would be the possibility for everyone to realise their potential, with freedom of choice and rights. He was in favour of equal opportunities for people of different nationalities and social origins, and their economic emancipation. To a great extent, Valdemārs sacrificed his personal professional career to achieving his goals.



Fig. 6. Krišjānis Valdemārs. 1863 (from the collection of the LVVA)

The life experiences of Juris Alunāns and Krišjānis Barons, the closest allies and peers of Valdemārs, were not as harsh. Juris Alunāns came from a well-off family of publicans, who sought to educate all of their children, encouraging them to learn German and to become Germans. This did not happen, as Juris' brothers were active organisers of Latvian public and cultural life. Juris Alunāns life was tragically brief, with his death occurring at the age of 32, yet he was able to accomplish a great deal in the creation of Latvian national literature and development of the language, as a publicist and advocate for Latvian cultural emancipation.[67]

Krišjānis Barons, the youngest activist in the Latvian evenings organised at the University of Tartu, was born into the family of an overseer at a manor, and lost his

[67] Goba, A. Juŗa Allunāna dzīve. Goba, A. (red.). *Juŗa Allunāna kopoti raksti*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 1929, 19.–74. lpp.

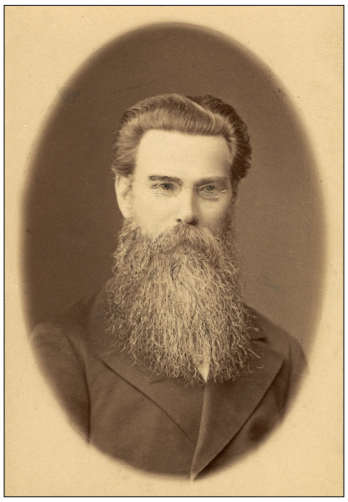


Fig. 7. Krišjānis Barons (from the collection of the RMM)

father at an early age. He was brought up by the family of his oldest sister, a servant at the manor. Barons amazed his teachers due to his knowledge and diligence while studying at a school in Ventspils District. These virtues allowed him to gain the support of A. Suvorov, the Governor General of the Baltic, to continue his education. Barons finished the Gymnasium at Jelgava with distinction, graduating in 1855. The following year Barons began to study mathematics at Dorpat (Tartu).[68] He summarised his experience as a young man in his memoirs as follows: "... the German school was not able to alienate me from my people. I had no reason to be ashamed by the fact of being born a Latvian, because at school I did not lag behind German pupils but rather I was ahead of them, and I was surprised by how obtuse some of the Germans were in studying."[69] Barons became an ally of Valdemārs and implemented many of his ideas. His life's work — collection, classification, and publication of Latvian folk songs — was started during the 1890s.

Studying at the University of Dorpat (Tartu) provided Valdemārs, Alunāns and Barons with an academic education and the opportunity to acquaint themselves with world culture and the advanced social theories of the times, making them the intellectual leaders of the Latvian national movement. Their understanding of on-going modernisation processes in Europe and delight that the Russian Empire was advancing along the road to reform persuaded them that the social order and system of values in the Baltic governorates would change. The New Latvians imported nationalism and the idea of national identity from Western Europe, first of all from Germany. Furthermore, it was the bourgeoisie — the intellectuals — which was responsible for creating Latvian nationalism, similar to the case for German nationalism.[70] However, their starting positions were quite different. The Latvian bourgeoisie formed, step by step, at the same time as Latvian national identity came into existence. From the 1860s onwards, the leaders of the New Latvian movement were also influenced by the Russian Slavophiles, with the latter being opposed to imperial nationalism and recognising the uniqueness of the ethnic peoples.[71]

A quiet period set in for the national movement during the second half of the 1860s, after *Pēterburgas Avīzes* had ceased publication. Nevertheless, a number of important events took place in various districts which facilitated joint work by Latvians, aligned their views, and led to the formation of united national thinking. A number of peer groups sprang up and new organisations were established, in particular ones dealing with farming and livestock raising issues. The song and local festival movement got under way. In 1864, the Latvian clergyman Juris Neikens organised the first Song

[68] Viese, S. *Krišjānis Barons, the man and his work*. Moscow: Raduga Publishers, 1985.
[69] [Barons, K.] Krišjāņa Barona atmiņas, 27. lpp.
[70] Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, p. 293.
[71] Zake, I. Inventing culture and nation: Intellectuals and early Latvian nationalism. *National Identities*, No. 4, 2007, pp. 322–323.

Festival of Vidzeme which took place in Dikļi, with approximately 120 men participating. In 1865, the Song Festival which took place in Bauņi featured seven choirs. In 1866, similar events were held at Matīši and in Rūjiena, and in 1868 in Valka.[72] The newspaper *Draugs un Biedris* (Friend and Companion), became a forum for Latvian national ideology; it was published in Riga, but its readership was quite narrow. Atis Kronvalds began his career as a publicist working at *Draugs un Biedrs*; the views expounded in his articles marked a new stage in the evolution of the concept of the nation. Thus, a number of ideas put forward from 1865 to 1868 were taken onboard and various activities transpired which were crucial to the increased activity of the national awakening which took place shortly thereafter, as well as to widespread acceptance by Latvian society of national identity.

The development of modern national life

At mid-century, cities emerged as centres of Latvian public life, first of all in Riga, the metropolis of the Baltic. Modernisation which also meant more efficient means of production, both rurally and in an urban environment, inevitably meant the flow of rural labour to the cities where it was needed in the manufacturing, construction, transport and service sectors. Approximately 24% of Riga's inhabitants were Latvians in 1868, and they became the largest single ethnic group in the city, displacing the Germans.[73] Latvians migrated to other regions of Russia in search of land, as well as to large cities in Russia to find work, pursue professional careers or to study. However, the social order in the Baltic governorates remained stagnant, and the elites, in an effort to preserve their traditional privileges, were not interested in changing values or ethical systems, whereupon the condition of anomie persisted. In reaction to these conditions there was a rapid growth in demand for Latvian national life and identity, since these eased integrating into the realities of modern life, rendered life more meaningful, and allowed individuals to define themselves.

A decisive event was the founding by the New Latvians of an institution which would organise and represent the Latvian national movement — the Riga Latvian Society (RLS). In October 1868, the Ministry of the Interior granted permission to set up this organisation.[74] A precursor to this society was the Latvian Association to help poverty-stricken Estonians, which was founded on 6 March 1868. The aim of this association was to provide assistance to the inhabitants of the Governorate of Estonia following a poor harvest. Contributions were collected, and the first Latvian public events in Riga — charity concerts, lectures, and lotteries — were held. A production of

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[72] Grauzdiņa, I., Grāvītis, O. *Dziesmu svētki Latvijā: Norise, skaitļi, fakti.* Rīga: Latvijas enciklopēdija, 1990, 6. lpp.

[73] Oberlenders, E. Rīgas izaugsme par daudznacionālu ekonomisko metropoli. Volfarte, K., Oberlenders, E. (red.). *Katram bija sava Rīga. Daudznacionālās pilsētas portrets no 1857. līdz 1914. gadam.* Rīga: AGB, 2004, 27.–28. lpp.

[74] Volfarte, K. *Rīgas Latviešu biedrība un latviešu nacionālā kustība no 1868. līdz 1905. gadam.* Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2009, 91.–93. lpp.

the play *Žūpu Bērtulis* (Bērtulis, the Heavy Drinker) which attracted a very large audience, proved to be a very significant event. These events provided enjoyment of Latvian national pastimes in the city.[75]

The RLS quickly became very popular with Latvians living in Riga, as well as elsewhere. In a description of the beginnings of the Riga Latvian Society, the writer A. Deglavs stressed the fact that: "People came forward and announced themselves to be Latvians whom no one in their right mind had ever thought to be Latvians. It turned out that there were so many Latvians who were as gentlemanly as gentlemen. But all those who had been badly treated by fate and suffered difficulties also came to the society to enquire after some advice, or to seek assistance."[76] The number of members of the RLS exceeded 1000 in the first year, and by the end of the second year it had 2070 members. Many Latvians were inspired by having their own society, and it became a measure of national achievement, as well as opening a road towards their future development. Analysis of the social breakdown of the members of the RLS during the 1870s shows that most were craftsmen (35.8%) and traders (26.29%). Initially there were rather few intellectuals as members; in 1880, they made up just 13% of the total.[77]

Active membership of the RLS allowed Latvians to learn many of the skills necessary to exist in a modern society, i.e. cooperation, political activity, organisational aptitude (including definition of community aims), strategic planning and tactical skills. Conflicts and splits between members of the RLS as well as frequent change of leadership attest to the fact that the aforementioned skills were not easily acquired. The first chairman of this organisation was Bernhards Dīriķis, but rather soon he was replaced by the entrepreneur Rihards Tomsons, who within less than one year was succeeded by the lawyer Frīdrihs Veinbergs, while the next chairman was the architect Jānis Baumanis. Krišjānis Kalniņš was chosen to lead the RLS in 1875, and he remained in this post until his premature death ten years later. The "golden era" of the RLS is associated with the name of Kalniņš. Several entities functioned under the umbrella of the Society, including the Science Committee, the Music Committee, the Theatre Committee, library, choir, museum, Sunday school, the Help Chest, and others. An important internal activity of the RLS was drawing up the annual budget, balancing income and outlays, as well as using financial resources to cover the needs of the organisation and organising Latvian national life. The capable administration of the society, including sensible and targeted use of financial resources to represent Latvian interests and cultural development as well as organising social and recreational events, contributed to its public image and social prestige. By the 1870s, the RLS had gained the status of an authoritative institution.

The RLS and its activities may be examined from several standpoints, i.e. — its public representations, political work and activities that promoted development of the professional and economic sectors. Representing the existence of the Latvian people

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[75] Hausmanis, V. Teātra pirmsākumi Latvijā. Ādolfs Alunāns un Rīgas Latviešu teātris. Dzene, L. (red.). *Latviešu teātris no pirmsākumiem līdz mūsdienām*. Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2010, 24.–25. lpp.

[76] Deglavs, A. *Rīga: Romāns*, 1. sēj. 5. izd. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1983 (1. izd. 1912), 329., 330. lpp.

[77] Volfarte, K. *Rīgas Latviešu biedrība un latviešu nacionālā kustība no 1868. līdz 1905. gadam*, 97. lpp.



Fig. 8. Bernhards Dīriķis, editor of the newspaper *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, the first chairman of the Riga Latvian Society (from the collection of the RMM)

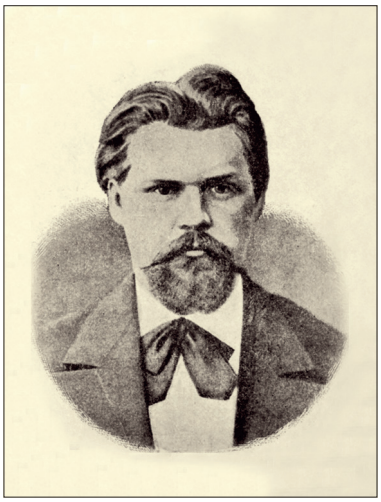


Fig. 9. Krišjānis Kalniņš, long erving chairman of the Riga Latvian Society (*"Baltijas Vēstneša" divdesmit piecu gadu jubilejai par piemiņu.* Rīga: B. Dīriķis un biedri, 1893)

and creating rituals in its support was a particularly successful activity of the society. The aim of such activities was to create content and organisational structures for Latvian national life, ignoring the presumption that Latvian were simply peasants of little worth. Construction of the building housing the RLS at a prestigious location on Great Park Street (then Grosse Parkstrasse, from 1885 onwards Pauluccistrasse, today Merķela Street) was significant in demonstrating the presence of Latvians as a social group in Riga. Foundations for the building were laid in June 1869, and a new flag of the association was dedicated. The building of the Riga Latvian Association was opened to the public approximately one year later. Every important milestone reached during its construction was cause for celebration, with a festival of songs, speeches, feasts, and with invited guests, in this way laying the foundations for national rituals; these events had good public visibility in Rīga.[78] The Latvian press of the times described the construction of the society's building as "a work of honour".[79] One of the first symbolic acts adopted by the RLS was to honour the memory of Garlieb Merkel, who had defended the rights of Latvians before he passed away in 1850. In 1869, the RLS organised commemorations of the 100th anniversary Merkel's birth, and in subsequent years there were organised visits to his grave (including speeches about his work), which was located at Katlakalns on Riga's southern outskirts.[80] Establishing new rituals, holidays, and traditions was a typical feature of the modern era, as was transformation of old customs and their inclusion in the living arrangements of the period. An "invented tradition" refers to many mutually interacting social practices (largely specially organised), which include definite prescripts and rules, rituals, and symbols. With the help of regular repetition, the aim is to establish, cultivate, and sustain specific values and the behaviour of society, as well as a sense of community solidarity. Traditions become in this way a part of individual and collective identity.[81]

[78] Volfarte, K. *Rīgas Latviešu biedrība un latviešu nacionālā kustība no 1868. līdz 1905. gadam*, 117.–119. lpp.

[79] [Bez aut.] Rīgas Latviešu biedrība. *Mājas Viesis*, Nr. 8, 1870, 23. februāris, 60. lpp.

[80] Volfarte, K. *Rīgas Latviešu biedrība un latviešu nacionālā kustība no 1868. līdz 1905.gadam*, 119.–120. lpp.

[81] Hobsbawm, E. Introduction: Inventing traditions. Hobsbawm, E., Ranger, T. (eds.). *The Invention of Tradition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 1–14.



Fig. 10. The building of the Riga Latvian Society (from the collection of the LNB, LBC BCB)

The founding of the Riga Latvian Society animated Latvian public life to flourish to an unprecedented extent throughout Vidzeme and Kurzeme; it also promoted an increase in national community and social solidarity, and conferred value to Latvian identity. The author Matīss Kaudzīte portrayed those times as: "During that period a special, inexplicable, powerful enthusiasm ruled emotions and minds, akin to children at Christmas, there existed an unspecific, warm hope, through which one could almost feel the synchronised heartbeat of the nation."[82] A choral movement spread throughout all districts inhabited by Latvians, theatre performances were organised, various associations and libraries were established, and celebrations were organised. Choral societies particularly emphatically manifested their national convictions, and these were to be found practically everywhere. All important events organised by the society concluded with a feast (on more important occasions these were called banquets) and with dancing. There were other rituals, including awards for the best choirs, milestone birthday celebrations of school teachers and others working in village administration, and anniversaries commemorating the opening of the house of the society. Theatre performances, concerts by choirs and orchestras, open air dancing during summer time and dance evenings in winter, as well as commemorating the departed by gathering during the summer at cemeteries, became popular public events.[83] Money that was taken in on these occasions, together with membership fees were used to organise Latvian national life, the construction and maintenance of facilities for societies, to acquire flags for societies and choirs, as well as other symbols. Special events were held solely to raise funds, for example, the sale of portraits of Garlieb Merkel.

The most visible communal ritual representing Latvians and expressing solidarity and representation was the I[st] General Latvian Song Festival, held in Riga on 8–11 July 1873, with 1033 male singers participating. During the 19[th] century, choral movements and a tradition of singing played an important role in the national movements of many European peoples, including the Latvians. The next Song Festivals were also highly successful: the II General Latvian Song Festival with 69 choirs and 1624 singers was held in 1880, the III with 117 choirs and 2618 singers took place in 1888, and the IV with 128 choirs and 3000 singers occurred in 1895.[84] Other national symbols and rituals were fashioned during these song festivals, including the Song Festival Flag and the repertoire, which included songs manifesting national identity as an emotional per-

[82] Kalninieks [Kaudzīte M.] Andrejs Pumpurs. *Jauna raža*, 6. sēj. Cēsis: Ozols, 1903, 26.–27. lpp.

[83] Strods, H. Sabiedriskā dzīve. Strods, H. (red.). *Latviešu etnogrāfija.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1969, 343. lpp.

[84] Grauzdiņa, I. (red.). *Dziesmu svētku mazā enciklopēdija.* Rīga: Musica Baltica, 2004, 34.–37. lpp.; Šmidchens, G. *The Power of Song: Nonviolent National culture in the Baltic Singing Revolution.* Seattle; London: University of Washington Press; Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2014, pp. 86–92.

formance full of national rhetoric. The lyrics of these songs featured poetic repetition of the terms *Latvia*, *the Latvian people*, *Latvians*, *fatherland*, and others. With their colourful national costumes and flags of the participating choirs, the solemn procession of singers participating in a Song Festival became a particularly important form of national representation. For example, the author Jēkabs Lautenbahs-Jūsmiņš described the impact of the 1880 procession on national identity as follows: "But our festival procession! It was so powerful so magnificent, that its powerful impression found its way irresistibly into the heart of every person who was fortunate enough to have seen the magnificence of it."[85] The leading conductors and composers of songs performed at these song festivals also became symbolic figures, in fact, national heroes.

Rituals are an important part of social order. Holidays and rituals are not merely a system of practices, but also a system of ideas which reflect the existing order. Rituals are a means by which social groups periodically reaffirm their existence and strengthen social solidarity.[86] Holidays and their celebration always serve to interrupt daily social routines, and people gather together on such occasions to jointly celebrate their roots, their interaction, their ideals and moral principles, to sense and to renew the power of the existing social order. Rituals both consciously and unconsciously create and spread definitions of reality, model thoughts and values, and create emotional bonds by means of positive feelings and sentiments.[87] The holidays and rituals of the New Latvians inevitably copied and borrowed from the modern ceremonies and holidays of other peoples. For example, the Latvian festival tradition was strongly influenced by the Baltic German festival held in 1861 in Riga, organised by Baltic German choral societies.[88] Initially there existed many outwardly visible analogies between the Baltic German and Latvian Song Festivals, but as the latter attracting mass support it progressively acquired a more pronounced national colour and content.

An essential role in Latvian nationalism was played by ressentiment — a psychological condition which comes about from repressed hostility and an inability to obtain gratification[89] — as is the case for the nationalism of other peoples. This also invites comparison with the so-called object of hatred, a conviction that this is essentially identical. Ressentiment influenced the formation of national identity and the spread of nationalism in all European countries.[90] The extensive range of Latvian holidays and

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[85] Lautenbahs-Jūsmiņš, J. *Latviešu otrie vispārīgie dziedāšanas svētki Rīgā, no 17. līdz 20. jūnijam 1880.* Jelgava: E. Zieslaks, 1880, 36. lpp.

[86] Durkheim, É. *The Elementary Forms of Religous Life.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 287.

[87] Rothenbuhler, E. W. *Ritual Communication. From Everyday Conversation to Mediated Ceremony.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1998, pp. 41–42.

[88] Mieriņa, A. Epizode vācbaltu kultūras dzīvē. Duhanovs, M. (red.). *Vācu faktors Latvijas vēsturē.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 1992, 78.–86. lpp.

[89] S. Freud coined the term "ressentiment" in the 1890s; it was developed further by many psychologists and sociologists. Ressentiment is taken to mean hostility which is caused by frustration of identity which, in turn, is sustained by blaming someone for this frustration. See: Nietzche, F. *Genealogy of Morals*. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications Inc., 2003; Scheler M. *Ressentiment*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1992.

[90] Greenfeld, L. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, pp. 15–17. For example, ressentiment fuelled French nationalism as a reaction to relations with England, while German nationalism arose from hostile relations with France.

cultivated rituals, as well as increased social mobility and striving for success in business and professional life was driven by a need to prove oneself to the Baltic German elite, as the latter was held responsible for many of the historical misfortunes suffered by Latvians. Ressentiment also provoked Latvians to re-evaluate many social values, including gradually moving away from a fatalistic inferiority complex, and the emergence of Latvian national pride based on a successful development of national life and national identity.

The principal ideologue of the Latvian national movement during the 1870s was school teacher Atis Kronvalds; his writings and speeches gave greater depth to the concept of a Latvian nation which had been developed by the New Latvians during the 1850s and 1860s. Kronvalds formed his unshakeable conviction about the future of the nation based on contemporary European national development processes, which, given that Latvians were a European people, Latvians would have to join. In describing the events of his time, Kronvalds emphasised that national self-awareness was important, "especially now when national aspirations have awakened large and small European peoples to engage in fierce competition, and where former differences between the idea of "Latvians" and "a people" are slowly disappearing".[91] He borrowed considerably from German nationalists, in particular Johann Fichte, in his formulation of the concept of a Latvian nation. He took over the doctrine of a nation as an organism whose existence is not due to the state, which is a secondary manifestation and only a means to attain a higher goal, but rather due to language, which is the primary factor defining a nation.[92] According to Kronvalds, the principal factor is love of the fatherland — the cornerstone of personal awareness of nationality. He insisted: "We need a fierce and devoted love of our fatherland, which is free of self-interest and ugly striving for solely personal benefit."[93] Kronvalds pointed out that the sources for love of the fatherland is familiarity with the fatherland, its history, native tongue, customs and religious instruction, as well as a sense of community and honouring the achievements of its most upstanding sons.[94] In analysing the possibilities for the political development of the Latvian nation, he recognised that Latvians must live as citizens of Russia as well as being national patriots, sensibly synthesising both statuses.[95] Kronvalds' writings influenced Latvian intellectuals of his time, in particular school teachers, students, poets, and public figures.

Thanks to literature in a national romantic style, particularly poetry, ideas about nationalism reached a wider public. The most prominent originators were the surveyor Andrejs Pumpurs, later a Russian army officer, and the school teacher Auseklis (real name Miķelis Krogzemis). Their poetry played an essential role in the formation of Latvian national identity, with virtue as a basic element, popular mythological notions, folk songs, song festivals, mother tongue, popular history, the sense of community of

[91] Goba, A. (red.). *Kronvalda rakstu izlase*. Rīga: Militārās literātūras apgādes fonds, 1937, 169. lpp.
[92] Lasmane, S. J. G. Fihtes "Runas vācu tautai" un to ietekme uz latviešu nacionālās idejas veidošanos. Duhanovs, M. (red.). *Vācu faktors Latvijas vēsturē*, 107.–114. lpp.
[93] Kronvalds, A. *Tagadnei: Izlase*. Rīga: Liesma, 1987, 54. lpp.
[94] Ibid., 56.–62. lpp.
[95] Ibid., 49. lpp.

the current and past generations of Latvians, as well as the homeland, and nature.[96] The poetry of Auseklis, Pumpurs and others was set to music, and songs performed by choirs, including at song festivals, affirmed national identity and strengthened love of the homeland. The national epic *Lāčplēsis* (Bearslayer) by Pumpurs, published in 1888, allowed national values and pride to glow with renewed brilliance. In combining elements of myth, folklore, Christianity, and history, as well as knowledge about human nature and his own imagination, the poet created a gripping and heroic tale about the fight of the Latvian people not only against invaders, but also against universal evil. *Lāčplēsis*, according to the literary historian, Ojārs Lāms, "has deeply and significantly influenced the development both of literature and art, as well as emancipation of the nation, [later] becoming a symbolic part of the ideology of creation of the state and how freedom was won".[97] A considerable number of books in Latvian had appeared by the 1870s and 1880s. Approximately 2300 different books were published between 1867 and 1885, of which 40% were books of fiction and 20% were scientific literature. World classics as well as modern literature were published in translation, and were in great demand by the public.[98] Scientific publications of the times became permanent national cultural assets, in particular those published by the RLS publishing house.[99]



Fig. 11. The poet Andrejs Pumpurs (from the collection of the RMM)

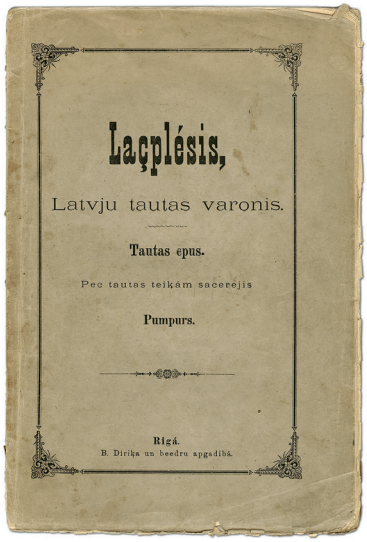


Fig. 12. The epic *Lāčplēsis* by Andrejs Pumpurs. 1888 (from the collection of the RMM)

The press played an important role in spreading Latvian national identity values as an ethnic nation (in the Latvian national discourse), particularly the newspaper, *Baltijas Vēstnesis* (Baltic News), founded in 1869.[100] The press also facilitated regular communication between nationally-oriented Latvians living in Riga, as well as between people living in Riga and Latvians elsewhere in Latvia.

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[96] Rudzītis, J. *Andrejs Pumpurs*. Rīga: Liesma, 1991, 215. lpp.

[97] Lāms, O. *Lāčplēša zvaigznājs. Latviešu eposa ģenēze un funkcionalitāte Eiropas klasisko un jaunlaiku eposa tradīciju kontekstā.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2008, 168. lpp.

[98] Apīnis, A. *Latviešu grāmatniecība no pirmsākumiem līdz 19. gadsimta beigām.* Rīga: Liesma, 1977, 240., 297.–298. lpp.

[99] Zanders, V. *Rīgas Latviešu biedrība (1868–1940) kā nacionālās grāmatniecības centrs.* Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2006, pp. 38.–39. lpp.

[100] Hanovs, D. *Pilsonības nācija: "Baltijas Vēstnesis". 1868–1906.* Rīga: Elpa, 2003, 210. lpp.

In their political orientation, the New Latvians focussed on the interest by Russian imperialism in diminishing Baltic German autonomy and the influence of the local nobility. This orientation was set in train by Valdemārs and continued by the RLS; the RLS organised celebrations of the Emperors of Russia and their family members, and extolled emancipation reforms. Thus, in 1870 the Society organised a commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Emperor Peter I, in 1877 it marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of Alexander I, and in 1880 it congratulated Alexander II on the 25th jubilee of his reign. In 1882 the RLS celebrated the coronation of Alexander III by lavishly decorating its building, holding a torch-light parade to the governor's castle, and dispatching a delegation to St. Petersburg. The RLS represented Latvians as citizens of the Russian Empire outside the borders of Vidzeme and Kurzeme, for example, by taking part in in the 1872 polytechnic exposition in Moscow, where they won awards at a rowing competition.[101]

Overall, support for the administration of Russia was not a successful policy, since the New Latvians failed to discern the contradiction between the imperial strivings of Russia and the rights of the Latvian people to self-determination.[102] In an attempt to gain support by the Tsar of Russia, the RLS engaged in several political campaigns. A Latvian "Address to Emperor Alexander II" was composed in 1870, containing a proposal for reform of the courts and Landtags in the Baltic. This document was signed by members of district administrations. According to Valdemārs, an impressive number of signatures, around 200 000, were collected for this document. However, submission of this address to the Tsar failed to produce any results.[103]

During the 1880s, the New Latvians placed great hopes on a senatorial inspection tour (Revision) by Nikolai Manasein.[104] This tour resulted from the numerous and contradictory complaints that Russian authorities had received from the Baltic, and a special review was carried out of administrative work in the governorate, in addition to gathering information, on behalf of the Ministry for the Interior, on the mood of society. The New Latvians hoped that following the senatorial inspection Baltic German autonomy would be weakened and reforms that would favour Latvians would be implemented. The RLS, including lawyers who were on the board of the society, actively assisted Manasein, and, on the basis of a recommendation by Valdemārs, lawyer Andrejs Stērste became one of the secretaries of Manasein. The RLS drafted sample copies of petitions which they distributed throughout the governorate with the request "that everyone asks for one and the same thing. Denounce everything which is German, and ask for everything which is Russian."[105] In mid-September 1882, Manasein reported having received 10 200 petitions from Latvians, and by the end of the year

[101] *Rīgas Latviešu biedrība savā 25 gadu darbā un gaitā.* Jelgava: Zieslaks, 1893, 39. lpp.

[102] Plakans, A. The Latvians, p. 221.

[103] Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1800–1914.* Stokholma: Daugava, 1958, 353.–354. lpp.

[104] Drīzulis, A. (red.). *Manaseina revīzija: Senatora N. Manaseina ziņojums par viņa izdarīto revīziju Vidzemes un Kurzemes gub. no 1882. līdz 1883. g.: materiāli Latvijas PSR vēstures pētīšanai.* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1949; Thaden. E. *Interpreting History: Collective Essays on Russia's Relations with Europe.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, pp. 271–286.

[105] Deglavs, A. *Rīga: Romāns*, 2. sēj. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1983, 157. lpp.

this number rose to 20 000.[106] This campaign of sending petitions reflected the Latvian view of the current situation, as well as expressing their interests. Many petitions discussed agrarian policy in the Baltic, in particular the issue of land ownership, requesting that the scope be widened for farmers to purchase or to lease land. In regard to education, demands were made for use of the Latvian and Estonian languages in schools run by the villages and parishes, and at teacher training seminars, increasing teaching of the Russian language and decreasing the number of hours spent in learning German. Demands were made to reduce the power of country nobles, and the replacement of Landtags with *zemstvo*. The Latvian petitions asked that the three Baltic governorates be divided into two entities. The basis of administrative units would be territory exclusively inhabited by Latvians and Estonians. The petitions demonstrated that Latvians sought the help of Russian administrative bodies to better their economic situation, to increase their social and legal rights, as well as to gain educational and cultural autonomy.

The first visible consequences of the Manasein senatorial inspection tour consisted of changes in the top officials of the Baltic governorates, followed by a systematic levelling of the differences between the Baltic governorates and the governorates of Russia.[107] Later, a number of imperial decrees (*ukaz*) were issued which subjected education, language use, and the church to Russification. By the end of the 1880s, Latvian parents had to accept that learning the Russian language was an integral part of the education of their children, and they become accustomed to using Russian more often in all aspects of life.

The New Latvians who supported the government of Russia and its policy initiatives, eventually had to admit that Russification was contrary to the fundamental aims and ideals of the national movement. The intense Russification which was implemented by state bodies and their opposition to Latvian national interests dealt a severe blow to the political course of the RLS and the prestige of its leaders, and signalled the end of the era of the New Latvians.

Conclusion

Latvian national identity, which possesses all of the dimensions defined by the political scientist Montserrat Guibernau and mentioned at the beginning of this article, came into existence during the era of the New Latvians. Undoubtedly some of these aspects — the psychological, cultural, and historical dimensions — were most evident. The dimension of belonging to a territory consisted of a virtual construction of the Latvian lands, as this did not correspond to any existing administrative entity. The question remained unresolved as to whether Latvians living in the Governorate of Vitebsk also belonged to Latvia. For its part, the Russification policy implemented by the Russian Empire brought new challenges to the political values of the Latvian

[106] Drīzulis, A. Manaseina revīzija (Priekšvārda vietā). Drīzulis, A. (red.). *Manaseina revīzija*, 13. lpp.
[107] Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1800–1914*, 452.–480. lpp.

community; this planted the seeds of doubts about loyalty to the Russian Empire and encouraged a critical view of it.

To a great extent, the formation of national identity resolved the phenomenon of anomie and facilitated Latvian adaptation to modernity; it offered a much greater space for living and working, social-psychological comfort, as well as opportunities for collective and individual development. Certainly, anomie was not completely eliminated, since the national policy of the Russian Empire circumscribed Latvian national life, and use of the Latvian language was excluded from education, public administration, and other sectors. The system of privileges for the Baltic German nobility which was contrary to a modern social order remained in place. The most potent element of Latvian national life was the use of Latvian in cultural and public life, and in the intellectual domain. Latvian literature, press, book publishing, professional theatre, choirs, and music culture all flourished during the 1880s. The description of the 19th century in Eastern Europe by the scholar Anthony Smith also applies to the period of the New Latvians, namely, "the movement for ethnic self-determination mobilised and fused together the middle class and the lower class into a politicised culture", and sought to develop an autonomous national culture, to transfer a passive existence into an active ethnopolitical society and a subject of history.[108] Latvian national identity was able, thanks to national life and culture, to withstand the attack launched against it by Russification, imposition of the Russian Orthodox religion, migration to interior regions of Russia, and the increase in the presence of the Russian language. Future generations of Latvians inherited from the New Latvians a stable national identity and cultural heritage, which were the basis for the Latvian state established in 1918.

[108] Smith, A. D. National Identity. London: Penguin Books, 1991, pp. 124–126.

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Līga Lapa

THE 1905 REVOLUTION IN LATVIA

The 1905 Revolution was one of the most important events of the early 20th century in the Russian Empire. This article presents the causes, the most significant political forces, and a chronicle of events. The Revolution culminated in armed clashes at the end of 1905. Dire consequences followed thereafter in the form of different kinds of repression — a period of punitive expeditions and political trials.

Keywords: demonstrations, strikes, social democracy, armed struggle, fighters, forest brothers, punitive expedition, field courts martial, political trials.

Causes of the 1905 Revolution

The development of many European states during the 19th century was determined by changes resulting from civil, bourgeois democratic revolutions and political reform. They had emerged and turned into modern industrial states. Change had passed by the huge Russian Empire, where Tsarist autocracy ruled unchecked and the landed aristocracy continued to play an important role. The scholar Andreas Kappeler has pointed out that there had been signs of the potential for social and political conflict in the Russian Empire during the period preceding the revolution between the traditional political system of the old regime and industrialisation, including modernisation being implemented by new forces, in addition to national tensions within the multi-ethnic Empire.[1] The historiography of the 1905 Revolution predominantly takes the view that the greatest activity took place in the national peripheral areas of Russia — the Baltic, Poland, the TransCaucasus, and Finland. Detlef Henning has identified a number of revolutionary preconditions to exist in the Imperial Baltic provinces: an earlier release from serfdom, development of port cities, emergence of an educated working class, the existence of a legal and educational system which had little room for illiteracy, establishment of modern industrial undertakings which by and large were at the same level as in Western Europe and, thus, essentially different in comparison with counterparts elsewhere in the Russian Empire.[2] According to

[1] Kappeler, A., Clayton, A. *The Russian Empire: a Multiethnic History*. Longman, 2001, p. 328.

[2] Henning, D. Revolution in Nordosteuropa und im Baltikum. *Revolution in Nordosteuropa.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011, S. 20. (Veröffentlichungen des Nordost–Instituts).

Beryl Williams, the generally excessive degree of centralisation of the Russian state had reached the point of exhaustion and had induced in society a new trend towards decentralisation. She also points out the fact that violence was far more rife in peripheral areas of the huge state than at its centre[3]. In his assessment of the causes for the revolution, Jan Kusber refers to a dominant view held by historians, namely, that contradictions existed between the autocratic form of state governance and prevailing social conditions and public sentiment, which only deepened at the start of the 20th century. The last two Tsars of Russia, Alexander III and Nicholas II, by implementing a policy of Russification, based on Great Russian nationalism and Russian Orthodoxy, led to nations throughout the huge country feeling alienated and in many cases suffering persecution. The scholar also lists a number of anachronisms of the Tsarist system such as the contrast between rapidly expanding urban centres and a patriarchal way of life in the countryside, as well as the impossibility to take part in and to influence political processes, which, in fact, was precluded at all levels of society.[4] The researcher James D. White has noted that polarisation of agrarian structures in the Baltic, compounded by an aggressive policy of Russification exacerbated local conditions to an extent unlike anywhere else in the provinces of Russia[5]. The historian Jānis Bērziņš concluded that the accumulated causes for a revolution at the beginning of the 20th century constituted on the territory of Latvia an irresolvable combination: overwelming ownership of rural land by the aristocracy, where peasants owned only about one-third of the land, the pressence of a substantial number of landless peasants, the remnants of feudal privileges for estate owners, the two-fold national oppression, and the struggle by workers for political and eonomic rights, which ran up against the limited legal room to manoeuvre within Russia as an autocratic state. All possibilities for evolutionary development allowed by the Tsarist regime in Russia, had been fully exhausted. The scholar also insists that the first stage of the Awakening of the Latvian people, which had been set in motion by the movement of the New Latvians, ended with the events of the 1905 Revolution.[6] It is well-known that the unsuccessful Russo–Japanese War in the Far East, which demanded significant material resources, as well as numerous soldiers, acted as a catalyst for revolutionary events. Many protests ocurred immediately preceding and during the Revolution, targeting military service, whereby newly called up individuals were immediately dispatched to serve at front lines.

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[3] Williams, B. 1905: The view from the provinces. *The Russian Revolution of 1905. Centenary Perspectives*. Routlege, 2005, p. 34.

[4] Kusber, J. Die russischen Revolution von 1905 und 1917. *Revolution in Nordosteuropa*, S. 66.

[5] White, J. D. The Revolution in the Baltic Provinces. *The Russian Revolution of 1905. Centenary Perspectives*. Routlege, 2005, pp. 55, 60.

[6] Bērziņš, J. Piektajam gadam — 100. *1905. gads Latvijā: 100. Pētījumi un starptautiskas konferences materiāli, 2005. gada 11.–12. janvāris, Rīga*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2006, 13.–14. lpp.

The clash in Riga on 13 January 1905

The 1905 Revolution in Russia was sparked by troops opening fire on a peaceful demonstration of workers in St. Petersburg on 9 January. Several days later a similar incident occurred in Riga — by the Daugava River, on 13 January; excepting that in this case the demonstrators were not petitioners asking for clemency by the Tsar. This impressive stream of striking workers in Riga struck fear and confusion into the authorities, and the strikers gained a sense of solidarity, the illusion of having real unequalled power.

News of events in St Petersburg became public knowledge despite strict censorship, and a general, politically-motivated strike began in Riga on 12 January, as was the case elsewhere in Russia; these strikes grew into impressively massive demonstrations. Clashes by demonstrators with police, who were present in significant numbers, however, did not, in fact, take place on this date. Strike continued the following day — 13 January, when in addition to large factories and other industrial plants, smaller enterprises — workshops and printing works — joined in.

Workers from several suburbs of Riga flowed towards the centre of Riga during the morning of 13 January, and around mid-day they set off in the direction of the Moscow suburb of Riga where the M. S. Kuznetsov Porcelain Factory was still working; work at this factory was halted, and, after an extensive demonstration was held, all of the demonstrators turned around, either to return to the centre of Riga, or to pass through the city centre to their homes in various outlying districts. The city police of Riga, having received news that a large group of people was moving towards the city centre, and that the crowd behaviour at times was destructive, took a decision — to prevent the crowd from entering the city core, which contained banks and various commercial enterprises. Contradictory versions exist concerning crowd numbers. Investigation documents estimate the number at 8000, various memoirs give the number as high as 70 000.

A military unit was sent to the place where the street from the Moscow suburb ended in front of the city centre, on the bank of the Daugava River. The unit was the 2nd Company of the training battalion from the military school in Riga for non-commissioned officers; this unit had unexpectedly and without proper training been assigned the task over two days to maintain order in the city. Night was falling on the short day, visibility was poor, and throughout that day the occasional encounter between demonstrators and the military had resulted in the soldiers withdrawing in the face of crowd pressure, hence warnings to disperse were not taken seriously enough, and furthermore, the route home for many demonstrators meant passing through the city centre. The crowd was in fact hemmed in within a small square, with the left side formed by the river bank, and the military unit in front and on their right side, and the railway embankment in the rear. According to documentation of their questioning, the soldiers asserted that the people in the crowd had been aggressive; whistling, shouting, even occasional shots fired, and general bedlam. Memoirs of members of the demonstration also agree that some people in the crowd had weapons, and injuries to

the soldiers indicate that these had been used, and that, possibly, this had provoked the clash. Shots were fired directly into the crowd, at short range. The following day, Capt. Nikolai Iordansky, commander of the 2nd Company, reported to Col. Fyodor Alexandrov, commander of the training battalion, that a total of 290 cartridges had been fired.[7] However, other evidence presented at the investigation shows that, according to autopsies of those who were killed, some had died from blows and stab wounds. Data has been found about 67 casualties from this clash, who died either immediately, or later of their wounds, among them one soldier. There were 84 wounded individuals who registered with medical institutions, among them 7 members of the 2nd Company. This firing at demonstrators on the bank of the Daugava River on 13 January became a watershed in the development of revolutionary events in Latvia and acted as catalyst of the development of future events.

Workers from the second largest industrial city of Latvia, Liepāja, also took part in the general strike. There engagement of fighters during the events of 13 January was by contrast open, with a group attacking the central telephone station on the morning of that day. The station guards were disarmed, telephone and telegraph equipment was damaged, leaving only a single line in working order, so that the strikers would be able to communicate with their comrades in Riga; a non-commissioned officer of the police was killed in clashes in the port of Liepāja. There were only some instances of strikes in other cities and district towns in Latvia, without any protest actions held.

Events during the spring of 1905, the strike movement

The general politically-motivated strike continued in Riga even after demonstrators were fired at, and in Riga fallen workers were buried practically every day when demonstrations were held. Strikes continued at enterprises in Riga, Liepāja, and Jelgava, even after the All-Russian politically-motivated strike came to an end.

Farm labourers gradually joined the strike movement, beginning with the early spring, they were among the most active participants during the 1905 Revolution in the Baltic governorates. Activation of this class was facilitated by the presence of an organisational network set up by Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party (LSDWP) to cover the rural areas of the Governorates of Vidzeme and Kurzeme. The first strikes by farm labourers from the estates of Kurzeme broke out in March 1905 and affected the districts of Kuldīga, Dobele, Ventspils, Aizpute, and Grobiņa, in all the territories of 40 civil parishes and of 60 manors and half-manors.[8]

Meetings of farm labourers on estates or in other public places preceded actual strikes; these often turned into demonstrations addressed by Social Democratic agitators who invited listeners not to bring forward only narrow economic demands,

[7] See the report "Rīgas apakšvirsnieku mācību bataljona 2. rotas komandiera kapteiņa Jordanska ziņojums mācību bataljona komandierim Aleksandrovam 1905. gada 14. janvārī." LVVA, 117. f., 1. apr., 546. l., 25. lp.

[8] Puļķis, A., Ronis, I. Revolucionārā kustība Latvijas laukos 1905. gadā. *Latvijas strādnieki un zemnieki 1905.–1907. gada revolūcijā.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1989, 98. lpp.



Fig. 1. Demonstration in Dundaga 6 March 1905. (Source: Latvian War Museum, inv. nr. 96736664)

pointing out that the economic status of farm labourers could only come about after the existing system of autocracy would be destroyed. It appears that demands by striking rural farm labourers were met in part, but no study has been made of this. However, many surviving documents from public authorities testify to an enormous wave of repressions that rolled over strikers. The only response of the government to the numerous protest actions both in the cities and countryside was introduction effective 15 March 1905 of a state of increased security in the Governorates of Vidzeme and Kurzeme.[9] For their part estate owners began to billet military units with a view to maintaining order, but these soldiers behaved violently and rudely towards the peasants, which only served to exacerbate the situation.

Democratic members of the intelligentsia engaged in political activities. In this way, the basic principles were drafted at illegal meetings of schoolteachers for a new education programme, which called for serious reform of how studies were conducted, emphasising teaching in the native tongue (which had been completely pushed out of schools during the period of the lengthy and aggressive period of Russification), leaving the Russian language as one subject of instruction. Reacting to the invitation by Tsar Nikolai II issued on 18 February 1905 to present petitions and proposals for reform an extensive campaign of petitions was set in motion in which diverse layers of society took part including more than 200 members of the Latvian intelligentsia — Rūdolfs Blaumanis, Jānis Pliekšāns (Rainis), Janis Rozentāls, Arveds Bergs, and others.

[9] *Лифляндские губернские ведомости,* № 29, 1905, 16 марта.

Activation of fighters

The wide range of public demonstrations and the violent response coming from the authorities to a certain extent caught unprepared the sole influential political force, the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party — which had been formed illegally. The official press organ of the LSDWP, *Cīņa* (Struggle) reacted with some delay, publishing an article on how the struggle was to be waged only in February/March, trying to provide answers to issues which preoccupied members of the social democratic movement. The article pointed out that the dream of a peaceful revolution was over and called for arms to be taken up, to acquire weapons, to wage armed struggle against the autocratic state system. There was a detailed exposition of practical tasks to be carried out, emphasising that the greatest enemies were policemen, cossacks, officers, gendarmes, and spies who had to be ferreted out and destroyed.

These tasks became the basis for action by the radical Social Democrats and led to the appearance creation of groups of armed fighters. These fighters were one of the most visible and controversial aspects of the 1905 Revolution. Fighters in Latvia belonged to various different political parties: the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (RSDWP), the Jewish Bund, factions of the Social Democracy, Anarchists-Communists, and the Latvian Social Democratic Union. Documents from the police and gendarmerie show clearly the presence of Russian SR Party in Riga, but also that it was unable to undertake active measures and organise any terror acts. No actual groups of fighters were formed as of the eve of the Revolution, with the task to engage in actual fighting, this was done by individual members of various factions. Their primary task was to provide security for meetings, strikes and demonstrations organised by workers, events which took place in increasing numbers.

The next step taken by the fighters' movement was forming specialised units which took place during the spring and early summer of 1905. They consisted of members of Social Democrat groups, and often also of workers whose ideological disposition was not that clear, but who were motivated by a reckless desire for excitement. Thus, on the one hand the conspiratorial element was enhanced since information about specific operations was no longer widely discussed by all members of a group. On the other hand, recklessness and poorly planned and executed operations resulted in failure. The formation of fighter groups led to their greater overall activity. Attacks on members of factory administration were the most frequent occurrence. Cossacks were frequently billeted at factories and other industrial facilities, as they were used to maintain order and to combat striking workers. Poorly organised and lightly armed workers could not hope to prevail against the army, but they were able to settle accounts with particularly hostile foremen, their assistants, strike-breakers, or those who were suspected spies, i.e. those who informed factory administrators about socially active workers, who were then threatened with repressions — fines, loss of employment, and arrest. Physical settling of accounts or moral humiliation, which entailed public and humiliating eviction from the place of work and was meted out to members of the administration of many enterprises and often could have lethal consequences. Thus, on 16 March

1905, the mechanic-foreman Karl Albin of the Russo-Baltic Wagon Factory was fatally injured, while on 5 April Pēteris Pavasars, a foreman at the Hesse Factory in Riga, was mortally injured, and on 7 August, a similar fate befell Ernst Gotze, director of a wax-cloth factory at Jelgava.[10]

The first bomb outrages took place in Riga during April and May, 1905: on 22 April a bomb was hurled at a unit of the 18th Don Cossack Regiment whilst they were on patrol on a city street, while on 1 May, a device was thrown at a unit from the same Cossack regiment in the centre of Riga (Vērmane's Park) when they were attempting to clear the area of people. The first attempt failed, while in the second case two horses were affected and one rider suffered slight injuries. The third bomb attack took place the following day — on 2 May, in Grīziņkalns, on the periphery of Riga, a bomb was thrown at policemen standing guard at the popular Apollo theatre; two policemen were killed, while a third suffered lesser injuries but was killed by a shot fired point-blank. This and other outrages were investigated successfully and Arkady Koshko, head of the Investigations Branch of the Riga City Police Department, distinguished himself in the process. His peers noted that his achievements comprised introduction of cruel system of torture and its application to various suspects (in particular, in political cases) with the result that this department gained notoriety even beyond the borders of the Russian Empire.[11]

The Church during the 1905 Revolution

Inasmuch as the 1905 Revolution impacted all aspects of daily life, undoubtedly it also affected the Church. A situation had come about that confessional fragmentation also reflected political fragmentation; in Kurzeme and in Vidzeme, the Evangelical Lutheran Church was on the side of the German aristocracy, the Russian Orthodox Church — the Tsarist government, which shamelessly used it to implement its Russification policy, while the Catholic Church dominant in Latgale was on the side of the local landed gentry. An edict was issued on the eve of the revolution, on 12 December 1904, "On instructions for improvement of public policy", which also slightly affected the Church. This act meant that henceforward greater tolerance in religious matters would be the rule; administrative steps were awaited that would eliminate restrictions on other religious confessions. This act had little practical impact on daily life, given the rapid pace of how revolutionary events progressed; rather, the act aroused hopes for future change. The following act of 17 April 1905 strengthened religious freedom and allowed the transfer from Russian Orthodoxy to another confession, and gave the right to representatives of various religious denominations to be active within the Russian Empire.

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[10] *Baltijas Vēstnesis,* Nr. 58, 1905, 17. marts; Nr. 75, 1905, 6. apr.; *Rīgas Avīze*, Nr. 18, 1905, 28. janv.; Nr. 19, 1905, 29. janv.; *Mitauische Zeitung*, Nr. 67, 1905, 27. aug.; Nr. 68, 1905, 31. aug.

[11] Tribune. 1907. gada 5. marts. LVVA, 117. f., 1. apr., 1954. l., 203.–204. lp.

The heavy bureaucratic apparatus of state governance in regard to adopting and implementing law meant that the process was delayed for years on end with acts and implementing rules adopted at several levels of public authority. However, formation of new religious confessions on the territory of Latvia must be regarded as an achievement. The researcher Roberts Ķipurs has studied creation of a Seventh Day Adventist parish in Liepāja in 1905, in Jelgava in 1907, and later after the revolution in Ventspils, in 1908, and in Valka, in 1909. His conclusion was that the attitude displayed thereby by the Tsarist authorities led to the Adventists never opposing the existing public order, and never threatened either the Tsar or the Russian Empire. The presence of a number of small religious affiliations tended to weaken the position of the Catholic and Lutheran Churches in the Baltic, to the advantage of the Tsarist government.[12]

The Old-Believers benefitted tremendously from the opportunity to legitimate their future activities as a religious community. They had been present on the territory of Latvia from the end of the 17th century onwards, but the Grebenshchikov Old-Believers' Parish of Riga, who owned a refuge, hospital, and cemetery, was first registered with the Riga District Court on 1 November 1907. [13]

The previously mentioned act on religious freedom also established the important provision that religious instruction at school was to be carried out in the mother tongue of pupils; this was implemented in the Governorates of Vidzeme and Kurzeme starting already with October 1905, and was a slight, albeit important achievement, during a period of intense Russification.

A unique form of protest developed during the 1905 Revolution — demonstrations held in churches in Vidzeme and Kurzeme, which was not found elsewhere in Latvia. These protests took the form of interrupting services, singing revolutionary songs and holding a meeting both inside and outside the church. Researchers have shown that this phenomenon basically affected the Lutheran Church, with a few instances also occurring at Orthodox churches, but was unknown among the Roman Catholic parishes. Based on his studies, Valdis Tēraudkalns concluded that this was not in essence a new form of protest, since it was resorted to during the 19th century in Vidzeme, to protest the presence of undesirable pastors.[14] Presently we know that these protests occurred in approximately 40 different parishes during the spring and summer of 1905, in some cases more than once at the same venue. These were not spontaneous events, they were planned by members of rural units of the LSDWP; the choice of venue for a protest action was determined by the nature of activity by the LSDWP in the immediate neighbourhood, and also by the relationship between church represen-

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[12] Ķipurs, R. Latvijas Septītās dienas adventistu draudžu vēsture: 1896.–1940. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 4, 1998, 35. lp.

[13] Pazuhina, N. Labdarība vecticībnieku kultūrā: Rīgas Grebenščikova draudzes pieredze 1920.–1930. gados. *Latvijas vecticībnieki: identitātes saglabāšanas vēsturiskā pieredze. Rakstu krājums*. Rīga: LU Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts; Rīgas Grebenščikova vecticībnieku kopiena; Vecticībnieku biedrība Latvijā, 2014, 98. lpp.

[14] Tēraudkalns, V. 1905. gada revolūcija: vēsturiski teoloģiskas refleksijas. *Starptautiska konference. Informācija, revolūcija, reakcija: 1905.–2005. 2005. gada 23.–25. novembris, Rīga (Latvija): materiālu krājums*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka, 2005, 36. lpp.

tatives and parishioners. On several occasions violence was perpetrated against specific pastors, and evidence has survived that five Evangelical Lutheran pastors were assassinated.



Fig. 2. Demonstration at a church in the summer of 1905. Reproduction of a painting by K. Miesnieks. (Source: Miesnieks K. *Mana dzīve un darbs mākslā.* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1959, 288. lpp.)

Pressing problems which had developed over time, concerning largely the Evangelical Lutheran Church were reflected in the political press rather extensively during the period of the 1905 Revolution. The predominant themes were protests against the patronage system which prevented parishioners from participating in the choice of pastor, leaving the decision entirely to the German landed gentry. Based on her study of the relationship between the state and the church Inese Runce maintains that the Governor-General of the Baltic, Vasily Sologub, expressed opposition to the patronage system, but feels that he was motivated by attempts of the Russian Empire to subordinate the Church.[15] However, despite impressive protests against the historically outdated system which had lost its moral basis, it survived essentially unchanged. The system of remuneration of the pastors of Evangelical Lutheran parishes which had developed historically also aroused protest, since the situation had come about where a pastor received the compulsory religious levies, and, in addition, managed a piece of land where he acted in the same manner as an estate owner. The scholar V. Tēraudkalns has written that there was a much older reason for the antagonism against the Church manifested during the revolution period, which can be related to the dual attitude of the 19th century Latvian nationalists towards religion; the emerging Latvian intelligentsia largely became alienated from the Church, adopting the position as a free-thinking part of contemporary society. He also points out the fact that, in contrast to matters in Europe, Latvian social democrats largely espoused an anti-clerical and atheistic version of socialism.[16] Conditions developed during the summer of 1905 that the practice of regular weekly religious services was interrupted in various parts of the Governorates of Vidzeme and Kurzeme, and during the autumn and towards the end of the year, most rural churches were closed, with their pastors, just as the landed gentry, fearing unrest and seeking refuge in cities.

[15] Runce, I. *Mainīgās divspēles. Valsts un baznīcas attiecības Latvijā: 190–1940.* Rīga: LU Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts, 2013, 108.–109. lpp.

[16] Tēraudkalns, V. 1905. gada revolūcija: vēsturiski teoloģiskas refleksijas, 36. lpp.



Fig. 3. The last Latvian. This cartoon illustrates a long-held dream of a large part of the Baltic German population — to transform the Baltic into a land inhabited only by Germans. Drawing by Rihards Zariņš. Series: Reports in the press about Latvians. II. Baltische Tageszeitung. (Source: *Svari,* Nr. 1, 1906, 10. lpp.)

Events during the summer of 1905

Resistance developed during the summer of 1905 against mobilisation to serve in the army, and extensive strikes broke out among workers on estates throughout Vidzeme and Kurzeme, with greatest activity in the districts of Dobele and Bauska. On this occasion servants of farmers joined striking estate farmworkers. Strikes coincided with the time for bringing in the harvest and were accompanied by various acts of violence — estate outbuildings were set ablaze, as was fodder prepared for livestock, taverns and local authority buildings, telephone and telegraph lines, the railway were vandalised, officials, nobles, policemen, and other representatives of local authorities were attacked, with the result that martial law was declared in Kurzeme on 6 August 1905. Demands by farmworkers were of an economic nature: reduce daily working hours to 10 (seasonally there could be 16 working hours per day), improved living conditions, separate living quarters for a family with children, increase wages. Gains resulting from these strikes were slight and very short-lived. The Treasury Chambers of the Governorates of Kurzeme and Vidzeme who were ordered by the Governor-General of the Baltic to study living conditions of farm labourers, produced findings which confirmed the reasons why such a broad segment of the rural population took part in the revolutionary movement: as many as 16 working hours per day at peak season, poor food and low wages, the latter allowing survival with nothing left over for savings, hopeless attempts to better one's social status.[17]

Resistance to the mobilisation which was declared on 16 August 1905 was in evidence both rurally and in the cities and towns; it proved impossible to quash this resistance. Serious clashes with the military units occurred in Liepāja on 19 and 20 August, when a crowd sought to prevent those who had been called up from reaching the railway station.[18]

[17] Baltijas guberņu kamerālpalātu ziņojumi par laukstrādnieku ekonomisko stāvokli Vidzemes un Kurzemes guberņās 1905. gadā [dokumentus no krievu valodas tulkojusi, publicēšanai sagatavojusi un komentējusi Līga Lapa]. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 2015, 121.–145. lpp.

[18] *Baltijas Vēstnesis,* Nr. 185, 1905, 25. aug.

Assault on the Central Prison of Riga in September 1905

In their investigation of operations by fighters the police were able rapidly to identify the origin of the casings used for bombs, which were quite openly made in the metal-working facility, *Fenikss,* under the direction of Jānis Lācis, a member of the Riga Committee of the LSDWP; all of the other details of bomb-making were identified. A large number of arrests ensued, and those detained were held in the recently-completed central prison; those still at liberty conceived a plan to free the prisoners and then to flee; imprints were obtained of keys to the gates and to individual cells from builders of the prison. The central prison was successfully attacked on the night of 7/8 September and this feat earned considerable public resonance. Two arrested persons were freed and they fled from the prison, together with the attackers who had suffered no casualties, leaving behind two dead and three wounded prison guards. During the Soviet period, this action was deemed a success, and one may concur with this assessment in terms of how it discredited the autocratic regime. In actual fact, the publicity attached to it was unnecessary; the original keys had been made of special Swedish steel alloy, and, thus, the copies were far less robust so that they broke when used, which explains why only two cells could be opened.

The Manifesto of 17 October 1905 and formation of trade unions

The principal events of the 1905 Revolution took place during the autumn and these were kicked off by the All-Russia political strike which broke out on 7 October on the railway line Moscow–Kazan and soon spread to become a nation-wide political strike which was joined step-by-step by residents in the Governorates of Vidzeme, Kurzeme, and Vitebsk. On 17 October, a manifesto was issued by Tsar Nikolai II, "On Improvement of the State Order", which set out the basic civil rights of citizens and began the process of transforming the empire into a constitutional monarchy. This manifesto evoked in the residents of Latvia a rise in revolutionary sentiment, and members holding radical views gained ground within social democratic organisations.[19]

Real power in Riga more and more passed into the hands of Federative Committee of social democratic organisations which had been formed in September 1904 by members of the LSDWP and the Jewish Bund, and which started to function during the spring and summer of 1905. Large rallies and public meetings were held in theatres and halls of public organisations following proclamation of the manifesto in Riga.

Workers taking part in the large rallies began to group together by their profession, which ultimately led to creation of trade unions. Such unions with membership drawn from a particular sector of the economy are an association of workers or employees, and unions act to defend the economic and social rights of their members.

[19] *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture.* I: *Latvija no gadsimta sākuma līdz neatkarības pasludināšanai. 1900–1918.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2000, 351.–352. lpp.

Unions appeared in Western Europe and in the USA at the end of the 18th century, while in the Russian Empire unions were only formed during the 1905 Revolution and was one of the achievements of this revolution. Interest in Latvia about open and legal workers' organisations dates from the end of the 19th century, in parallel with the development of capitalism and formation of the working class, movement towards its emancipation, more active participation in public life, in particular, through the work of numerous economic associations which were established starting from the 1860s onwards. Strike committees were formed in advance of the 1905 Revolution in many cities of the Russian Empire: in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga, and elsewhere; these took the form of councils at factories and other industrial plants, which in addition functioned as professional associations, and were the nucleus for future trade unions. These kinds of organisation were present by early 1905 at several factories and plants in Riga.

The next step consisted of unification of all groups of workers in a particular sector. In Riga workers at printing houses, railway workshops, mechanical engineering and several other sectors were organised, but they were only semi-legal in terms of their activities as the authorities sought to suppress them. Activities of the union representing workers at printing houses were clandestine in drafting demands by typesetters and printing press operators which then were agreed with the employers with the first rudimentary collective work agreement signed on 8 March 1905, with 22 printing houses in Riga.[20]

Development of the union movement was more rapid in the industrial regions of Central Russia and the I All-Russian Conference of Unions was convened in Moscow on 24 September 1905. Delegates from 26 professional organisations in Moscow took part in this conference, as did representatives from five cities in Russia (Riga was not one of them). Trade unions began to form here after proclamation of the manifesto of 17 October, which provided for freedom of association. It proved possible to establish unions of steel industry workers, of tailors and seamstresses, of workers at commercial and industrial undertakings. A central bureau of trade unions was created by the end of October which paid particular attention to organising workers in sectors where such activities had been slow to develop previously.

By December 1905, there were approximately 25 trade unions in Riga which covered all of the important sectors of industry: metalworking, chemicals, textiles, food processing, printing houses, etc., as well as workers at various offices and undertakings. Activities by the unions of railway workers, also of workers at post offices and telegraph offices earned great public visibility. The organisation of railway workers began its activities surreptitiously during the first half of October, while, after proclamation of the 17 October Manifesto, it turned into a chapter of the All-Russian Railway Workers' Trade Union. This trade union enjoyed good contact with the head of the Riga railroad nexus, Iosif Daragan, who personally took part in solving economic problems. The professional association of postal and telegraph workers was established

[20] Lapa, L. Arodorganizāciju pirmsākumi Latvijā 1905. gadā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 1992, 91. lpp.

after the All-Russian political strike and had branches in Moscow, Samara, Tsarytsin, Riga, and Liepāja. The first congress of representatives of this sector took place on 15 November 1905 in Moscow with 109 delegates participating of which one was from Riga, Jēkabs Jansons, a worker at the Riga Central post office.[21]

Repressive acts began in Riga against members of the organisation after a general strike by postal and telegraph workers which began on 15 November and lasted until 18 December, with serious consequences for economic life. In an attempt to stabilise the economic situation, the Tsarist government issued a decree on 5 December forbidding workers to strike at state offices, including postal and telegraph offices, and railway workers, as well as forbidding them to join professional organisations and for the administration to cooperate with such organisations. The central office of railwaymen in Riga ceased its activities at the end of December 1905. The unions representing railwaymen, also those of postal and telegraph workers, were the only ones whose members were brought to trial. Workers in both of these sectors were unable to restart organisation of a union in future years up until the February revolution since the decree giving the temporary regulations on associations and unions issued on 4 March 1906, only allowed them to organise charitable, mutual assistance and funeral organisations.[22]

The democratic intelligentsia took part in the process of establishing trade unions. Its members — school-teachers — had unsuccessfully tried from 1903 onwards to become organised along professional lines. Prior to outbreak of the 1905 Revolution here was near universal dissatisfaction in society concerning the education system. The provisional regulations on primary school administration promulgated 17 May 1887 for the Governorates of Vidzeme, Kurzeme, and Estonia reinforced the Russification system, which had started to give results by the turn of the century. In expelling the native tongue from schools, the Russification policy degraded the education system in its entirety. School-teachers themselves saw most clearly its shortcomings, and through attempts at organising they tried to find a way to overcome them. Several illegal gatherings of school-teachers took place in August 1904 and in February 1905, where the situation of teachers was discussed, as well as principles agreed for a new school programme, which called for substantial reform of teaching, emphasising the possibility of being taught in one's native tongue, relegating the Russian language to be one of the subjects. Jānis Asars, a publicist, compiled the new study programme, and it was published as a brochure in August 1905, under the title *Mūsu tautskola* (Our primary school).

An illegal social democratic teachers' organisation was formed during the spring of 1905, which, in fact, started to function as a trade union. In April, an illegal conference of school-teachers was held with a total attendance of 125 individuals, Latvian, Russian and Jewish teachers and workers in public education. One agenda item was the position to adopt on the question of establishing a chapter of an All-Russian

[21] Millere, M. Jēkabs Jansons. *Latvijas revolucionāro cīnītāju piemiņas grāmata*. 1. sēj., 3. d. Rīga: Avots, 1983, 200. lpp.

[22] *Лифляндские губернские ведомости*, № 31, 1906, 20 марта.

professional organisation for public education workers. Draft statutes for such an organisation had been worked out in Moscow and provided for members to deal with professional as well as political issues. The All-Russian Union of Teachers and Workers in Public Education was founded in Moscow at the beginning of April 1905; in the view of teachers in Riga, its statutes were judged as excessively modest, so that participation in the work of this union was to be limited to agreeing common tactics.[23] A small chapter of the All-Russian Union was established in Riga which consisted of Russian teachers from Riga who stood aside from on-going events in public life and paid their greatest attention to resolving conflicts.

A Bureau comprising publicly visible personalities was established at a joint meeting of educators and parents held on 26 October 1905: J. Rainis, K. Skalbe, E. Rozenberga (Aspazija), V. Plūdons, and others. The task of the Bureau was to administer education matters in place of the School Board, and to hold a Congress of the Educators of Latvia. Both organisations — the Bureau of the Social Democratic Educators, and the Bureau of Teachers and Parents, worked together harmoniously. The Congress of Primary School Teachers of Vidzeme and Kurzeme which met in Riga on 10–14 November undoubtedly was a major event in the political life of Latvia. Approximately 1000 delegates from various educational establishments took part in this Congress, where a new school programme was adopted, which called for obligatory six-year general primary education, with instruction at schools in the mother tongue, giving control over schools to local government authorities. The Congress of Primary School Teachers adopted a radical resolution, proposed by the LSDWP, of separating schools from the Church, rejecting a more moderate resolution of making religious instruction an optional subject. Delegates at the Congress were urged to implement the new study programme in future. It must be admitted that in many schools a lot of the features of the new programme had already been implemented during the autumn of 1905, such as teaching in the mother tongue, in advance of decisions taken at the Congress. The Congress of Primary School Teachers recognised the need to establish a trade union for educators, and tasked the Central Trade Union Bureau of Riga to work out the requisite statutes. Statutes for a Union of Primary School Teachers of Latvia were adopted at a meeting on 23 November of the Bureau elected at the Congress.[24] Additional principles had to be elaborated at the following congress which was scheduled for 27 December; the changed political situation meant that this assembly did not take place.

Trade unions were formed during November 1905 in Liepāja, the second largest city of Latvia. Three labour organisations were established in less than two months' time, with two local chapters created of the All-Russian teachers and railway workers' unions. Three independent labour organisations and a chapter of the All-Russian union of civil servants were formed in Jelgava. The trade unions became politicised, as was the case for other public organisations. The leading role of the RSDWP in terms of

[23] Vičs, A. *Latviešu skolu vēsture.* 5. sēj.: *Laikmets no 1905.–1915. g.* Rīga: R. L. B. Derīgu grāmatu nodaļa, 1940, 48. lpp.

[24] *Mājas Viesis,* Nr. 48, 1905, 30. nov.

generating ideas was acknowledged by the very first trade union to form, the (illegal) Union of Printing House Workers; later also by the All-Russian Union of Railway Workers. School-teachers openly sympathised with social democracy in Latvia.

The Association of the Factory Owners of Riga

The economic results and breadth of action undertaken by the workers, in the same way as in Western Europe induced entrepreneurs to close ranks and the Association of Factory Owners of Riga was established on 22 October 1905. A decision was taken at one of its first meetings, i.e. on 23 October, which the factory owners regarded as a most important and necessary step, that, in future, working hours could only be reduced at any plant, and wages increased on the basis of a decision taken by a committee of the Association.[25] Through their activities members of the Association of Factory Owners of Riga, at least initially, sought to continue to deal with workers as previously, without even taking into account efforts by factory inspectors of the Governorate to find a constructive approach to resolving confrontations between workers and owners. Thus, Alexander Bikov, a senior factory inspector for the Governorate of Vidzeme, expressed the view that disturbances then being experienced were eloquent testimony to a relationship between factory owners and workers which could not satisfy all of the demands being made of it, and which most definitely did not guarantee peaceful development of factories and industry. The only way to resolve matters was through contacts between owners and trade unions in the same way as was happening in many countries in Europe.[26] The situation changed slightly in early December 1905 due to a rapid decline in the economy, and at a plenary meeting of entrepreneurs it was decided to develop contacts with professional workers' organisations, but this did not happen in practice, given that the balance of power between the two sides changed thereafter. Faced with intensifying repressions, the professional organisations ceased their activities, or at least tried to save their illegal bureaus. A decree was issued on 4 March 1906, "On the provisional rules of associations and unions", which was the first legal act on the status of trade unions in the Russian Empire, which together with the formation of the trade union movement represents positive results of the 1905 Revolution.

Clashes in the Moscow suburb of Riga

At a time when Riga was overcome with a so-called delight in days of freedom, the tension was rising in the Moscow suburb of Riga, where traditionally a substantial Jewish community lived alongside Old-Believers and other ethnic Russians. Members

[25] See the minutes of this meeting, Fabrikantu biedrības sēde 1905. gada 23. oktobrī. LVVA, 2765. f., 1. apr., 9. l., 2. lp.

[26] LVVA, 2765. f., 1. apr., 9. l., 14. lp.; 14. l., 14. lp.

of the Jewish Diaspora justifiably feared being attacked, as the pogroms in Russia were widely described in newspaper reports. In turn, rumours began to circulate among Old-Believers who lived in a rather closed, conservative and inert environment that Latvians together with the Jews were getting ready to take revenge on Russians, who had refused to strike, or take part in revolutionary events, and who remained loyal to the Tsarist government. Both sides felt threatened and defenceless, and they reacted nervously to any incident in their vicinity, a sense of panic was rising, and various rumours circulated freely.

Some groups of fighters began to arrive in the Moscow suburb with a view to protecting the Jewish community there from possible violence; their role in protecting the Jewish Diaspora has been studied by the historian Aivars Stranga.[27] The Old-Believers viewed these groups as a threat. Persuaded that the self-defence groups were getting ready to wreak violence upon them the Old-Believers attacked any individual who had not previously been seen, and many clashes occurred in the area between 22 and 24 October as a result of which fighters and Old-Believers were injured, while degraded elements engaged in looting. The important outcome was that no pogroms took place, the Jewish community was protected and the arrival of fighters precluded any settling of accounts, and no one attempted to call for overt aggression in Riga against the Jewish Diaspora, as happened in very many cities in Russia.

Political activities and the Congress of Civil Parish Delegates

It was possible to establish political parties in Russia after proclamation of the Manifesto of 17 October. The Baltic Germans established the Baltic Constitutional Party and a constitutional monarchy party. Russians were represented by the Riga chapter of the Constitutional Democratic Party founded in Moscow and the Union of 17 October. The Latvian Constitutional Democratic Party and the Latvian Democratic Party represented the Latvian bourgeoisie.

An assembly of civil parish (*pagasts*) elders, their deputies, and clerks from the district of Riga gathered on 2 November 1905 acting on an initiative by the Governor of Vidzeme, Nikolai Zvegintsev, with the aim of compiling a list of the acute needs of local authorities, only to ascertain that this task was considerable, and, also, that without a doubt, this work needed to be continued. A bureau was created to do this comprising elders and clerks from four civil parishes, with Jānis Kroders, a clerk from Koknese civil parish, as chairman. A proposal was published for the reform of local authorities in Vidzeme; it was evident that similar problems existed in the Governorate of Kurzeme, and in those districts in Latgale with a Latvian population, whereupon representatives of these civil parishes were invited to come to Riga on 19 November, for a congress of local authorities, to discuss and develop a new plan for local

[27] Stranga, A. *Ebreji Baltijā. No ienākšanas pirmsākumiem līdz holokaustam. 14. gadsimts – 1945. gads.* Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2008, 361. lpp.

authorities.[28] On this date N. Zvegintsev, Governor of Vidzeme, informed delegates who had come to Riga, that the Congress could not take proceed, since resolution of problems in other Governorates was no longer within his powers. Nonetheless, delegates decided to disobey the Governor and proceeded with the congress. There were a number of issues on the agenda: concerning the political situation, existing shortcomings in the work of civil parish bodies, the next plan for local authorities, about the transition period. Calls were made at this congress to dissolve existing civil parish councils and to elect new executive committees in a democratic manner, as well as civil parish courts, to act until an All-Russian Constitutional Assembly would be convoked, where the issue of civil parish self-rule would be decided. Delegates elected a five-man central bureau of which three became publicly well-known: Jānis Asars, Jānis Brigaders, and Jānis Kroders.



Fig. 4. A cartoon reflecting the views of the newspaper, *Novoje vremja* which was equally critical of both opposing sides in the 1905 Revolution. Drawing by Rihards Zariņš. Series: Preses balsis par latviešiem. III. Novoje Vremja. (Source: *Svari*, Nr. 2, 1906, 23. lpp.)

Elections for executive committees at several civil parishes in Latvia had, in fact, already taken place; according to data compiled by the historian Kārlis Martinsons, such committees were constituted in 470 civil parishes, or 94% of the total number.[29] The working life of these councils was short, on average only slightly longer than one month. The elected bodies tackled governance issues, administered estates in the absence of the owner, collected taxes, dealt with schooling problems, etc. The work of these bodies was stopped upon arrival of punitive expeditions, and members of these committees were subjected to the harshest repressions, in particular, during December 1905 and at the beginning of 1906.

The historian J. Bērziņš has studied the development of the idea of Latvian statehood during the period of the 1905 Revolution.[30] His findings show that the first ideas about Latvian statehood appeared during the second half of the 19th century. Nonetheless the necessity of Latvian statehood became evident during the 1905 Revolution, although the idea of an independent Latvia outside the Russian Empire was not brought forward, but calls were made for greater or lesser self-determination in the form of a

[28] *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture.* I: *Latvija no gadsimta sākuma līdz neatkarības pasludināšanai,* 389. lpp.
[29] Turpat, 366. lpp.
[30] Bērziņš, J. Latvijas valstiskuma ideja 1905. gada revolūcijā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 1992, 84.–116. lpp.

vague form of autonomy within the Empire. Calls were made at the congresses of the primary school teachers and delegates from civil parishes for national autonomy, but owing to opposition by the politically influential LSDWP, the appropriate resolution was rejected.

Burning and destruction of manor houses

Some of the harshest events associated with the 1905 Revolution comprised mass arson and destruction or vandalising of manor and castles which occurred towards the end of 1905. Historical records give the following figures: a total of 418 manors (possibly 459 manors) in Vidzeme and Kurzeme;[31] these figures, however, do not give the entire picture, as in many cases outbuildings belonging to an estate were laid waste, as were servants' quarters and housing for other estate personnel. Chronologically, burning down manors began during the final week of November 1905 and continued throughout the month of December. Historians have not studied this process in detail, and the cases of arson are also rarely mentioned in memoirs, as with the passage of time their mention became discomfiting. A study of materials available leads to the conclusion that arson in most cases was not spontaneous; rather it was carried out deliberately, to eliminate support points, including housing, for the German nobles and for the Tsarist army units. The decision to proceed could be taken by the civil parish executive committee, or by members of the illegal Social Democrat organisation, or by both, acting together. The majority of cases occurred in rural areas with strong social democratic character which is evident from many historical sources. Some historical records point to the activity of armed bandits engaged in looting, particularly in the vicinity of Cēsis. Records from investigations of cases of arson show that peasants also engaged in looting manors, targeting wine cellars, slaughtering valuable pure-bred animals, or carrying them off to be sold. Court documents also paint a picture of resistance put up by persons living on estates, including, in some instances, armed defence against arsonists, heroic rescue of valuables and other items, hiding them and later returning them to the rightful owners.

It is difficult to grasp the magnitude of losses incurred as a result of these cases of arson: architecturally valuable ensembles of buildings were destroyed, as were tools and agricultural machinery, the latter then quite rare; animals were slaughtered which had been assiduously bred, stocks of animal feed and cereals were destroyed. Valuable works of art were destroyed, in addition to the above material items, so were unique historical records and archives; libraries were lost which had been carefully constituted over many centuries.

On 15 March 1906, the State Council acted on an initiative of Tsar Nicholas II and decided on compensation to be given to individuals who farmed the land and who had suffered as a result of the revolution (practically this meant country noblemen). Com-

[31] *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture.* I: *Latvija no gadsimta sākuma līdz neatkarības pasludināšanai,* 388. lpp.

mittees were created at district level consisting of members of the Tsarist administration and the nobility to decide the amount of compensation. Thus, for example, the district of Riga which was among the worst affected, was allocated a total sum of 110 000 roubles for compensation in 1906, and 195 000 roubles in 1907. The Provisional Committee for the district of Cēsis received 37 applications for compensation totalling 1 591 363.75 roubles in 1906 alone.[32] Requests by owners were accompanied by supporting documents from which it is possible to ascertain damage at individual estates. Maximillian von Sivers, a distinguished biologist and specialist in dendrology, owner of the estate at Skrīveri, requested compensation in the amount of 124 000 roubles: 106 000 roubles to renew damaged buildings, and 18 000 roubles to replace equipment. With the limited funds at its disposition, the Committee was able to grant only a sum of 20 000 roubles.[33]

The government did not regard it possible to compensate for all of the physical damage that had been caused, rather, the aim of granting partial compensation was to promote a quick restart of economic activity. No study has been carried out of the attitude adopted by insurance companies for claims for damage to insured property, but, based on indirect evidence (for example, from court cases), their attitude was clearly dismissive, resorting to the argument which today is known as "force majeure".

The armed struggle

The Revolution culminated with armed skirmishes in the cities and countryside of Latvia; in some areas, they developed into an armed, full-scale uprising (for example, in Talsi and in Tukums). Both the LSDWP and the RSDWP had charted the road to an armed uprising from the beginning of 1905 onwards. A similar position was adopted by a number of opposition movements for the liberation of Russia at the party conferences in Paris, from 30 September to 4 October 1904 and 2–8 April 1905.[34] The question of weapons was particularly acute — they were acquired by disarming policemen, confiscating them from individuals who had the right to carry them, by collecting money or executing armed expropriations so as to buy weapons abroad. Groups of fighters tended to be well-armed, but their activities often bordered on criminality, and often this border was crossed. Criminals impudently styled themselves as freedom fighters and carried out robberies in the name of political parties.

Society gradually grew accustomed to the idea that violence was part of the manner in which the social democratic parties expressed their political views. Anna Geifman who has studied political terrorism, has noted that extremist activities by Latvian

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[32] Rīgas apriņķa komisijas priekšsēdētāja ziņojums Vidzemes gubernatoram 1906. gada 30. maijā. LVVA, 210. f., 1. apr., 36. l., 2. lp., 2. lp. o. p., 7. lp; Cēsu apriņķa komisijas sēdes protokols 1906. gada 15. martā. LVVA, 211. f., 1. apr., 39. l., 2. lp. o. p.

[33] See the application for compensation, Īpašuma Remershof (Skrīveri) īpašnieka Maksa Augusta d. fon Siversa, kurš dzīvo Rīgā Reimersa ielā 1, lūgums Rīgas apriņķa komisijai. LVVA, 210. f., 1. apr., 24. l., 3., 5. lp.

[34] Чихару, *И. Японский резидент против Российской империи. Полковник Акаси Мотодзиро и его миссия. 1904–1905 гг.* Москва: Росспен, 2013, с. 88, 118–120.



Fig. 5. Col. N. Millers, Commander of the garrison at Tukums, shot during the uprising in Tukums. (Latvian War Museum, inv. nr. 4571-F)

fighters corresponded to similar behaviour throughout the Russian Empire.[35] During the autumn of 1905, and through to the end of that year, activities by fighters took the form of widespread expropriation of money from various undertakings, which most seriously affected vodka producers, warehouses and shops, both in urban and in rural areas. This was a rather easy way to gather funds, inflict losses on the state, and also corresponded to the political position expressed by the LSDWP, namely that the struggle against the Tsarist government had to attack greedy profits which it gained from drowning the masses in alcohol.

The people's militia was organised as armed units to maintain public order in civil parishes. This militia engaged in many clashes throughout Latvia with army units sent by the government — in Lielvārde, Aizpute, Vecpiebalga, Stāmeriena, Vecauce, and elsewhere. An armed uprising took place in two district towns — Tukums and Talsi — at the end of November and in early December. The most intense fighting took place in Tukums, where the Commander of the garrison fell, Lt. Col. Nikolay Miller, a battalion commander of the 180th Ventspils Regiment, in addition to a substantial number of members of the 9th Pskov Dragoon Regiment. The uprising was quelled by an army detachment from Jelgava under the command of General A. Horunzhenko, as a result of which many civilians were killed, including children. This army detachment entered Talsi after the armed militia and units from the surrounding civil parishes had evacuated the town, leaving only civilian inhabitants behind; the town was subjected to artillery fire, and then sacked burning down part of it (approximately 30 buildings).

Punitive expeditions

Historical accounts are dominated by the view that Baltic German nobles undertook active initiatives at the court of the Tsar, demanding introduction of the army to put down the revolution. The scholar Natalia Andreeva is of the opinion that the German Baltic nobles were equally active oriented towards Germany, with the result that the German Army Headquarters and members of the German government seriously considered intervening in Russia to deal with revolutionary events. None of these plans were acted upon, but the increase on pro-German sentiments of Baltic Germans was exploited during the First World War.[36] It must be recalled that, as a result of

[35] Geifman, A. *Death Orders. The Vanquard of Modern terrorism in Revolution Russia.* Santa Barbara: Praeger Security International, 2010, pp. 47–48.

[36] Андреева, Н. Революционный кризис 1905–1906 гг. как предлог для интервенции в Прибалтику? *Журнал Российских и восточноевропейских исследовании*, № 1, 2016, с. 70.

events during the autumn of 1905 that followed wide-spread political strikes which factory owners and their organisations were unable to avert, significant losses were incurred by industrial enterprises once they were unable to meet agreed delivery dates, and did not receive raw materials; future orders were lost as potential partners became cautious, whereupon an economically active and influential part of society became interested in calming society as quickly as possible.

Following an order by Tsar Nikolai II an act was issued on 28 November 1905 creating a temporary Governorate-General of the Baltic, consisting of the Governorates of Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Estonia and the army units in these territories. Lt. General Vasily Sologub was appointed on 4 December to the post of acting Governor-General.[37] The first elements of punitive expeditions arrived in the Baltic in mid-December 1905, once the railway began to function again after the end of the general political strike: General Alexander Orlov commanded units in the northern districts of Vidzeme, and General Walter Maynard, in the southern districts of Vidzeme, General Fyodor Wendt, in the area lying on both sides of the Riga–Daugavpils railway line, General Nikolai Poroshin, Colonels Vladimir Solonina, and Ivan Gordeyev, as well as General Piotr Nepenin — in Kurzeme. The researcher Jānis Krastiņš estimated that the total number of effectives in the military units deployed in the Governorates of Kurzeme and Vidzeme could have been as high as 15 000 well-armed and combat capable soldiers and officers,[38] who were accompanied by individuals given their status by the governor-General who provided the military with information, the so-called "honorary policemen", i.e. local landed gentry or members of their families.

The military units themselves encountered no resistance to their advance, but nevertheless many inhabited places and towns were subjected to artillery barrages. Afterwards all the residents of a civil parish were then assembled in order that the individuals, troublemakers, who were to be punished could be selected and these, most often, were shot (in particular during the early phase of activities by punitive expeditions). The death penalty was carried out with great public visibility, in the presence of family members and local residents, usually after the victims were physically abused. Information of the numbers punished this way in Vidzeme and Kurzeme during the second half of December 1905 and the first months of 1906 is incomplete, but a total of 1170 individuals killed has been calculated.[39] A large part of this number were members of the new forms of governance, civil parish committees and civil parish courts, schoolteachers or simply publicly active persons. The system of taking hostages was widely practised, wherein family members — parents, children, life partners and other relatives had to take responsibility in terms of their belongings or lives for every activist under suspicion who remained free. For example, three hostages were executed in August 1906 in the civil parish of Drusti — the schoolteacher Jēkabs Šīrons, as well as the father and son, Dāvis and Jānis Šūlmeisters, in retribution for the killing of a

[37] See: Nikolaja II nolikums 1905. gada 4. decembrī. LVVA, 6989. f., 1. apr., 11. l., 2. lp.
[38] Krastiņš, J. *1905. gada revolūcija Latvijā.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1975, 250. lpp.
[39] *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture.* I: *Latvija no gadsimta sākuma līdz neatkarības pasludināšanai,* 389. lpp.

village constable (Russ. *урядник*).[40] The practice was equally wide-spread of burning down peasant homes and their contents, occasionally together with their cattle, although usually everything of value had been stolen before fire was set to the buildings. Evidence survives that many of these homesteads had already been bought and paid for, and were private property.

The period of activities by the punitive expeditions is one of the darkest in the history of Latvia, and the view put forward in a question posed to the State Council that during their actions in the Baltic Governorates the punitive expeditions behaved like a foreign army in hostile territory. The army rampaged through the countryside of Latvia all of 1906, returning to some places more than once, even without cause. Thus, the newspaper *Mūsu Laiki* (Our Times) reported in May 1906, that in a single month 235 individuals had received corporal punishment in the civil parish of Alūksne, despite no manor having been torched in the area, and in the absence of any acts of revolutionary excess.[41] Considerable evidence has survived of looting by soldiers and officers, overt theft (under the guise of conducting a search), cruel behaviour towards family members, violence perpetrated against women, extortion and drunken behaviour. Reports gathered during the inter-war period by the society *Piektais gads*[42] (1926–1941) also testify to severe trauma, various levels of physical harm and cases of mutilation, as well as slashing with swords during so-called "questioning". Mass application of physical punishment, often with lethal outcome, was also traumatic. Being forced to witness the execution and application of death penalties to persons close to them were equally traumatic to the psyche of individuals. In many cases persons were killed without their relatives being informed, their bodies left unburied or very casually interred. Thus, many reports appeared in the press in the period 1906–1907 about human remains found in forests and fields, and about attempts by relatives to identify such remains.

Behaviour of punitive expeditions was never subjected to legal review or investigated, with brutal application of force leaving many who survived being punished without the physical ability to work so as to ensure their own existence, or that of their family, which often meant a change in the social status of the family. Historians have not studied the economic side of the work of the punitive expeditions inasmuch as these had the right to sequester peasants' property in the interests of the state. Historical sources show that these rights were often preferentially resorted to by targeting economically active peasants, ones who had bought their properties from estate owners and paid off any debts so that these were held in freehold, thereby becoming economic competitors to the latter. For example, in March 1906, property belonging to Nikolajs Delle a peasant in Grazdona civil parish, residing at Ķipas homestead, was first seized as collateral, and then sold on the orders of Col. Esper Feldman, commander of the punitive expedition in Southern Vidzeme. N. Delle had been active in

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[40] *Latvijas revolucionāro cīnītāju piemiņas grāmata.* 1. sēj., 2. d., 181. lpp.

[41] *Mūsu Laiki,* Nr. 68, 1906, 5. maijā.

[42] Literally, the Fifth Year (in Latvian) which is understood from context to be identical with the year of the 1905 Revolution (Translator's note).

denouncing privileges enjoyed by the rural nobility, had been active in the sectors of market gardening, agriculture and dairy farming — introduced progressive methods in farming, bee-keeping, the processing of fruit, organised various courses on the production of wine — the latter not having been held previously in Latvia. Charges brought against him were banal — Philipp von Brümmer, owner of the estate Veckalsnava, did not wish to pay the debt he owed Delle.[43] N. Delle was only able legally to recover his property in 1922, when the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia introduced an appropriate exception to Article 51, Part 3 of the Agrarian Law.

The Forest Brothers' movement

The Forest Brothers' movement in rural Latvia started to develop in parallel with the appearance of punitive expeditions in mid-December 1905, and early January 1906. With the arrival of a punitive expedition and the start of repressions, those who had taken part in revolutionary events, alternatively, politically active individuals who held the existing order to be unjust but who had concealed their views had to decide — either to fall into the hands of repressive agencies, or to leave the place of their birth — depart for central governorates of Russia, to join Latvian colonies which had already been established there, or to emigrate to foreign countries. A combination of circumstances and different levels of material well-being lead to the decision — to take refuge in the forest, with the hope that threats would soon go away, to survive with support by family members with the possibility opening eventually to leave temporarily. Their contemporaries called them the Forest Brothers, with this appellation first appearing in the press at the beginning of 1906; rather quickly this term was understood and gained currency.

The Forest Brothers' movement began abruptly, it was not an activity planned and prepared in advance. The brothers had no clothing suitable for the season, nor food or weapons. It was not easy to live in the open during winter time, warming themselves by campfires, or finding refuge in hay lofts, which presented a challenge even to individuals who were used to hard labour: worries about food, the safety of their relatives, and unceasing flight from those who pursued them, erasing traces of their passage added to these problems. Those who sought refuge in the forest lacked survival skills and combat experience. These were acquired by doing. Individuals hid in forests, and some formed groups, which increased their chances of survival, maintaining their will to fight and to survive. To a large degree the self-organisation of groups of forest brothers occurred spontaneously, but members of various Social Democrat groups were at the heart of this process. Historical records show that a group of Forest Brothers was to be found in every civil parish or in its vicinity; such groups operated in 91 civil parishes in Kurzeme, 84 in Vidzeme, and 12 in Latgale; studies have estimated the total

[43] Balode, B. Agronoms, teologs, Latvijas Universitātes profesors Pēteris Delle (03.11.1877–30.12.1948). *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti*, 738. sēj., 2008, 134. lpp.

number of participants in the Forest Brothers' movement in Latvia to be 5000,[44] a figure which appears to be considerably exaggerated.

Attacks on civil parish offices, with a view to obtaining passport forms, seals of office, money, also the destruction of documents effacing traces that would lead to them began in December 1905 and continued in particular throughout January, more or less, simultaneous with the arrival of punitive expeditions. These actions were due to local members of the people's militia, representatives from groups of Social Democrats, and the just-formed groups of Forest Brothers. Attacks were carried out disregarding the presence of members of the punitive expeditions and local army units. The authorities were helpless faced with these attacks. Theft of passport documents and seals of office were particularly important. Forged papers were used by many revolutionaries to save themselves by crossing the borders of the Russian Empire.

Once they organised themselves into groups, took up communication with one another and developed contacts with social democratic party organisations the Forest Brothers became a force that civil parish residents had to reckon with, as had the Tsarist authorities and estate owners. The Forest Brothers understood their principal task to offer armed resistance to government actions, dealing with spies and traitors. This movement reached a high point in its activities during the summer of 1906, since the groups of fighters were highly mobile and were able thus to evade capture. However, it must be said that at the same time the forest brothers began increasingly to lose popular sympathy and support. The peasants found themselves in an unenviable position. Their daily life included supervision by military units, repressions, physical retribution, the economic sanctions organised by estate owners and their revenge, introduction of the system of collective responsibility for attacks by the Forest Brothers and enormous financial penalties exacted from civil parishes for every transgression. No action by the Forest Brothers passed off without consequences, a response followed from punitive expeditions, innocent people suffered, as well as supporters of the Forest Brothers. In turn, many groups of fighters rather quickly went through a moral decline, becoming simple thieves who rampaged and killed indiscriminantly. The groups of Forest Brothers who worked under the leadership of the LSDWP, grew more independent in their activities and methods to an extent that their link with the political party was purely formal.

Activities by the Forest Brothers declined sharply during the autumn of 1906 with the approach of another winter and the fact that many of their supporters had been killed or in jail or exiled, while others wanted a change from several years of unsettled and unstable life and return to a peaceful life. The leadership of the LSD after a lengthy debate adopted a stable position and decided to put an end to the Forest Brother movement. It was decided at the LSD conference of its rural organisations in November 1906 that the Forest Brother organisations should be terminated and declared that the social democratic party organisations would no longer have anything in common

[44] *Latvijas revolucionāro cīnītāju piemiņas grāmata.* 1. sēj., 2. d., 143. lpp.

with the Forest Brothers.[45] Individuals and groups left for Russia, Finland, Western Europe and more distant parts, some were able to continue to live in Latvia on the basis of forged documents — this was not difficult to do so in the large industrial centre such as Riga. The Forest Brother movement ceased to exist in the rural areas of Latvia. The movement cannot be simply evaluated. Recourse to violence both by the repressive agencies of the government and by the Forest Brothers who were inspired by revolutionary dogma, or alternatively by those who had lost all moral values left dangerous fallout in the countryside of Latvia. Nevertheless, the Forest Brothers' movement permitted many people who fought in the 1905 Revolution to escape from repressions, saving their lives, as well as to give traitors their just rewards. The people of Latvia remember 1906 as the Year of the Forest Brothers.

Women during the 1905 Revolution

No study has been made exclusively of the place and role played by women in the 1905 Revolution, their participation in the emancipation movement. Nevertheless, participation of women, and their support of revolutionary events was significant. The workforce in several enterprises in Riga, the large industrial centre of the Baltic, was largely female who together with other workers were active in strike actions. Women were responsible participants in the formation of trade unions and in certain sectors — the textile, clothing and sewing and housemaid service fields — most members of professional organisations were women. Not a few women were elected to the new revolutionary forms of governance — the civil parish executive committees. They were equal partners with men in the illegal social democratic movement, they took part in the activities of social democratic groups, they maintained safe houses, they worked to spread propaganda about the armed struggle, and they took part in transporting weapons and illegal literature. Five women died as an immediate result of demonstrators being fired upon on 13 January 1905, while four women suffered injuries of differing severity and were admitted to hospital.

Once detained by the repressive agencies, women were beaten up, tortured and tried. The fraction of women among the victims of the 1905 Revolution is considerable. They were often taken as hostages during investigation of possible involvement in revolutionary activities of men in their family. Both the legal and illegal press often reported instances of violence against women in 1905–1906, at a time when various military units ruled both in rural and urban areas. A view emerged that violence perpetrated against women had become a real form of repression. The illegal publication, *Golos soldata* (The Voice of a Soldier), published by the RSDWP organisation of military men, in an article of 23 December 1905 refers to many cases of the rape of women as justification for an attack by fighters on a unit of the 9th Yelizavetograd Dragoon Regiment billeted at the factory, *Provodnik*, in the course of which 12 were

[45] *Latvijas Sociāldemokrātijas II kongress. 1907. gada 3.–7. jūnijā, Londonā.* Maskava: Prometejs, 1935, 289.–290. lpp.

killed and 7 injured.[46] In turn, women who demonstrated in public their affection for members of the repressive organs and the military, earned condemnation and public scorn. Through the illegal press the forest brothers announced that such women were to be boycotted, characterised them as spies, which, in fact, led to their early deaths. No pity was afforded to women who for one reason or another had given up information which resulted in repressions. Many women, as family members, suffered when social democratic organisations settled accounts with traitors or their disobedient members.

In 1926, a society *Piektais gads* was founded in order to perpetuate and to publish accounts written by those involved in the struggle as well as to gather historical records; the society had drafted standard survey forms seeking answers from those involved in revolutionary events. Rape of women was listed as one form of repressions. Not many corroborating replies were received to this point, mostly indirect mention by relatives. Nonetheless women were those who had to step in and take the place of their murdered, crippled husbands, sons, and other close relatives, who might have fled or who were imprisoned, in order to care for their children, to renew burned down or devastated and looted properties, seeking to direct life onto a peaceful path.

Political trials

The period of so-called political trials set in simultaneously with activation of the repressive agencies, with this period lasting up until the 1917 February Revolution. The regulation adopted on 21 October 1905 was a milestone in the development of the Russian court system, in that it provided for reduction of sentences for many who were accused of criminal and political offences committed prior to 17 October 1905. This wide-ranging amnesty affected many members of revolutionaly movements who were in the phase of pre-trial investigation or who were serving sentences anywhere on the territory of the Russian Empire. Society widely interpreted this step not as a manifestation of the good will on the part of the autocracy, to lighten the fate of many who were imprisoned and convicted, but rather as a demonstration of weakness. Historiography is dominated by the opinion that the cause of why a repressive court system developed during the succeeding period is to be found in the escalation of violence throughout the whole of the Russian Empire. However, historical records show that an important contributing cause for changes in the court system was that elements of a new form of governance emerged during the revolution in Russia, the Baltic, and in Poland — councils, strike committees, and executive committees, so that the autocratic system felt threatened, in particular when these activities took place on the periphery of the Empire, in the so-called non-Russian areas (Poland, the Baltic).

[46] Vidzemes guberņas žandarmērijas pārvaldes priekšnieka palīga ziņojums priekšniekam 1905. gada 23. decembrī. LVVA, 4568. f., 1. apr., 988. l., 4. lp.; Голос солдата. 23 дек. 1905. Sakarā ar notikumiem "Provodņikā". LVVA, 6989. f., 2. apr., 42. l., 21. lp. o. p.

All revolutionary offences committed during 1905 and later, up until the introduction of martial law, were tried in the court of the Vilnius Military District, visiting sessions of a chamber of the St Petersburg Court, as well as the criminal case department of the Riga District Court, which tried those accused of the attack on the central prison (7 September 1905). From the end of December 1905 onwards, provisional military courts were created in conformity with the declaration of martial law in the Governorates of Vidzeme and Kurzeme. These courts were set up practically in every district centre, while later their numbers decreased until only the provisional military courts sitting in Riga and Jelgava were active. Officers from military units stationed in these areas made up these courts, for example, from the 101st Perm, the 113th Starorusa, the 115th Vyazma, the 116th Maloyaroslavl, and the 177th Izborsk infantry regiments. Provided that the courts were not sitting in camera, press representatives were free to attend, whereafter information was published in newspapers with differing political orientation, which are useful source materials for historians to study.

The provisional military courts considered a variety of cases which were associated with revolutionary movements and these may be grouped by their content as follows: 1) arson and destruction of manors; 2) the work of executive committees; 3) activities by fighters — armed attacks, expropriation of money, punishment meted out to traitors and officials; 4) the activities of Forest Brothers and their support; 5) confiscation of weapons, armed uprisings of districts or civil parishes such as the trials conerning the uprisings at Tukums, Talsi, Aizpute, the trial of Skrīveri–Lielvārde, Mazsalaca, and Vecauce. Penalties were meted out based on the legal codex issued in 1903, which called for the following (based on the count on which the matter was heard): death by hanging or by shooting, hard labour for various lengths of time, being placed in correction facilities or prisons, exile to distant parts. It must be recalled that a sentence of hard labour automatically meant that all civil rights were revoked and after discharge of the sentence — exile to Siberia. Investigations, trials and a search for the guilty for political offences took place up until the 1917 February Revolution; the process was only stopped with the decree on 6 March 1917 by the Provisional Government on a general amnesty for political crimes, as a result of which 88 000 individuals were set free.

A different category of court were the field courts martial. These were in existence for a short time, from the end of 1905 to early 1906; the press published the date on which they were abolished — 16 February 1906. Various historical sources provide widely differing and contradictory information concerning field courts martial and the impression has been generated that they served the purpose of giving the punitive expeditions flimsy, albeit apparently tangible legal protection for their work. The next stage in activities by the field court martial is related to the outrage committed against Pyotr Stolipin on 12 August 1906 wherein an explosion at his summer house killed tens of individuals. A law which came into effect on 19 August had the following provision "in cases where the guilt of a civilian is evident without need for an investigation, the accused is to be bound over to a field court martial for punishment according to laws applicable in times of war". A field court martial consisted of a chairman and four members (officers), with no more than 48 hours allocated for investigation and

hearing the case; deliberation took place in camera, the sentence was to be carried out within 24 hours, with no provision for defence of the accused, or for appeals of sentences. The practice of public execution on the spot where the offence was committed was resorted to in Vidzeme and Kurzeme. No tally has been made of how many field courts martial were created, how many cases came into their purview; no archival material has been found of such an overview. The press only reported in 1910 that 284 death sentences had been carried out in Vidzeme and Kurzeme between August 1906 and the end of 1909.[47]

It is unlikely that precise information about the number of victims of field courts martial can be obtained since in practice the outcome was documented some time later of "shot while attempting to escape", as well as recording false information. For example, the well-known fighter Ferdinands Grīniņš, who had withstood interrogation and torture, was sentenced to 15 years of hard labour. As part of the investigation of events which took place during armed insurrection in the area of Skrīveri–Lielvārde, he was transported to Koknese and shot. Historical records indicate that he had attempted to escape, which is not credible given his severe injuries, including to the spine, incurred under torture. Other evidence points to his being shot after trial by a field court martial.

Political trials between 1905 and 1917 largely comprised cases arising from the 1905 Revolution. The relative fraction of cases due to revolutionary activity after the 1905 Revolution is comparatively small. Persons accused of one and the same offence could receive quite different punishment; individuals could even be tried and convicted several times for the same offence. Evidence presented to the guilt of the accused was very often obtained under torture and cannot be regarded to have been objective. In addition, witnesses were also intimidated, without recourse to physical methods, instead resorting to blackmail and economic threats, including cancellation of tenancy contracts, sequestering property. For example, trying to achieve a just outcome, a peasant, Belte, from Kurmale civil parish made a complaint against landlord Silvio Broedrich who had driven him out of a rented farmstead because he had testified in favour of the defendant in Jelgava provisional court martial proceedings.[48]

Conclusion

Substantial material values were lost during the 1905 Revolution which had been accumulated by several generations. A considerable number of persons in Latvia suffered and perished as a result of wide-ranging repressions, many emigrated to varios countries around the world; however, this was the first battle waged by the Latvian people for their rights with the aim — to establish a democratic state system. No matter the extent of losses incurred, possibilities opened up for political activity via

[47] *Latvija,* Nr. 292, 1910, 18. dec., 8. lpp.

[48] Latvijas Republikas II Saeimas 2. sesijas 20. sēde 1926. gada 19./20. martā. *Latvijas Republikas II Saeimas stenogrammas*. Rīga, Latvijas Republikas Saeima, 647. sl.

representation at the State Duma, and through use of the right of freedom of association and through the mass media. Despite persecution trade unions acquired a stable role in public life. Like many other nations, the Latvian nation had strengthened its political identity, it had won a place for itself on the political stage, from which it could not be ejected through any form of repression, and had gained experience in the struggle for creation of a national state.[49] The 1905 Revolution was one precursor of the major historic changes which would take place during the 20th century throughout Europe.

[49] Kusber, J. Die russischen Revolution von 1905 und 1917. *Revolution in Nordosteuropa*, S. 69.

About the author

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Valdis Bērziņš

THE LATVIAN RIFLEMEN

During the First World War, the Latvian riflemen were the ones, who greatly strengthened Latvian identity and national self-awareness. After mounting a long-running defence against the German army at the centre of the Baltic — Riga — they were forced by enemy's predominance to leave Latvia in February 1918. In Russia, they became part of the Red Army. At critical junctures of the Russian Civil War, the Latvian Rifle Division helped defeat those forces who wished to restore the old imperial regime in Russia, reminding that even small nations can influence globally significant events, with far-reaching consequences. The reputation of the Latvian riflemen, the memory of their contradictory, dramatic, and tragic fate has remained alive over the generations in Latvia.

Keywords: First World War, volunteers, Latvian riflemen, the Riga Front, Bolsheviks, Russian Civil War, Latvian Rifle Division

Latvians have been good soldiers over the ages. In fact, this assertion is more like an axiom, one that needs no proof and one that can be followed over the centuries up until today. Regrettably, this axiom has been unsatisfactorily discussed and studied. The resolve of Latvian soldiers, their courage and fighting sk+ills have unquestionably been demonstrated in national units that fought in the First and Second World Wars, regardless of the belligerent side which formed these units. Certainly, as members of foreign armies, in particular, during the Second World War, Latvians fought for the benefit of hostile great powers, and not for their native country's independence. As to the Latvian riflemen, they contributed to creation of independent Latvia, despite the fact that for a brief period they followed a foreign ideology and even turned against the forming of a new state. Their phenomenon was rooted in the national character and psychology, and influenced by historical events. There is no other credible explanation.

The relatively short history of the Latvian riflemen as a national unit has been very differently regarded: on the one hand, there was the view expressed during the period of Latvian independence, and on the other hand, the view taken in the Soviet Union throughout the nearly half-century of the occupation of Latvia. In the first instance, during the 1920s and 1930s, attention was focussed almost exclusively on First World War battles, whereas under the Soviet totalitarian system these events were viewed as being negative, with principal attention paid to the riflemen's support for the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War — that was actually ignored for several decades (1937 to

1956) in the Soviet Union. It is only after the renewal of Latvia as an independent state, when it has become possible to investigate the history of the Latvian riflemen, without preconceptions and also restrictions of any kind.

Over time, all types of publications (document collections and reminiscences, scientific monographs and articles, popular editions, specialised journals, etc.) have appeared, mostly in Latvian and Russian. Taken together these works are the most extensive body of literature devoted to any single topic in the history of Latvia. Nevertheless, the most recently published findings indicate that much still needs to be clarified and specified.

The formation of the Latvian Rifle Battalions

The brutal suppression of the Revolution of 1905 in Latvia, when Baltic German barons collaborated with the punitive expeditions sent by the Tsar of Russia Nicholas II, were followed by the years of reaction when these self-same barons and local Tsarist authorities realised colonisation of Latvia with Volga German and Russian peasants and practically compelled the Latvian people to postpone, although not to abandon their hopes to become masters in the land of their forefathers. The outbreak of war aroused hopes in Latvians to free themselves from Baltic German administrative, political, and economic oppression. At the same time, the Latvians were excited of scarcely hidden Germany's trend to flood the Baltic provinces[1] with several million colonists from the German Reich in case of its victory. The Latvian press, being aware of popular sentiments and inter-ethnic relations, launched an intense anti-German propaganda campaign, thereby further exacerbating tensions between Latvians and Baltic Germans, surpassing to an official campaign of populist Great Russian chauvinism, equally unacceptable for Latvians. Opposing the Tsarist system would be a reckless and unreasonable step at that time. Expressions of sympathy for the official patriotic position were largely superficial, since the Latvian people were obliged to think about their very survival as a people in the context of an armed conflict between two great powers.

Mobilisation for the Russian imperial army and navy began in Latvia on 29 July 1914, i.e. several days before the German declaration of war against Russia. Many Latvians were placed into the ranks of the 20th Corps (thus, it is occasionally referred to as the "Latvian Corps"). Shortly after the outbreak of war, this corps, together with other units of the 1st Army, crossed over the German border. This campaign proved to be insufficiently prepared, and initial successes were followed by major setbacks. On 7 February 1915, the German army attempted to encircle the 10th Russian Army. The 20th Corps was left behind as the rearguard in an attempt to save the situation; but the corps was cut off, and, after ten days of heroic resistance, it was practically annihilated,

[1] At the time the Baltic provinces comprised the Governorates of Courland (now Kurzeme), Livonia (now Vidzeme), and Estonia, i.e. gubernias of Imperial Russia, i.e. part of the present-day territory of Latvia and all of Estonia.

since its numbers decreased by 75%[2]. This turned out to be the largest number casualties of Latvian soldiers incurred in any battle of the First World War. The German army invaded Kurzeme[3] (western part of Latvia) in the spring of 1915, and over the following three years, the territory inhabited by Latvians was divided by opposing front lines of the warring Tsarist and German Empires. Latvians suffered in full the horrors and devastation of war, to a greater degree than the impact was on Lithuanians, because the German occupation of Lithuania occurred quickly, as well as by the Estonians, whose lands were not occupied for quite some time to come. At this time, hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants of Kurzeme — some voluntarily, others compelled to do so — became refugees, first scattering throughout Latvia, and, ultimately, throughout Russia. Given the proximity of the German attacking forces, offices and undertakings, their staff and workers, as well as schools, etc., were evacuated from Riga as a precautionary measure.

During manoeuvring hostilities, the Russian army failed to provide for adequate defence of Jelgava. Two work battalions, consisting almost only of Latvians, raised from the fortress of Daugavgrīva defending the estuary of the Daugava River, were deployed to defend Jelgava; it must be noted that these particular units had already fought in Northern Lithuania. Although the German army expected little resistance at Jelgava, a fierce battle was fought there, with heavy casualties on both sides. The lightly armed units defending Jelgava were able to hold their ground until reinforcements arrived.[4] An immediate loss of Jelgava was thereby averted.

Morale in the Russian armed forces had seriously deteriorated after their failures against a well-organised German army, and this, together with a lack of serious reinforcements in the Baltic region (one cannot admit the Russian home guard groups to be serious reinforcements), led to public doubt that Riga could be defended against a serious attack. The fall of Riga would induce many civilians to move on, leading to a substantial fraction of the Latvian people to become refugees, with far-reaching consequences for survival of the nation. This seriously excited the Latvian people. Jānis Goldmanis and Jānis Zālītis, two active members of Latvian civil society and elected deputies of the Russian State Duma, sought official sanction to organise Latvian national units based on volunteers with a particular mission to defend Riga, if not actually to recover Kurzeme, an aim that was then and later expressed largely as a slogan. Certainly distrust by Tsarist authorities to Latvians as revolutionary mutineers had to be considered, as well as considerable resistance mounted by the Baltic German elite which still retained substantial influence. Nevertheless, the Latvian request of 10 June 1915 was approved on the following day by the Russian Army High Command. Such immediate acceptance demonstrated the pitiful state of affairs in the Imperial Armed

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[2] Каменский, М. П. *Гибель XX корпуса (по архивным материалам штаба 10 армии)*. Петербург: Гиз, 1921, с. 202. Note that this data relates only to infantry units and artillery, i.e. that the total number of soldiers, including artillery, infantry and artillery support units of 45 500 effectives decreased to 11 400.

[3] Here and henceforward Kurzeme refers to the territory of the Governorate that included part of the historical region of Semigallia (now Zemgale).

[4] Peniķis, M. *Pasaules karš 1914., 1915. un 1916. gadā, un Latviešu strēlnieku bataljonu – pulku cīņas, II d.* Rīga: Militārās literatūras apgādes fonds, 1939, 232.–246., 271.–273. lpp.

Forces. Preparations for establishing Latvian national units were carried out by the Command of the North-Western Front, as it was responsible for ensuring the defence of invasion routes leading to the imperial capital of Russia, Petrograd, at the same time keeping Riga and holding the front line stretching along the Daugava River as far as Daugavpils.

At the beginning of the First World War, a large number of officially non-organised volunteers occurred in many countries for military service. In Latvia the first groups of volunteers appeared in the autumn of 1914 at police stations, then enlisted in the Russian army and were sent to the front. Organised registration of volunteers in Riga followed after the abovementioned official permission, on 1 August 1915, issued by the Headquarters of the North-Western Front (henceforward the Northern Front) on formation of two Latvian rifle battalions, named as the 1st Daugavgrīva, and the 2nd Riga Battalion[5]. The press published an appeal "Rally under Latvian flags!" that resonated strongly, in particular, among youth, who saw in it almost a personal invitation. National feelings played a key role in this drive for volunteers, since many saw service in these battalions to be a national duty, to defend the homeland against an enemy that sought to bring new chains to the Latvian people. Refugees from Kurzeme were particularly resolved to join up, and young workers from Riga did not lag far behind. A number of Latvians who had emigrated after the revolution to escape military service in the Tsarist Russian Army returned to join the new units. In addition, sons of Latvian colonists came from as far as Siberia. The older generation was sceptical of the effort, pointing to the large number of Latvians who already had fallen far from their homeland. Certainly social factors influenced the flow of volunteers (officially between 17 and 35 years of age[6]) such as, unemployment, increased cost of living, and urban food shortages. The organisation of registration centres where volunteers would also receive medical certificates and be registered, was a task for a fifteen-member-strong Latvian Rifle Battalion Organising Committee. This committee sought also to facilitate transfer of Latvian soldiers serving in other military units to the Latvian battalions. All in all, a relatively large number, a total of more than 8000 volunteers came forward[7], including those already mobilised, to make up the new units. After the first two battalions were created, there followed six more: the 3rd Kurzeme and 4th Vidzeme, and, by autumn, the 5th Zemgale, the 6th Tukums, the 7th Bauska, and the 8th Valmiera Battalions. A depot battalion was created to support the eight combat units. Career soldiers transferred in from other units, as well as those who had been previously mobilised. Unit commanders were reluctant to allow the usually well-disciplined and astute Latvians to leave, and sought to hinder their departure to the Latvian battalions. A number of Latvian officers also transferred in, including two graduates of the General Staff Academy (Colonel Andrejs Auzāns, and Lt.-Colonel, later Colonel Jukums Vācietis), sacrificed promising careers. Seven other battalion commanders had experience from the

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5 Each Latvian rifle battalion was assigned a number as well as a Latvian place name.

6 Prior to the First World War, men between the ages of 21 and 43 were liable for compulsory military service in Russia. War brought change in this regard.

7 *Latviešu Strēlnieki,* Nr. 6. Rīga: Latviešu veco strēlnieku biedrība, 1936, 589. lpp.



Fig. 1. The flag of the 1. Daugavgrīva Latvian Rifle Battalion (From the UL ILH (University of Latvia, Institute of Latvian History) collection)

Russo-Japanese War[8], the details of which the Russian Army had not adequately appreciated. Latvian battalion commanders must be rated as well-qualified, in particular in the light of results from the first war year, when insufficiency of Russian Army officers was too evident. The relationship between officers and their men in the Latvian battalions was based on mutual understanding, this reinforced trust in one another, which is an invaluable trait during battle. Each battalion consisted of four companies, and a number of specialised commands (machine-gun, communications, etc.), with, in total, 26 officers, 6 military officials (including 2 medical doctors[9]), as well as 1161 ordinary and 85 non-combatant ranks.[10]

Opponents of the formation of these units persisted. In September, the Tsarina twice reminded Nicholas II, who had just assumed the post of supreme commander of all Russia's armed forces, to disperse the Latvian volunteers throughout other military units. Latvian Social Democrats (LSD), in particular their left-wing, the Bolsheviks, continued to agitate through dissemination of illegal proclamations against the Tsarist autocracy, as well as against the Latvian battalions[11]. With hope for a revolution this political party had adopted a defeatist position in the question of war. However, the eminent Latvian poet Rainis, who was a supporter of moderate social-democratic views, expressed, from his place of exile in Switzerland, support for these units: "I welcome the Latvian Battalions, as the preparers of free Latvia, who have awakened the independent spirit of our people, as the promulgators of our glory — let behind the battalions come Latvians' new culture in all its strength and brightness."[12] The poet's vision extended further forward than that of the enthusiasts and fault-finders.

Intensive training of the volunteers was arranged immediately, paying most attention to tactics, finding one's bearings on the ground, camouflage and rifle practice. The drill was both alleviated and hampered by the presence of experienced soldiers and new recruits without any knowledge of military matters. Junior command positions

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[8] Bērziņš, V. *Latviešu strēlnieki Pirmajā pasaules karā (1915–1918).* Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2014, 13. lpp.

[9] Krīgere, I. Medicīniskais dienests latviešu strēlnieku bataljonos (pulkos) 1915–1918. *Pulcējaties zem latviešu karogiem!* Balcers, A. (sast.). Rīga: Zelta grauds, 2013, 229.–231. lpp.

[10] Latvian State Historical Archives (further LVVA), 5434. f., 1. apr., 776. l., 17.–21. lp.

[11] Kalniņš, B. *Latvijas Sociāldemokrātijas 50 gadi.* Stockholm: Memento, 1993, 127. lpp.

[12] Rainis, J. *Kopoti raksti,* 23. sēj. Vēstules. Rīga: Zinātne, 1986, 123. lpp.

were given to those who had combat experience. Training of volunteers was done in both Russian and Latvian, but commands were issued in Russian only. Officers and warrant officers followed up on the quick and accurate execution of orders. The serious approach taken by youths ensured a good outcome to this training. Free time was spent on sports and reading newspapers, and books that they received. Soldiers in the battalions quickly developed a feeling of comradeship. Latvian society supported these battalions in several ways, presenting, for example, to each battalion orchestra music sheets and instruments.[13] The so-called Ladies' Committees produced mittens, woollen socks for winter as well as camouflage cloaks.

The riflemen at the Riga Front

On 16 October 1915, the German armed forces moved to the south and southwest of Riga and soon the first two Latvian battalions, despite their incomplete training, were drawn into hostilities. Elements of the 1st Daugavgrīva Battalion were sent to the front on 23 October, and three days later the 2nd Riga Battalion followed. This operation was to be a serious test of the volunteer units, which they passed thanks in part to the presence of experienced warrant officers and officers who guided the inexperienced young soldiers. Several enemy attacks were repulsed, followed by night reconnaissance sorties, most of which were carried out by the 1st company of the 1st Daugavgrīva Battalion, led by junior officer (poruchik) Frīdrihs Briedis. These raised the self-esteem of the riflemen to face up in situations where the enemy used explosive bullets and later poison gas. Seeing the ability of the Latvian units to adapt quickly to conditions at the front, 12th Army Headquarters, who were responsible for the defence of Riga, increasingly began to employ them not only on special missions (reconnaissance and communications, etc.), but also in operations to stabilise threatened parts of the front and covering flanks. Being neatly dressed, with an erect posture and a resolute gaze, allowed easily to identify Latvian soldiers from soldiers of other units. The battalions quickly became widely popular, and were noticed by representatives of the Entente allies of Russia. Following German attacks on Verdun (France) in February 1916, the allies requested that Russia begin an offensive so as indirectly to relieve enemy's pressure in France. Consequently, the 12th Army prepared an assault on a position some 20 km south of Riga. Before this attack was launched, British Major Cudbert Thornhill visited the Northern Front and the 12th Army, including several Latvian Rifle Battalions. Accompanied by General Radko Dimitriev from 12th Army Headquarters, the allied representative arrived at the front, where he noted that "the Latvians' position was comfortably laid out", remarking that this was evidence for "a strong cultural spirit"[14]. This remark showed the visitor's poor general knowledge about Latvians. Latvians maintained order and cleanliness not only in their barracks, but also, within reason, at their front positions, building shelters and underground bunkers, as needed.

[13] Visendorfs, M. Latviešu strēlnieku orķestri. *Pulcējaties zem latviešu karogiem!*, 311.–313. lpp.
[14] *Jaunākās Ziņas*, Nr. 65, 1916, 5. marts.



Fig. 2. Lt. Colonel J. Vācietis greeting British Major C. Thornhill. March 1916. (From the UL IHL collection)

When they took up new positions, such facilities were put into order, or, if necessary, rebuilt. In his report to A. Knox, Military Attaché of Great Britain, C. Thornhill gave the following estimation of Latvian officers and men: "The officers are of good-stamp and better than the average Russian officer of a line regiment. The men are of good physique, and their level of intelligence is above average", not forgetting to add that, "esprit de corps is very strong in these units"[15]. C. Thornhill logically concluded that: "These bns[16] are extra to the establishment"[17]. Future events were to confirm that the experienced Major was not wrong in his assessment.

Delays of the 12th Army's assault, subsequent hastiness and bad leadership of the operation impacted negatively on the outcome. Practically, on 21 March 1916, the first two Latvian battalions advanced, in broad daylight, on both sides of the Riga–Bauska road, over open ground susceptible to enemy fire; these units penetrated deepest into enemy territory, overtaking the Siberian Riflemen's advance. This turned out to be the sole success of the entire operation. A later attack by the inexperienced 7th Bauska Latvian Battalion, carried out together with another Siberian regiment, stopped quickly as they were unable to reach enemy front trenches.[18] The German positions remained unbroken. The leadership of the 12th Army were dissatisfied with the way the operation had unfolded and the results, pointing out inadequate communication between infantry and artillery units, and an inability to storm hardened enemy positions. At the same time there was no serious self-criticism.

In the second half of July 1916, six Latvian battalions took part in an operation south of Riga, but in a different direction from the previous one. As a result of nearly one week of uninterrupted fighting, units of the 12th Army, including several Latvian battalions engaged in frontal assaults, suffered substantial casualties (60–70% of those taking part[19]), yet they were again unable to penetrate enemy front-lines and to push the enemy back. Latvian riflemen were employed in this and in future assaults as the

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15 Public Record Office, (PRO), WO 157, 1217 (1916), p. 20.

16 Short for battalions.

17 PRO, WO 157, 1217 (1916), p. 21. Note. A. Knox had an entirely different opinion resulting from his earlier visit paid to another unit of the 12th Army: "When I visited the trenches... in the 13th Siberian Division in the Riga bridgehead on February 26th, I found the men living under terrible conditions, in trenches full of water and in very damp huts, and many of the men certainly looked ill." (Knox, A. *With the Russian Army 1914–1917. Vol. II*. London: Hutchinson & Co, 1921, p. 389).

18 Hartmanis, J. *Latviešu strēlnieki Ķekavas kaujā 1916. gada martā*. Rīga: Jumava, 2012, 58.–65. lpp.

19 *Latviešu Strēlnieki*, Nr. 17. Rīga, 1937, 1698. lpp.

spearhead, whose initial success had to be exploited immediately by reinforcements that usually failed to arrive. At the same time, two Latvian battalions, alternating with one another, from spring onwards took part in strengthening and defending a bridgehead located at Ikšķile, or the so-called Nāves Sala (Death Island) position (a bridgehead of 2 km² on the left bank of the Daugava River)[20]. One Latvian battalion was positioned in Jūrmala preparing to take part in an amphibious landing on the coast of Kurzeme.

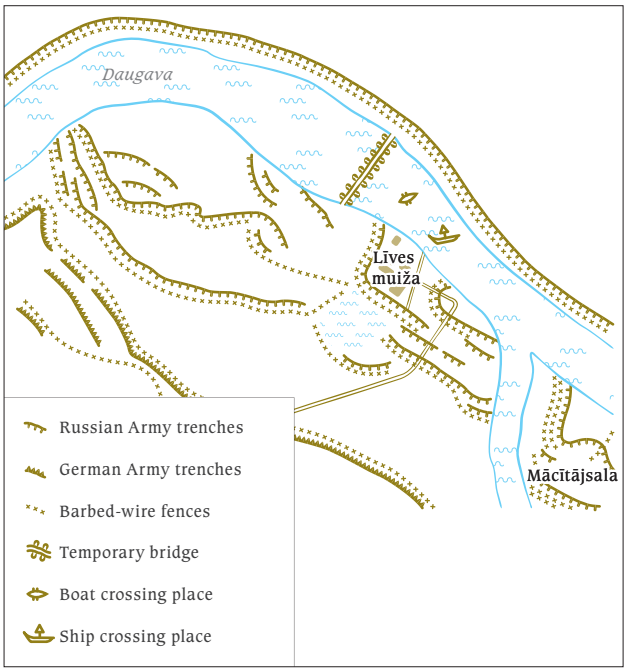


Diagram 1. The disposition of enemy forces on Nāves sala

Discipline was strict in the Latvian battalions. Careless carrying out of daily duties was not tolerated. The riflemen likened fighting to a dangerous job, an attitude that overcame natural fears and hardened them against danger. This simplified philosophical approach encouraged energetic and astute action, but did not exclude reckless behaviour. Often the distance between opposing front lines near Riga was less than a few hundred steps apart, in places, even less. After a reconnaissance sortie by the riflemen, the enemy would open fire with an artillery bombardment; hence both the Latvian units and their neighbours suffered, the latter simply wanting to remain undisturbed in their trenches. This led to bad feelings and poor relations. The Latvians maintained better relations with Siberian units as these were generally more disposed to fight. Once pulled back into reserve positions, the Latvians usually organised practical competitions (grenade throwing, overcoming barriers, also gymnastics, and wrestling, etc.[21]), and, occasionally, sang folk songs. Sometimes trainings were held twice daily, to hone military skills.

Shortly after fighting in July, five Latvian battalions were formed into a brigade commanded by Col. A. Auzāns. This brigade was sent to the region of Ķemeri–Smārde, where opposing lines were separated by a neutral zone up to 5 km wide, and where both sides had not disturbed one another for quite some time. Elements of the brigade, supported by Russian units, launched night attacks during the final days of August, and, given the marshy and wooded grounds, came very close to the German front line; the new positions were reinforced and counter-attacks warded off. With this the operation ended, without the 12th Army being able to improve its positions significantly.

[20] See Hartmanis, J. *Latviešu strēlnieki Nāves salā 1916.* Rīga: Apgāds Mantojums, 2014.
[21] Apine, R. Strēlnieki – sportisti. *Pulcējaties zem latviešu karogiem!*, 329.–333. lpp.

This time the brigade was able to avoid large losses, as they were not led by Russian generals, who were frugal with their artillery rounds and spendthrift with the lives of their men.

A survey of Latvian riflemen was carried out during the summer of 1916 (11 481 replies, some only partial records, by the soldiers of seven active battalions (except the 8th Valmiera battalion) are kept by the Latvian State History Archives) and provide data about volunteers (22.1%), mobilised individuals (20.3%), and those who transferred in from other units (57.6%). Men of an age subject to military service comprised 69% of those who replied; the remainder (30%) were younger. Latvians account for 91.5% replies, Estonians, 3.6%, and the rest, Russians (1.7%), Lithuanians (1.6%), Poles (1.1%), and others as well. The questionnaire did not enquire about the social origin or civil status; instead, questions were asked about each person's profession, or position before the war. The percentage of illiterates was small for the time period (approx. 3.5%)[22]. This last figure of merit for the Latvian battalions set them greatly apart from other Russian army units. The 3rd Kurzeme Battalion published, from March 1916 onwards, its own journal, *Cīņas Biedrs* (Companion in Arms), and in the autumn of that year a similar effort was made by the 1st Daugavgrīva Battalion, by publishing *Latviešu Strēlnieks* (Latvian Rifleman). These journals featured poetry, stories, portrayals, and other literary efforts written mainly by the riflemen themselves.

In October 1916, the Latvian battalions, described by the High Command of the Northern Front as "the most reliable bulwark at the Riga Front"[23], were transformed into regimens, each consisting of two battalions. Regulations foresaw that the complement of a regiment was 50 officers, 7 military officials, the latter including 3 medical doctors, and 2497 men.[24] Four regiments comprised two brigades, but those were not united into a division, nor were artillery or technical units included. The High Command indicated that "the further development and expansion of these units is acknowledged as needless".[25] Latvians were still not viewed as trustworthy. It had been clear for some time to the Russian High-Command that the outcome of the World War would not be settled on the Russian–German front, but on the Western Front, and consequently, they continued to act rather passively. The 12th Army Corps commanders shared this opinion. Generals, mostly elderly, preferred to wait out the end of the war remaining in their Headquarters, and it was futile to expect any initiative from them. However, the 12th Army commander, General R. Dimitriev attempted to prove that it might be possible to break through enemy lines despite earlier failed attempts. After having persuaded himself that Russian artillery fire before an infantry assault was ineffective against enemy positions, he decided to dispense with such traditional shellfire. Artillery support would be given once infantry had overwhelmed the enemy's first defence line. R. Dimitriev did not find support among Russian generals, but found

[22] Bērziņš, V. *Latvija pirmajā pasaules karā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1987, 108.-110. lpp.
[23] *Latviešu Strēlnieki*, Nr. 17, Rīga, 1937, 1705. lpp.
[24] LVVA, 5434. f., 1. apr., 646. l., 491.–492. lp.
[25] Российский Государственный военно-исторический архив (РГВИА), ф. 2031, оп. 2, д. 353, л. 229.



Fig. 3. Rest before moving to the battlefield. 1916. Photograph by Jānis Rieksts

it instead in the person of Col. A. Auzāns, a useful ally in that the latter was a specialist in geodesy and topography. It turned out that the reorganisation of the Latvian battalions into regiments was linked to preparations by the 12th Army for a major offensive crossing an extensive marsh, Tīreļpurvs, situated south-west of Riga. It was decided to wait until the marsh water holes froze over. The strategically groundless assault was officially named the Mitau (Jelgava) Operation, but it is still remembered in Latvia today as the Christmas Battles, because they started on 23 December 1916 (according to the Julian calendar), i.e. 5 January 1917 (according to the Gregorian calendar). As had often been the case previously, the Latvian riflemen were assigned the most arduous task. By their own effort alone, to carry out a massive frontal assault, overcoming barbed-wire fences, then a high rampart, and, after crossing the first line of the enemy's trenches, had to capture machine-gun nests hidden in concrete bunkers, and then they had to advance forward. 184 battalions strong Russian 12th Army's operation against the German 8th Army's 66 battalions[26] greatly depended on the success of 16 Latvian battalions. German forces located in the sector stretching from the Riga–Jelgava railway to the western edge of Tīreļpurvs, consisted of their Jelgava Group, 16 battalions strong[27], but seven of them faced two Latvian brigades.[28] Furthermore, all of the enemy's reserves were deployed to deal with the Latvian assault.

Shortly before the operation both Latvian brigades were united into the Latvian Division under the guidance of General Augusts Misiņš. Unfortunately, he was not exempted from commanding the 1st brigade, but it troubled mutual collaboration between Latvian riflemen brigades. The German side was genuinely taken by surprise, but the shock assault by 12 thousand Latvian soldiers[29] did not succeed. The enemy was alerted by the noise made by several regiments that prematurely began to cut paths through the barbed-wire defences. Most casualties were sustained whilst storming

[26] *Стратегический очерк войны 1914–1918 г.г.* ч. 6, Москва: Высший военный редакционний совет, 1923, л. 125; *Der Weltkrieg 1914 bis 1918. Bd. 11*, Berlin, Verlag Mittler, 1938, s. 399, 400. Note. Comparison of opposing army strength in terms of battalions, instead of referring to regiments is confusing, since the number of battalions in a regiment was different in the Russian and German armies.

[27] *Der Weltkrieg 1914 bis 1918*, Bd. 11, S. 400.

[28] Peniķis, M. *Pasaules karš 1914., 1915. un 1916. gadā, un Latviešu strēlnieku bataljonu-pulku cīņas*, II d., 784. lpp.

[29] *Latviešu strēlnieki*, Nr. 21. Rīga, 1938, 2135. lpp.

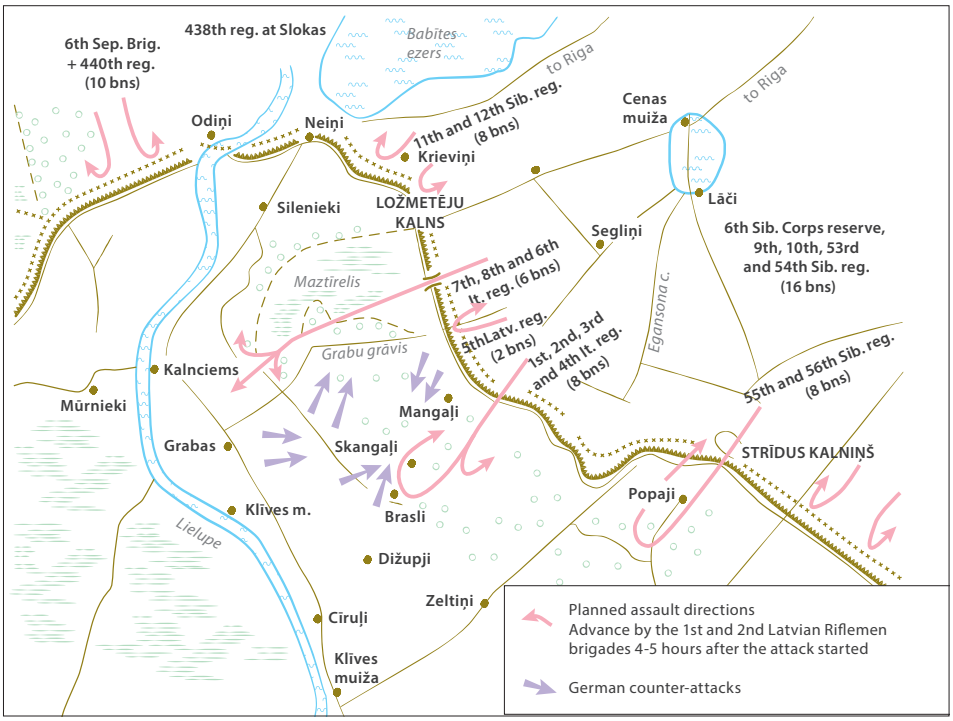


Diagram 2. The development of the Jelgava operation. January 1917

these fences under heavy machine gun fire; although the German defences were breached in two places, the attack stalled. A. Knox, who has studied these battles in detail, recounts these as follows: "The 2nd and 1st Lett Brigades ... broke through the enemy's lines without artillery preparation ... The 3rd Siberian Division on the right of Letts failed in its surprise attack, and further right the 4th Special Division[30] refused to leave its trenches. The Letts were not properly supported, but the fighting up to the 10th [of January] resulted in the Germans being forced back a few kilometres."[31] The enemy was able just in time to throw his reserves into the battle, preventing the attackers from proceeding past the second line of defence and their repulse. The Latvian riflemen felt themselves cheated by the Headquarters of the 12th Army since success had needed the arrival of massive reinforcements once the first defensive line had been taken. Unfortunately, 12th Army Headquarters had not even tried to bring up the reserves in time, and the late engagement of several Siberian battalions had been too little to change the outcome. The Latvian forces had to retreat. The retaking of Jelgava was impossible. The German strongpoint, Ložmetējkalns (Machine Gun Hill) was taken, yielding many prisoners and trophies; however, continuing to fight was futile. Casualties suffered by

[30] Not the 4th Special Division, but the 6th Special Brigade was at the right flank of the 12th Army.
[31] Knox, A. *With the Russian Army, 1914–1917. Vol. II*. London: Hutchinson & Co, 1921, pp. 517–518.

both Latvian brigades, according to information given out by the Headquarters of the Northern Front, were 5245 killed, lost and wounded men, as well as 119 officers.[32] In refusing to commit its reserves, the High Command announced that in future fighting must be based "solely on the Latvian rifle regiments"[33]. Furthermore, Nikolai Trikovsky, commander of the 3rd Siberian Division, who usually tried to spare his men, in giving orders to the Latvian brigades several times added a statement that the Germans would only recapture Ložmetējkalns over the dead bodies of Latvian soldiers.[34]

German attempts to retake their former positions continued and hostilities to the south-west of Riga intensified during late January 1917. After regrouping his forces on January 23, the enemy achieved some territorial gains along both banks of the Lielupe River. Two days later, units of the 12th Army were sent into battle without a preliminary artillery shelling. The battle was fought on both banks of the Lielupe and following an initiative by the Germans fierce fighting continued until 31 January, despite the harsh prevailing weather conditions. The Latvian riflemen had to defend critical positions on several occasions, including Ložmetējkalns, the latter being ordered to hold at any cost. The positions around Ložmetējkalns, as it turned out, were the only ones that the Germans failed to recover. On 3 February, the temperature fell to –30 °C, and the Germans suspended their last attempt.[35] Both sides stopped fighting as they were completely exhausted, physically and mentally.

After the fall of the Tsarist Autocracy

This protracted period of fighting produced a sombre mood in Latvian civil society in the rear. The riflemen also expressed their disappointment. The High Command and the Tsarist Autocracy were blamed. Thus, the riflemen, as well as the Latvian people, greeted the fall of the Tsarist Autocracy in February (March) 1917. What they had experienced and survived had matured them, as well as raised their self-esteem. The riflemen sought to understand political problems, which they previously had ignored. At the same time senior officers, who had been out of touch with political life during their long service in the Russian Army and had no clear vision of the future of the Latvian brigades, were anxious about riflemen becoming a forum for political struggle. The Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks quickly indoctrinated the 12th Army, which was composed largely of peasants. This agitation was carried out in a spirit of reconciliation typical of the approach of the Provisional Government in Russia. The Latvian riflemen step by step adopted a hard political line as regards the general situation, and they were not impressed by the relatively moderate positions of mentioned parties. They were, however, attracted to the radical ideas espoused by recently legalised Bolsheviks. In 1916, the Tsarist regime had decided to call up political prisoners

[32] *Latviešu strēlnieku vēsture (1915–1920)*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1970, 50. lpp.
[33] РГВИА, ф. 2152, оп. 1, д. 80, л. 6, 7.
[34] *Latvju strēlnieku vēsture*, 1. sēj. 1. d. Maskava: Prometejs, 1928, 123., 125. lpp.
[35] Peniķis, M. *Pasaules karš 1914., 1915. un 1916. gadā, un Latviešu strēlnieku bataljonu – pulku cīņas*, II d., 898.–899. lpp.

and exiles. Thus so-called untrustworthy elements entered the ranks of the armed forces, and the police in closely tracking these persons, soon discovered their propensity to widen covert activities. Soldiers from the 12th Army often mentioned Siberians who had been shot down for refusing to take part in the attack during the Jelgava operation.[36] An illegal group of Bolsheviks established itself within the Latvian depot regiment, and in January 1917, with reinforcements, these Bolsheviks were sent to all combat units. Their anti-war sentiments quickly spread to their fellow soldiers. Moderate Latvian political parties were busy dealing with other issues (local authorities, food supply, agrarian problems, etc.) and did not engage in political competition for the favour of the riflemen, practically leaving them to the Bolsheviks, who exploited the opportunity without fail. Furthermore, the moderate political parties had little to promise or to recommend to the riflemen. Continue the war with the aim of regaining Kurzeme? After failure of the Jelgava operation this seemed completely unrealistic. It also had become apparent how little soldiers' lives meant to the generals, and action by Latvian officers could not save their men's lives. Lithuanians and Estonians did not have this experience with "their" army involved in operations carried out by the 12th Army and, consequently, they suffered much fewer lives lost.

Initially the riflemen and their officers supported the autonomy of Latvia, which was expressed in the slogan, "a free Latvia in a free Russia". However, their mutual understanding disturbed the Bolsheviks, whose ranks increased rapidly with newcomers arriving from among the most active riflemen ranks. In fact, Bolsheviks took over committees elected by the rifle regiments and companies. In April, the Great Council of the Latvian riflemen, also called the 1st Congress of the Riflemen, supported continuing the war[37], and also partially supported the actions of the Provisional Government. Bolshevik influence rapidly spread to the Executive Committee that had been elected by the Congress, i.e. Iskolastrel [38], and anti-war propaganda was stepped up in the ranks, with fraternisation at the front lines with German soldiers actively encouraged. Iskolastrel established practical links with the Council of Riga workers deputies, also sympathetic to the Bolsheviks. When this Council began to organise a militia (police) force, the 7th Bauska Latvian riflemen regiment was called to Riga to maintain inner order (later it was replaced by the 2nd Riga regiment).

Experienced officers who proved to be unable to counter growing anti-war sentiments in the Latvian regiments, which became the centre for spreading Bolshevik ideas, transferred to other units. Junior officers, who often were former elementary schools' teachers, at least in part, personally agreed with skilful Bolshevik opinions. During preparations for the 2nd Congress of the Riflemen, Bolsheviks were successful

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[36] Хромов, П. Антивоенные выступление в войсках 12-й армии Северного фронта в конце 1916 года. *Военно-исторический журнал*, № 4, 1962, с. 121.

[37] Tomaševskis, J. Latviešu strēlnieki starp Februāra revolūciju un Oktobra apvērsumu: nacionālais faktors. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1/2, 2013, 72.–101. lpp.; Bērziņš, V. Latviešu strēlnieki politisko pārmaiņu apstākļos. *Latvijas vēsture krustcelēs un jaunu pieeju meklējumos (Latvijas vēsturnieku I kongresa materiāli)*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2014, 234.–245. lpp.

[38] Abbreviation of the name (in Russian) of the Large or United Latvian rifle regiments committee. During intervals between congresses, Iskolastrel dealt with problems common to all riflemen units.



Fig. 4. Wounded Latvian riflemen reading *Brīvais Strēlnieks*, spring 1917. (From the UL IHL collection)

in nominating their party members and supporters as delegates. The riflemen poorly grasped the political debate, and they tended to trust their comrades with whom they had fought rather than outside agitators. A resolution proposed by two Latvian Bolshevik leaders, Pēteris Stučka and Jūlijs Daniševskis, was adopted by an overwhelming majority at the Congress which took place in Riga, on 21–30 May 1917. It condemned the Provisional Government for continuing to prosecute the war, advocated concluding a democratic peace treaty, as well as endorsing the Bolshevik call for all power to soviets of deputies representing workers, soldiers, and peasants (in Latvia — landless peasantry). An announcement was made that the riflemen would obey orders issued by army bodies that were democratically elected, and by the Provisional Government, provided that these did not conflict with revolutionary democratic goals. The national question, as well as the issue of Latvian autonomy, was not even mentioned. Decisions taken by the 2nd Congress strongly resonated in various layers of Latvian society, earning approval, disappointment, and incomprehension. Protests by some riflemen companies, detachments, etc. could not change matters. Having in the past obeyed all reasonable, and even many impossible orders, the riflemen were forced to conclude that their sacrifices had been in vain. A self-preservation instinct kicked in as regards justifying continuing to fight and to act.

Representatives of the Entente States also were anxious by the quick radicalisation of the Latvian riflemen, seeking an explanation for this fact. French military observers examined Latvian history starting with the events of 1905. Jean Guéneau, a French naval engineer attached, from October 1916 onwards, to the Northern Front, and had followed how Latvian riflemen had evolved, assessed them to be "better instructed and more civilised", "very courageous", and having taken part in all offensive operations[39]. At a meeting with the long-serving British consul in Riga, Vivian Bosanquet, the French engineer described his view on the situation in the 12th Army. On 30 July 1917, V. Bosanquet sent an extensive report to George Buchanan, the Ambassador of Great Britain in Petrograd. The Latvian riflemen are described in this report as those "who have always shown very great courage on the front ... are now the worst and most Bolshevist", [that they] "have been continually in the first positions, while numerous other

[39] Gueslin, J. Public opinion, the French military and the Baltic front: From ignorance to the discovery of a geopolitical and national issue (1914–1919). *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata = Yearbook. Latvian War Museum*, XV. Rīga: Latvijas Kara muzejs, 2014, 126.–127. lpp.

Divisions have never been engaged. At the outset the Lettish troops always had important successes, but reserves either arrived too late or not at all ... The Letts have consequently become very bitter against the Russians, and think that they have always been sacrificed to them, and that the Russians have wished to exterminate them. It should be noted, however, that the main reason why the Russians have utilised them to such an extent is that they were formerly the best and most reliable soldiers in the 12th Army"[40].

Headquarters of the 12th Army, although worried by these events, was compelled to abandon any idea of disbanding the Latvian regiments, since Siberian and other units of the 12th Army threatened not to allow their disarmament. Although recent events had partially demoralised some of the Latvian riflemen, they kept the necessary military discipline. They refused to take part in any offensive action, but were prepared to defend Riga, in the light of increased movement by enemy forces during the second half of summer. The High Command and the Provisional Government kept in contact with the Western allies of Russia and decided to launch an offensive, hoping thereby also to achieve at least partial "healing of the illness" that had appeared in the armed forces. Representatives of the High Command, together with Socialists-Revolutionaries and Menshevik agitators, attempted during early summer to convince soldiers to participate in new offensives. Alexander Kerensky, the Minister for War, accompanied by allied military delegations, arrived in Riga and Daugavpils for this purpose. They achieved few successes at the Northern Front. Units of the 12th Army, including the Latvian riflemen, refused to take part in any assault. Army Headquarters had not abandoned its intention to deal with them. Thus, when the 1st Latvian Rifle Brigade was ordered to Valmiera, allegedly to be included in the reserve of the Northern Front, but the brigade, supported by Siberian units, refused to carry out this suspicious order.[41] The 12th Army Command did not risk recourse to violence to enforce this order. Without going into details, the long-planned offensive operation proved to be unsuccessful.

A group of Latvian officers, dissatisfied with Bolshevik dictates, after many meetings and negotiations, on 18 August 1917, established the Latvian National Soldiers' Association. This alliance did not earn the necessary authority and influence, and also lacked any concrete plan of action. At the elections for the Riga City Council held two days later, Bolshevik candidates were supported by approximately 60–70% of the Latvian electorate[42], a result that appears to indicate that many were attracted to radical left positions by the political stance of the Latvian riflemen.

The German 8th Army's offensive against Riga started on 1 September 1917, and was preceded by a particularly fierce artillery bombardment. German forces crossed the Daugava River close by the bridgehead of Nāves Sala which was previously abandoned by Russian units. It had been possible to foresee the likely crossing point for the enemy between Ķekava and Ikšķile, as the left bank of the Daugava is higher there

[40] PRO, FO 371/3012 (1917), N170514.
[41] РГВИА, ф. 2031, оп. 1, д. 20, л. 1.
[42] Ezergailis, A. *Esejas par 1917. gadu.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1991, 46. lpp.

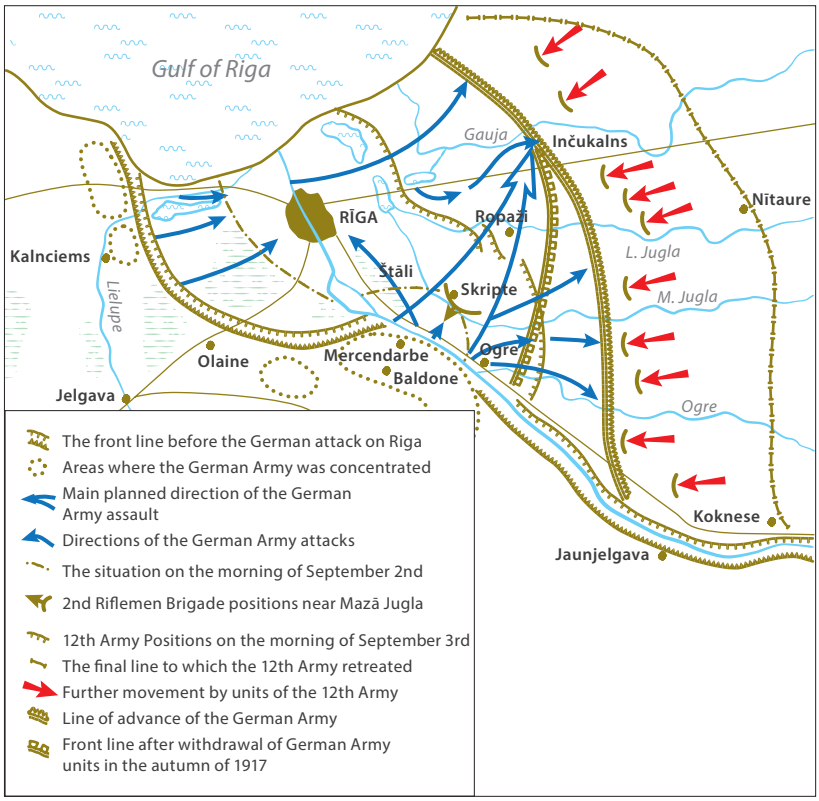


Diagram 3. The battle for Riga 1–3 September 1917.

than the right bank, and during the summer months the river was no wider than 400–500 m. However, the new Commander of the 12th Army, Dmitri Parsky, who had replaced R. Dimitriev, delayed to take the requisite defensive measures and subsequently the performance of the Army Command in the defence of Riga was deemed to be unsatisfactory.[43] As to the soldiers' masses of the 12th Army, in view of fraternization with the German side and the Bolshevik Party's anti-war policy, they were practically unable to defend Riga. The last unit to retreat from the vicinity of Olaine (about 20 km south-west of Riga) was the 1st Latvian Rifle Brigade, while the 2nd Latvian Rifle Brigade under Colonel Ansis Lielgalvis' command was withdrawn to take up positions along the second defensive line at the Mazā Jugla River (approximately 8 km north of the Daugava River). The main forces of the 12th Army were in full retreat, some units actually fleeing in panic, abandoning most of their artillery and other materiel. Regiments of the 2nd Latvian Rifle Brigade, especially the 5th Zemgale regiment headed by Colonel J. Vācietis, sustained attacks by superior forces and halted the German Army forces at the Mazā Jugla River. In fact their action prevented the 12th Army from being

[43] *Россия в Первой Мировой войне 1914–1918. Энциклопедия. Том 3.* Москва: Росстэн, 2014, с. 57.

encircled.[44] "The fortitude shown by the 2nd Latvian Rifle Brigade in halting advance of the enemy's 2nd Guards Division, prevented encirclement of the main forces of the 12th Army", as noted in the encyclopaedia, *Russia in the First World War 1914–1918*, "firmness by the Latvians presented the Commanders of the 12th Army 26 h operative time"[45]. Unfortunately, 26 hour-period was not usefully employed for evacuation more of the abandoned military technique. After losing more than 3 thousand men[46], the bleeding regiments of the 2nd brigade retreated only in the evening of September 2, having received such an order. On the following day, the 12th Army proved incapable of defending the line Ķišezers–Jugla, and retreated towards the so-called Cēsis positions. For its part the 8th German Army, after taking Riga, with its vanguards at Inčukalns, halted its advance.

The fall of Riga discredited the Bolshevik policy of fraternising with the enemy, because the Germans had used the opportunity to gather suitable information. Many Latvian regimental committees showed themselves unable to overcome challenges and had to be re-elected. An understanding had again developed between officers and their men, to the great disappointment of the Bolsheviks. After their retreat from Riga, units of the 12th Army became even more demoralised. The army food supply situation worsened for the men, as did the supply of fodder for the horses. Bands of soldiers-marauders roved along Northern Vidzeme robbing local inhabitants, stealing food and cattle. Latvian riflemen took the initiative to protect civilians, confiscating loot from marauders and preventing their leaving Latvia with their booty.

J. Vācietis, with the support of the first Chairman of Iskolastrel, Staff Captain Voldemārs Ozols, had hoped in the spring of 1917 to unite both Latvian brigades into a single corps, supplementing it with artillery, engineering, and other technical units, as well as with cavalry. One week after the loss of Riga, V. Ozols presented this idea to members of Iskolastrel, and received a favourable response. Aleksandr Verkhovsky, then Minister of War of the Provisional Government, also supported the initiative. He adopted the idea, developed it as far as a proposal for formation of a Corps and Divisions made up of the ethnic minorities of Russia (Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians, etc.). It is likely that his intent was thereby to strengthen national feelings within the Russian Army, to counter the spread of Bolshevism. As regards the Latvian Corps, the minister foresaw adding to it an Estonian Division.[47] A. Verkhovsky's plan remained on paper, since his time as minister shortly came to an end.

As soon as news of the armed Bolshevik coup d'état in Petrograd reached Latvian units, their Bolsheviks hastened to engage several regiments in taking power in Northern Vidzeme, including capture of Valka, where the 12th Army Headquarters and the

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[44] Hartmanis, J. Kauja, kura varēja nenotikt. (Pieminot strēlnieku cīņas Mazās Juglas krastos 1917. gadā). *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata = Yearbook. Latvian War Museum*, IX. Rīga: Latvijas Kara muzejs, 2008, 30.–39. lpp.

[45] *Россия в Первой мировой войне 1914–1918: Энциклопедия*, т. 3, с. 55.

[46] РГВИА, ф. 2152, оп. 1, д. 308, л. 231.

[47] PRO, WO 106, 1096 (1917), p. 12. Extract from a report by A. Knox, Military Attaché of Great Britain, on 1 November 1917, to the British Embassy in Petrograd.

Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks' led Iskosol[48] were located. No resistance was encountered. Preparations were made in the riflemen regiments to elect commanders based on a suggestion offered by P. Stučka that in a complicated political situation the riflemen would follow only commanders that they had elected. The Bolsheviks insisted on a stringent evaluation of officers who had remained by their regiments, arresting politically suspect individuals. Occasionally the riflemen resisted to such action. For example, sappers of the 4th Vidzeme regiment took up arms to protect their respected commander. In any case arrests and their negative views on the Bolshevism stimulated a number of officers, among them three former regimental commanders (R. Bangerskis, F. Briedis, and K. Goppers), to join anti-Bolshevik forces.[49] Bolsheviks later admitted that their actions had alienated a number of officers who were not at all conservative in their views.

The Bolsheviks' power in Petrograd was uncertain. According to requests received from Petrograd, on 5 December 1917, Iskolastrel sent the 6th Tukums regiment to maintain "revolutionary order", which local Red Guards and revolutionary sailors were unable to accomplish in the capital of Russia. Three days later, a special unit was formed for Petrograd to defend the Soviet government. Iskolastrel sent the 3rd Kurzeme regiment to the Don region to fight troops led by General Alexei Kaledin, and also sent parts of the 1st Daugavgrīva regiment and the 4th Vidzeme regiment to Byelorussia against anti-Bolshevik elements of the Polish corps. In this way, the Latvian riflemen were dragged into the Russian Civil War on the Bolshevik side soon after the October coup d'état, thanks to the efforts of Iskolastrel. At the same time Iskolastrel, Bolsheviks among Latvian troops, and members of committees now and again ignored basic democratic principles. When on 26 December 1917, Ukrainian soldiers of the 12th Army at Valka wished to discuss nationality issues in Ukraine, Iskolastrel, well aware of the hostility of the Russian Bolshevik elite concerning the Central Rada of Ukraine, did not allow to hold them a meeting. Less than a month later, the 6th Tukums regiment helped to expel and disperse the Russian Constitutional Assembly, although this fact is not easy to demonstrate unequivocally.[50] Their participation in similar actions ruined the reputation of the Latvian riflemen, as well as left a negative psychological impact on them.

The new Command of the 12th Army authorised formation of a Latvian Corps, but the Soviet Northern Front delayed giving its approval. On 30 December, J. Vācietis, while at the Revolutionary Field Headquarters in Mogilev (this body replaced the former Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for operational issues), obtained approval to constitute the Latvian Corps. Many Latvians from artillery units, air force

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[48] Abbreviation of the name, in Russian, of the Executive Committee of the Council of Soldiers of the 12th Army.

[49] For a study about the engagement of Latvian soldiers, mostly officers, in the anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia during the Civil War, see: Jēkabsons, Ē., Ščerbinskis, V. Latvieši krievu pretlielinieciskajā kustībā. 1917–1920. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 1997, 90.–107. lpp. Note. This topic has been little studied thus far due to severe restrictions on access to relevant archives' materials held in the Russian Federation.

[50] Ezergailis, A. *The Latvian Impact on the Bolshevik Revolution. The First Phase: September 1917 to April 1918.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, p. 324–333.

units, and others immediately sought to join this corps. However, having formed a committee charged with constituting the corps, Iskolastrel acted slowly, putting off decisions on creating the corps, because not all of its members supported the idea.[51] Certainly formation of the corps was influenced by the general demobilisation of the old Russian Army, a process that also affected the Latvian rifle units. In fact the activities of the demobilisation commissions had taken the opposite direction to formation of the corps.

The Latvian riflemen in Russia

After failure of peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk between Soviet Russia and Germany, the German troops launched, on 18 February 1918, an offensive over a broad front and among other territories in the East overran Northern Vidzeme and Latgale. Not wishing to become casualties in unequal fighting or to surrender, most of the riflemen who still remained in Latvia retreated in good order into the expanse of Russia. The Bolsheviks of Russia had been all too effective in disbanding the Tsarist Army, whereas their Latvian comrades, Iskolastrel and officers who had stayed with their regiments, had saved the Latvian rifle units, preventing their demobilisation. The decree of 28 January about forming the Red Army from volunteers had not been seriously taken up. The Soviet Government was, therefore, unable to resist the German advance. German forces already reached Pskov in February, and in a panic situation the 6th Tukums regiment was ordered to oppose the Germans. The Latvian riflemen refused to obey this senseless order. Despite Bolshevik efforts at persuasion the regiment remained in Petrograd until 25 February. Finally, several hundred riflemen were convinced to move to the Pskov region. No fighting ensued since the Germans had halted their offensive in the direction of Petrograd.

Russia acknowledged its defeat in the First World War by signing the separate Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, on 3 March 1918, with Germany and its allies. The Latvian units were to be demobilised, but the People's Commissariat for War of Soviet Russia did not want to be left without some military capacity. Despite the rejection of national formations in the Red Army, on 13 April, formation of the Latvian Soviet Rifle Division was authorised. J. Vācietis was named to head the division, with two Latvian Bolsheviks, Kārlis Pētersons and Kārlis Dozītis, as commissars alongside him. Practically, this meant that Latvian troops would immediately be demobilised with the option of voluntarily joining the newly formed division. It was organised into three rifle brigades, each comprising three regiments, with additional artillery units, aviation group and other technical units, including cavalry. Approximately 6000 men enlisted during the first five days.[52] By the autumn this number had tripled as many riflemen then had returned after looking up for their families in Russia, entered refugees, workers evacuated from Riga, as well as entire units that had been created by Latvians on their own

[51] *Latvju strēlnieku vēsture*, 1. sēj., *2. d.* Maskava: Prometejs, 1928, 637. lpp.
[52] Ibid., 743. lpp.

initiative. Henceforth it was forbidden to form separate Latvian units outside their division. The Commissariat for Latvian National Affairs in Moscow estimated that at that time some 700 thousand Latvians were resident in Russia, with 80 thousand in Moscow alone.[53] Many Latvians joined the division to escape difficult living conditions. This was one reason why the national issue and question about Latvia were of such concern in the Latvian Division. Unlike the rest of the Red Army, the Latvian Division preserved the system of elected committees and Iskolastrel, also regimental Communist factions and their Party coordinating centre, or the Orgkom, which pointed at internal democracy and divisional autonomy. The mentioned organisations of the division organised and led so-called party and political work, thereby transforming the unit into an obedient weapon for the regime. Although occasionally they were described as the Praetorian Guard[54] of the Bolsheviks, the Latvian riflemen were not better paid nor better supplied compared with other Red Army units. Often the Latvian riflemen were, in fact, poorly supplied with food, clothing, boots, and even ammunition. Service in the Latvian Division was harder than in other Red Army divisions by it being ordered to carry out complex tasks, and also because of strong discipline; nevertheless, such service was considered to be prestigious. The title of "a Latvian rifleman", as they were known throughout Russia, needed no further explanation. The riflemen were both proud of their achievements and aware that they represented their people; themselves respecting order, they demanded the same from others. Those dismissed from the division were forbidden to rejoin it. Dissonance was created by the 6th regiment Bolsheviks' efforts for their Communist faction dictatorship, which delayed the regiment's integration into Latvian Division for more than two months.

The Soviet Government moved from Petrograd to Moscow and took up residence in the Kremlin where was guarded by Latvian riflemen. In Moscow Latvian riflemen were given the task of disarming and arresting anarchists, armed robbers, rioters and hooligans, which the local militia (police) were unable to control; additionally, Latvians guarded diplomatic missions, embassies, various warehouses and other selected objects. The riflemen were often sent on missions near and far, occasionally they participated in campaigns to confiscate the remainder food above minimum limits, which usually were carried out by specialised units. Detachments of Latvian riflemen helped suppress peasant revolts in the Volga region, in North-west Russia and around Moscow.

Individuals with a wide range of personal leisure interests were to be found in the Latvian Division. As before some went in for sports, others sought to educate themselves and asked the Commissariat for Latvian Affairs to send foreign language teachers[55] (unsuccessfully), others created a theatre or art group. By contrast, most Red Army divisions in the culture and educational field sought mostly to stamp out illiteracy. Latvian riflemen stationed in Moscow and Petrograd visited museums and art galleries in their spare time. Regimental orchestras regularly held concerts, and the

[53] Государственный архив Российской Федерации (ГАРФ), ф. 1318, оп. 1, д. 1356, л. 21, 22.
[54] *Известия ВЦИК*, № 135 (399), 1918, 2 июля.
[55] ГАРФ, ф. 1318, оп. 1, д. 1357, л. 31.

9th regiment that was formed by increasing the men guarding the Kremlin managed to organise a symphonic orchestra. However, as civil war hostilities intensified the time for these leisure activities shrank.

Immediately after signature of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, the Entente states disembarked an expeditionary force at Murmansk to support anti-Bolshevik forces. Latvian riflemen were involved in defending Vologda and Arkhangelsk. The latter city could not be held, but otherwise no substantial fighting developed in Northern Russia. The anti-Bolshevik mutiny by the Czechoslovak Corps (51.3 thousand strong)[56], on 25 May 1918, signalled an important turning point in the Russian Civil War, and was the basis for creation of its first front, the Czechoslovak, or Eastern Front. At that time there were only a few small and completely untrained units of the Red Army located in the region, and the 4th regiment of the Latvian Division was sent as reinforcements. The regiment became the principal fighting force along this front. However, discipline began to suffer in the 4th regiment under the influence of so many demoralised units located alongside it. J. Daniševskis, who visited the 4th regiment at the Eastern Front in June 1918, decided that replacing the regimental commander Jānis Āzēns would not be useful. In his report of 29 June, J. Daniševskis described the latter as someone who was "neither a Communist, nor a supporter of Communist power", but "a very good fighter", a person whom the riflemen trusted, since he did not lead them into "senseless danger"[57]. Of course, J. Āzēns was not the only commander with similar qualities among the Latvian regiments.

Stability was also absent at the centre of the state. On 6 July 1918, the Left Social-Revolutionaries, who had previously been content as a part of the Soviet government, together with the Bolsheviks, mutinied in Moscow. They were suppressed the following day by the Latvian riflemen, but the mutiny was echoed at the Eastern Front whose commander-in-chief, Colonel Mikhail Muravyov, a Left Social revolutionary, aspired to turn the Red Army units against the Bolsheviks. The chaos that followed was used by units of the Czechoslovak Corps, who were joined by local anti-Bolshevik forces, to launch an energetic attack against Simbirsk. The 4th Latvian regiment, weakened after battles, received contradictory orders, and did not defend the city.[58] Soon after the loss of Simbirsk, on 5 August, the enemy attacked the strategically important Kazan. Defence of the city was led by the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern Front, J. Vācietis, who was supported by the 5th regiment of the Latvian Division. Then 4th Latvian regiment selflessly defended the bridge across the Volga. In the evening of the following day, the 5th Latvian regiment was involved into street fighting. Riflemen resisted mainly in the centre of the city. A unit led by the regimental commander Jānis Briedis, surrendered after being encircled by superior forces.[59] A few small groups of

[56] *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. 1918. Russia,* Vol. 2. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1932, pp. 458–459. Note. This corps was formed during the Provisional Government period, and was being transferred unit by unit along the Trans-Siberian Railway in order that it might leave from ports in the Far East to fight the German Army in Western Europe.

[57] *Latvju strēlnieku vēsture*, 1. sēj. 2. d., 766. lpp.

[58] Latvijas Valsts arhīvs (LVA), PA-45. f., 2. apr., 160. l., 10. lp.

[59] *Latvju strēlnieku vēsture*, 1. sēj. 2. d., 322.–323. lpp.

riflemen, one led by J. Vācietis, were able to escape from Kazan. Very timely the city had already been abandoned by J. Daniševskis and other members of the Revolutionary Military Council, i.e. high-ranking political commissars, disregarding their task of controlling the actions of the non-party Commander-in-Chief.



Fig. 5. Cavalry from the Latvian Division at the Eastern Front. 1918. (From the UL IHL collection)

The situation on the Eastern Front for several months has been characterised by the USA historian Richard Pipes as follows: "The Czechoslovaks on the anti-Bolshevik side, and the Latvians on the Bolshevik one — played a greater role than indigenous Russian forces."[60] The Red Army was able to take the initiative only after receiving substantial reinforcements, including several regiments of the Latvian Division, the latter due to the efforts of J. Vācietis (on 6 September, he was named the Commander-in-Chief of all armed forces of Soviet Russia). Soon Soviet troops retook Kazan, Simbirsk, Sizran, and other cities in the region.

Bruce Lockhart, a diplomatic representative of Great Britain, was well aware of the role played by the Latvian riflemen in the Russian Civil War, and sought through secret agents as intermediaries to bribe the Latvian riflemen to desist from supporting the Bolsheviks. The Cheka (Bolsheviks' security police) arrested the British diplomat who was then kept under guard in the Kremlin. Recounting conversations with his guards, B. Lockhart was surprised by the conviction firmly expressed by the Latvian riflemen about an inevitable Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War: "Even those Letts, who were anxious to return to Latvia, laughed at the possibility of successful counter-revolution. To them counter-revolution meant restoration of the land to land-owners."[61] The British diplomat was wrong in simplifying the reasons why the Latvian riflemen supported the Bolshevik regime, associating it with eventual reversal of land taken from the Baltic German barons, an act that had not then taken place. Such action could not happen under German occupation.

In October 1918, the situation rapidly deteriorated in Southern Russia, and the 3rd brigade of the Latvian Division was sent to the Southern Front to oppose a Don Cossack army which had been formed by General Piotr Krasnov, one of the "heroes" of repressing the 1905 Revolution in Latvia. The 9th regiment, from the Kremlin, was also sent to the Southern Front. By the initiative of a Communist faction the regimental commander was changed without paying attention to his military skills and experience

[60] Pipes, R. *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime.* New York: Vintage Books, 1995, p. 7.
[61] Lockhart, B. R. *Memoirs of a British Agent*. London and New York: Putman, 1935, p. 333.

led the regiment to serious casualties already in its first battle. The Republican Revolutionary Military Council condemned this choice of a "wholly inappropriate" set of commanders.[62] The Latvian riflemen were forced to deal with a number of problems at the Southern Front. Still in early onset of cold weather (–20 °C) the 3rd brigade was able to stymie the plans of outnumbered opponents, and relieved pressure on Tsaritsyn.

In Russia the riflemen regiments, as stated above, were supplemented by workers, but not to such an extent that the Latvian Division could be described as proletarian. The Bolsheviks insisted upon such assertion in order to diminish its national character. The majority of men were of rural origin, and not only because very many were refugees from Kurzeme, namely, farmhands, servants, small holders, and even farmers' sons. No proletarian solidarity was in evidence when the 7th regiment of the Latvian Division helped suppress workers' uprisings at the Izhevsk and Votkino weapons factories. The command staff often did not take into account the exhaustion of riflemen after battles and failed to organise timely delivery of supplies and settling of other issues. The riflemen grumbled and occasionally openly protested, threatening to leave their regiments.[63] Regimental Committees and Communist factions had to calm down the riflemen. At any rate the "revolutionary conscientiousness" of the riflemen was not an unchallenged axiom. Some of the non-party riflemen were rather nationally inclined. When discussing the issue of Latvia, there was discord between the nationalists and the internationalists or supporters of Bolshevik ideas. These differences did not prevent them from mutual support in difficult situations during combat. Most of the Communist Party members in the regiments were ordinary riflemen and they had not lost their fundamental Latvian self-respect. In his memoirs B. Lockhart, having had as his guards, Latvians, Russians, Poles, and Hungarians, insists: "The Letts were the best. Most of them were contemptuous of the Russians, whom they regarded as inferiors."[64] One way or another, the national question and the issue of Latvia did not lose its relevance in the units of the division.

Fighting in Latvia

Revolution in Germany and the armistice of Compiegne presented the Bolsheviks an opportunity to annul the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty on 13 November 1918 and to begin taking over territory that had been occupied by the Germans, once their armies started to retreat. Units of the Latvian Division were, for political reasons, sent to the Baltic region, but proclamation, on 18 November 1918, in Riga, of the independent Latvia forced the Russian Bolshevik regime to constitute in Moscow an alternative, the Latvian Bolshevik Provisional Government headed by P. Stučka. The first to be sent

[62] *Реввоенсовет Республики: Протоколы 1918–1919. Сб. документов*. Москва: Русский мир, 1997. с. 106. Note. The Republican, i.e. the Soviet Russian Revolutionary War Soviet was created on 6 September 1918 as the Supreme Command body for collective direction of the Red Army and Navy.

[63] LVA, PA-43. f., 1. apr., 5. l., 43. lpp.

[64] Lockhart, B. R. *Memoirs of a British Agent*, pp. 330, 333.



Fig. 6. The Latvian riflemen in Jelgava. January 1919. (From the UL IHL collection)

were the 2nd Latvian brigade from the Eastern Front to Pskov and then on to Valka, soon the 3rd regiment, from Moscow to Daugavpils and the 3rd brigade, from the Southern Front. The composition of the division had substantially changed after fighting at various fronts during the Russian Civil War, with gaps in the ranks filled by Latvians and non-Latvians. The first were in a minority in several regiments.

The Latvian riflemen were welcomed as heroes who had chased away the German occupants. Approximately 5000 volunteers, with recent estimates as high as greater than 7000[65], mostly young men with no military training, joined the riflemen regiments, then the principal force opposing the idea of an independent Latvia. Rather few inhabitants supported the idea of independence, even though it was vital for the future of the Latvian people. That reflected the people's dislike to the Provisional Government, headed by Kārlis Ulmanis, for its forced cooperation with local Baltic German barons and the German occupants. This Government published an appeal, "Latvian soldiers in Russia", inviting them to return without their weapons or to put these at the disposal of the mentioned government. Documentary material has failed to find even indirect evidence that this appeal reached the addressee's. Even had the appeal reached the riflemen it would not have been able to alter events, given the prevailing circumstances. In his turn P. Stučka, supported by Latvian troops, dragged Latvia into the net of the Russian Civil War. After arriving in Valka, P. Stučka immediately decreed the laws of a socialist revolution to be in force in Latvia, with a strict class approach resolving crucial questions.

[65] Šiliņš, J. *Padomju Latvija 1918–1919*. Rīga: Vēstures zinātnes un popularizēšanas biedrība, 2013, 153.–154. lpp.

On 3 January 1919, the Latvian riflemen, after defeating several disintegrating German forces, reached Riga and hurried on towards Kurzeme. Ventspils was captured at the end of January, but Liepāja was not taken. However, a new opposing force appeared unexpectedly in mid-January. The Army of Estonian Democratic Republic had expelled the 7th Soviet Army from its northern area and with its armoured trains threatened Valka. Thus the second front had opened for the riflemen in the north of Latvia. Latvian riflemen units sent to Valka ran into fierce fighting not far from the town. Their opponents were fresh, organised, and well supplied. Estonian army units took over Valka on February 1.

Organisation of the Army of Soviet Latvia, as part of the Russia's Red Army, began immediately after entry of the riflemen into Riga. This army was tasked with establishing control of the entire territory of Latvia, as well as adjacent areas in Northern Lithuania. In addition to the existing Latvian Rifle Soviet Division, henceforth 1st Division, whose ranks had to be topped up, the 2nd Division had to be formed in a hurry and in the absence of sufficient numbers of volunteers. The 2nd Division also included a number of Latvian units from the Red Army in Russia which had not been incorporated into the 1st Division, as well as four small regiments of the International Division that had been formed in Moscow (soon one of these regiments was excluded). Three new regiments had to be formed in full. The residents' number of Latvia had greatly diminished, and the Government of P. Stučka was forced to mobilize all combat-fits, the so-called counter-revolutionary elements, placing them in work battalions afterwards. It was very difficult to form technical units, receiving equipment and weapons from Russia. A gigantic problem was food supply since the war years and occupation had cleaned out Latvia and gathering the last food stocks from rural areas meant looting those living there.

Following the example of the 1st Division, the system of committees was adopted for the 2nd Division with Communist factions present in all regiments with an exception for the regiments of the former International Division. Army's leadership was very dissatisfied with this system, and in February 1919 at the Conference of Army, Bolsheviks unsuccessfully tried to suppress the system. A second attempt made at the Latvian Communists' Congress in early March, insisting that its liquidation would improve combat readiness and discipline, had the same result. Communists from military units did not wish to abandon the system and voted against the proposal.

In Northern Vidzeme fighting continued throughout February 1919. Clashes between reconnaissance groups and local battles occurred day and night. The Estonian Army with armoured trains continued to create serious threats to Valmiera. These threats were ultimately neutralised but Alūksne was lost, although soon it was retaken.

In the meanwhile, command of the anti-Bolshevik forces in Kurzeme was assumed by the German General Rüdiger von der Goltz, who brought with him significant numbers of mercenaries recruited in Germany, including all the anti-Bolshevik forces in Kurzeme into the 6th reserve corps. Just a year earlier these mercenaries had fought as German soldiers on the Western Front. They were led by professional officers. In Kurzeme, therefore, the Latvian riflemen faced an experienced and well-supplied op-

ponent. R. von der Goltz intended, as he later revealed in his memoirs, far more than merely seizing the Baltic region. He wanted to put an end the Bolshevik power in Russia and with the new Russian government to turn against a long-time enemy of Germany, i.e. Great Britain.[66] The General was an unshakeable enemy of Latvian independence, therefore the presence of the Latvian Separate Battalion[67] (later Brigade) in the 6th reserve corps was a temporary alliance.

On 3 March, units of the 6th reserve corps launched attacks over a broad front in Northern Lithuania and in Kurzeme, and strove to split the opposing Latvian riflemen regiments. One Latvian brigade by itself proved unable to resist and, therefore, additional troops were sent to Kurzeme from the Vidzeme Front. The augmented force was unable to halt the enemy. On 18 March, the Landeswehr occupied Jelgava, and continued to advance as far as the line of the Lielupe River. This sounded an alarm in Riga, and the Army of Soviet Latvia performed unsuccessful attempts at retaking Jelgava, and restoring the previously held positions in Kurzeme Front. Headquarters of the Soviet Western Front decided, however, that the Army of Soviet Latvia should abandon Riga and retreat eastwards to a defensive line Pskov–Rēzekne–Daugavpils.[68] However, it was decided to defend Riga at all costs, because of its political significance.

The need to fight simultaneously in Kurzeme and in Northern Vidzeme rendered the situation for the Army of Soviet Latvia ever more difficult. Troops sent from Russia showed weak fighting abilities.[69] Little remained of the regiments of the former International Division after assaults launched by units of the 6th reserve corps in Northern Lithuania. An offensive in Northern Vidzeme by units of the 2nd brigade of the 1st Division ended with the riflemen forced back to their starting positions. News about the situation in army units concerned poor supply, the inferior quality of products, shortages of uniforms, underwear and shoes — many soldiers were barefoot. All this resulted in frequent outbreaks of sickness. Activities in the rear by representatives of Soviet power and the Bolshevik Party members distressed the riflemen, i.e. the excessively radical approach taken by the Government of P. Stučka in following an immediate course towards socialism. They were also angered by "revolutionary" tribunals' privileges in the rear, as well as the bureaucratisation of the state apparatus and the Bolshevik Party. Their sentiments were based on letters from families and their own personal experiences. They protested about cases of their relatives' property being requisitioned[70] and threatened to deal with Communist officials in the rear. Communists in the regiments occasionally also protested, and some, as individuals, not wishing to accept these iniquities, even left the Bolshevik Party, but remained in their regiment.[71] At

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[66] Goltz, R. von der. *Meine Sendung in Finnland und im Baltikum*. Leipzig: K. F. Kochler, 1920, S. 147.

[67] This battalion was formed in Jelgava, on 5 January 1919, from smaller units that supported the Provisional Government of K. Ulmanis, and together with Baltic German units, it was part of the Baltic Landeswehr.

[68] *Latvju revolucionārais strēlnieks*, 2. sēj. Maskava: Prometejs, 1935, 489.–490. lpp.

[69] РГВА, ф. 6, оп. 4, д. 82, л. 6, 7; LVA, PA-45. f., 3. apr., 75. l., 6. lp.; ibid, 2. apr., 152. l., 72. lp.

[70] It is for this reason that the responsible commisar K. Pētersons forbade "searches of the homes of family members of Red Army soldiers, requisition or confiscation of their property, or expulsion from their home". (*Latviešu strēlnieki par un pret lieliniekiem, 1915–1920: Dokumenti un materiāli*. Šalda, V. (sast.). Daugavpils: Saule, 2006, 123.–124. lpp.)

[71] LVA, PA-43. f., 1. apr., 7. l., 52. lp.

that time resignation from the Bolshevik Party was not viewed as treason, as it was later. Latvian riflemen coming from an agrarian background were particularly concerned by a decree of P. Stučka, issued on March 1, nationalising all land, which meant an end to hopes of the land-less, as well as of small landholders, to acquire their own property. A number of agrarian experiments, such as hurriedly organised Soviet farms and communes, received negative estimation. This led to more grumbling about Communist acts in the rear. While in Russia, the riflemen had looked at Soviet excesses only in passing, but seeing these same at home led them to think deeply about causes and effects. The regimental Bolsheviks had no sound arguments. "White Guards cells" were discovered in several regiments. Some soldiers who had been mobilised went over the front to the Estonian Army. On the Kurzeme Front cases of defection or surrender occurred rarely, because being captured by the Germans of the Baltic Landeswehr forces meant a serious threat to the life of the prisoner.

In April 1919, the Polish Army, after capturing Vilnius, threatened Daugavpils and the rear of the Army of Soviet Latvia. Headquarters of the Soviet Western Front found itself without reserve forces, but on April 28 ordered the Army of Soviet Latvia to proceed with an energetic offensive operation, to retake Valka, Bauska, and Jelgava[72], i.e. to attack simultaneously in three different directions. The task was beyond the capabilities of the army, and, furthermore, some Latvian riflemen units were already engaged in fighting in Northern Vidzeme without any prospect of retaking Valka. Morale of the troops continued to deteriorate. "The mood of the army has reached its lowest level"[73], the executive committee of Valmiera District stated in its letter of 7 May, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia. The letter was describing a crisis in morale that was further exacerbated by instances of fraternisation of Latvian riflemen with Estonian soldiers.

On 22 May 1919, General Goltz's forces occupied Riga without encountering vigorous resistance. This dealt a serious political blow to the Bolshevism throughout Latvia and it was closely followed by attacks from the north (by the Estonian Army), from the south and south-west (by the Lithuanian and Polish armies). The Army of Soviet Latvia was obliged to leave Vidzeme and retreat to Latgale in order to avoid being encircled. Many individuals deserted during this retreat, including disillusioned Bolsheviks.[74] The check up of personnel showed that only 41% remained in the 1st regiment, 47%, in the 9th regiment, 61%, in the 2nd regiment, etc. The Communist faction of the 2nd regiment had shrunk by 63% (!)[75]. Its riflemen were justified in blaming losses suffered by the 2nd regiment on the Commissar, Kārlis Briedis, for taking the lead on his own responsibility. By his incompetent leadership, on 22 May, part of the riflemen was surrounded, while some fled (mostly volunteers as there were no mobi-

[72] *Директивы командования фронтов Красной Армии (1917–1922 гг.): Сб. документов*, т. II. Москва: Воениздат, 1972, с. 70.

[73] *Latviešu strēlnieki par un pret lieliniekiem, 1915–1920: Dokumenti un materiāli*, 122. lpp.

[74] LVA, PA-43. f., 1. apr., 8. l., 68. lp.

[75] Российский государственный военный архив (РГВА), ф. 200, оп. 1, д. 160, л. 72; LVA, PA-42. f., 1. apr., 47. l., 56. lp.; Bērziņš V. *Latviešu strēlnieki – drāma un traģēdija*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1995, 185. lpp.

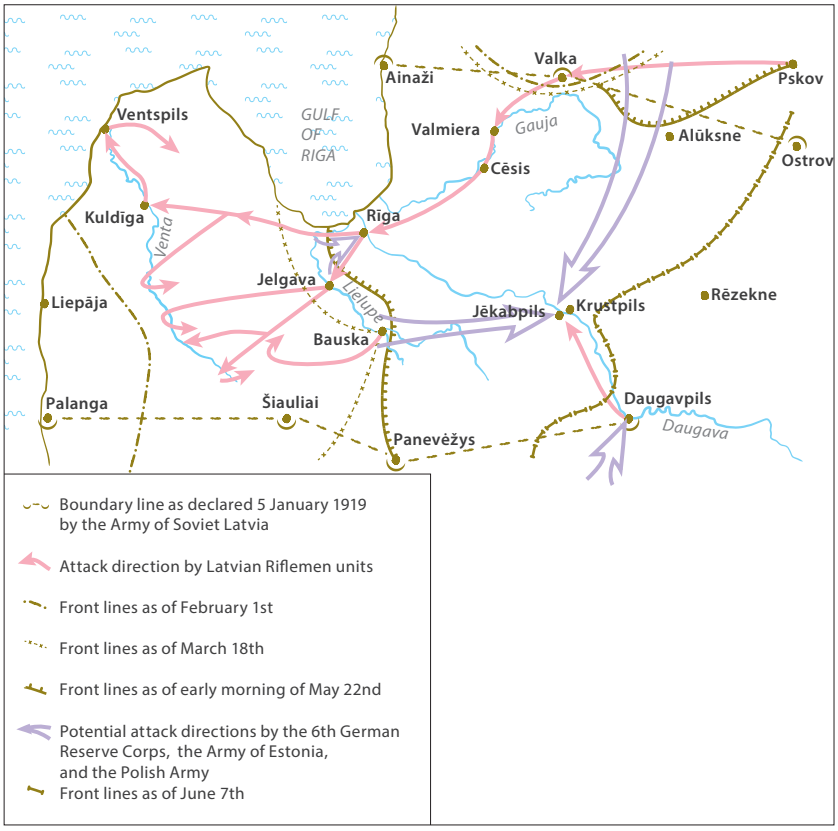


Diagram 4. The development of hostilities in Latvia during the first half of 1919

lised soldiers in the regiment)[76]. There were very many deserters. According to lists of names drawn up later, 2519 individuals had deserted, some of the 339 individuals listed as missing should be added to this number. The number of killed, 224, was greatly smaller.[77] These changes led to serious consequences. Complete collapse of the Army of Soviet Latvia was only averted by a German attempt to seize Vidzeme and Estonia. German forces were defeated in June 1919 at Cēsis where they encountered the Estonian Army and the North Latvian Brigade. Subsequently the Germans retreated to Kurzeme where they joined *en masse* the anti-Bolshevik troops or the Russian Western Army, led by the adventurer Pavel Bermondt. The Baltic German Landeswehr units were sent to Tukums to be reorganised, and later they were integrated into the National Army of Latvia.

The Army of Soviet Latvia, on arriving in Latgale, was renamed the Soviet 15th Army, and was reorganised. Both divisions were united into one Latvian Rifle Division. The elected committee system and Iskolastrel were abolished. The Communist

[76] LVA, PA-43. f., 1. apr., 6. l., 38. lp.
[77] LVA, PA-42. f., 1. apr., 41. l., 2.–99. lp.

factions in the regiments were reorganised into ineffectual party cells like it was in the rest of the Red Army; the rights of Commissars were strengthened. In this way the "national features" that had long bothered the "centre" were erased from the Latvian units. Evidently not everyone at the "centre" liked the very name of the Latvian Rifle Division, and on 8 July 1919, simultaneously with the removal of J. Vācietis from supreme command of the all armed forces of Soviet Russia, the Latvian Rifle Division was renamed the 53rd Rifle Division. This act greatly displeased the riflemen who were proud of the name of their division, and on 24 July its former designation was restored. The government headed by P. Stučka, in particular, J. Daniševskis, were concerned about receiving additional forces to seek revenge. They sought to exploit the armed conflict between German forces and the Estonian Army so as to retake Riga and other territory that they had lost in Latvia. The Soviet Russia was unable to send four divisions for this purpose.[78] Available reserves had to be allocated to the Southern Front, as well as to the Petrograd region.

In July 1919, the Soviet 15th Army on the so-called Latgale Front faced units of both the troops of the Estonian Democratic Republic and the National Army of Latvia (officially it was founded on 10 July[79]), but near Daugavpils it faced also Lithuanian and Polish forces. The most substantial engagements took place towards the end of the summer near Daugavpils, a city which both Lithuanian and Polish troops sought to capture. The Soviet 15th Army succeeded in holding the city, in a large measure thanks to help by the 2nd regiment of the Latvian Rifle Division arriving from Pskov, as well as, by the Estonian Soviet Brigade[80]. However, cases began to occur with increasing frequency, of defection by Latvian riflemen and officers (including senior officers) to the National Army of Latvia. The majority of riflemen were not disposed to leave their units and to defect. Many had not freed themselves of the influence of Communist ideology, others were held back by their sense of soldier's honour. Nevertheless, defection of soldiers was the main reason why the Latvian rifle regiments were shifted to Byelorussia, where they engaged units of the anti-Bolshevik Polish Army. The transfer of the Latvian riflemen regiments from Latvia was completed in the first half of September 1919.

Against the restoration of "a united and indivisible" Russia

The strategic and operational situation of the Red Army had substantially deteriorated along the Southern Front. Neither the appeal by V. Lenin, "Everybody to the fight against Denikin", nor dispatch of additional forces and the mobilisation of thousands of communists produced the desired result. Every day brought news of victories gained by General Anton Denikin's troops in their advance towards Moscow, the

[78] LVA, PA-45. f., 3. apr., 42. l., 121. lp.

[79] This army incorporated the Baltic Landeswehr as well as Latvian units formed in the Estonian Army.

[80] Jēkabsons, Ē. *Piesardzīgā draudzība: Latvijas un Polijas attiecības 1919. un 1920. gadā*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2007, 36.–37. lpp.

direction in which his best units were concentrated. An erroneous strategy of Soviet Supreme Commander Sergei Kamenev and its failings became ever more evident over time. He had chosen the wrong direction for main assault and had left the road to Moscow relatively unprotected. This coupled with poor combat abilities of demoralised units of the Red Army. The Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party intervened and practically reverted to a plan that had been worked out by former Supreme Commander J. Vācietis in May–June 1919, on how to defeat the Army of A. Denikin. The plan called for the principal offensive operation to comprise assaults via the Donbas through to Novocherkassk, relying on the Latvian riflemen to crush down the crack troops of the opponent's army.[81] Enemy's success had so unsettled the Kremlin elite that they were readying a secret plan to leave Moscow for Perm[82], i.e. considering the possibility that Moscow might fall. In this situation V. Lenin remembered the Latvian riflemen, whose division of 19 340 men were less than 1% out of the 2 million strong active Red Army.[83] He insisted that they, together with the Red Cossack Brigade, be transferred to the Southern Front[84], and personally followed their progress. The Estonian Rifle Division of the Red Army was later also engaged in fighting the forces led by A. Denikin; it appears that the Bolshevik elite recognised the fighting prowess of its national units, then, and in later battles.

The Latvian Rifle Division, together with the Red Cossacks and one infantry brigade, after their arrival at the Southern Front, were shaped into an assault group, with the Latvian troops making up the principal force. On 11 October, Latvian units made contact with enemy scouts and the following day saw their first major engagement. This was the first time that the Latvian Rifle Division in its entirety was given an operational task. The riflemen were ready to fight an enemy who rejected any thought of self-determination for small nations. Yet organising supplies for the Latvian riflemen had not taken place, and soon they ran out of food, even bread. Supply deliveries were uneven of ammunition, and many in the Division did not have proper clothing. Soviet dysfunction occurred from time to time. The riflemen did not secure their flanks, but instead attacked A. Denikin's elite units that had captured Kromy and Orla. The situation was paradoxical: the 13th and 14th Soviet armies whose combat effectives outnumbered more than six times that of the assault group[85], continued to withdraw, whereas the assault group, supported by the Estonian Rifle Division, advanced. Fierce fighting occurred at Kromy with positions changing hands several times, but eventually the attacking forces dislodged the enemy from the city and held Kromy. This defeat of A. Denikin's elite infantry units of the Volunteer Army ended any hope of capturing Moscow. During the course of this battle, the Latvian riflemen's superiority above

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[81] *Директивы Главного командования Красной армии (1917–1920): Сб. документов*, т. IV. Москва: Воениздат, 1969, с. 429–433.

[82] Pipes, R. *Russia under the Bolshevik regime*, p. 121.

[83] РГВА, ф. 1574, оп. 1, д. 201, л. 278; *Директивы командования фронтов Красной армии (1917–1922 гг.): Сб. документов*, т. IV, с. 105.

[84] *В. И. Ленин. Биографическая хроника*, т. 7. Москва: Политиздат, 1976, с. 513.

[85] *Директивы командования фронтов Красной армии (1917–1922 гг.): Сб. документов*, т. IV, с. 72–73.

enemy in the collision of characters was undoubted. The enemy began a general retreat over the entire front since their moral and physical forces had been exhausted. At the same time, the 5th separate Latvian regiment which was formed from the part of the division's 5th regiment, was engaged in the defence of Petrograd. There the riflemen were able to deal with a secret weapon of General Nikolai Yudenich, notably a number of British tanks manned by British crews,[86] which were sent to support infantry assaults. Their example inspired other Red Army units to stand fast, not to flee, and how successfully to deal with tanks.

The Russian Western Army led by P. Bermondt did not rush to reinforce the General N. Yudenich's troops at Petrograd. Instead, P. Bermondt attacked Riga on 8 October 1919. This action makes a convincing evidence for the force being directed by certain political circles in Germany, as well as its priority to defend Baltic German interests in the Baltic. The Latvian National Army, supported by English and French naval shelling, defeated the Russian Western Army, and expelled it from Latvia at the end of November of that year.[87] At that time a lot of Latvians released from prisoners of war camps in Germany, and deserters from riflemen units, were fighting in the National Army of Latvia, and, in Latgale, they were joined by Latvian riflemen who abandoned the 15th Soviet Army. However, assertion that more than 50% of the soldiers in the national army have been former members of the Red Army[88], must be viewed as exaggeration.

The Latvian Rifle Division, immediately after a difficult campaign in the region around Orla and Kromy and, despite of a typhus epidemic[89] among riflemen, was included into persecution of defeated Denikin's troops. The Division,[90] was relegated to the reserves only in the last decade of December; however, already in January 1920 it was ordered to oppose the Ukrainian peasant army raised by Nestor Makhno. In March the Division, which had not yet regained its strength, was integrated into the 13th Soviet Army that had been ordered to capture the Crimean peninsula. The remnants of the A. Denikin's troops, sheltering behind the 10 m high Turkish Wall, had been consolidated and reinforced by General Peter Wrangel. Latvians recalled the name of this Baron, as a reminder of cruel punishment forces responsible for repressions of the 1905 Revolution in Latvia.

The Latvian Rifle Division, without having recovered from the typhus epidemic and greatly diminished numerically, was included in the assault group. On 13 April, the division was sent on an irresponsible attack against the Turkish Wall, with the 13th Army's Command promise of reinforcements to arrive later. Initially, the attack was successful, but in the absence of artillery support, and without the promised reinforcements, it had to be broken off. The troops led by General P. Wrangel counterattacked and forced the Latvian riflemen to retreat. On the following days, the regi-

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86 Swain, G. *Russia's Civil War*. London: Tempus, 2000, p. 124.

87 *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture. II. Neatkarīgā valsts, 1918–1940.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 110.–122. lpp.

88 National Archives (USA), M 1508, R 10, p. 0578.

89 LVA, PA-45. f., 9. apr., 3. l., 7. lp.

90 The number of command officers had decreased by 75% (РГВА, ф. 199, оп. 1, д. 17, л. 131).

ments of the division again were sent into hopeless and futile attacks. The Red Army did not overcome the Crimean defences with these assaults. After this bout of fighting, talks about the need to return home restarted in the Latvian Rifle Division, and the divisional political commissars were forced to conclude that the numbers wishing to go home had increased, and that the "Issue of Latvia" was increasingly affecting the Division.[91]



Fig. 7. At the Headquarters of the Latvian Rifle Division in the Southwestern Front, 1920. Standing, from left to right, Chief of Staff, Kārlis Švēde, Divisional Commissar, Roberts Apinis. Sitting, Kirils Stucka, Commander of the Division. (From the UL IHL collection)

During June 1920, General P. Wrangel's Russian Army, having reinforced its ranks, pushed back the Latvian Rifle Division and other Red Army units to Kakhovka, and then carried on the fight to the Tauride Steppes, where the enemy proved adept at using their more sizeable cavalry units to great advantage. For many regiments of the division these were their final battles. One after another they were cut off and surrounded, failing to receive promised support from the Red Army cavalry, in some cases even given direct orders not to break out. Four regiments were annihilated after a desperate struggle.[92] Other units also suffered heavily. After it was reinforced with mobilised non-Latvians and Latvians, the Latvian Rifle Division engaged in capture of the Crimean Peninsula.

The taking of the Crimea by the Red Army signalled the end of the Civil War in the European part of Russia. The Latvian Rifle Division was no longer useful to the Bolshevik regime, and they hurried to disband it, offering riflemen the opportunity to join the 52nd Division. Latvians were still concentrated in combat structures which the Bolsheviks wished to retain for their own purposes. However, the majority of non-party Latvian riflemen took advantage provisions of the Peace Treaty between Soviet Russia and Latvia, signed on 11 August 1920, first to demobilise, and then to depart for Latvia. They completely ignored the Bolshevik propaganda about hard times there and the likelihood of punishment in "White Latvia". During 1921 and in the first four months of 1922, 11 395 former Red Army soldiers left for Latvia.[93] It is difficult to estimate how many of these were riflemen, since Latvians were to be found in many Red Army units during the Russian Civil War. It seems likely that fewer than one-half of

[91] Divisional Commissar R. Apinis later expressed himself bluntly: "The fighting capacity of this Division hinges on … the "Issue of Latvia". (*Latvju revolucionārais strēlnieks*, 1. sēj. Maskava: Prometejs, 1934, 25. lpp.). Note. The Commissar, and the Communist factions wanted a return to Latvia as victors, but riflemen preferred to return to their homeland without their weapons.

[92] *Latviešu strēlnieku vēsture (1915–1920)*, 489.–490., 513., 527.–530., 563. lpp.

[93] *Latvijas statistiskā gada grāmata, 1922*. Rīga: Valsts statistiskā pārvalde, 1923, 24. lpp.

those who returned were riflemen. In fatherland they were welcomed as long-lost sons, and were neither repressed, nor particularly lauded. The majority of those who remained in Russia were physically annihilated in the Stalinist purges of 1937–1938, which targeted ethnic groups in particular.

The Troitsk Battalion and the Imanta Regiment

Besides those Latvian riflemen and officers in Russia who joined and fought in the Red Army or took the anti-Bolshevik side (the latter mostly officers), there were riflemen and their officers, comparatively many times less preliminary, who were able to avoid from their dragging in the Russian Civil War. These soldiers were determined to fight solely for the freedom and independence of Latvia. Some of them enlisted in the 1st Latvian Liberation Battalion, formed in Troitsk, October 1918, with the approval by the Committee of the Russian Constituent Assembly; this unit is usually referred to as the Troitsk Battalion. Pēteris Dardzāns, formerly officer of the 1st Daugavgrīva Latvian Rifle Regiment, was appointed as commander of the Troitsk Battalion. Seeking to avoid inclusion of this battalion into the "Peoples' Army" being created by same anti-Bolshevik Assembly, and thereafter being drawn into the Russian Civil War, the Latvian Provisional National Council of Siberia and the Urals, that had been established in Omsk, and the Latvian Central Bureau in Vladivostok, jointly contacted the commanders of the Czechoslovak Corps and the French Military Mission to Siberia. The Troitsk Battalion and the Imanta Regiment, which had been formed on 1 December of the same year in Vladivostok, were placed under the command and supply of the Czechoslovak Corps. Colonel Jānis Kurelis, formerly an officer in the 5th Zemgale Latvian riflemen regiment, commanded the Imanta Regiment. Commanders of the Imanta Regiment were changed from time to time for various reasons. French General Maurice Janin, Commander-in-Chief of Entente Armed Forces in Eastern Russia and the Western part of Siberia, accepted responsibility for both Latvian units, in this way preventing their coming under the control of Admiral Alexander Kolchak. Once under protection of the French Mission both units attracted volunteers from Latvian refugees and Latvian colonists. Reverses suffered by A. Kolchak's forces against the Red Army meant that greater efforts were made to integrate the Troitsk Battalion into the struggle against the Bolsheviks. Therefore, with the imminent arrival of Red Army units, the Troitsk Battalion left for Vladivostok on 25 July 1919. The following year, on 10–11 January, the battalion was obliged to clear the way forward by engaging the Red Army units blocking their path. A full-scale battle was fought in the Nizhneudensk District on 29 January at the temperature of –40 °C. The Troitsk Battalion suffered heavy casualties in this fighting: 27 soldiers killed, 204 injured, and 22 taken prisoners.[94] Along the way soldiers with wavering convictions and Siberian colonists started to leave the unit. The Troitsk Battalion

[94] *Mūsu armija tapšanā, valsts izcīnīšanā un tagadējos sasniegumos*. Rīga: Golts un Jurjāns, 1929, 134. lpp.

reached Harbin in mid-April. General M. Janin stated in his order of the day: "This retreat that covered 6000 kilometres, traversed Asia, and is unprecedented in military history; those who are familiar with Siberia appreciate the range of the difficulties that were encountered, and together this elicits the greatest respect for the soldiers and for the Commander who led them overcoming so many obstacles. It is my duty to remind you again of this."[95] Editors of the battalion newspaper, *Brīvais Latvis* (Free Latvian) accompanied the men. This newspaper had first been published in Omsk, and was issued whenever the battalion stopped for a longer time. The unit managed to publish several tens of editions before reaching Vladivostok, i.e. before 13 June 1920, with a final issue appearing there. At that time the unit consisted of 97 officers, 7 military officials, 2 medical doctors, 109 instructors, and 518 riflemen, in total 732 soldiers[96].

The Imanta Regiment encountered fewer problems at Vladivostok, where its personnel on 19 December 1919, was 4 officers, 1114 instructors and men.[97] Whilst in the city the troops formed a garrison and guarded various objects of military significance. They also had time to engage in cultural and educational pursuits, such as discussing Latvian history issues and problems associated with the Latvian state, taking English and German language lessons. A choir and mandolin orchestra were organised.[98] This was yet again a reminder of their desire for knowledge, a wish of Latvians to spend their free time in learning, as well as playing music and making art. On 28 February 1920, some of the troops left for home and later the remainder also sailed for Latvia. Shortly after they reached their destination, Troitsk Battalion followed. French and British ships transported them, but the Latvian state later reimbursed costs incurred. Both units reached Latvia after the War for Independence had concluded. The Troitsk Battalion was integrated into the Border Guards Division, while the Imanta Regiment was disbanded, allowing its members to serve in various units of National Army of Latvia.

Conclusions

The great losses suffered by the Russian Army at the beginning of the First World War in battles with the German Army led the Tsarist Autocracy to tolerate formation of Latvian national military units from volunteers. This decision was taken and implemented despite mutual mistrust that arose out of a recent revolution in Latvia (1905) and its brutal suppression. The Autocracy sought well-motivated fighting men, the Latvian side wanted to defend Riga and to free themselves, at very least, from oppression by a Baltic-German elite that continued to exert great influence. Certainly the eight battalions that were raised with a certain degree of autonomy,

[95] LVVA, 6033. f., 1. apr., 40. l., 136. lp.
[96] *Mūsu armija tapšanā, valsts izcīnīšanā un tagadējos sasniegumos*, 134. lpp.
[97] *Latvju enciklopēdija*. Švābe, A. (red.). 1. sēj. Stokholma: Trīs zvaigznes, 1950–1951, 792. lpp.
[98] Bērziņš, V. *Latviešu strēlnieki – drāma un traģēdija*, 238. lpp.

were neither Latvian nor Latvia's troops. They were a small part of the Russian Imperial Army. The battalions, later regiments, did not have any operational self-dependency and the 12th Army's Command used them according to its own plans. After the Tsarist Autocracy fell, bleeding in numerous assaults, the Latvian riflemen quickly radicalized, and became a potent Bolshevik force within the 12th Army. Only partially demoralized, these units retained their capacity to fight, which they verified saving the 12th Army from encirclement, when the Germans restarted an operation against Riga.

In the days following the October overturn in Russia, the Latvian regiments were sent to control the northern part of Latvia, as well as to support the new government in Petrograd, i.e. they took the Bolshevik side during the Russian Civil War. After the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty between Soviet Russia and Germany, the Latvian Soviet Rifle Division, formed as part of the Red Army, was the most significant military supporter of Bolshevism in Russia, a stabilising force on the Eastern and Southern Fronts throughout the civil war. When the Peace Treaty was annulled, units of the Latvian Division, supporting P. Stučka's pro-Moscow Bolshevik Government and as the main counter-force to independent state, managed to take up almost all Latvia. Gradually they became less able to resist attacks by growing numbers of anti-Bolshevik units. Excessively radical policies pursued by the P. Stučka Government (arbitrary acts by tribunals, taking of hostages, agrarian experiments, etc.) greatly sapped the morale of the riflemen. After losing Riga, the Army of Soviet Latvia, organised on the basis of riflemen, avoiding siege, retreated to the eastern part of Latvia, i.e. Latgale. Bolshevism in Latvia definitively was defeated in 1919, not only militarily, but also ideologically. There were many instances of defection by Latvian riflemen to the ranks of the National Army of Latvia.

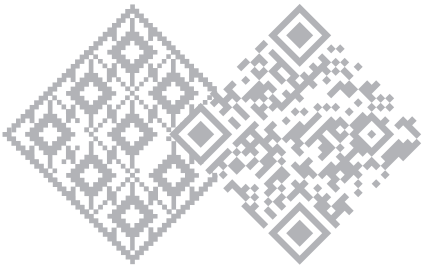
It was mainly the Latvian Rifle Division which on the Southern Front, in October 1919, defeated the elite of anti-Bolshevik forces led by General A. Denikin, this signalling their imminent rout and averting a threat to Moscow. The Division, physically weakened, poorly supplied and suffering from a typhus epidemic, was assigned to persecute the retreating enemy. In April of the following year, the Latvian riflemen fought against P. Wrangel's Russian army that had found safe haven in the Crimea. The Soviet High Command displayed a felonious and irresponsible attitude towards the riflemen during fighting at Perekop and Kakhovka and in the Tauride Steppes. After the greatly reduced Latvian Rifle Division was demobilised, the majority of ethnic Latvian soldiers and officers took their discharge and departed to their homeland, cutting all ties with the Bolshevik regime.

The Latvian riflemen were determined troops and put their experience to good use in defeating those who sought to renew a "United and Indivisible" Russia. Thus, they indirectly helped to defend the independence of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland and facilitated their international recognition. It is also true that they at the same time assisted at the birth of a new totalitarian great power in Russia. International assessments of the role played by the Latvian riflemen differed: their fighting at

the Riga Front was positively viewed by the Western powers, and the support they provided for the Bolshevik regime in Russia was condemned by the same Western powers. This judgement did not cover action by the two Latvian military units that avoided involvement in the Russian Civil War, but who were unable to take part in the Latvian War of Independence, as had been their original intention.

About the author

Valdis Bērziņš (b. 1935) – historian, *Dr. habil. hist.* (1990), professor (1993), Full Member LAS (1998), State Scholar Emeritus (2005), IREX (USA) scholarship (1993–1994), Fulbright Scholar (USA, 1997), Member, Committee of Historians of Latvia (1998–2001). Annual Science Award established by the LAS the Joint Stock Company "Grindeks" received 2000, Kārlis Ulmanis Prize (2004), Order of the Three Stars (IVth rank, 2012). Author of nine books.



PART IV

LATVIANS AND THE STATE OF LATVIA (1918–1990)

Ēriks Jēkabsons

MILITARY PROCESSES WHICH LED TO LATVIA'S STATEHOOD (1918–1920)

The objective of the article is to show the main events and processes of the Latvian War of Independence from November 1918 to August 1920, during which time the state of Latvia came into being and was strengthened. This objective is met by relying on primary sources and recent, source-based literature. The main attention is focused on military issues, and political issues are discussed only for better explanation of military processes and events. Unfortunately, the limited volume of this article prevents detailed discussion of these processes and events, so that it is restricted as regards primary sources and the latest and the most complete literature about them.

Keywords: Latvian War of Independence, Provisional Government of Latvia, Landeswehr, Army of Northern Latvia, Soviet Latvia, Soviet Russia, Bermondt's troops, Liberation of Latgale, relations with neighbours, social processes connected to military issues.

The year 1918 marked an important turning point in the history of Europe and of the world. Many national states in Central and Eastern Europe were born during the final phase of the First World War, with not a few of these appearing for the first time in history. The right to self-determination abetted the collapse of empires already weakened by war. However, the conditions facing the new governments in their fight for independence and settling the borders of their countries differed to a lesser or greater degree (this struggle ended in the above-mentioned region of Europe in March 1921 with the peace treaty of Riga between Poland and Soviet Russia, which also signalled the emergence of the Versailles–Riga system). This was certainly the case for the three Baltic States, despite the apparent similarity of their geopolitical situation. Differences in the dates on which independence was proclaimed are telling (for Estonia and Lithuania this occurred in February 1918, while for Latvia this happened only in November 1918), for which there is a credible explanation. The German occupation of Lithuania began in 1915 when its territory was completely occupied by Germany, which was interested in establishing an anti-Polish entity. Estonia for its part was only occupied by German forces in February 1918, so that the Estonian political elite managed to proclaim independence in advance of the arrival of the German army. The German occupation authorities did not tolerate the emergence of real statehood in either of these cases (fully suppressing the tendency in Estonia, and partially in

Lithuania). Latvia alone of the three Baltic lands was a zone of ongoing combat for three years, and, this precluded major public political activities, including proclamation of any form of independence.

Once fighting ceased on the Western Front in November 1918, the situation changed in those territories in the east which had been occupied by the German army. National governments set to work in Lithuania and Estonia — previously the occupation authorities had simply forbidden such activities. The Republic of Latvia was proclaimed in Riga on 18 November, but the Provisional Government of Latvia had to wait one and a half years for recognition, a period of protracted and complex military and political struggle to sustain independence. Over the period 1918–1920, the following entities collided with one another and even became intertwined in a variety of ways on the territory of Latvia: armed forces of the nascent Republic of Latvia, those of Soviet Russia and of Latvian Bolsheviks, defeated and humiliated German forces, various ambitious anti-Bolshevik forces of Russia, or various leaders of Russian anti-Bolshevik forces, the armed forces of the new and renewed neighbouring countries — Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, and Finland — as well as those of the Belarusian People's Republic and of the Ukrainian People's Republic, both of whom had declared independence yet failed to secure it, and, finally, forces representing the interests of the Great Powers of the West under various, occasionally differing guises.

During the period under consideration three governments were active on the territory of Latvia, each having an armed force to hand, as well as a civilian authority established in Zemgale at the rear of the army led by Pavel Bermondt-Avalov. After their liberation from Bolshevik forces, several territories in Latvia also found themselves, albeit for a shorter or longer time, in the jurisdiction of, even military rule by their neighbouring states — Estonia, Poland, and Lithuania.

The study of the history of the period of Latvia which is the subject of this paper is, regrettably, still incomplete — only several issues have been adequately studied, whereas a number of equally important issues await an in-depth analysis, or have not even been studied, or their investigation today has not advanced beyond what was achieved by scholars during the 1930s. An analysis is still missing today of historical events and processes associated with the War of Independence that would take into account archival materials in Latvia and abroad, and one which would conform to contemporary scholarly requirements. An essential inadequacy of many extant studies, one that is shared by the historiography of states and even great powers in the region, is the examination in isolation of their history over the time period in question, looking at events which are regionally closely linked solely within their borders, only occasionally making use of materials available in neighbouring countries as well as in the great powers concerned.[1] Most publications in English have been written largely from

[1] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas Neatkarības karš 1918.–1920.gadā: Galveno militārpolitisko norišu atspoguļojums historiogrāfijā. *Latvijas valstiskumam 90. Latvijas valsts neatkarība: ideja un realizācija*. Starptautiska konference 2008, 13.–14. novembris, Rīga. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2010, 20.–44. lpp. Given the limited size of this article, further references to generally known scholarly publications dealing with the subject of this paper will be left without reference. See the article cited above for more information on the range of such literature.

this standpoint, at best complementing the text with original documents taken from Western collections of documents.[2] At the same time, a new generation of historians with a different outlook is coming to the fore.[3]

Creation of the armed forces and their initial activities

Despite Riga being under German occupation at the time, the Latvian National Council proclaimed the Republic of Latvia on 18 November 1918, and announced a Provisional Government of Latvia headed by Kārlis Ulmanis. Initially, the National Council consisted of representatives of Latvian political parties, excluding members of the Latvian Social Democrats, who were part of the Russian Social Democratic Party, i.e. the future Communist Party (with the exception of Staņislavs Kambala, who represented the region of Latgale); participation was also foreseen by representatives of the national minorities, who joined the Council later.

At the same time, on 16 November, the Latvian National Association of Soldiers led by Roberts Dambītis restarted its activities, and under the aegis of the Latvian National Council, it created a Defence Section, which took the first organisational steps towards forming a so-called militia. On 19 November, the National Association announced at a meeting of its presidium that: "Subsequent to foundation of the state of Latvia, and the question of defence arising, it has fallen to the National Association of Soldiers to begin registration of officers and riflemen with a view to organising a militia and a defensive force (…)", and the presidium nominated three candidates for the post of minister, individuals "who are suitable for the post and who would be well-regarded by the Association of Soldiers".[4]

The Defence Ministry was formally established on 22 November, although the first Defence Minister, Jānis Zālītis, a barrister, one of the authors of the idea of creating the Latvian Riflemen's units in 1915 and who had participated in their formation early in the First World War. Zālītis assumed his position on 4 December, at which time his two deputies were confirmed, military officers Roberts Dambītis and Gustavs Grīnbergs. Formation of military units loyal to the government began shortly thereafter. The German occupation authorities fully controlled the situation in the capital. Given the news that the Red Army of Workers and Peasants had just arrived in Latvia from Soviet Russia, including Latvian Riflemen's units, and that the Provisional Government of Latvia was forced to collaborate with both the German occupation authorities and

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[2] The best examples of these publications include: Spekke, A. *History of Latvia. An Outline*. Stockholm: Zelta Ābele, 1957, pp. 337–359; Plakans, A. *The Latvians: a Short History*. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1995, pp. 112–120; Puisāns, T. *The Emerging Nation: the path of agonizing development from Baltic tribalism to Latvian nationhood*. Riga: Centre of Baltic-Nordic History and Political Studies, 1995, pp. 164–240; *Latvijas vēsture – 20.gadsimts = Histoire de la Lettonie au 20ième siècle*. Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. (comp.). Rīga: Jumava, 2006, pp. 128–140, etc.

[3] See for example: Šiliņš, J. Latvian War of Independence against Soviet Russia and Germany (1918–1920). *GeoPolitica*, Nr. 3, 2011, Anul IX, pp. 268–274; Minins, A. A Civil War? *Journal of Baltic Studies*, No. 1, 2015, pp. 49–63.

[4] *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, 1918, Nr. 4, 18. novembris, Nr. 7, 21. novembris, 3. lpp.

local Baltic Germans (the latter had been able very rapidly, starting on 11 November, to raise rather impressive volunteer military units), support by the people for the Provisional Government of Latvia was weak — it only proved possible for the government to raise a few companies in Riga, Cēsis, Tukums, and elsewhere. Furthermore, at the end of December when several companies (two from Riga) were ordered to take part in defending Riga from the advancing Latvian Red Riflemen's units, only the German Landeswehr and Iron Division attempted to do so at Inčukalns between 31 December and 1 January[5], together with a partisan unit raised in Rēzekne and led by Mikhail Afanasyev (which was loyal to the Provisional Government of Latvia). After the two companies refused to obey orders, they were disbanded, and several soldiers were executed.

Agreements concluded by the government led by Kārlis Ulmanis on 7 and 29 December with August Winnig — who represented the German government in the Baltic — are still regarded as controversial in present-day historical discourse. These agreements detailed the principles to be followed in forming the Landeswehr as military force of the Latvian government, for example, a fixed relative number of Latvian (national), Baltic German, and Russian units (which principle was not followed because of different reasons), supplies from the stores of German occupation forces etc.[6] The Agreement of 7 December called for the introduction in Latvia of four military (war) administrative districts. On 9 December, the Provisional Government of Latvia appointed a Baltic German, Leon Freytag von Loringhoven, Commander of the Landeswehr, a Major General of the Russian Army, as commander of the Riga Military District (a fact omitted from history books written during the 1920s and 1930s), with Captain Jorģis Zemitāns as his assistant; Col. Jānis Apinis was appointed commander of the Vidzeme Military District, Col. Mārtiņš Peniķis, commander of the Kurzeme Military District, and Lt. Col. Jānis Imaks, commander of the Latgale Military District.[7] These appointments proved to be largely symbolic in nature. However, these agreements demonstrated, first, the great dependence of the Latvian authorities on German military forces and the German occupation authorities; second (in particular, the 29 December agreement which provided for German soldiers to be granted Latvian citizenship after several weeks service in the armed forces of Latvia was a glaring example), they further diminished the popularity of the Provisional Government of Latvia among the people; third, they gave little practical support for the creation of the national armed forces — it was impossible to form the Latvian units foreseen for the Landeswehr by reason of too few volunteers, and, furthermore, the German occupation authorities who were to hand out weapons and ammunition according to the agreements were tardy in doing so, advancing the excuse of these units being politically unreliable.

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[5] See: Buks, A. Pirmā kauja par Latvijas neatkarību. Accessible at: http://vesture.eu/index.php/Pirm%C4%81_kauja_par_ Latvijas_neatkar%C4%ABbu#cite_ref-23 (site last visited 11.06.2016).

[6] See: Latvian State Historical Archives of the National Archives of Latvia (further LVVA), 1468. f., 1. apr., 130. l., 10.–14. lp.

[7] J. P. Mūsu pirmo jātnieku vienību formēšana un kaujas gaitas līdz 1919. gada 6. martam. *Militārais Apskats*, Nr. 10, 1938, 1899.–1937. lpp.

The situation was described by 1st Lieutenant Jānis Ezeriņš, then a member of the Provisional Government of Latvia forces, as follows: "The impression we gained in Riga was bad. German soldiers wandered about without any discipline; heavy drinking and revelry went on to excess. Shooting, screaming, buffoonery — all of this went on in our capital city at the end of December 1918. Our first government had to work under these depressing conditions as it constituted the army (…) The approach of overwhelming communist forces cast a pall that grew day by day during the time that we spent in Riga. Bedraggled former soldiers of the Russian Army walked the streets. German soldiers sold everything for a pittance. The carousing became even more vociferous towards the outskirts of the city, Communist songs could be heard, there was shooting and rockets were fired into the air. There was no order in Riga."[8]

Under such trying conditions, when uncertainty and confusion was universal, and most soldiers either deserted or refused to leave Riga, the remaining several hundred soldiers loyal to the Provisional Government of Latvia, led by Oskars Kalpaks, withdrew in early January 1919 as part of the Landeswehr, alongside the Provisional Government of Latvia and the German occupation authorities, first passing through Jelgava, and then heading on to Kurzeme. Soon thereafter the Army of Soviet Latvia, the so-called Latvian Red Riflemen, occupied almost the entire territory of Latvia, with the exception of Liepāja, and a small surrounding district.

Events that transpired in the 2nd Riga Defence Company well illustrate the mood of the times. This company had disarmed the German command centre on 30 December and was ordered on 2 January to leave the capital in the direction of Jelgava, first bivouacking at the "*Café de Paris*", 14 Suvorova (now Krišjānis Barons) Street. During the night of 2/3 January, "near the time for departure, a debate broke out between soldiers and several officers about remaining in Riga. [Lieutenant Ernests] Maršals climbed on to a table and appealed to soldiers to remain, to await arrival of their comrades, and then to join them. Standing on the table, M. pointed his finger at the officers, who he was convinced would leave the city, and said: 'Do not go with these Whites, they have betrayed our comrades and Latvia, they have sold themselves to the Germans'. The overwhelming majority obeyed, and remained in Riga, with only 16 leaving the city out of the company's contingent of 190".[9]

In a short time almost the entire territory of Latvia, except for Liepāja and a small surrounding district, came under the control of the Bolsheviks, who were inspired by the idea of using Latvia as a bridge to "ignite the flames of world revolution". Following an order from the Soviet Russian Government (the Soviet of People's Commissar) and from Vladimir Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik Party, they established a formally independent state-like entity named "Soviet Latvia", which was in fact structurally part of Soviet Russia. The Government of Soviet Latvia, led by Pēteris Stučka, gathered through mass mobilisation a large army which was legally, in fact, part of the Red Army of Russia, responsible ultimately to their commander-in-chief (Jukums Vācietis, a Latvian, formerly a Colonel of the Russian Army). This army was given an

[8] Ezeriņš, J. Atmiņas par pulkveža Kalpaka bataljonu. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 51, 1927, 4. marts, 2. lpp.
[9] LVVA, 3412. f., 1. apr., 585. l., 405.–406. lp.

order, impossible to be carried out, namely to establish Soviet power not only in Latvia, but also in Estonia, Lithuania and even in that part of Lithuania partly controlled by the Polish Army. The Government of Soviet Latvia instigated mass terror against the population based on an exaggerated interpretation of "class", as well as implementing a misguided agrarian reform policy (peasants were not granted land, but instead had corvée and impossible norms imposed on them, which far exceeded past taxes; failure to comply with these demands could result in harsh repression, including the death penalty). In this manner, an effect completely opposite to the desired one was achieved; within a few months, the initial popularity this government had enjoyed among the people declined rapidly. The formation of an Army of Soviet Latvia which was impressive in terms of numbers (on 14 May it counted 105 000 soldiers) did not improve the situation.[10] National minorities played a rather symbolic role in administrative bodies (Lithuanian, Polish, German, as well as three Jewish Communist sections were formed in Riga, Daugavpils, and Rēzekne), while Latvians occupied almost all of the senior and middle-ranking positions in a convoluted and repressive political system.[11]

The situation in Liepāja and the surrounding district, at the beginning of 1919, was extraordinarily difficult. Matters were exacerbated by the fact that the German military authorities did not trust the Provisional Government of Latvia led by K. Ulmanis; they almost completely controlled its work and did not permit it to carry out mobilisation (the Germans feared that weapons might thus fall into the hands of Latvians sympathetic to the Bolsheviks). Therefore, the Provisional Government of Latvia was forced to carry out a series of partial mobilisations not authorised by the German authorities, which were carried out in secret in neighbouring parishes and in the city of Liepāja itself. For example, on 25 January, Minister of Defence J. Zālītis signed an instruction (in Latvian and in Russian) that mobilisation was to take place in Liepāja and in the district of Grobiņa, of former officers of the Russian Army, Fleet, and Air Force (aged younger than 45), and also of non-commissioned officers (younger than 33). Residents of Liepāja were to assemble in the building of the Latvian Society on 28 January, and residents of the district of Liepāja, on 30 January. Soon afterwards advertising materials titled, "Why Latvia needs mobilisation"[12], were professionally printed and distributed.

At the same time, from early January onwards, many ministers hurriedly left Liepāja for destinations in Europe, as did most senior officers of the armed forces, resorting to various formal pretexts to do so. These individuals despaired of being able to

[10] For details see: Šiliņš, J. Padomju Latvijas armijas skaitliskais sastāvs un tā izmaiņas no 1919. gada janvāra līdz jūnijam. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XI. Rīga: Latvijas Kara muzejs, 2010, 30.–39. lpp.; Šiliņš, J. *Padomju Latvija. 1918–1919*. Rīga: Vēstures izpētes un popularizēšanas biedrība, 2013, 9.–231. lpp.; Šiliņš, J. Rīgas cietumi un lielinieku terors, 1919. gada janvāris – maijs. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2009, 119.–137. lpp., etc.; Stranga, A. Komunistu diktatūra Latvijā: 1918. gada decembris – 1920. gada janvāris. *Latvijas valstiskumam 90*, 62.–70. lpp.; Padomju Latvija un tās bruņotie spēki (1918. gada decembris – 1919. gada jūnijs) Latvijas arhīvu materiālos. *Vēsture: avoti un cilvēki*, [Nr.] 13, (2010), 186.–192. lpp.

[11] See: Stranga, A. *Ebreji Baltijā. No ienākšanas pirmsākumiem līdz holokaustam. 14. gadsimts – 1945. gads*. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2008, 391.–395. lpp.

[12] LVVA, 1533. f., 1. apr., 3. l., 5.–6. lp. (poster).

continue to act in their homeland, since they were convinced that Liepāja would soon fall to the Bolsheviks. These actions only emphasised the importance of the actions of Lt. Col. Oskars Kalpaks in accepting command (on 30 December 1918) of those soldiers who were still loyal to the Provisional Government of Latvia.[13]

Confusion reigned in the city due to the arrival of many different military units, as well as activities by left-leaning Councils of German soldiers (which only lost influence in February when German General Rüdiger von der Goltz arrived from Finland to assume overall command). A number of adventurers were active, which only illustrated the confused state of affairs; for example, on 11 January, Jānis Aleksandrs Liberts, a major in the Serbian Army styling himself as a "Colonel-Major", appealed on the premises of the Latvian Society for volunteers to constitute a Latvian and Lithuanian "National Iron Division" to fight invaders and secure a "Free State of the People".[14] This appeal did not evoke any tangible response by the public.

The 1st Separate Latvian Battalion (from April, a brigade), which was part of the Landeswehr but commanded by O. Kalpaks,[15] and which was led after his death, on 6 March, in an accidental fire-fight with a German unit of the Landeswehr[16] by Jānis Balodis, fought in battles in Kurzeme, in January 1919, and gradually increased its numbers as the government mobilised in civil parishes retaken by its forces. Latvian reserve units with quite a few effective troops ("the newly constituted forces") were formed in Liepāja, and these units, together with the brigade already mentioned as well as all anti-Bolshevik units in Kurzeme, were formally part of the 6th Reserve Corps of the German Army (commanded from the beginning of February by von der Goltz), whereas this Corps, in turn, reported to the Supreme Command of the Border Guards of Northern Germany.[17] It need not be mentioned that being part of the Armed Forces of Germany, even if only formally, did not increase support for the government among the Latvian population, although a certain gradual increase was noted.[18]

Estonian army units liberated Tartu on 14 January 1919 and soon afterwards neared Valka. Fierce fighting ensued there at the end of January between Estonian units and the Army of Soviet Latvia, the latter seeking to hold the line Mehikorma–Rūjiena–Ainaži, with the 7th Soviet Army simultaneously launching an offensive in northern Estonia. For several reasons, the attacks in both of these directions were unsuccessful, with the Estonian units repulsing the attacks by the Army of Soviet Latvia

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[13] LVVA, 1468. f., 1. apr., 130. l., 35. lp.

[14] Latvijas Nacionālā arhīva Kinofotofonodokumentu arhīvs, A-210, 22. lp. (The appeal reads, "Hurry up, if you are not a slave!").

[15] See: Mugurēvičs, Ē. *Oskars Kalpaks. Pirmā pasaules kara un Latvijas Atbrīvošanas cīņu varoņa dzīves un kauju ceļš.* Ogre: Convictor, 2005. See also, the review of this book by Ē. Jēkabsons: *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1, 2005, 134.–140. lpp.

[16] See Jēkabsons, Ē. Pulkvedis Oskars Kalpaks: jauni materiāli. *Tēvijas Sargs*, Nr. 3 (marts), 2010, 26.–27., 31. lpp. Also accessible at: http://doc.mod. gov.lv/lv/ts/2010/3/index.html (site last visited 11.06.2016).

[17] Bērziņš, V. (atb. red.). *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture. II. Neatkarīga valsts 1918–1940.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 64. lpp.

[18] For details about activities by the government of Latvia during the said periods and during the War of Independence in general, see: *1918.–1920. gads Latvijas Republikas Pagaidu valdības sēžu protokolos, notikumos, atmiņās.* Rīga: Latvijas Vēstnesis, 2013, 799 lpp.

and then counter-attacking, while on 26 January fighting took place very close to Valka. The fighting continued during the following days at the northern approach to Valka in temperatures of –15 to –20 °C, resulting in many casualties on both sides. Estonian forces liberated all of southern Estonia on 27–31 January, as well as several parishes in Latvia, acquiring rich trophies; on 31 January, units of the Army of Soviet Latvia retreated from Valka, which the Estonian Army entered the following day. That same day the Estonian Army occupied Võru, and, in February took Petseri; these victories allowed the Estonian Army to deploy its armoured trains along the line Petseri–Valka (in reply Soviet units hurriedly destroyed segments of railway lines still under their control stretching from Valka to Vecgulbene and Strenči).

On 12 February, the Estonian Army launched a new offensive in northern Vidzeme, with the battles not always going their way. A Finnish unit fighting in the Estonian Army was at first successful in Alūksne District; initially, the Soviet side lost ground, but then, with the help of the 7th Latvian Riflemen's Regiment, they re-took Mazsalaca. The Finns were able on 21 February to recover Alūksne, while one week later, on 28 February, the 6th Latvian Soviet Riflemen's Regiment re-entered the city. There was clearly growing reluctance on the part of soldiers and officers of the Latvian riflemen's units stationed along the front to fight against the Estonian National Army.

Captain Jorģis Zemitāns departed on 7 January 1919 from Liepāja for Tallinn as military representative of the Provisional Government of Latvia of Latvia; on 20 January, he obtained the consent of the Estonian side to form six Latvian self-defence companies in the largest cities in Estonia (Tallinn, Tartu, and Pärnu), with Latvian refugees and soldiers (age 19–35) joining these companies.[19] K. Ulmanis, head of the Provisional Government of Latvia, arrived in person in Tallinn at the end of January and obtained agreement in principle from the Estonian side that units of the Latvian Army might be formed on the territory of Estonia. Further negotiations on this issue were led by Jānis Ramans, as the diplomatic representative, and by Jorģis Zemitāns, who, without gaining formal authorisation to do so by their government in Liepāja (under the conditions extant at that time such contacts were impossible), who signed, on 18 February, an Agreement with the Government of Estonia that provided for assistance by the Estonian Army in liberating the territory of Latvia and the formation of a Latvian armed force reporting to the Estonian Army. Under this agreement, Valka, five civil parishes of the district of Valka, two parishes in the district of Valmiera, etc. were to be included in the territory of Estonia (later the Provisional Government of Latvia refused to recognise the validity of this agreement, citing the lack of a remit for its representatives to sign such an agreement — this evoked understandable dissatisfaction, even disappointment, by Estonia).[20]

Public political life restarted in January in the first Latvian civil parishes liberated by the Estonian Army (Lode, Ipiķi, Arakste, Ķoņi, Terneja, and Rūjiena civil parishes)

[19] See: LVVA, 1526. f., 1. apr., 35. l., 1. lp. (The 1st Order issued by J. Zemitāns, "On the Latvian Organising for War in Northern Latvia, and in Estonia", 17 January 1919).

[20] See: LVVA, 1468. f., 1. apr., 131. l., 88. lp. (A report by J. Zemitāns of 20 February 1919 about the agreement struck with the Government of Estonia and the start of establishing Latvian armed forces.).

as well as in the town of Rūjiena. The first gathering of peasants took place on 26 January at Ķirbēni, at which it was decided to set up armed patrols and to despatch these to the parishes. It was also decided to levy a tax (three roubles for every *pūrvieta*[21]), the proceeds of which would go towards covering needs of the newly formed armed forces. After the liberation of Valka, mobilisation was announced by Latvian public figures, with concurrence by the Estonian military authorities, to take place in the town and surrounding district; the first results were 60 officers and 1471 soldiers, many of whom reported for duty together with their horses and carts. Certain tensions were evident between Latvian society and Estonian public authorities, which intensified through the summer of 1920, relating to the different interests of the two sides regarding which state would be home to the city and its surrounding districts; the issue was only resolved in June 1920 through the good offices of Great Britain, with whose assistance a temporary demarcation line was drawn, dividing the town of Valka into two parts.

Those mobilised were sent to Tartu, where they underwent training. The large number of soldiers meant that the initial Estonian plan to allow formation of a battalion was modified to formation of a regiment, which was named the 1st Valmiera Infantry Regiment, including also a reserve battalion and an artillery battery.[22] This regiment had its first engagement on 28 March launching an attack in the direction of Alūksne, and continued later to fight as part of the Brigade of Northern Latvia, which was created on 31 March; this remained the case until the summer of 1919, at which time the Army of Latvia was consolidated following the battles around Cēsis. Latvian units led by Jorģis Zemitāns, located on the territory of Estonia and operationally reporting to the Army of Estonia (as per the Agreement that had been signed), were active from early February onwards. At the end of February, once mobilisation had been carried out in liberated territory in northern Latvia[23], and substantial numbers of units of the Army of Soviet Latvia had come over to the side of the Estonian and Latvian National Armed Forces, these units were integrated into the Brigade of Northern Latvia. This Brigade also included the 1st Valmiera Infantry Regiment, which was shortly thereafter joined by the 2nd Cēsis Infantry Regiment and other units (after the Army of Latvia was consolidated numbers attached to these regiments were changed, the first of these renumbered as the 4th, and the second as the 5th Regiment).[24]

The activities of the Provisional Government of Latvia in Liepāja and its evident orientation in favour of the Entente aroused considerable displeasure among the Baltic German elite. On 18 February 1919, Latvian Customs officials in Liepāja confiscated

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[21] *Pūrvieta* — measure of land roughly equal to 0.37 ha (translator's note).

[22] See: LVVA, 1468. f., 1. apr., 130. l., 109–110 (A report by J. Zemitāns of 12 March 1919 about the progress of mobilisation.).

[23] For more details about the situation in northern Latvia during the period under discussion see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Stāvoklis Ziemeļlatvijā 1919. gada sākumā: Valkas latviešu sabiedriskā darbinieka Oto Hasmaņa liecība. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2011, 140.–158. lpp.

[24] See: Ekmane, B. Ziemeļlatvijas brigādes veidošanās 1919. gadā: ko par to stāsta Latvijas Kara muzeja krājums. *Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, VI. Rīga: Militārās literatūras apgāda fonds, 2005, 192.–211. lpp.

from Heinrich von Stryk (who had arrived from Stockholm, empowered by the nobility of Vidzeme to act on their behalf) documents about the establishment of the "Livonian Confederation". Acting as Governor of Liepāja, R. von der Goltz arrested Stryk, releasing him after a few days in return for his departure to Germany, while Latvian authorities arrested one of his companions, Lieutenant Karl Stock of German Military Intelligence, with the latter remaining in custody until the German coup on 16 April (the Administrator of the Justice Ministry of the Provisional Government of Latvia, in the presence of Pēteris Oliņš, representative of the Defence Ministry, permitted Martens, a member of the German Military Tribunal, to visit Stock in Liepāja Naval Prison, remarking that "Martens is not allowed to speak about anything that relates to charges of treason brought against Karl Stock", and on 9 April permitted a visit to the detainee by his cousin, under the same proviso).[25] This incident substantially raised the prestige of the Provisional Government of Latvia in the eyes of the population, and enraged Goltz, who needed peaceful conditions to reign behind the front lines; he was of the opinion that the time was not yet ripe to bring down the government. However, he increased his influence in the territory which was almost completely controlled by the Landeswehr and the Iron Division (volunteers from Germany), and this only worsened relations further.

In January 1919, the 1st Separate Latvian Battalion (later, Brigade) was at the front lines, slowly gathering strength. However, relations between the Provisional Government of Latvia and National Council, together with a limited military reserve contingent — the newly formed force present in Liepāja — and the German authorities were strained. These were further worsened after the arrival in Liepāja in early February of General R. von der Goltz. This general who sympathised with the monarchy and held extremely patriotic German sentiments, was made Governor of Liepāja and commander-in-chief of all German Armed Forces in the Baltic; he was extremely displeased by the orientation of the Provisional Government of Latvia towards the Entente Powers, whose Missions operated in Liepāja. The situation was made more difficult by the comments of several ministers about an impending confiscation of land from German barons and anti-German sentiments prevalent among Latvians. The latter provided an excuse to describe the Provisional Government of Latvia as Bolshevik (which at the time contained a slither of truth) and to hinder in various ways mobilisation favouring the military units of the Provisional Government of Latvia of Latvia. Similar sentiments were held by most of the Baltic German nobility.

By March, the German and Latvian armed forces had advanced as far as the Lielupe River, at which time Goltz called a halt to further progress. Hans von Manteuffel-Szoege, commander of the Landeswehr assault forces, recommended arresting the Provisional Government of Latvia and forming a new one more favourable to Germans and to Germany. Goltz did not immediately support the suggestion overtly, but instead allowed the Landeswehr assault troops to return to Liepāja allegedly for rest and recreation, "hoping that this would suffice for our just demands to be met". A new

[25] LVVA, 1533. f., 1. apr., 3. l., 56., 57. lp.

Iron Division unit, "a Free Corps from Westphalia", arrived in Liepāja, on 7 April, from Germany; led by Captain Pfeffer von Salomon this contingent comprised five infantry companies, three machine-gun companies, three artillery batteries, a detachment of mounted cavalry and several armoured automobiles, in all about 1500 men; on 13 April, a mountain artillery battery led by Walter von Medem arrived, as well as Landeswehr assault troops (about 600 men), on 12–13 April. Officer Jānis Aleksandrs Liberts later described the Free Corps led by Pfeffer as: "… a Free Corps in the fullest meaning of the term. It consisted of 1800 men of a variety of elements and nationalities; it appeared to have been raised from fortune seekers of all peoples and countries. All were armed to their teeth: 20 machine-guns mounted on carts, two armoured automobiles, some eight large calibre artillery pieces and hand-held machine guns, countless automatic pistols. This corps recognised no other authority than itself (…) Members of the Free Corps were unceasingly being whipped up against our officers, alleging these to be Bolsheviks, and that they were preparing to attack the Free Corps."



Fig. 1. Volunteers from Vecpils civil parish enlisted in the 1st Separate Latvian Battalion. Spring, 1919 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum, No 4-39976)

Military units made up of local Germans (the Landeswehr assault troops) who were dissatisfied with the policy of the Provisional Government of Latvia vis-à-vis the Western Great Powers, overtly supported by the German authorities (the so-called "Pfeffer Free Corps" took part) and mounted an armed coup d'état on 16 April against the Ulmanis government; they disarmed Latvian soldiers, occupied ministries and other state offices (one Latvian soldier on guard duty was killed), and temporarily arrested several ministers. K. Ulmanis and others took refuge in the Mission of Great Britain, and later retreated to the steamship "Saratov" anchored in Liepāja harbour. Power was assumed by a Security Committee set up by the German authorities, which proved incapable of convincing representatives of the Western Great Powers of the legality of these acts. An attempt was made to set up a "Directorate" which was to include Jānis Balodis and Anatol Lieven, commander of the Russian units of the Landeswehr, but both refused to comply. On 17 April, power was temporarily assumed by the Prosecutor of Liepāja District, a German, Oskar Borkowsky, while on 26 April, a pro-German government headed by Andrievs Niedra, a clergyman, was installed with the discreet support of R. von der Goltz; this head of government saw collusion with the Germans as a possibility of strengthening Latvian statehood. At the same time the Provisional Government of Latvia headed by K. Ulmanis continued to exercise limited powers from the steamship "Saratov", now guarded by an English warship. Thus, a situation of two governments appeared to be acting in parallel, although in fact Goltz and the German authorities in the city dictated events. Responding to a demand made by the Entente, Goltz was forced to temporarily relieve H. Manteuffel of his post as commander of the Landeswehr assault

troops, and, on 26 April, to despatch the unit led by H. von Pfeffer to join the Šauilai Brigade in Lithuania.[26]

The Latvian Brigade in Kurzeme (part of the Landeswehr) had quietly continued its political support for the Ulmanis government, while the Brigade of Northern Latvia, acting under the operational command of the Army of Estonia, continued to fight the Army of Soviet Latvia. During the coup d'état, members of newly raised units in Liepāja were temporarily interned at Liepāja Naval Base, with most of them being set free later and sent home. At the same time, the popularity of the Ulmanis government continued to rise, abetted by the unsuccessful and compromised policies of the governments led by P. Stučka and A. Niedra, and by the very status of the Provisional Government of Latvia after the coup of 16 April: this was seen as evidence of a rupture in relations with its erstwhile apparent ally, the German occupation authorities.

German forces captured Riga on 22 May 1919, after suffering heavy casualties. Taking revenge for the terror instigated earlier by the Soviet regime against the population, which had first and foremost targeted Baltic Germans as their "class enemy", terror was now unleashed against Latvians. The German slogan was that "a Latvian = a Bolshevik",[27] and units of the brigade commanded by J. Balodis, which had arrived in the city on 23 May, were impotent witness to the slaughter. Soon thereafter the Army of Soviet Latvia, which had been tremendously inflated through forced mobilisation, collapsed as a result of mass desertion as its members went over to the side of the Army of Estonia and Latvian units of the Landeswehr (the remaining units of the Army of Soviet Latvia were hurriedly moved to various fronts of the Russian Civil War, where soldiers were simply no longer able to desert).

The battles at Cēsis and consolidation of the Army of Latvia

After taking Riga, the German forces did not follow on the heels of the disintegrating Army of Soviet Latvia in the direction of Latgale, but instead sought to take over Vidzeme, which was then controlled by the Army of Estonia and Latvian forces. At the same time, peace negotiations in Paris were at a critical juncture and there was a real possibility that fighting might resume, an outcome that the Military Authority in Latvia led by R. von der Goltz greatly desired, hoping thus to acquire Vidzeme as a strategic area for further military operations. The armistice negotiated by Missions of the Western Allies expired on 19 June, and conflicts ensued immediately, leading to day-long battles between German units of the Landeswehr and the Iron Division against Estonian and Latvian forces; with the German forces suffering defeat at Cēsis, they were harried in their retreat by Estonian units as far as the outskirts of Riga.[28] Leaders

[26] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Jāņa Aleksandra Liberta loma Latvijas vēsturē un viņa liecība par vācu 1919. gada 16. aprīļa puču Liepājā. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3/4, 1996, 103.–110. lpp.

[27] See: Patenaude, B. Shooting the Bolsheviks. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2013, pp. 89–102.

[28] See: Bērziņš, V. Vēlreiz par Cēsu kaujām. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 1999, 73.–84. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Cēsis, Battle of. *1914–1918 Online. International Encyklopedia of the First World War.* Accessible at: http://encyclopedia. 1914-1918-online.net/home/ (site last visited 10.06.2016).

of the 1st Latvian Separate Brigade were formally neutral during the battles near Cēsis, and only started attacking the Germans on the night of 21/22 June (when several small units moved into Vidzeme and contacted the Brigade of Northern Latvia). Nevertheless, from the beginning of June, the 1st Squadron of the 1st Cavalry Division took part in battles near Cēsis on the side of the Brigade of Northern Latvia.[29] Estonian artillery began a heavy bombardment of Riga at the end of June which caused civilian casualties. The pro-German government led by A. Niedra fled, as did German military units.



Fig. 2. Soldiers of the Reserve Battalion of Northern Latvia accompanied by ladies. 3 July 1919 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum, No 4-35839)

Victory at the battles near Cēsis allowed the Provisional Government of Latvia of K. Ulmanis to alight from the steamship on 27 June and return to Riga at the beginning of July. The government led by A. Niedra ceased to function, while the Government of Soviet Latvia also lost its grip, although formally it continued to operate for some time in Latgale. An agreement with Estonia was signed on 21 July concerning future cooperation,[30] but it did not function well, since both sides had differences of opinion about territorial matters and other issues.



Fig. 3. Soldiers of the Brigade of Northern Latvia. Summer, 1919 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum, No 4-35841)

In mid-July 1919, consolidation of the Army of Latvia resulted when the Brigade of Northern Latvia, led by Jorģis Zemitāns, and the 1st Latvian Brigade led by Jānis Balodis, acknowledged a single Army Supreme Command Headquarters in Riga (with Dāvids Sīmonsons, who had formerly commanded a Russian army, named as Supreme Commander; he retained this position until the beginning of the campaign against Bermondt, at which time J. Balodis was named to take his place). At first two infantry divisions were formed (the Kurzeme and the Vidzeme Divisions), with a third joining them soon afterwards (the Latgale Division), and their number rising to four at the end of the year (the Zemgale Division stationed in Liepāja). Each division comprised three infantry regiments with unified numbering, who were initially complemented

[29] See: LVVA, 1501. f., 1. apr., 7. l., 5. lp. Sīkāk sk.: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas armijas jātnieku vienības 1919.–1921. gadā. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, V. Rīga, 2004, 72. lpp.

[30] See: LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 8. l., 46.–47. lp.

by the German Home Guards (the former Landeswehr), a field artillery regiment (initially there were 13 separate batteries), a cavalry squadron[31] and a company of sappers.

At first there was some confusion about the numbers assigned to various regiments, which reflected rivalry between two different groups of officers. The Supreme Commander issued an order on 15 July attributing the number "1st" to the Vidzeme Division, which was based on the Brigade of Northern Latvia and which had already established appropriate numbering of its regiments; however, J. Balodis protested this decision, citing the formation and subsequent campaigns which had started already in November 1918.[32] Following this, numbering was changed with the lowest numbers attributed to the regiments of the Division of Kurzeme.

The post of Supreme Commander of the Army was created, and an Army Headquarters, supply and technical support units, as well as an Aviation Group (later the Aviation Park) were set up, together with a Headquarters Naval section, which commanded ships adapted for military use. A Coastal Defence unit and a mine-laying flotilla were created during operations that autumn against Bermondt, adapting various craft lying in Riga Harbour for military use, forming a small Navy and Transport Fleet. Initially, 12 artillery batteries were created, and only later, a 13th battery was constituted (the latter was based on artillery of the German Home Guards). In 1920, the artillery batteries were reorganised into four regiments (the Kurzeme, Vidzeme, Latgale, and Zemgale Regiments), while the 13th battery was disbanded.[33] The Army also possessed cavalry, an armoured train (actually mobile artillery),[34] automobile, engineering, and communication units. All of the other services which are necessary for an army to function (courts-martial and places of incarceration, special units and military institutions, supply depots,[35] medical, veterinary medical, pharmacy, etc. services) were put in place, while specialised units suitable to the demands of modern warfare were also established within more traditional types of armed units, for example anti-aircraft defence.[36]

At the same time, the Army also had a number of irregulars within its ranks, including units which had been created during the summer of 1919, for example, the Partisan Unit of Latgale located in northern Latgale (after this regiment was internally reorganised to conform to standard military practice, it retained a distinct identity until 1920 when it was integrated into the 9th Rēzekne Infantry Regiment as the

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[31] For details of activities by the cavalry see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas armijas jātnieku vienības 1919.–1921. gadā, 67.–105. lpp.

[32] LVVA, 3601. f., 1. apr., 249. l., 59. lp.

[33] See: Dambītis, K. Latvijas bruņoto spēku artilērijas vienību formēšana un reorganizācija: 1918.–1921. gads. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV. Rīga, 2013.

[34] Concerning details about use of armoured trains in combat see, for example: Jēkabsons, Ē. Polijas bruņotie vilcieni Latvijā un Latvijas bruņoto vilcienu sadarbība ar Polijas armiju 1919.–1920. gadā. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 1, 2010, 45.–53. lpp.

[35] See: Ciganovs, J. Latvijas armijas intendantūras dienestu darbība Neatkarības kara laikā: 1918.–1920. gads. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV, 30.–52. lpp.

[36] See: Dambītis, K. Gaisa telpas aizsardzība Latvijas Atbrīvošanas kara laikā. *Militārais Apskats*, Nr. 3/4, 2009, 37.–48. lpp.

Partisan Battalion) and the Upper Kurzeme Partisan Regiment from Ilūkste District (this unit was active in fighting Bolshevik forces alongside the Army of Lithuania and was subsequently integrated into the 3rd Jelgava Infantry Regiment). Besides the so-called Green Partisan units which operated in the rear of Soviet forces in advance of the creation of the Army of Latvia (largely in Vidzeme), a Partisan Regiment of Northern Latvia was briefly active in 1919, and the 1st Partisan Regiment was formed during the campaign against Bermondt, with neither of these units playing a decisive role in the fighting.



Fig. 4. Soldiers of the 5th Cēsis Infantry Regiment. Autumn, 1919 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum, No 4-32180)

Approximately 2000 residents of Vidzeme, northern Latvia and Sēlija (Ilūkste District) took part in the War of Independence of Latvia during 1919 through organised and largely voluntary armed struggle against Soviet power; furthermore, a considerably larger number of persons supported the combatants. Armed partisan groups significantly challenged the Soviet regime in Vidzeme and in northern Latvia, starting with the spring of 1919 and in particular, during late May, at a time when the military and political situation had deteriorated in Soviet Latvia, which rather quickly took the form of disintegration of the Army of Soviet Latvia (partisan groups in upper Kurzeme were particularly active at this time, cooperating with units of the Army of Lithuania). Their contribution to defeating the armed forces of Soviet Latvia was not decisive, but nevertheless it was important (particularly that of the Latgale Partisan Regiment then in the process of formation and of the Upper Kurzeme Partisan Regiment); furthermore, all of these Latvian partisan groups were integrated in an organised manner into the Army of Latvia once the latter was established in July 1919. Individual so-called partisan units were created expressly for the purpose of fighting in the campaign against the German–Russian Volunteer Army of Western Russia led by Pavel Bermondt by carrying out military actions in its rear areas during the autumn of 1919.[37]

A report to J. Balodis, the Supreme Army Commander, written in the summer of 1919 by J. Zemitāns, described the complex organisational situation: "Many different kinds of partisan and reserve units are found wandering around the eastern front." Were officers at the front be asked to give the order to send these units to Valmiera to be incorporated into a newly formed regiment, they would refuse to issue such an order, and, therefore, no new unit could be created without an order for mobilisation. J. Zemitāns also noted that, "there are too few officers being sent here despite your

[37] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijos ginkluotųjų pajėgų partizanų daliniai 1919 metais. *Paramilitarism in the Eastern Baltics, 1918–1940: Cases Studies and comparisions*. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla, 2004, pp. 57–71 (*Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, XXVIII). Accessible at: http://dx.doi.org/10.15181/ahuk.v28i0.922 (site last visited 10.06.2016).

orders".[38] However, matters were taken in hand rather quickly, and a united army capable of action was formed.

Leaders of the Army of Soviet Latvia and the Red Army resorted to similar tactics, setting up partisan units to operate in the rear areas of their opponents; in 1919, a significant number of armed groups were left behind in Kurzeme under the command of Jānis Kretulis and other convinced Communists, while later, groups of saboteurs infiltrated across front lines to engage in lesser or greater acts of sabotage, or outright criminal acts, terrorising official authorities and civilians alike. In many cases counter actions were undertaken by the police and self-defence forces with the help of local and regular army units; these rather effectively resolved this serious problem.[39]

In the summer of 1919, the newly formed army (including the Landeswehr, which had been re-organised in Tukums with almost all of its officers dismissed and re-christened the German Home Guards of Latvia, led by Lt. Col. Harold Alexander of the British Army) began operations in Latgale against the Red Army of Soviet Russia (the date 6 July was later defined as the starting date of service in the Army of Latvia for all who were included in the army in this way, although re-organisation was finished only at the end of the summer, when the Home Guards were sent to the front). The German Home Guards were a numerically large, combat-ready unit, in fact, a brigade, who for a time retained different uniforms, obeyed internal regulations and were structured differently. The commanders of the Army of Latvia progressively erased these differences, starting in the spring of 1920, by renaming this unit the 13th Tukums Infantry Regiment; it was disbanded in April 1922 by being incorporated into the 7th Sigulda Infantry Regiment as the 3rd Battalion, also known as the Tukums Battalion).

Given the changes which had occurred in the overall military political situation during the summer of 1919 (as well as due to the anti-German policy of the Ulmanis government), the Provisional Government of Latvia began to gain popularity among the people, and from this time onwards it is possible to speak of emphatic public support by the people for the statehood of Latvia.

The repulse of Bermondt and the liberation of Latgale

The Agreement of Strazdumuiža negotiated after victory at Cēsis, with the Allied Missions in Latvia (those of the USA, Great Britain and France) acting as intermediaries, entered into force at the beginning of July 1919 and provided for the evacuation of the defeated German forces to Zemgale, where they were to be given time to organise for their final departure to Germany (to East Prussia). However, the German military leaders did not want to leave Latvia, hoping to restart fighting in order to renew the

[38] LVVA, 3601. f., 1. apr., 249. l., 75. lp.

[39] For details see: LVVA, 3591. f., 1. apr., 51. l., 73., 78.–79. lp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas armijas virsnieka Jāņa Rubeņa liecība par Latvijas Neatkarības kara cīņām 1919.–1920. gadā. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1, 2007, 43.–72. lpp.



Fig. 5. Prime Minister Kārlis Ulmanis visiting the 6th Riga Infantry Regiment. Autumn, 1919 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum)

German Empire, its honour and territorial integrity, which had been lost at Versailles, thus a pretext was found to avoid repatriation. In September, German soldiers were given permission to enlist as volunteers in the so-called West Russian Volunteer Army led by Pavel Bermondt[40], which had initially been constituted from Russian prisoners-of-war held in Germany, and which now started to form up in Jelgava. While the stated goal of this army was the restoration of the Russian Empire it attacked Riga on 8 October with a view to securing its rear (eliminating Latvian independence), in advance of joining up with the North-western Russian Army, led by Nicolai Yudenich located in Estonia, followed by a campaign to "liberate" Russia. However, the volunteer army had questionable relations with Latvia, and Yudenich denounced Bermondt as a traitor to Russia).[41]

German units constituted about 70% of the force commanded by Bermondt, while the remainder were Russian soldiers recruited in prisoner-of-war camps in Germany, who had been sent by rail early in the summer of 1919 to join Yudenich's army in Estonia, but who were stopped at Jelgava and integrated into Bermondt's forces.[42] They advanced quickly at first, but the few remaining Latvian Army units in Riga, overcoming great difficulties and despite an order to retreat by the Latvian Army's command (the government itself had been evacuated to Cēsis), were able to stop their advance at the Daugava River by opening the bridges across the river. The enemy had overwhelming superiority in artillery and other technology (including aircraft).[43] The desperate situation following the attack by Bermondt has been described in many sources, for example, Frīdrihs Zommers, an officer in the 1st Student Battalion testified that as late as 10 October , "signs of panic were evident in the city", and, "the dregs of society began to smash windows in the centre of Riga and engaged in looting".[44]

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[40] See: Čapenko, A. Rietumu Brīvprātīgo armijas komandiera portrets. P. Bermonta biogrāfija. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, III. Rīga, 2002, 95.–110. lpp.

[41] See: Ciganovs, J. Krievu Rietumu Brīvprātīgo armijas veidošanās. 1919. gada vasara–rudens. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa*, 54. sēj., Nr. 1/2, 2000, 13.–22. lpp.

[42] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Krievijas Ziemeļrietumu (Nikolaja Judeņiča) armijas pārstāvniecība Rīgā 1919. gada augustā–decembrī: Bermonta armijas konteksts. *Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XVI. Rīga, 2015, 80.–108. lpp.; Jēkabsons, E., Fleishman, L. Первый российский консул в независимой Латвии. *Труды по балтороссийским отношениям и русской литературе. В честь 70-летия Бориса Равдина. Part I. Stanford Slavic Studies*, Vol. 42. Stanford, 2012, pp. 67–214 (together with L. Fleishman).

[43] See: Ekmane, B. Rīgas garnizona gatavošanās pilsētas aizstāvēšanai. 1919. gada oktobris. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV, 58.–73. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas armijas 1. studentu bataljons Bermonta karaspēka uzbrukumā no 1919. gada 9. oktobra līdz novembra sākumam: kareivja Oskara Ozola liecība. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV, 11.–30. lpp.

[44] Zommers, F. Bij. studentu bataljona atcerē. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 229, 1929, 9. oktobris, 2. lpp.

During the fighting in Riga, supporting artillery fire for the Army of Latvia was provided by two Estonian armoured trains (until these trains were recalled on 23 October, after Latvia refused to bow to increased Estonian territorial demands), as well as by British and French warships of the United Baltic Sea Squadron. In addition, this Squadron briefly lent two anti-aircraft guns together with their crews to the Army of Latvia; artillery fire from Bermondt's forces killed nine and injured six sailors on board British ships.[45] The struggle against Bermondt led to unprecedented solidarity between the people and the Provisional Government of Latvia, as thousands of volunteers joined the army, increasing the number of effectives in existing units and allowing new units to be raised (the 1st Student Battalion and others).

During the following month, many tough battles and skirmishes were fought in Riga. Elsewhere in Latvia; on 14 October, the Army of Latvia staged a diversionary attack across the Iron Bridge in the centre of Riga, and following crossing of the Daugava River further upstream, took the Daugavgrīva Fortress located at the mouth of the river. Supporting artillery fire from British and French warships was crucial to the success of the attack. On 11 November, all of Riga on the left bank of the Daugava (*Pārdaugava*) was liberated; on 21 November, Jelgava was liberated, and by the end of November, all of the territory of Latvia was liberated, as well as a brief incursion into Lithuanian territory. At this time, the government of Latvia ignored an attempt by Germany to take over command of Bermondt's forces as well as a call by the Great Powers for a cease-fire and negotiations. In the meantime, Bermondt's forces mounted an attack on Liepāja, but were repulsed by the city garrison (later to become the Zemgale Division of the Army of Latvia) after several days of intense fighting, while on 14 November their advance was definitively halted, and subsequently, in the face of naval artillery fire from Allied warships, these forces were thrown back from Liepāja and expelled from Kurzeme.[46] The forces of Bermondt in Lithuania were attacked on 21 November by the Army of Lithuania, which until then had procrastinated in doing so, citing various reasons to representatives of Latvia. Once the Army of Latvia had fully cleared its territory of forces led by Bermondt, and even entered parts of Lithuanian territory, both sides signed an Agreement about joint attacks on German forces if these had not departed from Lithuanian territory by 15 December; this proved not to be necessary, because the German forces had by then departed for East Prussia). Both sides resorted to great cruelty during the campaign against Bermondt, with civilians and prisoners of war suffering grievously.

On 25 November, reacting to an announcement by the government of Germany that it was assuming overall command of forces formerly led by Bermondt, the government of Latvia declared that it was breaking off relations with Germany; this was taken to be a declaration of war. This is assessed in modern historical literature to have been overly hasty, nevertheless largely provoked by the attitude of the German side.

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[45] See: Poziņš, D. Latvijas sabiedroto Lielbritānijas un Francijas karakuģu iesaistīšanās karadarbībā pret P. Bermontu-Avalovu 1919. gada oktobrī. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV, 68.–77. lpp.

[46] See: Ekmane, B. Gatavošanās Liepājas aizstāvībai 1919. gada rudenī. Ko par to vēsta Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīva glabātie dokumenti? *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, VIII. Rīga, 2007, 43.–55. lpp.

The issue was only resolved in June 1920 when both states signed an agreement resuming relations.[47]

Victory over the forces of Bermondt was achieved with the Army of Latvia suffering very heavy losses, and subsequently only Latgale remained in the hands of the enemy, i.e. the Red Army. Estonian forces controlled part of north-east Vidzeme and left this area only after concluding a Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia early in 1920. The eastern part of Ilūkste District was occupied by Polish and Lithuanian forces after intense battles during the summer of 1919, with the Red Army suffering heavy casualties; they had a clear intention to include this territory into their state. In terms of their extent and number of casualties, these battles were the largest during this period not only in Latvia, but in the entire region (by analogy with fighting near Cēsis, these battles could be described as the battles of Daugavpils). These battles were not mentioned in the past for political reasons. In August 1919, the two opposing sides consisted of, on the one hand, "incorrect" Latvians and Estonians (assault troops were drawn from the 2nd Soviet Latvian Riflemen's Regiment and the Estonian Soviet Riflemen's Brigade), and on the other hand, allegedly "correct" Poles and Lithuanians (allegedly, as they fought for inclusion of this territory in their state, with mutual conflicts breaking out among their units, including incidents on the territory of Latvia). The Red Army was only definitively pushed back to the right bank of the Daugava River at the end of September, when the Poles were able to accomplish this supported by the 1st Polish Tank Regiment, with many French soldiers acting as tankers serving in the Army of Poland; several were wounded.[48]

Despite the view expressed publicly by leaders of the Social Democratic Workers Party of Latvia that they hoped to recover Latgale through negotiations with Soviet Russia, the Government of Latvia and the high command of the Latvian Army took the entirely justified decision to launch a military operation. It was evident that military cooperation with a neighbouring country was essential for the success of such an operation, both from both military (the 4th Zemgale Infantry Division was only nearing its full complement), and political points of view (were the attack to be launched solely by the Army of Latvia, Lithuanian, and Polish forces located along the Daugava River would react and their departure afterwards from Latgale would likely be problematic). Furthermore, Estonia at that time was negotiating a peace treaty with Soviet Russia (Estonian experience in these negotiations convinced the Latvian side that Russia would not relinquish Latgale on the basis of negotiations). Following fruitless negotiations with the government of Lithuania, during the course of which the Lithuanian side refused to countenance collaboration in striking at the Red Army (instead the Lithuanian side demanded support for their struggle with Poland, their enemy), in December 1919, the high command of the Army of Latvia concluded a secret agreement in Riga with a representative of the Army of Poland on limited military

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[47] See: Feldmanis, I. Latvijas kara pieteikums Vācijai. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, II. Rīga, 2001, 124.–135. lpp.

[48] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Polijas armijas kaujas ar Sarkano armiju Ilūkstes apriņķī 1919. gada septembrī. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata.* Rīga, 2000, 46.–58. lpp.



Fig. 6. Staff officers in the village of Varakļāni. March 1920 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum)



Fig. 7. German Home Guards setting up a barbed wire obstacle at Rozenova (Zilupe). March, 1920 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum, No 4-31752)

cooperation. This agreement provided for joint action by the two states in liberating southern Latgale, with Latvian forces taking direction from units of the Polish Army during these operations (in extending this support the Polish side would solidify the left flank of their armed forces then engaged against Soviet Russia, and, furthermore, Poland sought to gain Latvia as its military ally in the region, with this aim achieved only partially). On 3 January 1920, the combined forces of Poland and Latvia, first taking care to guard against a possible crossing of the Daugava River by Lithuanian units, launched an attack on the Red Army in southern Latgale. Daugavpils was liberated on the first day by Polish units, and on 9 January, Latvian army units attacked in northern Latgale.[49] The result was that all of the territory of Latgale was liberated by the beginning of February (in some places even extending beyond Latgale), the dire winter conditions notwithstanding (many soldiers suffered severe frostbite). This was the result of a number of operations (on 16 January, a second agreement was signed in Riga to cover future operations).

At the same time as these events were taking place, a delegation of the Red Cross of Latvia led by Fricis Menders, a Social Democrat, had arrived in Moscow early in January 1920, on a secret mission to conclude an armistice with Soviet Russia. An armistice was signed after lengthy negotiations to take effect on 1 February.[50] This armistice was kept secret at the request of the Latvian side, and unit commanders of the Army of Latvia at the front in Latgale were not informed about it, thus limited engagements continued, with reciprocal reconnaissance forays and sporadic skirmishing producing casualties and wounded, with prisoners taken, continuing up until the Peace Treaty was signed on 11 August 1920. Peace talks which had begun in Moscow on 16 April proceeded with great difficulty; these continued throughout the summer in Riga, and were, furthermore, strongly influenced by de-

[49] See: Kapenieks, K. Latvijas armijas darbība 1920. gadā Ostrovas apriņķī. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV, 94.–115. lpp.

[50] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Slepenais pamiers Latgales frontē 1920. gadā. *Tēvijas Sargs*, Nr. 2, 2005, februāris, 28.–29. lpp.

velopments at the front between Soviet Russia and Poland. For example, the Latvian side started to yield some points once the Red Army achieved successes in Poland, while the Soviet Government once again began to think about the imminent outbreak of "a world revolution" and the advance of the forces of "proletarian dictatorship" into Central Europe. For its part the government of Latvia, highly recognisant of the possible consequences in Latvia of victory by Soviet Russia, simply wanted, under these circumstances, to ensure the independence of Latvia by all possible means, including legal means.[51]



Fig. 8. Orchestra of the 3rd Jelgava Infantry Regiment. 1920 (from the collection of the Latvian War Museum, No 4-37441)

Units deployed on the right flank of the front in Latgale were joined in April 1920 by the Zemgale Division, which arrived there from Liepāja; at the same time, Polish armed forces withdrew from the front in areas not inhabited by ethnic Latvians, i.e. in the surroundings of Drisa (today, Verkhedvinsk)[52]. By agreement, a small Polish garrison remained in Daugavpils until the end of the war. This garrison was forced to leave the city at the beginning of July, fleeing in the face of being cut off from the principal Polish force following the rapid advance of the Red Army in its counter-offensive. The sole remaining task for the armed forces of Latvia was to take control (after small-scale clashes with units of the Army of Lithuania, which followed the same kind of strategy), of the hamlet of Grīva and six civil parishes in the district of Ilūkste on the left bank of the Daugava River opposite Daugavpils, which by then had been annexed by Poland, which declared them to be part of the province of Braslaw.[53]

After the War of Independence had come to an end, the 12th Bauska Infantry Regiment of the Zemgale Division of the Army of Latvia, together with a cavalry troop and one artillery battery, took part in early September in a military operation in the region of Subate, pushing back Lithuanian army units to the established demarcation line, which the latter had seriously over-stepped (one Lithuanian soldier was killed and two were wounded in this operation). The last piece of Latvian territory was only recovered in October 1920 when several civil parishes were re-taken by units of the Army of Latvia in Ilūkste District, which up to then were occupied by the

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[51] For details see: Stranga, A. *Latvijas – Padomju Krievijas miera līgums 1920. gada 11. augustā*. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2000, 17.–72. lpp.

[52] For details see: Kapenieks, K. Latvijas armijas darbība Drisas apriņķī 1920. gadā. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, IX. Rīga, 2008, 88.–106. lpp.

[53] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. *Piesardzīgā draudzība: Latvijas un Polijas attiecības 1919.–1920. gadā*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2007, 21.–182. lpp.

Army of Lithuania (this happened after the Polish General Lucian Żeligowski occupied Vilnius and Lithuania units abandoned the remainder of Ilūkste District and the railway station at Eglaine).[54]

The balance sheet for the War of Independence for the Army of Latvia

The number of effectives of the Army had increased rather quickly through to early 1920: at the start of the campaign against Bermondt on 3 October 1919 there were 39 241 soldiers in the Army (incl. 2371 officers and military clerks),[55] while at the end of this campaign there were, on 1 December 1919, a total of 65 296 soldiers, together with 5495 horses and 79 automobiles (the number of active combatants was 23 015), and on 31 December there were 69 232 soldiers, and 2179 individuals under contract for a total of 71 411, whereas in January 1920 the total reached 73 246 soldiers. Thereafter the numbers began to fall gradually as soldiers of different categories were retired (for example, students, elderly persons, etc.).[56] During May–November 1920, those Latvian units returned to Latvia which had been formed in Siberia and in the Far East of Russia at the end of 1918, namely the Imanta Regiment (which was disbanded immediately upon its repatriation) and the 1st Latvian Riflemen's Battalion (the so-called Troitsk Battalion, named after the city in Russia where the unit was constituted), which, upon repatriation, was renamed a regiment and, bearing the same name, integrated into the Border Guard Division (a separate Border Guard Division, consisting of four regiments, was formed in the autumn of 1920, corresponding to the four so-called border districts defined between the end of 1919 and March 1920).

The ranks of the Army had to be decreased once the War of Independence was over (11 August 1920) and adapted to peace time needs. At the time of signature of the Peace Treaty, the Army numbered 52 940 individuals (2468 officers, including medical officers, 708 military clerks, 8651 non-commissioned officers, and 38 566 enlisted men, with an additional 2547 individuals under contract); the Army had at its disposal 138 artillery pieces, four armoured trains, six armoured automobiles, 23 aircraft and eight tanks.[57] The ethnic composition of the soldiers of the Army of Latvia in the summer of 1920 was 84.2% Latvians, 5.6% Germans, 3.9% Russians, 1.8% Poles, 1.7% Jews, 1.3% Belarusians, 1.5% others. The number of minority representatives was relatively large,[58] although these figures demonstrate that without any doubt Latvians were the core of the army, an entirely understandable state of affairs.

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[54] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas attiecības ar Lietuvu 1919.–1921.gadā. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 2, 1997, 31. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Lietuvas karaspēks Ilūkstes apriņķī 1919.–1920. gadā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa. Sociālās un humanitārās zinātnes*, 59. sēj., Nr. 2, 2005, 49.–64. lpp.

[55] Peniķis, M. (virsred). Latvijas Atbrīvošanas kara vēsture. II. Rīga: Literatūra, 1938, 63. lpp.

[56] Brīvības cīņas 1918–1920. *Latviešu Konversācijas vārdnīca*, 2. sēj. Rīga, 1928–1929, entries 2973–2976.

[57] Bērziņš, V., Bambals, A. *Latvijas armija*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1991, 38. lpp.

[58] *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 142, 1920, 12. augusts.

Respect for religious beliefs and national sentiments was a principled stance of the Army in granting leave on specific holidays, which applied to national minorities and non-Christians alike. Thus, the Commander of the 10th Aizpute Infantry Regiment gave special leave to his Jewish soldiers on 9 May 1920 that they might take part in a solemn religious service in honour of "the recognition of Palestine", while the commander of the Zemgale Division, then stationed in Southern Latgale, granted on 7 September 1920 special leave to Jewish soldiers to attend services on the Holy Days of 12–14h, 21, 22, 27, and 28 September, in all locations where there were synagogues.[59]

Losses suffered by the Army of Latvia in battle during the War of Independence totalled 154 officers and 2875 other ranks killed; the largest number of casualties were incurred during the campaign against the army of Bermondt, with the next largest number of casualties suffered in fighting with the Army of Soviet Russia during the operation to liberate Latgale. The number of soldiers wounded in battle was 3844, and 241 soldiers of the Army of Latvia were shell-shocked. Hundreds of soldiers also fell victim to various diseases; in late 1919 and early 1920 typhus spread from soldiers of the Russian North-West Army interned in Estonia, as well due to prevalence of this disease among soldiers of the Red Army, and an influenza epidemic and dysentery arrived from Western Europe, culminating in the summer of 1920. There were many fatalities among soldiers, and, additionally, dozens of medical personnel perished, including several Red Cross nurses and Elizabete Krīgere, a medical doctor at the Riga Military Hospital. Her death notice of 17 April 1920 reads as follows: "Death from typhus which she contracted while carrying out her duties as a doctor."[60] Illnesses were particularly widespread among units deployed at the front in Latgale, and these were exacerbated by the extremely poor sanitary conditions which reigned there among the civilian population. Even in the rear illnesses could be fatal, and "121 soldiers died of a combination of typhus and influenza" at the garrison infirmary in Liepāja between 5 January and 22 February 1920; [61] however, the Sanitary Service of the Army of Latvia was able to deal with this critical situation.[62]

Many members of national minorities were to be found among casualties suffered by the Army of Latvia — Germans, Russians, Jews, Poles, Lithuanians, Estonians, Belarusians, Gypsies, etc. The highest military award — the Military Order of Lāčplēsis, which was awarded for bravery on the battlefield, first conferred on the day of victory in Riga over the forces of Bermondt — 11 November 1919,[63] — was awarded to a total

[59] LVVA, 1527. f., 1. apr., 2. l., 237. lp.; 1498. f., 1. apr., 9. l., 42. lp.

[60] LVVA, 3413. f., 1. apr., 2. l., 42. lp.

[61] LVVA, 6033. f., 1. apr., 286. l., 2. lp. For details of the sanitary situation in Latgale see, for example: LVVA, 1515. f., 1. apr., 243. l., 381. lp.

[62] See: Gīle, I. Medicīnas aprūpe Latvijas armijā Bermontiādes laikā, 1919. gada oktobris–decembris. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3/4, 2012, 95.–120. lpp.; Gīle, I. Latvijas armijas 1. Sanitārā vilciena darbība un nozīme Neatkarības karā, 1919–1920. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 2015, 17.–36. lpp.

[63] This date can be considered as the official date of the award, whereas the actual medals were struck considerably later, after much debate, with the first soldiers only receiving them in hand on 11 November 1920. For details, see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Kad dibināts Lāčplēša kara ordenis? *Latviešu Strēlnieks*, Nr. 2, 1996, 7. lpp.

of 47 Germans, 15 Russians, nine Poles, six Estonians, four Jews, and three Belarusians who served in the Army of Latvia and Latvian Riflemen's units during the First World War.[64] German Home Guard units rendered great service in fighting the Red Army — many Latvians and members of other nationalities fought in these units, including several dozen Tatars, who had been taken prisoner at the front in Latgale, and who then volunteered for service in the Army of Latvia. Participation must be noted of Russian units in the War of Independence — a partisan unit was raised in November 1918 in Rēzekne, led by Colonel Mikhail Afanasyev, which was composed mostly of Russian soldiers; it was later briefly part of the armed forces loyal to the Provisional Government of Latvia. This unit was disbanded in 1919 in Liepāja, at which time most members of the unit joined the Russian Unit of the Landeswehr under the command of Anatol Lieven, which was instrumental in clearing Bolshevik forces from Kurzeme and Riga. Furthermore, the commander of this unit refused to support the instigators of the coup mounted on 16 April in Liepāja, and refused to fight together with Germans against Estonians and Latvians near Cēsis. At the end of June and the beginning of July, one of the batallions of Lieven's unit ensured order in Liepāja after the departure of the German forces from the city, while after the battles at Cēsis this unit left Latvia to join the North-Western Russian Army in Estonia.[65]

On 23 July 1919, J. Zemitāns, commander of the Vidzeme Division, informed the Army Supreme Commander that his units included quite a few Russian soldiers, and that "training them together with Latvian solders was impossible", and also that "command in the field is difficult", since most of them do not understand Latvian. He, therefore, sought permission to set up a separate unit consisting only of Russian soldiers (there were 121 Russian soldiers in the division who did not understand Latvian), and at the beginning of August, a "separate Russian Unit" was created in the 6th Riga Infantry Regiment with 35 Russian speaking soldiers (the unit was disbanded on 21 September by transferring these soldiers to other companies).[66] Most of the units with Russian-speaking soldiers were to be found in the Latgale Partisan Regiment. Soldiers from practically all nationalities present in Latvia were found in the ranks of the Army of Latvia during the War of Independence, including Ukrainians, Karaites, Czechs, Swedes, Frenchmen, Danes, etc.[67] At least one officer from Sweden served voluntarily in the Army of Latvia on ideological grounds, and one from the USA.[68] A British officer, Robin Ritchie, presenting himself at the Representation of Latvia in

[64] See: Šēnbergs, M., Bambals, A., Rauzāns, G. u. c. *Lāčplēša kara ordeņa kavalieri. Biogrāfiska vārdnīca*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs, 1995.

[65] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latgale vācu okupācijas laikā un pulkveža M. Afanasjeva partizāņu nodaļas darbība Latvijā 1918. gadā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 1996, 42.–59. lpp.; Čapenko, A. Firsta Anatola Līvena Liepājas brīvprātīgo strēlnieku vienības izveidošanās un cīņas Latvijas teritorijā 1919. gadā. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, IV. Rīga, 2003, 95.–110. lpp.

[66] LVVA, 1494. f., 1. apr., 2. l., III. daļa, 31., 96. lp.

[67] See: LVVA, 5601. f., 4. apr. iekļautie Latvijas armijas karavīru dienesta gaitu saraksti.

[68] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Kapteinis Gesta Mellins – zviedru brīvprātīgais Latvijas armijā. *Tēvijas Sargs*, Nr. 10, 2010, oktobris, 30.–31. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Amerikānis Džozefs Stēlins Latvijas armijā Neatkarības kara laikā. *Tēvijas Sargs*, Nr. 6, 2010, jūnijs, 30., 31. lpp.;

London in February 1920, expressed a desire to serve in the Army of Latvia either as an officer or non-commissioned officer; his offer, as well as that of several other English officers and soldiers, was politely turned down.[69]

Soldiers who had fought during the First World War in the Tsarist Russian Army, including those who had fought as members of the Latvian Riflemen's units (this was particularly true for non-commissioned officers) made up the core of the Army of Latvia; however, many who were mobilised had no previous military experience. In the same way, at least initially, all officers, military clerks, and military medical doctors had served in the Tsarist Russian Army, although later a number were commissioned from the ranks after demonstrating bravery in battle; two schools were established in the autumn of 1919, with a larger number of cadets at the Infantry School than at the Artillery School.[70] The first contingent of new officers graduated on 20 May 1920, after completing a six-month wartime short training course, to immediately join the officer corps of the armed forces.[71] Compared with the situation in the Army of Lithuania, the Army of Latvia had many more senior officers, middle-ranking officers, as well as medical doctors-officers who had completed higher institutions of military education (graduates of military academies in Russia).[72]

Relations with neighbouring states were also difficult, first and foremost due to conflicting territorial claims. Cooperation with Estonia, which found itself in a better military-political situation, had begun at the start of 1919, and in the first instance this took the form of help in liberating part of the territory of Latvia, as well as operational direction and supply of the Brigade of Northern Latvia (a group of Estonian military cadets visited the 1st Separate Latvian Battalion in Kurzeme early in 1919, and even participated in one battle against units of the Army of Soviet Latvia[73]). As part of the Army of Estonia, volunteer Finnish and Danish units took part in liberation of the territory of Latvia.[74] The attitude adopted by the Provisional Government of Latvia of Latvia and the Great Powers after the victory at Cēsis offended the Estonian side, as did the refusal of the Latvian Government to live up to the agreement signed by Jorģis Zemitāns concerning state borders, on the grounds that he had exceed his authority as a military attaché. Consequently, when the armed forces of Bermondt attacked, the Estonians laid out impossible financial and territorial demands for their support, and meeting with refusal, withdrew their armoured trains from Riga. Part of the territory

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[69] LVVA, 3601. f., 1. apr., 469., 103., 153. lp.

[70] See: Dambītis, K. Latvijas armijas kadetu skola. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIII. Rīga, 2012, 42.–50. lpp.

[71] See: Ekmane, B. Latvijas armijas pirmās militārās mācību iestādes (1919–1920). *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, VII. Rīga, 2006, 107.–122. lpp.

[72] For a description of the officer corps of the Army of Latvia see: Jēkabsons, Ē., Ščerbinskis, V. Ievads. *Latvijas armijas augstākie virsnieki 1918–1940.* Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs. Jēkabsons, Ē., Ščerbinskis., V. (sast.). Rīga: Nordik, 1998, 9.–53. lpp.

[73] See: Sammalso, P. Kurzeme – 1919. gada janvāris. Kaujas draudzības sākums. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XIV, 133.–143. lpp.

[74] For details see: Ščerbinskis, V. Ziemeļvalstu brīvprātīgie un Latvijas Brīvības cīņas. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 1, 1997, 78.–84. lpp.

of Northern Vidzeme remained under Estonian control until early in 1920, when the Mission of Great Britain acted as intermediary to resolve the border issue (an initial agreement on borders was concluded in June).

At the end of 1919, the Army of Lithuania which had liberated part of Ilūkste District expressed a growing determination to integrate this territory into their state, and the Lithuanian Government spoke about the need to reconsider the status of Daugavpils and Latgale. This led to lengthy arguments between both sides, which even led to skirmishing during September 1920 (an agreement on borders was finally concluded in March 1921 with both sides swapping disputed territories, incl. Palanga[75]).

Territorial disputes also existed with Poland which, after providing military assistance to Latvia during the liberation of Latgale, claimed part of Ilūkste District. There were indications that differences might have also arisen with the Belarusian People's Republic (BPR), and this did not happen simply because of the desperate straits that this state found itself in (a unit led by General Stanislaw Bulak-Balachowicz, which had ceased being part of the Army of Estonia and was moving via Daugavpils to join the Army of Poland, since it was considered for some time to be part of the armed forces of Poland, remained static in Alūksne from the end of 1919 to early March 1920). Initially, there were active relations with the Military-Political Mission of the BPR in Riga; however, these were gradually broken off unilaterally by the Latvian side when the general situation in Belarus worsened, and Latvia started its peace talks with Soviet Russia.[76]

Another potential state entity in the region was the Government of North-western Russia with which the government of Latvia maintained active, albeit very complicated relations (not excluding military issues); these relations were imposed by Great Britain, who had by then recognised the independence of Estonia and Latvia. Latvian broke off these relations after the Army of N. Yudenich was defeated at Petrograd and its remnants were interned.[77]

The relationship between three states — Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania — which appeared to be in a similar situation was very complicated, with each of the parties seeking to realise their interests in an exaggerated way. This was evident in their separate peace talks with Soviet Russia, as well as at joint conferences in Tartu (in the autumn of 1919) and Riga (Bulduri) in August–September 1920. Furthermore, a delegation from the Ukraine People's Republic attended the latter conference, at which substantial differences and conflicting interests were evident, which directly impacted on military processes in the region.[78]

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[75] See: Kapenieks, K. Palangas novads Atbrīvošanas cīņu laikā (1918–1920). *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, VII, 164.–186. lpp.; For the border issues with Lithuania, see also: Kapenieks, K. Latvijas militārā klātbūtne Mažeiķos 1919. un 1920. gadā. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, XI, 51.–57. lpp.

[76] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Ģenerālis Staņislavs Bulak-Balahovičs un Latvija. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1, 1995, 16.–21. lpp.

[77] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvija un Krievu Ziemeļu korpuss (Judeņiča Ziemeļrietumu armija) 1918–1920. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, II, 54.–84. lpp.

[78] For details, for example, about conflicts arising between the Baltic States during the campaign against Bermondt, see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas diplomātija Bermonta uzbrukuma laikā 1919. gadā. *Militārais Apskats*, Nr. 2, 1994, 73.–82. lpp.

The attitude of the Western Great Powers in regard to Latvia was peculiar, which played an important role up until the summer and autumn of 1919. On the one hand, pressure by the Allied Missions led Latvia to agree to the very disadvantageous Armistice of Strazdumuiža, and at the end of August to the never implemented Treaty of Riga signed by the Baltic States, Poland, and the forces of Yudenich and Bermondt regarding a common front against the Red Army; on the other hand, Allied warships provided artillery support for the Army of Latvia, even to the extent of incurring casualties, in fighting the forces of Bermondt (the Army of Latvia was assisted by British Marines who worked artillery pieces on the Latvian armoured train). Despite the fact that they did not recognise the independence of Latvia, hoping for the rebirth of a non-Bolshevik Russia.[79] Military Missions of Great Britain and France were present in Latvia, as well as Lady Muriel Padget's humanitarian mission (UK), a US military-political mission led by Warwick Greene (until the summer of 1919),[80] a State Department Commission (starting with the autumn of 1919), several US aid organisations (the American Relief Administration, the American Red Cross), as well as the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association), which provided humanitarian assistance not only for civilians, but also to members of the armed forces.[81] Great Britain and the USA extended a substantial loan to the Provisional Government of Latvia of Latvia to purchase war materiel, medical supplies, as well as uniforms and footwear for soldiers, and this was a tremendous boost for the army's fighting capabilities.

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All the countries of Central and Eastern Europe faced significant military and political problems after 1918. However, devastated during the First World War, with numerous powerful enemies, both internal and external, and a bewilderingly complex political situation, the fledgling state of Latvia faced particularly large hurdles to assert its independence.

Like in practically all European armies, members of every strata of society in Latvia were engaged in military activities. The issue of participation by children and women in armed struggle for statehood was relevant for the armed forces of Latvia. Firstly, this was manifested in the creation of a specific organisation — the Women's

[79] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Francijas vieta Latvijas vēsturē 1918.–1921. gadā. Accessible at the home page of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Latvia. Accessible at: http://www.mfa.gov.lv/aktualitates/zinas/29609-francijas-vieta-latvijas-vesture-1918-1921-gada-dr-hist-erika-jekabsona-uzruna-diskusija-latvijas-de-iure-atzisana-skatupunkti (site last visited 11.06.2016).

[80] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Die Tätigkeit der amerikanischen Mission in Lettland unter der Leitung von Warwick Greene: Liepāja, April bis Mai 1919. *Forschungen zur Baltischen Geschichte*. (Tartu: Akadeemiline ajalooselts), 2014, 9, S. 152–176.

[81] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Amerikas Savienoto Valstu Jaunekļu kristīgās savienības (YMCA; Young Men's Christian Association) un Jaunavu kristīgas savienības (YWCA; Young Women's Christian Association) darbība Latvijā 1920.–1922. gadā. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 4, 2009, 31.–62. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Amerikas Savienoto Valstu Sarkanā Krusta darbība Latvijā 1919.–1922. gadā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2010, 37.–70. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Amerikāņi Rīgā: Amerikas Palīdzības administrācija 1919.gada maijā–jūnijā, darbības pirmais posms. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3/4, 2013, 113.–154. lpp.; Accessible at: http://www.arhivi.gov.lv/sitedata/ZURNALS/zurnalu_raksti/113-154-Eriks_Jekabsons.pdf (site last visited 12.06.2016).

Auxiliary Corps of Latvia — on 25 September 1919,[82] with the members of this corps not only providing social support for soldiers of the Army of Latvia, but also helping with the burial of fallen soldiers, etc.[83] Furthermore, women in the army acted as nurses, on occasion demonstrating extraordinary valour on the battlefield, worked in unit offices, at the offices of various bodies, in procurement offices, and elsewhere dealing with national defence matters. Beyond the Women's Auxiliary Corps, almost 1000 women participated directly in the War of Independence. Most were members of the medical service (at least two women doctors, 250–350 nurses and an equal number who cared for convalescent patients) and approximately 300-400 were telephone operators, worked in offices, as cleaners, washed laundry, etc. A significant number were young and well-educated, with the largest absolute number being Latvians (approximately 85–90%), as was the case for soldiers; however, there were significant numbers of German, Russian, Polish, Jewish, Lithuanian, and Estonian women. Although seemingly invisible, women made a significant contribution to victory on the battlefield and the liberation of the country, thus demonstrating qualitative advances in society and women's readiness to participate in the life of the state on an equal basis as men. The largest influx of women to military units and offices was evident after the Army of Latvia was created in the summer of 1919, although they had previously been present in various military offices.

The struggle against the army of Bermondt represented a turning point when patriotic sentiment rose substantially among the citizens of Latvia of all age groups and genders, manifested in a rise in the number of volunteers. This was also a turning point in official policy, as women's participation in defending the state began to be debated in public (firstly regarding the Women's Auxiliary Corps), and both the left-wing and centrist press came out in support of engaging all citizens in the defence of the state. Two women were awarded the Military Order of Lāčplēsis for bravery in battle: Lance Corporal Valija Veščūnas[84] and Elza Žiglevica, a member of the Women's Auxiliary Corps who died of wounds sustained while delivering food to soldiers in the trenches on the Daugava embankment during fighting against the forces of Bermondt.[85]

This also applied to boys who were still minors and who had not yet reached the age when they might officially be called up for service. The youngest soldier in the Army of Latvia was the Jewish boy Konstantīns Goreliks, who was only ten years old when he voluntarily joined the armed forces in June 1919,[86] while some 300 boys younger than 16 volunteered and were accepted for military service, and some

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[82] Korpusa dibināšanas sapulces protokolu sk.: LVVA, 5192. f., 1. apr., 60. l., 83.–86. lp.

[83] See Ciganovs, J. Latviešu sieviešu palīdzības korpuss Atbrīvošanas cīņu laikā. *Sieviete Latvijas vēsturē. Rakstu krājums*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2007, 56.–61. lpp.; Bērziņa A. Latviešu Sieviešu palīdzības korpuss Bermontiādes laikā, 1919. gada oktobris–decembris. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3/4, 2013, 155.–179. lpp.

[84] See also: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas Atbrīvošanas kara varone Dižkareivis Valija. *Ilustrētā Pasaules Vēsture*, Nr. 34, 2010, decembris, 36.–40. lpp.

[85] See: Jēkabsons, Ē. Sievietes un bruņotie spēki Latvijas Neatkarības kara laikā. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 3, 2012, 20.–39. lpp.

[86] LVVA, 3318. f., 1. apr., 373. l., 296. lp.

800–1000 youths entered service aged less than the official limit of 18 years of age. Many of these saw combat, including special missions such as reconnaissance in the enemy's rear. Many fell in battle, were wounded or shell-shocked, and went missing in action, as well as demonstrating conspicuous bravery. A total of 27 boys were awarded the Military Order of Lāčplēsis for heroism in combat who were younger than 18 at the time of these acts. Several companies were constituted from the students of Riga (one in November–December, two in the summer of 1919), the Schoolboys Company of Cēsis (in June 1919) as part of the 5th Cēsis Infantry Regiment, and the so-called Schoolboys Company of Liepāja (in the autumn of 1919) as part of the Zemgale Division; a substantial part of these companies consisted of under-age boys. During the campaign against Bermondt, a Boy Scouts Company was created in the autumn of 1919 as part of the 1st Student Battalion, in which a total of 120–140 boys aged 11–14 were members and served carrying out special duties.[87] The oldest serviceman in the Army of Latvia was Andrejs Hofmanis, born in 1830, who in 1919 volunteered for service in the Brigade of Northern Latvia, and who then served as an orderly at the first aid post of the 6th Riga Infantry Regiment.[88]

The struggle which played out on the territory of Latvia up until June 1919 undoubtedly contained features of a civil war. This may be inferred from the large number of combat casualties and cruelties inflicted by all sides (including on prisoners) in Kurzeme, at Jūrmala near Rīga, and in Northern Vidzeme (however, this does not mean that the process should be renamed, since a different tradition has been now established in historiography, one that is essentially not incorrect). Furthermore, one must recall the facts of the war between the Republic of Latvia and Soviet Russia, and with the peculiar Russian–German Western Russian Army of volunteers led by Bermondt. Victory in the War of Independence was gained thanks to a favourable military-political situation in the region, as well as by gradually increasing popular support for Latvian statehood, and by extension for its armed forces. Practically all types of weapons were deployed by the Armed Forces to good effect, while popular support was manifested through the selfless courage and heroism of soldiers, as well as through direct support for their Armed Forces given by society in general, and by various social and ethnic groups, in particular. The presence of experienced officers inherited from the Tsarist Russian Army, in addition to astute choice of operational tactics in the fight against different enemies, contributed greatly to a favourable outcome.

At the same time, considerable study still needs to be undertaken about the War of Independence of Latvia, and this must take into account the regional context. One of the topics related to this war which has received practically no attention in Latvian historiography is the role played by German units of the Landeswehr and the Iron Division, as well as those of the "Free Corps", in the fighting that went on in Kurzeme, Zemgale, and Vidzeme; the activities of Russian units within the Landeswehr led by

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[87] See Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas zēni un jaunieši armijā Pirmajā pasaules karā un Neatkarības kara laikā (1914–1920). *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 2, 2013, 5.–24. lpp.

[88] 89 gadus vecs kareivis latvju armijā ir Andrejs Hofmans. *Jaunākās Ziņas*, Nr. 143, 1919, 14. novembris, 6. lpp.

A. Lieven have only been partially studied, while the following issues have barely been studied: the fighting to liberate Northern Latvia (based on Estonian, Finnish, and Danish sources) up to and including the battles around Cēsis; selected parts of the campaign against Bermondt; action by German Home Guard units of the Army of Latvia at the Latgale front; indeed, all events which transpired in Latgale (based on Red Army archival materials). Furthermore, it is necessary to follow the example of other countries in studying how particular classes of weapons were used, how individual units and military formations behaved during the War of Independence, how different segments of society took part in the fighting, i.e. directly or indirectly, as well as public opinion of on-going events, questions of weapons procurement, the attitude adopted by the Western Great Powers, etc.

The principal conclusion reached in this paper is that historical investigation of the events of the period 1918–1920 in Latvia is far from complete. Comprehensive scholarly work based on foreign archives has yet to appear; hence pre-war publications, although scientifically outdated, continue to be relied upon — there is no excuse for this state of affairs. Scholars in Latvia have studied various periods of the War of Independence, processes and events, the number of military units involved has been assessed, as well as the importance during the war of individual participants and locations; however, there is still no compilation of recent findings, and also these studies tend to examine only part of the available information on periods of the war, military units, participants, and locations. It is evident that complete investigation of all these aspects is practically impossible, but further progress is possible and necessary. For this reason, studies of archives in Latvia must continue, as well as within reasonable limits collaboration with foreign historians, including producing summarising works. Close collaboration is also possible with representatives of sub-sectors of history (social history, etc.). This must be done bearing in mind the fact that between 1918 and 1920 Latvian soldiers (including national minorities of Latvia), which in this context means the Latvian people, took up arms and made great sacrifices, demonstrating through their persistence and ever increasing determination the fact that the people were ready for statehood and prepared to fight and sacrifice their lives so that an independent state of Latvia might exist.

About the author

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THE AUTHORITARIAN REGIME OF KĀRLIS ULMANIS (1934–1940): POLITICS, IDEOLOGY, ECONOMICS

The paper examines the situation in Latvia on the eve of the coup of 15th May 1934 and offers the conclusion that the state was not facing any danger which could have justified the abolition of democracy. The author considers Kārlis Ulmanis' political system to have been authoritarian, even autocratic, with a tendency towards totalitarian control over the public. The economy was marked by growing state intervention, elements of a planned character without any formally adopted plan, and unsolvable problems in recruiting an adequate labour force, which led to creation of Labour Centres and a Labour Service. Authoritarianism was the main principle of the official ideology.

Keywords: the coup of 15th May, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, Chambers, state plan, national unity, nationalism, monumentality.

"For some time people have been regarding with great concern the rise in internal political tension, which perturbs peaceful residents, creating a sense of insecurity (…) A broad sector of the public has become dangerously apathetic about the fate of the country; uncertainty has set in about the future and there is a fall in the joy of work and in the will to work (…) Doubts have set in about the security of the state and its very existence..." (The Government Manifesto. The Decree on Martial Law, published in *Jaunākās Ziņas*, 16 May 1934)

"… the present government is a revolutionary government, a revolutionary government in the broadest sense of the term..." (15 May 1935, Kārlis Ulmanis address to the Cabinet of Ministers, LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 304. l., 148. lpp.)

"For hundreds of years Latvians have been obsessed with a desire to gather around a leader. The will of leaders already in ancient times was the cement that bound together the will of individual Latvians." (Extract from a speech by Augusts Tentelis, Minister for Education, at a history teacher seminar, 29 July 1935, published in *Rīts*, 30 July 1935)

The situation in Latvia on the eve of the coup d'état

Despite allegations in the manifesto of those who carried out the coup that the internal political situation was very dramatic, one that even threatened the existence of the state, this was not the case. The years of economic crisis — the most difficult ones

being 1932 and 1933 — were in the past, and Latvia had weathered relatively peacefully, in particular when compared with the most extreme case — Germany, where democracy, and even civilisation itself had died, and Nazism taken power — even, with established French democracy, where the lifespan of several governments was measured in a few weeks, and where, in February 1934, protestors were killed in clashes in Paris, not to mention hundreds of injured. Latvia never descended into wide-spread destructive social or political conflict, not to mention threats of civil war. All state institutions functioned reasonably well. The only political organisation which followed the dictum, "worse means better", and who would be well pleased were the security of Latvia, or even its independence to be compromised and it be joined to the USSR, was the Communist Party of Latvia (CPL). However, it was weak, and its only most recent achievements were two strikes held in 1933 — those by shoemakers in March and April, and the one by sailors of the Latvian shipping fleet and dock workers during the summer.[1] Although both the strikes were extensive, and the sailors' strike created an unpleasant image of Latvian shipping abroad, they were typical strikes called for economic reasons, similar to the ones seen in any European country not only during the years of crisis, which ended as soon as the pay settlements were agreed with the strikers. These strikes were not a threat to national security. Furthermore, as the Communists themselves discovered, the Party's influence among the unemployed had even diminished.[2] At the beginning of May, on the eve of the coup, workers were on strike at 22 sawmills, demanding higher pay,[3] which was agreed at several undertakings, with substantial increase achieved — with pay rises as high as by 30–40%.[4] Workers were on strike at only two other enterprises in Riga.[5] There were no on-going strikes elsewhere in Latvia, excluding a small one in Liepāja — 10 workers — at the printing house "*Progress*".[6] There was no social unrest in the country on the eve of the coup of 15 May, i.e. nothing which might even minimally justify the termination of democracy. After the events of 15 May the leadership of the CPL admitted that the coup had come as a surprise and caught the party unprepared.[7] This, in fact, was the only similarity between the CPL and all the other political parties, and it showed that before 15 May the Communists had not planned any subversive acts and, furthermore, they were incapable of carrying out any which they might have planned.

The Latvian Social Democratic Workers Party (LSDWP) — the largest party in terms of representation in the Parliament, and the second largest political party in the country after the Latvian Peasants Party — was utterly different from the CPL. It had been present at the birth of independent Latvia, starting with the period of the Democratic Block and the People's Council, and it was completely loyal to Latvia. Despite this party being depicted, for a while, after 15 May, by propaganda of the K. Ulmanis'

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1 *Latvijas Komunistiskās partijas vēstures apcerējumi*. II daļa. 1920–1940. Rīga: Liesma, 1965, 240.–246. lpp.
2 LVA, 240. f., 2. apr., 833. l., 4. lp.
3 Koku zāģētavu strādnieku streiks paplašinās. *Sociāldemokrāts*, Nr. 102, 1934, 10. maijs, 2. lpp.
4 Streika cīņā jau atrodas ap 3000 kokstrādnieku. *Sociāldemokrāts*, Nr. 101, 1934, 9. maijs, 4. lpp.
5 Streiki rūpniecības uzņēmumos. *Sociāldemokrāts*, Nr. 105, 1934, 15. maijs, 4. lpp.
6 Streiks "Progresa" drukātavā. *Strādnieku Avīze*, Nr. 105, 1934, 15. maijs, 3. lpp.
7 LVA, 240. f., 2. apr., 925. l., 5. lp.

regime as a subversive force[8] and many of its members repressed, including Bruno Kalniņš who was sentenced to a prison term — on the basis of false evidence — the party had not done anything during the years of economic crisis which would warrant the coup. From 1931 onwards, the party was again led by Dr. Fricis Menders, one of the founders of the Democratic Block and the People's Council. He espoused very left-wing ideas, but was not that left oriented in practical politics: unlike any other Social Democrats, F. Menders, who had earned two doctoral degrees, was in his political philosophy most afraid of the Social Democrats coming to power too early. In his opinion, the natural role of Social Democrats in a civil society was to remain in opposition: to criticise the nationals, to follow the tactic of taking small political steps to the benefit of their electorate (improvements in social welfare and medical care — for example, introducing the system of health insurance funds in Latvia) and to wait until capitalism would have developed sufficiently to form the basis for democratic socialism — someday, in the future. There was no room for any idea of taking power violently — in contrast to the Bolsheviks — and it would not be worthwhile to take part in any civil government or to form a government themselves: it could not change the fact of the society being not yet ready for socialism, and would not be able to short-circuit the time-consuming process of development of capitalism. The Social Democrats, through their unwillingness to countenance anything other than a rapid recovery from the economic crisis and the restart of growth, which would also entail a rise in manufacturing capacity, culture, numbers of workers and everything else which was a prerequisite for the future evolution of capitalism to readiness for democratic socialism, perhaps unwittingly increased the likelihood of K. Ulmanis carrying out a coup.

The next to last democratic government of Latvia was led by Ādolfs Bļodnieks, the leader of the Party of New Farmers and Small Holders; his Cabinet worked starting from the spring of 1933. This was neither the best nor the worst government in the history of parliamentarianism in Latvia; the one which the LSDWP unjustifiably characterised as pro-Hitlerite, as it "… threatens not only the continued existence of Latvia, but all of the achievements of working people, including the agrarian reform, because, in acceding to the demands of Germany and seeking agreement with it (…), it promotes the latter's efforts to subordinate the Baltic sea coast to the interests of Hitlerite foreign policy…"[9] For his part K. Ulmanis wished to see the demise of the government led by Ā. Bļodnieks, not because of essential differences in the policy but because he realised that the coup which he had been planning already since the end of the summer of 1933, could be more readily accomplished — possibly it could only be realised — if he was the Prime Minister, i.e. from a position of authority, not in oppo-

[8] A particularly scandalous affair was associated with an individual, known to the political police of Latvia, J. Pošeika (H. Bogomolovs) (and who had in 1928 sought the help of F. Menders, a Social Democrat, in the matter of charges of… horse theft) who had published an article in instalments in the main newspaper supporting the regime, *Brīvā Zeme*, starting 10 July, alleging that the LSDWP took orders and received money from Moscow, and sought to undermine Latvia in league with senior USSR leaders with Latvian origin, J. Rudzutaks, J. Daniševskis, and others. Publication of instalments was abruptly stopped on 24 August after protests by the USSR Embassy in Riga (J. Rudzutaks was a candidate Member of the Politburo of the AU(C)BP). For more details see: Stranga, A. Sociāldemokrāti K. Ulmaņa režīma gados. *Latvijas Vēsture*, Nr. 2, 1991, 18.–21. lpp.

[9] LSDSP Ārkārtējā kongresa rezolūcija. 1934. gada 21. janvāris. LVVA, 3017. f., 1. apr., 22. l., 35. lp.

sition to the legitimate government. The Social Democrats were not in a position to prevent the downfall of Ā. Bļodnieks, which K. Ulmanis had so assiduously planned, but they did not even try to do so. The government of Ā. Bļodnieks was overthrown on 2 March, assisted by the Social Democrats. Their newspaper, *Sociāldemokrāts*, rejoiced, without any good reason: the government "… have come to an end in an unprecedented scandalous way..."[10] Based on this, Edgars Dunsdorfs concluded: "In fact, the Social Democrats who voted together with the Peasants' Union, allowed K. Ulmanis to form his last democratic government, and, indirectly, facilitated the arrival of the subsequent dictatorship." [11] The Social Democrats' aversion to forming a government is illustrated by their response to an invitation extended on 23 March by the State President Alberts Kviesis to the Presidium of the LSDWP faction of deputies in the Saeima, in the spirit of parliamentary tradition, to ascertain whether a government proposed by this party (21 deputies) would be able to get a majority vote. This would not have been practically possible even if the LSDWP would have taken a constructive approach. A majority of deputies in the Saeima were from civic parties, but the attitude of F. Menders — a long-standing opponent of the coalition government — meant that the LSDWP was deliberately not constructive: 14 demands were formulated to be accepted based on which the Social Democrats would undertake the formation of a new government. Some of these demands could not been met by a government consisting even entirely of left-wing Social Democrats (for example, the demand "... to provide work for all of the unemployed..."). The civic parties rejected these demands, and a new government was formed on 16 March by none other than K. Ulmanis.[12] The dogmatic leadership of the LSDWP was not at all bitter about this outcome. The intellectual critic of Social Democrats, Arveds Bergs claimed that in formulating its unreasonable demands the party had "... declared to its membership its great concern about the needs of the masses, so as later to be able to blame the civic parties for the failure".[13]

In Latvia, considerable rhetoric — but no real threats to national security — was generated by the chauvinistic and, in its attitude towards Jews, even racist, organisation, *Ugunskrusts* (*Pērkonkrusts*) (Fylfot Cross, Thunder Cross) which was founded in 1932. This organisation was not planning a coup, which they would have been unable to stage, even if they wanted to — this organisation appealed largely to Latvian student societies, to the intelligentsia, but was weak among members of the Army and the Home Guards (let alone among senior officers), without whose support no coup could be mounted. During the summer of 1933, when K. Ulmanis had decided to carry out a coup, the political police, who carefully carried out surveillance of *Pērkonkrusts*, concluded that: "... there is no information that "Pērkonkrusts" might have secret plans to instigate an armed coup".[14] Nothing had changed by the end of April 1934, i.e. only two

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[10] *Sociāldemokrāts*, Nr. 49, 1934, 3. marts, 1. lpp.

[11] Dunsdorfs, E. *Kārļa Ulmaņa dzīve. Ceļinieks. Politiķis. Diktators. Moceklis*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1978, 304. lpp.

[12] For more details see: Stranga, A. *LSDSP un 1934. gada 15. maija valsts apvērsums.* Rīga, aut. izdev., 1998, 140.–141. lpp.

[13] *Latvis*, Nr. 3697, 1934, 6. marts, 1. lpp.

[14] Cited in: Stranga, A. *Ebreji un diktatūras Baltijā. 1926–1940.* Riga: LU Jūdaikas studiju centrs, 2002, 167. lpp.

weeks before the coup prepared by K. Ulmanis, when the police found that: "The members of "Pērkonkrusts" are preparing, where possible on the first of May, to give speeches, chant their slogans, and distribute flyers. Furthermore, they are getting ready to throw a stink bomb (not a real bomb, but a smelly mixture — *A. S.*) at the State President, Mr Ulmanis, as he is walking towards the Esplanāde. A certain Freivalds, resident in (Riga) Sarkandaugava, at 25 Duntes Street, has agreed to hurl the stink bomb in return for payment."[15] The stink bomb was not used, but chanting slogans was legal, as this did not threaten national security, and which required no coup to be staged in order for it to be prevented. In 1934, *Pērkonkrusts* followed the principle which had been highlighted at the time of its formation, namely "legal means are the basis for our struggle"; and, in spite of being prohibited, it was getting ready to contest elections for the 5th Saeima under a different name.

The "Government Manifesto" published on 16 May asserted that: the situation in the country was so tense that there was the threat of "…accidental events and armed clashes which might occur, provoked by the so-called legionnaires, and by other irresponsible groups".[16] In February 1934, the so-called legionnaires, who were led by an intrepid officer, Voldemārs Ozols, had indeed started to fantasise about armed intervention, but their "battle groups" were small — approximately 200 individuals — and almost unarmed. It would have not been possible to seize power based on such a "force". Prime Minister K. Ulmanis had been informed of the failure of legionnaires to establish serious contacts with the 4th Valmiera and the 6th Riga infantry regiments, and no coup could take place without army support.[17] K. Ulmanis was professional in preparing for his own intervention, and cultivating a nervous atmosphere by spreading rumours about an impending coup attempt by the legionnaires was part of his preparations. Luring V. Ozols out of Tallinn, where the latter had been living since 14 April, was the most successful act carried out by the political police — who reported to K. Ulmanis as the Prime Minister, and to Jānis Frīdrihsons, who supported the idea of a coup. On 6 May, V. Ozols came to Valga, in Estonia at the invitation of agents of the political police who had infiltrated the legionnaires, but he hesitated to cross the border into Latvia — his experience as a conspirator meant that he had a sense of dark foreboding. At 11.20, V. Ozols crossed the border and was arrested at 11.40. The arrest of V. Ozols was fortuitous for K. Ulmanis — he used this fact to create an impression that the legionnaires had been preparing a putsch and that V. Ozols had come to Latvia to lead it.[18] (It is true that the Manifesto did not explain how V. Ozols, who was under arrest then, could plan the coup; this was not the only curious allegation to appear after 15 May.)

The Manifesto alleged that the economy of Latvia found itself in the deepest of crises, and that there were signs of "a catastrophic collapse"; thus, one of the reasons for the coup was the wish to put things right. In fact, there was no impending catastrophe in the economy. The impact of the crisis had been hard to bear, but the worst was over.

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[15] LVVA, 3235. f., 1/22. apr., 940. l., 90. lp.
[16] Valdības manifests. *Jaunākās Ziņas*, Nr. 107, 1934, 16. maijs, 1. lpp.
[17] Stranga, A. *LSDSP un 1934. gada 15. maija valsts apvērsums*, 153. lpp.
[18] Ibid., 153.–154. lpp.

The specialist journal, *Ekonomists* wrote in November 1933 that: "... we must admit that we have reached the lowest ebb point of the crisis…"[19] At the end of December it concluded that: "... no further rapid overall deterioration of the economy is evident, in certain sectors some slight improvement is apparent (…) There are no signs of contraction in agricultural production (…) The industry no longer is in decline, but growing."[20] It is true that 1933 was very difficult for Latvian foreign trade: in comparison with the results for 1929, which was the best year, it had fallen by more than three times — from 636 million lats in 1929, to 173 million lats in 1933. Latvian exports suffered tremendously. As the Chamber for Trade and Industry admitted later in December 1935, this was the "year of maximum depression in Latvian international economic relations".[21]

There were two reasons for the Great Depression. The first and main reason, which could not be influenced by any government of Latvia, either democratic or authoritarian, was the international conjuncture, the world economic crisis. Everyone in Latvia was well aware of this, including K. Ulmanis. For example, on 23 March 1933, when Marģers Skujenieks handed over the office of leading the government to Ā. Bļodnieks, the latter allowed that: the economic situation in Latvia has become more difficult, "... not because of our internal situation, but thanks to the international conjuncture..."[22]. As a small state with a small economy, dependent on foreign markets, Latvia flourished during the second half of the 1920s, together with the world economy, and suffered together with it during the first half of the 1930s. However, the second reason was due to actions by Latvia itself. England — Latvia's main trading partner — devalued the pound, its currency, in 1931. Latvia did not devalue its national currency, the lat, in this way making its exports more expensive under severe crisis conditions, also at a time when protectionism was on the rise everywhere, and Latvia was confronted with increasing difficulties in selling its products: "... once it failed to align the value of the lat with the new value of the English pound sterling in 1931, Latvia lost a good part of this market and it proved to be very expensive for the Latvian export industry, as well as for its agriculture."[23]

In Latvia there was a rare consensus of opinion, including that of K. Ulmanis and the Latvian Peasant Party, that there should be no devaluation of the lat, and even after the 15th May coup, currency devaluation was put off until September 1936 without any good reason for this delay. Once he became the Prime Minister of Latvia in March 1934 (as the last democratically elected one) K. Ulmanis did not take any steps which could have been construed as attempts to save an allegedly crumbling economy. On 9 May, one week before the coup, the Finance Ministry of his government submitted a draft of the Law on Increased Rights of the Government to Regulate Economic Life. This contained provisions on regulating foreign trade in three respects: firstly, the government's right to declare a provisional entry into force of trade and other economic

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[19] Bokalders, J. Tautsaimniecības perspektīvas. *Ekonomists*, Nr. 21, 1933, 15. nov., 771. lpp.

[20] Bokalders, J. Saimnieciskā dzīve 1933. gadā. *Ekonomists*, Nr. 24, 1933, 31. dec., 1.–2. lpp.

[21] Cited in: *Buržuāziskā Latvija imperiālistisko lielvalstu ekonomiskajā atkarībā. 1919–1940. Dokumenti un materiāli.* Rīga: Avots, 1984, 130. lpp.

[22] LVVA, 1307. f., 1 apr., 303. l., 75. lp.

[23] Aizsilnieks, A. *Latvijas saimniecības vēsture. 1914–1945.* Stokholma: Daugava, 1968, 452. lpp.

agreements which had been concluded before; secondly, to permit revision in customs tariffs; thirdly, to broaden the government's power in the administrative regulation of imports, exports, and currency trading.[24] If this law had entered into force, it would have constrained the rights enjoyed by the Saeima, but it would not have charted a new course for the economy: foreign trade had been regulated starting already in 1931. After 15 May, this law was superfluous since the Saeima was no longer functioning, and all the Laws were adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers, while the activities of the Ministry for Finance between March 1934 until 15 May showed that there was no impending economic catastrophe, which latter was highlighted in the Manifesto of 16 May.

Mention of the position of Latvia internationally, which had allegedly encouraged mounting the coup, was not excluded from the Manifesto: "With the question arising about securing peace in Eastern Europe on a solid and enduring basis, we must act with the greatest equanimity, so that events do not occur which would affect the independence of our state." At the time, events in Europe were marked by the Nazis taking power in January 1933 which had not changed the wish of the USSR to maintain good relations with Germany, in fact, the contrary, but the anti-communism of A. Hitler and the Germany–Poland settlement of January 1934, which was greatly to the disadvantage of Moscow, and which complicated the foreign relations of the USSR, caused the Soviet Union to turn to the so-called collective security concept and the struggle for peace in Europe, which in turn led to the so-called Eastern Pact. However, the sole purpose of this Pact, which, for some time, the USSR had urged the Baltic States to join, was to put pressure on Berlin: it was to frighten Germany to revert to a bi-lateral Germany–USSR settlement. The internal political system in Latvia — either democratic or authoritarian —, did not have any impact on the USSR or the relations between the USSR and the other major powers. K. Ulmanis, certainly, could not have predicted that "fateful events affecting the independence of our independent state" would occur precisely during the period of his one-man rule, when in 1939–1940, these would be provoked by none other than two aggressive states, the USSR and Germany, and that his actions, particularly those on 17 June 1940, a decisive day for Latvia, would be evaluated most controversially, subject to justified criticism, which has not died down even today.

The political system of the authoritarian regime

The regime led by K. Ulmanis did not wish to be an ordinary, conservative authoritarian dictatorship, but sought to be "a national revolution", a dictatorship characterised by fascist mass mobilisation and manipulation features. K. Ulmanis and members of his government, not to mention the ideologues and propagandists for the regime, throughout all of the years of its existence, compared the regime with fascistic and even totalitarian regimes. On several occasions K. Ulmanis expressed publicly high appreciation of the fascism in Italy and of Benito Mussolini, personally, and called

[24] LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 79. l., p. 271.

upon Latvia to learn from Italy; one can say he even expressed admiration of Italy.[25] For example, the address by K. Ulmanis to leaders of the Mazpulki movement (an organisation of rural youth based on the 4-H clubs which Ulmanis had observed while a student in the USA — Translator's note), on 26 April 1935, in Riga included a passage on the theme "How fascism came to be" (this topic, possibly, coming as a surprise to the largely rural audience). K. Ulmanis accented the qualities of the leadership of Italy and the psychological aspects of fascism — fascism as a heightened emotional state, enthusiasm which is necessary to achieve mass mobilisation. K. Ulmanis cited the words of B. Mussolini: "Relentlessly rise above the transient present — this will be the heroic nature of our belief."[26] He wished to see this also in Latvia. In propaganda put

[25] See, for example, an article that described in detail the corporative state system in Italy: Bulāns, A. Kamdēļ itāļiem vajadzīga korporatīva valsts. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 212, 1934, 21. sept., 1.–2. lpp. The conclusion offered by the author of this article is significant: "... fascism is something which, even if it cannot be realized universally, deserves, at the very least, to be considered by states which have to deal with similar problems"; see also: Fašistu Lielā padome. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 56, 1937, 10. marts, 10. lpp.

[26] *Pirmais gads. 1934.15.V – 1935.15.V.* Rīga: Leta, 1935, 247.–248. lpp. This speech was well received in Rome: K. Ulmanis was visited a few days later by Dr. Mameli the Ambassador of Italy to Latvia "... and acting on a direct personal order from the Prime Minister of Italy [B. Mussolini] (…) he expressed the satisfaction and appreciation of Mussolini about the clarity of the views expressed by the Prime Minister at the meeting of the 4H clubs concerning the ambitions of the people of Italy." (Musolini pateicība ministru prezidentam. *Rīts*, Nr. 125, 1935, 7. maijs, 1. lpp.). Italy was to enjoy the next pleasant moment a few weeks later, during the manifestation commemorating the coup of 15 May 1935. B. Mussolini began to believe that fascism had taken root in Latvia. He sent further greetings to K. Ulmanis on May 17th: "I add my heart-felt good wishes to the commemoration that the People of Latvia are rendering on the occasion of the anniversary of the new regime founded by your Excellency." (Itālijas valdības galvas sveiciens vienības svētkos. *Rīts*, Nr. 125, 1935, 18. maijs, 1. lpp.). At the same time an "Italy week" was held in Latvia during the course of which the Italian reporter Vittorio Foschini, who was resident in Latvia and who wrote articles for the Italian press, expressed the view at the beginning of this week: the events of this week "… show that there exists a deep common feeling and friendship between the Italians of Mussolini and the Latvians of Ulmanis"; while the poet Gabriele D'Annunzio had also sent his greetings "… to the new Latvians who are facing up to a new life" (Latvieši iet pretim jaunai dzīvei. *Rīts*, Nr. 103, 1935, 13. apr., 1. lpp.). The fact of the newspaper of the Latvian Army, *Latvijas Kareivis*, devoting an extensive and positive review of articles about Latvia written by V. Foschini for the Italian press is telling. Fragments of the latter were quoted verbatim: "... one can say this about Ulmanis, that he has given Latvia a "fascistic break with the past" (…) If the designation fascism has not appeared in Latvia, if it has not visibly affected the country, this does not mean its absence, since the coup of May 15th was fascistic, and the spirit that inspires Latvian patriots is fascistic." (Atjaunotās Latvijas labvēlīgais novērtējums Itālijā. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 27, 1935, 13. febr., 1. lpp.). Shortly thereafter, the Italian reporter Dr. L. Cabalsar visited Latvia, and was even received by K. Ulmanis; L. Cabalsar praised K. Ulmanis as the Leader of Latvia and advocated Italian Fascism, which according to him, was suitable for any country (Mussolini uzticības persona Rīgā. *Rīts*, Nr. 161, 1935, 13. jūn., 1. lpp.). An event was held at the end of October 1935 dedicated to the 14th anniversary of the "March on Rome" by B. Mussolini. The outstanding writer Edvarts Virza, who was the first person in Latvia (only a few days after the May 15th coup) to start the cult of K. Ulmanis as Leader, presented a lecture about this march (Galvas pilsēta. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 246, 1935, 27. okt., 7. lpp.). A number of fascist characteristics are being borrowed by Latvia, but no precise copy of fascism can ever be established here (and this will prove to be impossible by anyone who admires the pioneer B. Mussolini). Expression of admiration for Italy continued and was particularly evident in the New Year's greetings extended by K. Ulmanis on 5 January 1938 to the residents of Latvia: references to his own speeches are absent from this message, or examples set by Latvia, rather Italy is quoted: "Others sowed, others reaped — Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cavour, Mussolini (…) And the Italian people are united and the stronger for this." (Atraisīsimies no pašmīlības. *Rīts*, Nr. 5, 1938, 5. janv., 1. lpp.). See also the observations made by K. Ulmanis in February of the same year: Pienākums – augstākais likums. *Sējējs*, Nr. 2, 1938, 114. lpp.

out by the regime, K. Ulmanis was compared not only with B. Mussolini, but also with A. Hitler.[27] Rickard Sandler, the Foreign Minister of a Social Democrat Government of Sweden, during his visit of Latvia in June 1937 (the visit had been planned for 1934, but was postponed on account of the May 15th coup), wished to understand the nature of the regime in Latvia. Vilhelms Munters, the Foreign Minister of Latvia, sought to correct the view held by R. Sandler that, "doctrinal fascism" ruled in Latvia; according to the clarification offered by V. Munters the K. Ulmanis regime was not driven by doctrinal fascism, but was a pro-fascist authoritarian regime — Latvian fascism.[28] V. Munters on the occasion of addressing the Labour Chamber on 3 April 1938, presented a kind of typological definition of authoritarian systems similar to that of K. Ulmanis as follows: it was one of "... the single party or no political party regimes, which are labelled as totalitarian or authoritarian..."[29] When, in 1939, the fifth year of the regime was celebrated, fascism and totalitarianism could no longer be separated from how the regime defined itself: on some occasions the regime was considered as being correctly described as a fascist state,[30] with flashes of megalomania — Jānis Bokalders, the well-known statistician and regime ideologue, described it as, "a politically united and totalitarian state".[31] Totalitarian — something akin to the USSR and Germany, the only totalitarian (or nearly totalitarian) states?

The 15th May regime sought to combine selected features from different dictatorships, but this did not make it a fascistic, let alone a totalitarian dictatorship, which in fact was not fully the case even for the politics implemented in Italy by B. Mussolini —

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[27] See, for example: Alnis, A. No parlamentārisma uz autoritāru vadonības valsti. *Sējējs*, Nr. 8, 1939, 806. lpp.

[28] Stranga, A. *LSDSP un 1934. gada 15. maija valsts apvērsums*, 196.–197. lpp.

[29] *Ceturtais gads. 1937.15.V – 1938.15.V*. Rīga: Leta, 1938, 367. lpp.

[30] Alnis, A. No parlamentārisma uz autoritāru vadonības valsti, 806. lpp.

[31] Bokalders. J. Saimnieciskā ideoloģija. *Ekonomists*, Nr. 10, 1939, 700. lpp. For his part Andrejs Bērziņš, who was one of the closest associates of K. Ulmanis, wrote in December 1939: "... totalitarian methods are appearing more often among us and we shall not be able to endure the harsh conditions of war without them. This theme is not, in fact, foreign to us" (Mūsu stāvoklis. *Rīts*, Nr. 352, 1939, 21. dec., 1.–2. lpp.). The interesting aspect of this admission is not that the need to adopt a totalitarian form of economic management under conditions when a new economic crisis has set in for Latvia following the outbreak of the world war, but the remark that this is not unknown to Latvia. It must be mentioned here that most eminent legal authorities of Latvia, for example, Professor Kārlis Dišlers and Hermanis Albats used the terms authoritarianism and totalitarianism, or authoritarianism, corporativism, and totalitarianism, as synonymous — see for example the comments by H. Albats about "... an authoritarian and a totalitarian state" (Albats, H. Ievērojamie momenti neitralitātes tiesību izveidošanas gaitā. *Tieslietu Ministrijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 3, 1940, 1. maijs, 447. lpp; Valsts iekārtas veidošanās autoritarā virzienā." *Rīts*, Nr. 63, 1937, 4. marts, 5. lpp.). K. Dišlers stated that two additional descriptions may be appropriate for an authoritarian state. The first is a totalitarian state: "... this label contains the concept of the leadership of such a state dealing personally not only with political matters but with all other matters which are important to the people and to the state. Great importance is attached to economic matters (...) a good example of issues which are of part of the programme of leaders of a totalitarian state are the cultivation of swamps (Italy), regulating construction and beautifying the state (Latvia), and even regulation church matters (Germany). The second is that of a corporate state: "… the system of chambers is a sign that our state is developing in the direction of a corporate state." (Dišlers, K. Autoritāra, totalitāra, korporatīva valsts. *Aizsargs*, Nr. 7/8, 1936, 15. aug., 476. lpp.). For his part the magistrate R. Viļums wrote: "The basis for the concept of a totalitarian state (...) is unity of the people which is placed above the individual..." (*Tieslietu Ministrijas Vēstnesis*", Nr. 4, 1939, 1. jūl., 203. lpp.). He supported this idea, and this is only one example of how use of the term "totalitarian" began to spread in Latvia.

who developed the concept of totalitarianism. Despite political repression after 15 May touching a larger number of persons than had ever occurred before (1080 persons were arrested during the month of May and throughout the summer of 1934; their detention exceeded the capacity of existing prisons, and a concentration camp was set up in Liepāja[32] — a shameful page which marked the beginning of the regime of 15 May); most of detainees were released during 1935. Political repression during later years was relatively mild, not to mention the fact that none involved loss of life (however, one has to remember that thousands of people lost their jobs for political reasons — 3982 persons were removed from their posts at local government authorities through to the end of 1934[33]). In this sense the regime was not at all authoritarian, and, when the USSR began its aggression against Latvia in June 1940, there were only 253 political prisoners incarcerated in Latvia (a further 14 individuals were serving sentences for spying on behalf of the USSR — spying on behalf of another country is one of the most serious criminal offences in any state). This was a relatively small number when compared with numbers in totalitarian or fascistic regimes (even if the regime of K. Ulmanis were one), as well as several authoritarian or military dictatorships (for example, in Poland during the life of Joseph Piłsudski, or that of King Carol II, not to mention the brutal regime of Ion Antonescu (both in Romania)). The control of public life increased rapidly after 15 May. The police as well as the extensive Home Guards organisation helped in this. Commanders at different levels of the latter organisation had to present a report about public opinion to the Minister for the Interior, and to his deputy, Alfrēds Bērziņš, later the Minister for Public Affairs every month;[34] General Jānis Balodis, the Minister of War, states in his memoirs that there were informers who reported directly to K. Ulmanis, namely that Riga was divided "... into 5–7 districts, and that in each district there were no fewer than 3 trustworthy people acting in secret. Their task was to monitor popular sentiments, the views of the people about the president..."[35] This control was not fully totalitarian and could have never become totalitarian, but it definitely was more stringent than controls which were in place in the authoritarian regimes of Lithuania and Estonia.

The most evident mixture of the example of Italian fascism, and even that of German National Socialism was the personality cult centred on K. Ulmanis, and the accompanying liturgy of the fascistic regime mass processions, parades, festivals, which had to leave the impression of a new "Latvian" Latvia to have been formed and to provide a dynamic form for K. Ulmanis' leadership. However, in contrast to the situation

[32] "Formation of this camp was dictated by the exceptionally large number of persons detained. It was not possible to house the many hundreds who were arrested, leading to a decision on setting up a concentration camp for those who were interned. It is not clear who advanced this idea, but its existence followed from the arrest of a large number of political opponents." (Ščerbinskis, V. Liepājas koncentrācijas nometne un tās režīms. 1934. gada maijs – 1935. gada marts. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1/2, 2009, 84. lpp.).

[33] Ščerbinskis, V. Pašvaldību amatpersonu atlaišanas un iecelšanas pēc 1934. gada 15. maija apvērsuma. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 2, 2007, 61. lpp.

[34] Butulis, I. *Sveiki, Aizsargi! Aizsargu organizācija Latvijas sabiedriski politiskajā dzīvē 1919.–1940. gadā.* Rīga: Jumava, 2011, 73. lpp.

[35] Balodis, J. *Atmiņu burtnīcas. 1918.–1939. gads.* Publicēšanai sagatavojis A. Caune. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2015, 249. lpp.

in authentically fascist Italy, not to mention in the Fuhrer's Germany, the cult of the "Leader" in Latvia masked an authoritarian dictatorship exhibiting autocratic tendencies. The regime was not made truly fascistic through adoption of other features from Italy, and from the clerical fascism of Austria[36] namely, the creation of Chambers. On 3 April 1926, Benito Mussolini had insisted that: "Italy is a country where the state controls everything — politics, the economy, morality (a claim for totalitarianism — *A. S.*). Italy is a corporate state."[37] The Chambers embodied the corporate nature of the state; they were opposed to liberal economics and were based on the fascist ideological claim to have resolved class differences and the class struggle — the sickness of democracy and liberalism — by an apparent cooperation between the classes by bringing together employers and employees in a single body — a Chamber. A total of 22 different Chambers were created in order to regulate economic life in Italy, and these chambers were watched over by a Chamber Minister. In 1938, the Chambers were consolidated into a single body — to be named in 1939 the Chamber of Fasci and Corporations, an obedient puppet of the government who selected its members; this Chamber was to replace the democratic ("bourgeois") parliament considered to be decadent and bankrupt. However, the system of chambers which, in the words of Mussolini, represented the dictatorship by the state over the social classes was only one of many fascist claims to revolution: the capitalist economic system, although subject to greater state control was not destroyed. An essential feature of the state system of governance in Italy was the conviction held by B. Mussolini that the system of chambers could only function well if it was subject to control by the Fascist Party.[38]

The system of Chambers in Latvia, independent of its origin, had its own special characteristics. First, unlike the situation in Italy and Austria, K. Ulmanis sought to use the Chambers to bring about greater, almost totalitarian control of the society. In addition to four separate Chambers covering the economy, a further two were created to cover all spiritual issues, i.e. members of the liberal professions, the technical intelligentsia, and other professions, which could not be covered by the four economic Chambers. Thus, a Chamber of Literature and Artists, as well as a Chamber of the Professions (the latter even including dentists and veterinary surgeons — these too could

[36] In the notes which he wrote during the autumn of 1940 whilst exiled in the USSR, K. Ulmanis admitted that: "I followed in detail changes and how they were implemented in Vienna" (*Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un cietumā. Dokumenti un materiāli*. Ronis, I., Žvinklis, A. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures institūta apgāds, 1994, 293. lpp.). See also approving assessments appearing in the Latvian press, for example: Austrija — korporatīva valsts. *Rīts*, Nr. 68, 1934, 2. nov., 4. lpp.

[37] Halperin, S. W. *Mussolini and Italian Fascism*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand Rheinhold, 1964, p. 56; see also: Feldmanis I. Autoritārisma viļņi Eiropā pēc 1. pasaules kara. *Apvērsums. 1934. gada 15. maija notikumi avotos un pētījumos*. Ščerbinskis, V., Jēkabsons, Ē. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais arhīvs, Latvijas Arhīvistu biedrība, 2012, 81., 85. lpp.

[38] K. Ulmanis had carefully studied the system of Chambers set up in Italy, in particular, a record of the first meeting in March 1939 of the Chamber of Fasci and Corporations which was introduced to replace the Parliament. Reading the draft text prepared by Giacomo Acerbo about this Chamber, K. Ulmanis underlined certain passages, such as: "The people are unified and discipline introduced by the Fascistic Party"; "The Chamber will overcome the "congestion arising from oratorical procedures", etc. See: K. Ulmaņa piezīmes. LVVA, 5969. f., 1. apr., 281. l., 141.–145., 437. lp.

not be excluded from supervision[39]) were created. None of these six Chambers had any real power which could in any way diminish the absolute power of K. Ulmanis, which "… could not be limited by any other body."[40] It must be said that the only body which had some influence was the Chamber for Trade and Industry, through its chairman, Andrejs Bērziņš, not ex-officio, but by virtue of his being a long-standing and close associate of K. Ulmanis, and someone whom he had complete faith in.[41] Overall, the Chambers had a consultative function.[42] For example, the press was informed in advance of the meeting of the Chamber of Literature and Artists on 24 October 1939, that: "Members of the government will present instructions to those attending."[43] (Evidently, the government instructions were to be implemented.[44]) If the first four Chambers needed to strive to overcome the differences in economic matters, to achieve harmony, then what were the "class differences" to be overcome by, for example, painters and actors, who were subject to regulation by the Chamber of Literature and Artists? The regime of one-man rule by K. Ulmanis, even with the help of the police and the Home Guards, could not control everything, in particular, in the field of culture and the arts. (A suggestion was made to create a Chamber for Upbringing, which would comprise religious ministers! This idea was not acted upon.[45]) Control was manifested through the Chambers (after all, every resident of Latvia had to work in a profession which was organically part of one of these Chambers). Every profession was permitted to establish a single representative organisation, with, eventually, branches in the provinces, which rendered each profession easy to control.[46]

Secondly, akin to the situation in Italy and Austria, although the Chambers were described as an alternative to a democratic parliament, their creation in Latvia was so slow, that they were incomplete by the time of Soviet aggression in June 1940. However,

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[39] 2 kameras un kultūras padome gara darbiniekiem. *Rīts*, Nr. 65, 1938, 6. marts, 1. lpp.

[40] Alnis, A. No parlamentārisma uz autoritāru vadonības valsti, 807. lpp.

[41] The Credit Bank of Latvia was created in 1935 with remit to nationalise any private enterprise in the country; its decisions could not be contested in the courts. Andrejs Bērziņš was Director of this Bank, described by the UK Embassy as "... a confidential financial adviser and close friend of the dictator [K. Ulmanis]. His influence on financial policy is enormous." (Dunsdorfs, E. *Kārļa Ulmaņa dzīve: ceļinieks, politiķis, diktātors, moceklis*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1978, 406. lpp.).

[42] Consultations would only be allowed in strictly apolitical cases. For example, the Presidium of the Chamber for Agriculture at its meeting of 4 January 1938 "... agreed an action plan for determining and improving the quality of pigs raised for bacon" (*Rīts*, Nr. 5, 1938, 5. janv., 2. lpp.).

[43] Kultūras kameru sanāksme. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 239, 1939, 20. okt., 2. lpp.

[44] Jānis Lejiņš, an elected Deputy of the Latvian Peasants Party, and one of the most astute observers of the K. Ulmanis regime, justifiably noted that: "In Latvia the System of Chambers represented bluffing at a professional level and even less was expected of them in the political field..." (Lejiņš, J. *Mana Dzimtene. Atmiņu un pārdomu atspulgā.* [Vesterosa]: Ziemeļblāzma, 1971, 172. lpp.

[45] See: Gerharde-Upeniece G. *Māksla un Latvijas valsts. 1918–1940.* Rīga: Neputns, 2016, 201.–203. lpp.

[46] For example, only one organisation could work in the field of the fine arts — the Fine Arts Association of Latvia (Konstante, I. Mākslinieku biedrības Latvijā (1934–1940). See, Jaunākie Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīva materiālu pētījumi. *Māksla un politiskie konteksti*. Rīga: Neputns, 2006, 105.–108. lpp.). This also applied to music: at the moment of the occupation of Latvia in 1940 only one association remained affiliated with the Chamber of Literature and Art — the Music Association, which had approximately 600 members, and implemented the centralisation policies of the regime. (*Mūzika okupācijā. Latvijas mūzikas dzīve un jaunrade. 1900–1945.* Klotiņš, A. (red.). Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2011, 41. lpp.).

it was publically known, from 1938 onwards, that the Chambers were to be a central feature of a new Constitution for Latvia — that of K. Ulmanis. It is possible that illusions were harboured that the promised revision would be the reform of the 1922 Constitution of Latvia; however, Sir Edmund Monson, British Ambassador to Latvia had no such illusions, as seen from his message of December 1936 to the Foreign Secretary of the UK Anthony Eden: "On a few occasions in conversations with members of the Cabinet I have tried to mention this matter [reform of the Constitution] (…) but I know nothing about any firm intentions, other than to continue in the foreseeable future with the currently effective rule by the police..."[47] The next step was to unite the four economic Chambers into a single State Economic Council, and the other two — into a State Culture Council (again, we can observe the influence of Austria here — four Councils had been established there in 1934[48]). The first meeting of the State Economic Council took place on 11 January 1938. K. Ulmanis announced at this meeting, that a new representative body was to be created of the "united" people of Latvia, which "… would no longer be a meeting of representatives of political parties...", but the Chambers would not disappear after the creation of the new body.[49] It was clear that a democratic system would not be re-established. There were a total of 111 members in both councils as of May 1939. K. Ulmanis arranged for the two Councils to hold a joint meeting on 12 May 1939 (100 members attended), which was declared to be the first demonstration of "the new form of representation of the people". (Articles appeared as early as 1936 in the Latvian press about Mussolini's view that "the parliament is to be replaced by a Fascist and Corporation Chamber, which initially might take the form of a joint session of 22 Corporations".[50] Note the reference to a joint session.) Reports were made to the joint session by Alfrēds Valdmanis, the Minister of Finance, and the Foreign Minister V. Munters, who answered a total of nine questions (four questions were addressed to V. Munters during a closed session, and their substance is not known).[51] This joint session did not take any decisions as it had no right of decision. Later, after deportation to the Soviet Union, K. Ulmanis described the creation of the Chambers as follows: "... everything was done top-down without any involvement by the people."[52] For his part, Alfrēds Bērziņš in his memoirs has precisely characterised the joint sessions of the Chambers: "Speakers sought to demonstrate their loyalty to the government and to the President, without offering any innovations, or significant revisions to what was laid before them."[53] Thus, only compliant discussions took place. It must be noted that, although the Chambers were only consultative bodies, their maintenance was expensive: for example, on 10 January 1939 the Chamber of the Professions was granted 35 000 lats by the government to cover three months

[47] Dunsdorfs, E. *Kārļa Ulmaņa dzīve: ceļinieks, politiķis, diktātors, moceklis*, 389. lpp.

[48] Austrijas Satversme. *Jaunais Zemgalietis*, Nr. 96, 1934, 3. maijs, 1.–2. lpp.; Austrijā stājusies spēkā jaunā Satversme. *Rīts*, Nr. 68, 1934, 2. nov., 4. lpp.

[49] Kāda būs jaunā tautas pārstāvniecība. *Rīts*, Nr. 12, 1938, 12. janv., 1. lpp.

[50] Bokalders, J. B. Musolini runa korporāciju padomē. *Ekonomists*, Nr. 7, 1936, 15. apr., 254. lpp.

[51] Mēs jūtamies stipri. Valsts Prezidents Kārlis Ulmanis Valsts saimnieciskās un kultūras padomju kopsēdē. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 108, 1939, 13. maijs, 1., 5. lpp.

[52] *Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un cietumā. Dokumenti un materiāli*, 323. lpp.

[53] Bērziņš, A. *Nepublicētas atmiņas: laiks, kas negaist*. Rīga: Lauku Avīze, 2015, 139. lpp.

of operating costs, i.e. until March 31.[54] There is no question but that more substantial sums of money were allocated for all of the Chambers together over many years.

This was a form of theatre, where no one was allowed to overshadow the main player — K. Ulmanis, whose entry was greeted with fanfares. He did not address the joint session so as not to detract from his more important public speech, for example, in the National Opera House on the fifth anniversary of the 15th May coup. On this occasion, he pointed out that the Chambers, their Councils and the recent joint session all represented a real reform of the Constitution: "As we continue along this road, we shall approach the more direct participation in the work of the government by representatives of the people."[55] However, he let it be known that there was still a long way to go "along this road", and that it would take a long time to arrive (in contrast to what he had promised on 11 January 1938: "I wish and hope that this moment will come soon."[56]); first, "our spiritual Constitution must develop and grow in strength", and only when "this spiritual Constitution is ripe, will a political Constitution be written".[57] This could be understood as a confirmation that the residents of Latvia were not yet ready to accept Leaderism and autocracy.

However, no written constitution was ready by the spring of 1940, one year later. In his address to the Chamber of Labour on 7 April 1940, K. Ulmanis admitted that discussions had occurred about a possible unification of the two State Councils: thus, "an attempt would be made to organize them in one common apex as soon as all of the organisational work will be complete for the Chambers". (The Chamber for Labour reported to the Ministry for Public Affairs, and the responsible Minister, Alfrēds Bērziņš was the personal representative of K. Ulmanis in this Chamber; in early March 1940, A. Bērziņš appointed his former secretary Kārlis Veldre as his representative[58] — in this way the Chamber for Labour was fully under control: K. Ulmanis — A. Bērziņš — K. Veldre. One of the mechanisms whereby the Ministry and the Chamber exercised control of workers' lives was via the so-called elders and co-operators at the workplace, in fact, those people were overseers. As of April 1940, a total of 221 elders and 1024 co-operators had been recruited at industrial undertakings — for co-operation with the Chamber.[59] Therefore yet another council was to be established; one which would not alter the nature of the regime — one-man rule by K. Ulmanis. And, even if a "common appex" of the Chambers was to be formed, it also would be "... only smoothing the way for an enhanced new political system".[60] On 15 May of that year, K. Ulmanis, in a speech commemorating the sixth year of the regime, stated that "… the beginning of the end phase of writing a new constitution has been announced".[61] Only "the beginning of the end phase". ("And the new Constitution of Latvia is slowly taking shape".[62] Only slowly.)

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[54] LVVA, 1307., 1. apr., 315. l., 5. lp.

[55] Mēs esam strādājuši rītdienai un nākotnei. *Latvijas Kareivis*, 1939, 17. maijs.

[56] See reference Nr. 48 above.

[57] See reference Nr. 55 above.

[58] Iecelšana darba kamerā. *Kurzemes Vārds*, Nr. 57, 1940, 10. marts, 3. lpp.

[59] Latvijā 76 905 organizēti strādnieki. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 80, 1940, 6. apr.

[60] Darbs ir avots spēkam un augšanai. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 78, 1940, 9. apr., 1. lpp.

[61] Mēs stāvam uz cieša un stingra pamata, *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 107, 1940, 15. maijs, 1.–2. lpp.

[62] Ibid.

The third aspect of the system of Chambers in Latvia which was different to that in Italy, was the lack of any equivalent in Latvia to the fascist party control of Chambers in Italy; after the coup of 15th May, no political parties remained active in Latvia, including any authentic fascist political party, not even a "pocket political party" created by and beholden to K. Ulmanis. This difference was important: despite rhetorical attempts by K. Ulmanis, and by means of actions by certain institutions to model his dictatorship after that in Italy, it never became an authentic fascist regime, as the Ambassador of Italy to Latvia Francesco Mameli, declared on 5 February 1936: "The government of Latvia is no longer a fascist one, but it has degenerated into that of a police state."[63] Nevertheless, K. Ulmanis had intended to create a new political party during 1939, one which would not change the autocratic nature of his regime, but would give it mass support and be a means of mobilising and controlling the society. Up until 1939, the regime had neither political structure, nor system: K. Ulmanis relied upon the police control, loyalty of the army, and continued allegiance of the bureaucracy. The large Home Guards organisation fulfilled certain functions of a political party; however, this organisation was itself subject to rigorous control by the Ministry for the Interior and later by the Ministry for Public Affairs.

K. Ulmanis never publically divulged his aspirations to organise top-down a State Political Party. In May 1939, he still had doubts about the need to do so. A political party system was again rejected during the commemorations of the fifth anniversary of the coup of 15th May: Hermanis Apsītis, the Minister of Justice was rather insistent in his speech commenting that, in Latvia "[we have] a strictly non-party government".[64] Nevertheless, there were political parties created by dictators, or supporting political dictators in all of the authoritarian states in Europe, including Lithuania and Estonia; however, the official view in Latvia concerning such parties was still negative: in a radio broadcast the lawyer Kārlis Dišlers, one of the interpreters of the legal principles underpinning K. Ulmanis' regime, stated emphatically that in Latvia "... there is neither now, nor will there be in the future a single-party government, as is the case in several authoritarian states". Having heard this, K. Ulmanis wrote in his notes: "How then can a new political association be established?"[65] His speech on 15 May 1939 in the National Opera House could have been the occasion to announce a new initiative, but he had still to overcome his doubts, and, instead, K. Ulmanis announced that there would be no return "... to the discarded political party system, and its associated behaviour..."[66] He had indeed not the slightest desire to return to the "old political party" system — i.e., parliamentary democracy; nevertheless, the idea of a political party

[63] Andersons, E. *Latvijas Vēsture. 1920–1940. Ārpolitika.* 1. sēj. Stokholma: Daugava, 1982, 630. lpp. It is significant that when F. Mameli departed from Latvia in September 1936, he stated at the final audience granted by K. Ulmanis; that he "... as an Italian had been deeply moved for the second time in his life to witness a true national rebirth. I first witnessed it in my homeland...". However he was not as effusive about the May 15th regime, as he had been in 1935. (Sūtnis dr. Mameli atvadās. *Rīts*, Nr. 243, 1936, 3. sept., 1. lpp.).

[64] *Tieslietu Ministrijas Mēnešraksts*, Nr. 4, 1939, 868. lpp.

[65] LVVA, 5969. f., 1. apr., 281. l., 177. lpp.

[66] See reference Nr. 55 above.

subordinated to the Leader continued to mature, and his doubts were slowly overcome. It was decided to establish, in his own words, "... an all-purpose political organisation (…) in the form of a centralised political party (…) It was foreseen, in parallel with creation of a political party, to create a youth association".[67] (Alfrēds Bērziņš living in exile wrote in 1963, that: K. Ulmanis "... foresaw creation of a strong State Political Party, one which would cover both the urban and rural areas of the country. This Party was intended by Ulmanis to be led by him".[68])

The idea had been not only to establish top-down a centralised political party, but also a youth organisation subject to this party. It was intended to adopt the name The People's Unity Party; its symbol would be a white wreath on a green background, and all the party members would have to wear a so-called ring of Namejs.[69] This Party would indeed have mass membership, but this would not make it a mass fascist party. Mass membership would also be ensured from above: in 1969, A. Bērziņš asserted that, "... the Home Guard Organisation with its broad membership would be integrated into the work of the new party of people's unity".[70] If the base of the party would be the Home Guards, then its youth organisation would be formed in like manner, by declaring the Mazpulki organisation, which K. Ulmanis had helped to create in 1929, to be the only youth organisation in the country. In a speech to the Mazpulki on 8 January 1938 in Riga, K. Ulmanis announced that: "This is the year when it is foreseen that, together with other work and tasks (…) we shall complete the process of uniting the youth of our country and giving the youth unified leadership."[71] (This

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[67] *Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un cietumā. Dokumenti un materiāli*, 323. lpp.

[68] Bērziņš, A. *Labie gadi. Pirms un pēc 15. maija*. [Bruklina]: Grāmatu Draugs, 1963, 245. lpp. However in his memoirs which were not to be published during his lifetime, and which were made public only in 2015, A. Bērziņš wrote: "According to statements by Ulmanis this political party would be based on farmers, workers, and members of the Home Guard. There was no mention of the army, since the army would have to remain outside party politics. The wreath of Namejs surrounding a hawk, which initially was used to decorate the Presidential podium, was intended to be the symbol of the State Political Party." (*Nepublicētas atmiņas: laiks, kas negaist*, 139. lpp.). What is important here is the accent on the term State Political Party.

[69] See: Politiska "divkauja" pēc 34 gadiem. *Latvija Amerikā*, Nr. 93, 1966, 23. nov. A "Namejs ring" was presented to K. Ulmanis already in May 1935, marking the first anniversary of the coup. A missive was presented together with the ring with the following message "Come, long-awaited King of the Peasants!" (Nameja gredzens atradies. *Rīts*, Nr. 133, 1935, 15. maijs, 17. lpp.). The image of a hawk was utilised during the commemoration in 1937 of the May 15th coup (Svētku rota Prezidenta pilij. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 104, 1937, 11. maijs, 1., 11. lpp.), and extensively during commemoration of 20 years of Latvian independence in November 1938. It was described as "the Symbol of the Leader" (Hanovs, D., Tēraudkalns, V. *Laiks, telpa, vadonis: autoritārisma kultūra Latvijā, 1934–1940*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2012, 225. lpp.). In Jelgava in the castle of Viesturs, "... a 5 m shield will hang over the main doors with the symbol of Namejs — a wreath with a white hawk within." (Nameja zīme pie Viestura piemiņas pils. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 243, 1938, 25. okt., 1. lpp.).

[70] Cited from: Butulis, I. *Sveiki, Aizsargi! Aizsargu organizācija Latvijas sabiedriski politiskajā dzīvē 1919.–1940. gadā*, 75. lpp.

[71] Vienota vadība jaunatnei. *Rīts*, Nr. 9, 1938, 9. janv., 2. lpp. A desire to unite and centralise all youth organisations was present immediately after the May 15th coup. An announcement was made in early September 1934 that, "… a project has been developed for creating a central youth organisation" (*Rīts*, Nr. 11, 1934, 5. sept., 1. lpp.). This remained a project and it remains still to be determined as to why it was never fully implemented.

"unified leadership" was again spoken of at the end of the year[72], but in fact this was not achieved.) K. Ulmanis did not have time to establish the intended political party since the autumn of 1939 brought with it absolutely unexpected events. Even if such a party were to have been created, the regime would only gain protocol and mobilising features visible from outside the country; in practice, one-man rule by K. Ulmanis would remain, embellished by an organisation led by the Leader, subordinate to him, which nonetheless would probably enhance his abilities to control the society.

Reforms of local governments were begun at last in 1939. A law on local city governments was adopted on 30 June 1939. Before the coup of the 15th May local governments had been an integral part of the democratic order. The structure of city local governments was as follows: 1) a city council was a local parliament, which, up until 1931, was elected for a term of three years, but from 1931 onwards, for a term of four years; 2) the board of the city council was the executive arm of the city council, and governed the city; 3) the Board was led by the city mayor — the city's "Prime Minister"; 4) an Audit Commission regulated financial operations of the Council.[73] After the coup of the 15th May, all the city councils were dissolved — in the same way as the Saeima, the national parliament — and individuals loyal to the regime were installed as city Mayors. The new law of 1939 stipulated the following. There were four elements to an urban local authority: 1) a city Elder (in Riga — a Senior Elder) — who was the key person in any local government (the change in designation from Mayor to Elder was justified by a desire to harmonise the title of this post since in rural areas there always had been Elders leading local governments; 2) a City Council; 3) City Counsellors; 4) an Audit Commission. All of the members of local authorities were appointed by the Minister for the Interior, with no provision for elections. (The Minister Kornēlijs Veidnieks expressed his views on this issue: "The authoritarian principle which is consistently followed in the new scheme for city governments demands each official to take personal responsibility. Thus, the law provides for all officials in local city governments to be designated by the supreme guide for the work of local governments — the Minister for the Interior."[74]) This applied for the city council and its members — called "padomnieki [Counsellors]" as well (this was a newly coined term which, it appears, was intended to insert Latvianness into the description of the body, contrasting with the previous term of German origin; it is also possible that this was an attempt to erase memories of the previous democratic body): this was to a certain extent an honorary unpaid post. Whereas the city Elder, members of the City Board, and the Audit Commission were designated for a term of six years by the Minister, Counsellors were appointed for a term of three years, since they could be nominated for their posts by a Chamber, which itself was appointed for a term of three years. Despite introduction of the new bodies being widely hailed as a large step taken towards popular involvement in Local Government activities, the legal remit of Counsellors was quite limited — in fact, they could

[72] In November 1939, the official journal of the regime, *Sējējs*, wrote that, it will not be possible to tolerate indefinitely all other youth organisations than *Mazpulks* (Baumanis, A. Tautas vadonis Kārlis Ulmanis. *Sējējs*, Nr. 11, 1938, 1128. lpp.).

[73] *Riga sociālisma laikmetā. 1917–1975*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1980, 66. lpp.

[74] Veitmanis, K. Pilsētu pašvaldību reforma. *Pašvaldības darbs*, Nr. 7, 1939, 1. jūl., 163. lpp.

only "... pose questions and receive answers from city council officials"[75], or "... offer advice and suggestions to support the work of those running the city".[76] Even "posing questions" was strictly regulated.[77] In the same way as was the case for the Chambers, the accent put on city councils was that "The President [K. Ulmanis] will realise when the time comes for selection of their members with direct citizens' participation".[78] Even five years after the coup the time had not yet come (in principle, the same fate would have befallen the reform of rural Local Government, but this was not even begun by the time of the demise of Latvia in 1940 — the new dramatic problems which beset Latvia after the start of the Second World War were the chief reasons for this delay).[79]

K. Ulmanis conceived of yet another idea in 1939. On 21 July, the Cabinet of Ministers was presented and agreed with his proposal "... to create a post of county leader, one for each of the counties of Latvia. The first step was to study this question and to collect the necessary information about similar positions in foreign countries".[80]

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[75] See: Nozvērināti Rigas padomnieki. *Rīts*, Nr. 340, 1939, 9. dec., 1. lpp. The new Riga City Council held its first meeting on 8 December 1939. Council members swore an oath before the Minister for the Interior, K. Veitmanis (shortly thereafter he changed his surname to Veidnieks, to make it more Latvian-sounding when compared to the Germanic Veitmanis) who sent the following message to K. Ulmanis "… an expression of my deepest regard, devotion, and unquestioned loyalty" (Galvas pilsētas padomes sveiciens un solījums Prezidentam. *Rīts*, Nr. 341, 1939, 10. dec., 2. lpp.). As we see in the ritual of "being sworn in" principal emphasis was put on devotion and loyalty to K. Ulmanis, who K. Veitmanis had elsewhere characterised as "the Author of the Glorious May 15th". In all, 858 council members were appointed throughout the country; there were 36 members in Riga; 30, in each, Liepāja, Daugavpils, Jelgava, 24, in Ventspils and Rēzekne, and there were smaller numbers of council members in the other towns of Latvia. It is hard to understand why the greatest number of city council members was selected from the Chamber for Labour — 250 craftsmen and 76 workers. This was an evident nod in the direction of urban "workers": many of the workers, council members, were leaders of labour unions controlled by the government (Strādnieku pārstāvji pilsētu valdēs un padomēs. *Darba Dzīve*, Nr. 48, 1939, 25. nov., 4. lpp; Pilsētu padomēs darbosies 858 padomnieki. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 15, 1940, 20. janv., 2. lpp; Pilsētu padomēs reprezentētas visas iedzīvotāju šķiras. *Rīts*, Nr. 62, 1940, 3. marts, 11. lpp.).

[76] Kā saimnieko Rīga. *Rīts*, Nr. 336, 1939, 5. dec., 1, 3. lpp.

[77] K. Veitmanis issued guidelines on the manner in which meetings were to be held. The provisions included that during a council meeting the city Elder and council members "... were forbidden to engage in private discussions with other council members", "... to refrain from shouted interruptions", "… no council member is to speak to the same issue more than twice", "… the chairman of a council session may shorten the time allocated to a [council] member to speak, to close the list of speakers to a point, or to terminate further debate" (Darba kārtība pilsētu padomēm. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 19, 1940, 24. janv., 1. lpp.). The city Elder was at the same time Chairman of the most important sub-committee, the budget commission (Galvas pilsētas Rīgas padome. *Pašvaldību Darbinieks*, Nr. 3, 1940, 207.–212. lpp.).

[78] "Nozvērināti Rīgas padomnieki".

[79] See the explanation offered 1 January 1940 by K. Veitmanis, Minister for the Interior: *Pašvaldību Darbinieks*, Nr. 1, 1940, 1. janv., 1. lpp. The statements made by J. Kaminskis, Finance Minister as of November 1939, at a meeting of the Department Directors of the Ministry which took place on 2 March 1940, demonstrate that other possibilities were possibilities: "Reduction in the number of districts and civil parishes (…), suppression of the local authorities in small towns joining them to the local district authorities ..." (LVVA, 6824. f., 1. apr., 38. l., 59. lp.). The origin of these intentions is not clear; it is possible that they represented a wish to simplify local government and to reduce costs. Of course, practically none of the intentions were realised before the occupation of Latvia, which took place a few months later. It appears that there was only one instance of a small town local authority being liquidated and joined to the civil parish — Lejasciems located in the county of Gulbene, which had acquired city status in 1928, but lost this status in 1939, and subsequently amalgamated with the surrounding civil parish.

[80] LVVA, 1313. f., 1. apr., 140. l., 169. lp.

The origin of this proposal is obscure, although the desire to insert yet another layer of governance — the county and its leader — could have been a desire to exercise even greater control over the country — through regional centres of authority. This proposal, if realised, could have led to threats to the one-man rule by K. Ulmanis, if the regional leaders would have begun to represent regional interests. Just as what befell the idea of establishing a political party this proposal was not brought to fruition by June 1940. In fact the regime in Latvia when the state died was essentially the same as it had been in 1934 — authoritarian, even autocratic rule by a single person, K. Ulmanis, which was, perhaps, the most authoritarian regime in all of Europe, at the same time being the simplest (which does not imply it to have been the most repressive one), because in contrast to other anti-democratic regimes of the time there was no parliament in Latvia, even a decorative one[81] (there were parliaments in all other dictatorships) and there was no political party subject to the dictator.

The ideology of the 15th May regime

In 1939, when the five years of the authoritarian regime were marked in triumph, the Minister of Education Jūlijs Auškāps, who had become the principal ideologue of the regime, formulated three basic principles of the ideology of the regime: Unity, Leaderism, and a Latvian Latvia.[82] The definition of unity showed considerable influence of Italian fascism — the subordination of personal interests to those of the state, the elimination of all contradictions, but the crux of this "definition" comprised pro-totalitarian tendencies and centralisation: unity could only be achieved through regularisation — organised and planned[83] — of everything in Latvia. All the life was to be subject to the state. Leaderism, on the other hand, was to be the complete embodiment of the unity.[84]

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[81] The lawyer A. Alnis insisted, that the regime of K. Ulmanis was superior to that of the National Socialist regime in Germany, since there was no equivalent to the formally existing parliament in Germany — the Reichstag — and, thus, Kārlis Ulmanis had no limits (not even decorative ones) to his rule: it was monolithic and unrestrained. (Alnis, A. No parlamentārisma uz autoritāru vadonības valsti, 807. lpp.).

[82] Auškaps, J. 15. maija idejiskais saturs. *Sējējs*, Nr. 5, 1939, 460.–462. lpp.

[83] A predilection for planning was a permanent feature of the regime, which gained nearly comic expression in various clarifications offered by J. Auškaps. For example, when in September 1937 the 60th birthday of K. Ulmanis was being celebrated, he announced that that K. Ulmanis' becoming the Leader was "... the wish of Destiny, determined by a Higher Power with the sequence of events and circumstances following a planned arrangement" (Auškaps, J. Gadījums vai Likteņa griba. *Rīts*, Nr. 242, 1937, 4. sept., 2. lpp.).

[84] We note again the tremendous influence exerted by the example of Italy; for example, in his article, "Vadonības principi mūsu dzīve", R. Dēliņš widely quoted the explanations offered by K. Ulmanis himself about the principles of leadership, which in turn were entirely taken over from those espoused by the Italian author R. Guardini (*Sējējs*, Nr. 1, 1936, 1. janv., 32. lpp.). For his part, General J. Balodis mentions in his memoirs a government meeting at which K. Ulmanis set out his understanding of the role of a Leader in the life of the state: "The speech was full of quotations about the ideas of Mussolini as published by the European press." (Balodis, J. *Atmiņu burtnīcas. 1918–1939*, 242. lpp). In December 1936, a special lecture series was presented at the University of Latvia about the Fascist state of Italy. Lectures were given by Professor R. Bertolotto of Rome University, who emphasised in his final lecture that "… Fascism will bring a new ideology — cooperation between the Leader and the masses...", as well as "… warmly extolling Latvia, which was undergoing very nearly the same transformation of the state system as in Italy" (Ne demagoģija, bet spējas rada vadoni. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 283, 1936, 12. dec., 7. lpp.).

The Leader — a prophet sent by God — would achieve the unity and determine its spiritual content (J. Auškāps was one of the first Latvians to be educated and to work as a scientist; he had, among other things, in 1910, in Petersburg, developed an essentially novel method to analyse colours by direct spectrophotometry, and was a Professor of Organic Chemistry Technology[85], but now wrote nonsense unworthy of a scientist).

In order to achieve a Latvian Latvia it was necessary to define clearly what was almost beyond definition — what constitutes Latvianness — as well as (what was even more important) to find a suitable place for this constructed identity in the ideology of the regime. First of all, J. Auškāps defined what qualities characterised the nature of Latvians: an aversion to anarchy, nihilism, idleness, reverie, fatalism, bravado, being loud, bowing to outside influences, etc. The exalted codex of the 15th May had but one clear purpose — to inculcate obedience to the Leader. "Latvianism" only had a meaning in reaching this ultimate goal. In the explanation of why a Latvian cannot be lyrical, the following is stated explicitly: "... it is difficult to discipline individuals possessed of a lyric personality, they always enthuse about absolute freedom."[86] Neither Latvianness, nor nationalism — notwithstanding the large place allocated to these — were in the ideology of the regime values in themselves, unrelated to the principal political and ideological principle — Leaderism,[87] which, as the defining principle, had made an appearance in the writings of Edvarts Virza, just a few days after the coup. The principle of a united nation which was enunciated thereafter during the first months of the 15th May regime was explicitly subordinated to Leaderism, "... the master plan which has been developed and which is being implemented by the Leader of the people, Dr. K. Ulmanis".[88] The fixation of the regime with planning in all sectors which was evident throughout all of its years had thus appeared early.



Fig. 1. Mock-up of a statue of K. Ulmanis intended to be set up in the Chamber for Agriculture. Published in *Jaunākās Ziņas*, 03.06.1939

K. Ulmanis himself expressed his view on the relationship between nationalism and Leaderism. Speaking at an event on 11 February 1938, held to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Riga Latvian Society, he asserted that: "After 15 May 1934, we had to lay greater emphasis on unity and consensus, as there was no need to prove the virtues of nationalism, rather to understand it correctly..."[89] Two important conclusions

[85] Stradiņš, J. Zinātnes un augstskolu sākotne Latvijā. Riga: Latvijas Vēstures institūta apgāds, 2009, 29. lpp.

[86] Nacionālā nelaime. *Sējējs*, Nr. 9, 1938, 898. lpp.

[87] Professor Vita Zelče of the University of Latvia has correctly emphasised the following: "The most important ideological feature was Leaderism (...) Leaderism granted the rights of a dictator to K. Ulmanis, the right to take decisions by himself, legally, correctly, and not open to question." (Zelče, V. "Bēgšana no brīvības": Kārļa Ulmaņa režīma ideoloģija un rituāli. *Reiz dzīvoja Kārlis Ulmanis...* (Letonika; Agora, Nr. 6). Rīga: Zinātne, 2007, 331. lpp.

[88] Sauliets, V. Lauki un pilsētas. *Rīts*, Nr. 63, 1934, 28. okt., 2. lpp.

[89] Tautas goda apziņas spēks. *Rīts*, Nr. 43, 1938, 12. febr., 1. lpp.

may be drawn from this: firstly, the chief preoccupation of the 15th May regime is consensus (Leaderism); secondly, nationalism has to understand correctly the nature of consensus. The latter was a simple yet succinct and effective conclusion: neither every nationalist, nor every form of nationalism was useful for the regime; those who failed to admit the unrestricted priority of action undertaken under the guise of Leaderism ran a strong likelihood of prison sentences, as many radical nationalists discovered to their cost, e.g. members of *Pērkonkrusts*. All of the ideological principles of the regime acted solely in the context of Leaderism and were subordinate to it: as J. Auškāps insisted, the Leader arranges and forms our life, acting from a single position and giving a single direction".[90] (The interpretation of the principle of unity given by the press was significant: "Power is the key to political unity, while on a spiritual plane — loyalty to those in power."[91] In Latvia, K. Ulmanis was identical with the power.) Leaderism was even justified on theological grounds, with the most important argument not an assertion of the origin of K. Ulmanis as an act by God, ("… God is ever watchful (…) at a time of great need he sent us our Leader"[92]), but the fact that "... the strength of the nation lies in the obedience to him who has been empowered by God to lead our people".[93] Once again, the key word is obedience.

Many and varied methods were employed to strengthen the ideology of Leaderism and Latvianness. One of these methods, which is typical of all dictatorships, were megalomaniac construction plans: addressing the opening session of the Chamber of the Professions meeting on 26 January 1939, K. Ulmanis informed them that the 15th May regime has "... earned the title of being an era of construction".[94] (This referred to the so-called ideological construction.[95] K. Ulmanis could well have been called the Leader-Builder.) Riga was to be subjected to the most extensive "Latvianisation". Authoritarian construction comprised built, planned and not built, and correspondingly — not demolished buildings to make way for the new ones (relatively few buildings were demolished in Old Riga: 42 residential buildings and 28 commercial premises). There were relatively few new buildings: the rather small Dom Square in Riga was renamed the 15th May Square and enlarged to be a venue for mass events held by the authoritarian regime, as well as new national rituals (joyous gatherings of the *Mazpulki* movement and assemblies of Girl Guides), and speeches made by K. Ulmanis from the balcony of the Credit Bank (see Fig. 2).[96] The so-called Latvian architectural style was evident in the Palace of Justice and the Finance Ministry buildings; the Army Economic Store (*Armijas ekonomiskais veikals*) and the War Museum (*Kara muzejs*) were also built at this time (both were quite successful, architecturally speaking).

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[90] Auškaps, J. 15. maija idejiskais saturs, 460.–462. lpp.

[91] M. S. Uzticība. *Rīts*, Nr. 39, 1938, 8. febr., 2. lpp.

[92] Liepiņš, A. Autoritāra valsts reliģiskā skatījumā. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 109, 1939, 14. maijs, 18. lpp.

[93] Hanovs, D., Tēraudkalns,V. *Laiks, telpa, vadonis: autoritārisma kultūra Latvijā, 1934–1940*, 270. lpp; "The principle of Leaderism is linked to loyalty towards, and obedience to the Leader (…) Everyone is glad to obey the Leader" (Dēliņš, R. Vadonības principi mūsu dzīvē, 32. lpp.).

[94] *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 22, 1939, 27. janv., 1. lpp.

[95] Liepiņš, R. Celtniecība atjaunotā Latvijā. *Pašvaldību Darbinieks*, Nr. 1, 1939, 1. janv., 12. lpp.

[96] Lejnieks, J. *Rīga, kuras nav*. Riga: Zinātne, 1998, 95.–98. lpp.



Fig. 2. Festive commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the coup at the 15th May Square in Riga. 15 May 1939. *Atpūta*, 10.05.1939

On the other hand, there were breath-taking plans, beginning with the decision released on October 1934, to demolish the buildings between Kr. Valdemāra Street and Raiņa Boulevard, so that "an enormous House of Riga", might be erected on this site.[97] (Description of all of the proposed designs contained the words "immense", "grand", and "monumental". This was a self-description.) Despite the fact that

[97] Rīgas pilsētas milzu nams. *Rīts*, Nr. 59, 1934, 24. okt., 1. lpp. The architect Aleksandrs Klinklāvs drew up plans for this "Mega-building", but this was not his best work — in particular when compared with his design for a hospital in Riga and a sanatorium in Tērvete. For more details about A. Klinklāvs, see: Krišāne, I. Aleksandra Klinklāva funkcionālisma izjūta: Rīga – Monreāla – Čikāga. Pilsēta. Laikmets. Vide. Rīga: Neputns, 2007, 167.–189. lpp. As was usual for the architecture of the May 15th regime, the principal value of the design was its height — 60 meters. It was foreseen that the building of the 3rd Gymnasium on Kr. Valdemāra Street in Riga would have to be demolished to make way for this building. (Monumentālais pilsētas nams. *Rīts*, Nr. 236, 1935, 28. aug., 4. lpp.). Later even this design was judged to be insufficiently monumental.

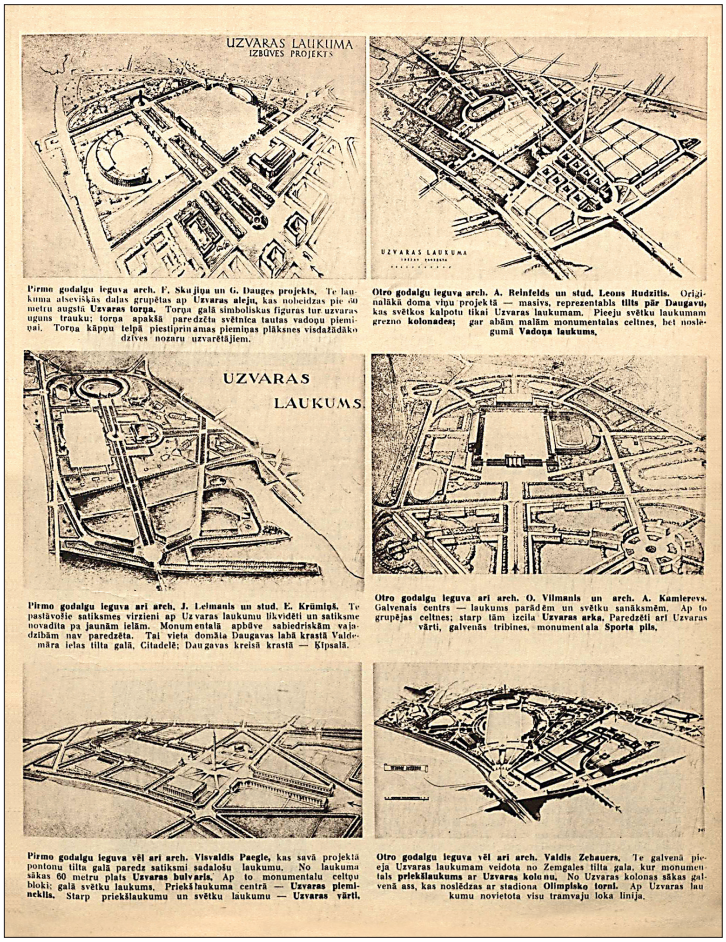


Fig. 3. Various concepts and designs for the Victory Square. *Atpūta*, 03.02.1939

the building for Riga city council was planned to be located elsewhere, the idea of demolishing a series of historic buildings along the boulevard was serious. Regime ideologues insisted that, "we shall soon not recognise Riga where there are now so many foreign elements".[98] It was announced in May 1936 that the House of the Large Guild was "…unimportant architecturally and historically...", and that a congress hall would be put up in its place with room for 5000 visitors.[99] This was followed by a number of other radical, even barbarous proposals for the rebuilding of Old Riga. These included an office building for Riga City Council on the banks of the Daugava, a high-rise building for the city council, a building for the Postal Savings Bank, a monument to K. Ulmanis on Kārļa (formerly 13th January) Street, and, possibly, a monumental sculpture by Kārlis Zāle, "Our hero", where the horse was not saddled by

[98] Kroders, A. Mēneša apskats. *Aizsargs*, Nr. 2, 1936, 15. febr., 137. lpp.
[99] Kongresa nams bij. L. Ģildes vietā. *Rīts*, Nr. 143, 1936, 26. maijs, 1. lpp.

a war leader, but by a farmer and ploughman (K. Ulmanis was described as the land owner, father[100] and ploughman). All of these ideas were overshadowed by proposal to build on the Victory Square a facility which would be larger than the very large Berlin Stadium for the 1936 Olympic Games, although Germany had not economised on size (see Fig. 3). A central element of the square was to be a 60 m high Victory Tower, the lower part of which would be a shrine dedicated to the memory of national leaders[101] (it is possible that K. Ulmanis would have wished to be laid to rest there). Nothing of the planned was built before the occupation of Latvia in June 1940.

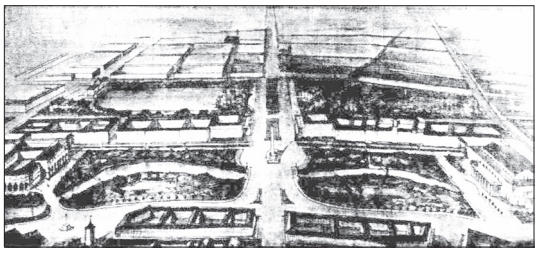


Fig. 4. Conceptual sketch of a future Riga, *Rīts*, Nr. 143, 26.05.1936, 7. lpp.

The most negative impact on the architecture of Riga would have resulted from the plans drawn up in 1936 by two influential architects, Pāvils Dreijmanis (Chairman of the Riga City National Building Commission) and Pauls Kundziņš, which later were combined in "A proposed layout of public buildings in the central part of Riga", and called for demolition of most buildings along Raiņa Boulevard to be replaced by a row of massive sombre government buildings;[102] to destroy the built-up area in Šķūņu street between Zirgu, Amatu and Laipu streets, which included significant buildings by Christoph Haberland; to erect a pantheon at Bastejkalns, etc. It is credible that plans of such scope had political support.[103] Fortunately, out of the 33 edifices called for in this plan, only two were built, the previously mentioned Ministry for Finance and the War

[100] "… we consider Kārlis Ulmanis to be not only the Leader of our people, but also to be the Father of our country..." (Goba, A. Še ir zeme un šīs zemes Tēvs. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 287, 1939, 17. dec., 2. lpp.).

[101] Lejnieks, J. *Riga, kuras nav*, 122. lpp.

[102] See Fig. 4 for a sketch of the proposal by P. Dreijmanis (Nākotnes Rīga. *Rīts*, Nr. 143, 1936, 26. maijs, 7. lpp.). A glance at the plans shows clearly that a number of buildings would have to be demolished to make way for this project to be realised: not only the excellent former private mansions along Raiņa Boulevard, which then housed the Embassies of Germany and France, but also the historic building of the University of Latvia (the former Polytechnic Institute). P. Dreijmanis described his proposal as follows: "In time national monumental edifices will have to flank the Freedom Monument, not mansions (…) in the foreseeable future Raiņa Boulevard will be transformed into a wide two-lane street (…), with a series of grandiose monumental buildings along one side and a beautiful park along the other side. The view from the Freedom Monument in both directions will have to end somewhere. This closure could be given by a large government building alongside Valdemāra Street stretching from Riga Canal all the way to Kalpaka Boulevard joined across Raiņa Boulevard. Other monumental buildings would be sited along the other side of Valdemāra Street." Even the Opera House would be razed and a new monumental one built in its place (Nākotnes Rīga. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 116, 1936, 25. maijs, 1. lpp.). The grand construction programme was foreseen to continue for ten years, during the course of which the citizens of Riga would lose a number of beloved buildings and sculptures: for example, "... among others, the fountain with the statute of a nymph will disappear from the greenery surrounding the National Opera house, as it is in an area crossed by a new road" (Darba plāns desmit gadiem. *Rīts*, Nr. 225, 1937, 18. aug., 1. lpp.). The statute, due to August Foltz (1887), of a Nymph in a water basin, is familiar to every resident and visitor to Riga.

[103] Pētersons, R. Politiskie konteksti pieminekļu valdes darbībā (1923–1940). *Māksla un politiskie konteksti*: rakstu krājums. Rīga: Neputns, 103.–104. lpp.

Museum.[104] Hope lingered the longest for construction of the gigantic building for the Postal Savings Bank at 13th Janvāra Street, a project dear to K. Ulmanis personally.[105] Arveds Švābe asserted and insisted that in order to write a new national history of Latvia "... we must, first of all, pull down all of these non-Latvian buildings".[106]

Various political rituals[107] in particular multi-faceted festivals ("... society during the authoritarian period in Latvia may justifiably described as a society of never-ending festivals"[108]) were an important way for the regime to strengthen its ideology and politics. In addition to continuing to celebrate the main holidays of the Republic of Latvia (18 and 11 November, etc.), the calendar was complemented by a number of new holidays, one of the most important of which was 15 May, the day of the coup, labelled as the Day of State Unity. All national holidays were celebrated in a grand manner, to leave as powerful as possible impression on the population. New folk festivals and events were invented in order to gain support of the people (i.e. performance of "The song of rebirth" was the first folk festival to be held after the coup already in 1934; then 11 April 1936, the day when K. Ulmanis became the State President; the occasion of the 60th birthday of K. Ulmanis, etc.). A number of other events were staged to strengthen the ties between the Leader and the "united people", K. Ulmanis travelled around the country to instruct the people even on gathering stones from meadows and arable land, he was a generous benefactor to organisations (even to some individuals) and distributed sweets to children: "During these rituals the people identified themselves with power, its instructions and fulfilment of their wishes, as well as recognition. Freedom was superfluous. Faith was everything. Individuals throughout the country, in every district, publically acknowledged their readiness to live and work in line with the instructions of their Leader."[109] The most popular measure, which furthermore had a practical permanent residual value was the "Friendly Invitation" extended 28 January1935 — when K. Ulmanis urged everyone to recall their school by

[104] At the same time there were other ideas for urgently needed construction outside of the historical centre of Riga, for example, a major expansion of the 1st City Hospital of Riga, which would take the form of a city block consisting of hospital buildings to be built in the area of Brīvības, Šarlotes, A. Briāna, Kr. Valdemāra and Aizsargu streets (Plāns slimnīcas celtņu kvartālam. *Rīts*, Nr. 38, 1938, 7. marts, 1. lpp.).

[105] The Savings Bank building was to feature a 140 m tower, which was deliberately intended to be taller than the spire of the "German" St Peter's Church. The "... architectural style of this tower was greatly reminiscent of the Stalinist buildings which featured a spire. The complete transformation of Old Riga was conceived, namely in terms of layout and its silhouette" (Krastiņš, J. *Latvijas Republikas būvmāksla*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1992, 49.–50. lpp.). As late as 16 October 1939, at a time when Latvia was on a daily basis being devastated by the new economic crisis which accompanied the outbreak of the Second World War the Cabinet of Ministers insisted with regard to the ideologically important tower: "… [it is] decided to build the Savings Bank building, inclusive of the tower, with a view to altering the image of the Capital City Riga better to align it with our times and the present era in the state of Latvia" (LVVA, 1313. f., 1. apr., 140. l., 258. lp.). P. Dreijmanis, who was one of the authors of the megalomaniac project, was finally compelled in early 1940 to admit that: "The Riga City Local Government has stopped all work on new buildings, with the exception of the new clinic (today the P. Stradiņš Hospital — A. S.)." (Ierosina stipri sašaurināt būvniecību pilsētā. *Rīts*, Nr. 79, 1940, 20. marts, 7. lpp.).

[106] Švābe, A. *Straumes un avoti.* II. Rīga: A. Gulbis, 1940, 117. lpp.

[107] Zelče, V. Bēgšana no brīvības: Kārļa Ulmaņa režīma ideoloģija un rituāli, 334. lpp.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Zelče, V. Bēgšana no brīvības: Kārļa Ulmaņa režīma ideoloģija un rituāli, 347. lpp.

presenting it books,[110] works of art, music instruments, radio receivers, and other useful items (even 28 microscopes were offered[111]). The historian A. Švābe announced without any hesitation, that "The name-day of the President has become one of the most important days of the year".[112]

An important issue for the policies and ideology of the authoritarian regime was the attitude towards the ethnic minorities of Latvia, which constituted one quarter of the population; on the one hand — as Alfrēds Bērziņš often stated — the regime sought to combine two ideas: "The sun in Latvia shines on everyone" (thus, also on non-Latvians), and "a Latvian Latvia". However, as Ilgvars Butulis has noted — it was not easy to unite the two ideas. Often very active Latvian nationalism predominated, and "... the leading ideologues of the regime approved of the inequality of minority peoples in Latvia and considered the situation to be correct".[113] Generally speaking, the attitude of the regime ideologues towards the minorities was not consistent and was even contradictory, and independent of the expression of radical nationalist ideas (in particular against Baltic Germans), occasionally moderate and tolerant views were expressed.[114] Starting in 1936, the regime sought to define "a new nationalism". What was meant by this? On the one hand, as J. Auškāps explained matters, Latvian nationalism is "... a peaceful nationalism, one that seeks fulfilment not through expansion, but in the souls of the people".[115] For his part, Alfrēds Bērziņš, in clarifying the essence of the new nationalism insisted that: "A heroic era has begun after 15 May — the era of nationalism,"[116] — while R. Kroders wrote that: "The true religion of nationalism is the cult of heroes."[117] Such definitions of "a new nationalism" are entirely understandable: the principal hero was K. Ulmanis himself, and the "new nationalism" only added to the emphasis put by the ideology of the regime on its main principle —

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[110] One must not forget that 1 270 374 books were removed from libraries which the regime considered as inappropriate for the general public; even the classic novel by the brothers Kaudzītis, *Mērnieku laiki* (Times of the Land Surveyors), was deemed inappropriate for schools. Attendance at public libraries went down (Dunsdorfs, E. *Kārļa Ulmaņa dzīve: ceļinieks, politiķis, diktātors, moceklis*, 371.–372. lpp.).

[111] Bērziņš, V. (atb. red.). *20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture.* 2. sēj. Neatkarīgā valsts. 1918–1940. Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 744. lpp.

[112] Švābe, A. Divdesmit astotais janvāris. *Rīts*, Nr. 28, 1938, 28. janv., 2. lpp.

[113] Butulis, I. Daži 1934. gada 15. maija apvērsuma aspekti Ulmaņa autoritārajā ideoloģijā. *Apvērsums. 1934. gada 15. maija notikumi avotos un pētījumos*. Ščerbinskis, V., Jēkabsons, Ē. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais arhīvs; Latvijas Arhīvistu biedrība, 2012, 93. lpp.

[114] Ibid., 97. lpp.

[115] Auškaps, J. Latviešu nākotnes ceļi. *Sējējs*, Nr. 1, 1936, 1. janv., 10. lpp. A similar definition of new nationalism was given by Līgotņu Jēkabs: "New nationalism demands a morally renewed person, knowledgeable, with strength of character, who wants and who is able to carry out the tasks that time and his place among the people set him." (Jaunais nacionālisms. *Jaunākās Ziņas*, Nr. 79, 1937, 10. apr., 2. lpp.). Elsewhere it was defined as the '[new-idealistic nationalism" (Jauna uztvere strādnieku dzīvē. *Jēkabpils Vēstnesis*, Nr. 20, 1937, 20. apr., 1. lpp.). The concept also appeared of a "new religious nationalism", which was characterised by sanctity the will to be charitable and other high virtues (Reliģiskais nacionālisms. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 39, 1937, 17. febr., p. 2). All of these "definitions" were idealistic and of a peaceful kind, eschewing xenophobia.

[116] Latvietim jāpalīdz latvietim: ministrs A. Bērziņš zvejnieku svētkos Mazirbē. *Ventas Balss*, Nr. 89, 1936, 11. aug., 1. lpp.; Te vienmēr dzīvos stipri latvieši. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 178, 1936, 10. aug., 6. lpp.

[117] R. Kr. Jaunā politika. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 152, 1936, 10. jūl., 3. lpp.

Leaderism. However, other ideas could be found which at best were odious. A collection of essays, *The New Nationalism*, edited by Jānis Lapiņš, a popular ideologue of the regime, appeared in 1936, wherein this type of nationalism was defined as "a philosophy of inequality", and also as a "racial issue".[118] Furthermore it was asserted that "... according to race theory mixed blood leads to conflict within the soul of an individual and also in his actions. Therefore every race must guard the purity of its blood. Nationalism tells every individual that he is the bearer of sound blood, and the fate of an individual is determined by his blood; blood is fatalistic about its predestination (…) being convinced about the superiority of his race provides tremendous vitality which allows achieving superhuman results". Latvians must proudly define "the outstanding qualities of their race", which are not slight: "... the Nordic race is more frequently found among Latvians, than among Germans".[119] Some of the insights offered would deserve pride of a place in a humorous publication, for example: "Formerly elongated heads were associated with being more gifted. This view has turned out to be unsubstantiated. A round head must now be considered to be superior."[120] The concept of a "Latvian biological dowry", which could be spoiled through marriage with non-Latvians appeared: "If we wish to transmit onwards the Latvian biological dowry, and to increase it, we must be careful. Once a Latvian, one always has to remain a Latvian."[121]

Racist ideas also appeared in publications by the artist, Roberts Šterns. In 1936, he wrote: "If we speak about the downfall of European culture, it is only because people have appeared who wish (…) to associate themselves with the current plight of Negros and redskins (…) Latvians have no need to reproduce the development of mankind from chaos. Latvians have no need to indulge in baby talk. Latvians have no need to abjure knowledge and skills which have been acquired over the long period of development from the distinguished past of his race."[122] All of the conclusions drawn by R. Šterns — as the art historian Stella Pelše noted — were very similar to views espoused by the Nazi ideologue, Alfred Rosenberg, in his publication "The myth of the 20th century", but this did not transform R. Šterns into an adherent of Nazis (the "glorious racial past" of Latvians was not an important theme in Latvian art), but was mainly the evidence for a reaction of a representative of academic traditions — indeed an ugly one — to what he found objectionable in modern art.[123]

In 1938, the journal *Studentu dzīve* (Student Life) marking twenty years of Latvian independence, published an extensive article by V. Reiznieks, "The potencial of the Latvian nation". The article offered two new "concepts" — "racial dowry" and "racial potential" — and, of course, the conclusion was offered that "... the racial potential of

[118] Lapiņš, J. (red.). *Jaunais nacionālisms*: rakstu krājums. Riga: Valters un Rapa, 1936, 7., 9., 10. lpp.
[119] Ibid., 37. lpp.
[120] Ibid., 29. lpp.
[121] Students, J. Tauta, tās vadonis un valsts. *Aizsargs*, Nr. 3, 1936, 15. marts, 166. lpp.
[122] Cited in: Pelše, S. Mākslas interpretācija un autoritārisma konteksts: 1934. gada faktors. *Māksla un politiskie konteksti*: rakstu krājums. Rīga: Neputns, 131. lpp.
[123] Pelše, S. *Latviešu mākslas teorijas vēsture. Mākslas definīcijas valdošo laikmeta ideju kontekstā (1900–1940)*. Rīga: Latvijas Mākslas akadēmijas Mākslas vēstures institūts, 2007, 139. lpp.

the Latvian nation (…) may be recognised as very high". Although the article contained many denigrating epithets about various nations (peoples), for example, about Mongols and Gypsies, the article did not attempt to arouse racial hatred of non-Latvians. The main enemy of the Latvian nation was proclaimed to be their particular vices: "... eroticism is the most important and grievous vice, and Latvians practice this vice with the greatest abandon." This was, perhaps, an unexpected conclusion. At the same time the article also contained odious opinions, for example: "War is usually regarded as an evil. However, in terms of racial potential, war, the preparations for war, the fear of war come as a blessing for individuals and nations, since these raise their racial potential."[124] (It is true that this does not mean that V. Reiznieks attributes war-like tendencies to the "Latvian race"; quite the contrary: "Taking into account that Latvians, and together with them the entire Baltic race, are not conquerors, other peoples and nations might be able to see in us a kind of liberator, who might lead them out from the present crisis in culture, to a future happier era."[125]) The spread of eugenics in Latvia during the years of the authoritarian regime in Latvia was a more important development. Bjorn M. Felder concluded in his novel study: "... focusing on applied eugenics, the Latvian project was actually quite near Nazi racial hygiene, with the exception that there were no mandatory sterilisation and certainly no euthanasia — killing of the mental ill." According to Felder, the 15th May regime "... can be described as a racial state.[126] It is possible that this judgement is exaggerated (for example if we look again at the principal ideas of the 15th May regime as formulated by J. Auškāps, we can find no reference to racist principles, and no race laws were ever adopted in Latvia).

Basic principles of the economic policies of the regime[127]

In November 1937, addressing the 1st Congress of the Traders, Industrialists and Homeowners of Latvia, Andrejs Bērziņš, Head of the Credit Bank of Latvia and of the Chamber of Trade and Industry, stressing the increase of the state control over the economics remarked that: "... we have heard outcries, that we are nearing state socialism, that we are approaching Communism."[128] What had Latvia indeed approached? Mainly it was a continuously rising level of state intervention in the economy — approaching a planned economy. The most difficult problem the state was facing was inadequate supply of labour in the agriculture sector, and the departure of able-bodied people from the countryside to too rapidly expanding industry. Neither the first nor the second phenomenon was a new one in Latvia, and they were already in evidence

[124] Reiznieks, V. Latviešu nācijas potences. *Studentu dzīve*, Nr. 72, 1938, 18. nov., 10.–12. lpp.

[125] Reiznieks, V. Latviešu nākotnes nācija. *Kadets*, Nr. 11, 1938, 1. nov., 28. lpp.

[126] Felder, B. M. "God forgives — but Nature never will." Racial identity, racial anthropology, and eugenics in Latvia. 1918–1940. *Baltic eugenics: Bio-politics, race and nation in interwar Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania 1918–1940*. Felder, B. M., Weindling, P. J. (eds.). Amsterdam–New York: Rodopi, 2013, pp. 136, 126.

[127] See more — Aivars Stranga. Kārļa Ulmaņa autoritārā režīma saimnieciskā politika. 1934 – 1940 – LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, Rīga, 2017.

[128] Mums nepieciešama plānsaimniecība. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 271, 1937, 29. nov., 1. lpp.

during the democratic period; thus, even if democracy had survived these problems would have persisted. The regime of K. Ulmanis radically increased state intervention in the economy, while the labour supply problem escalated, with radical solutions found and even more radical solutions considered by K. Ulmanis. The idea of economic planning — state intervention in the economy in major and tangible ways — was already clearly mooted during the government of A. Bļodnieks: on 3 October 1933, it tasked "...the Finance Minister [Jānis Annuss] to draw up a plan for the national economy for the next three years and to present this draft plan to the Cabinet of Ministers".[129] Such a plan had not been developed by 15 May and we have no idea about how radical it might have been: national plans may be of various types.

The idea gained new strength after the coup: on 30 April 1935, the government again tasked the Finance Ministry (the Minister being Ludvigs Ēķis) to draft a plan to regulate and to manage the national economy.[130] The greatest attention was paid to the necessity "... of developing a national industrial plan"[131] (later in this article we shall present the reasons for this necessity). There were no exact parallels with the decision taken in 1933, and, in fact, there were at least three differences between the two plans. The first of these follows from the fact that during the parliamentary period in Latvia, any national plan would have been subject to evaluation by the Saeima, by political parties, and in the press, and any radical plan was unlikely to have been adopted. The regime of K. Ulmanis was not subject to any political restrictions and everything depended on what he or his closest advisor in economic matters, Andrejs Bērziņš, would decide. Another difference was that all national policies of the authoritarian regime were aimed at "... the overwhelming influence to be wielded by the government on the agriculture, trade, credit matters and labour issues".[132] Thus, if any plan had been adopted it would have been a radical one. Thirdly, even if Minister J. Annuss had attempted to develop a national plan, he simply had insufficient time to complete this work; however, he was not known to be a supporter of radical economic planning. This was in contrast with L. Ēķis — the Finance Minister of K. Ulmanis' regime until the summer of 1938, who was the most active in working out a national plan. Nevertheless, as we shall see later, many aspects of a plan were introduced, but no formal national plan was implemented, and L. Ēķis even lost his influential position.

A collision occurred between two different approaches to a national plan for the economy and the state intervention in the economy. Andrejs Bērziņš was the supporter of one of these approaches. Speaking on 4 September 1937 in an interview on Riga Radio he announced that, formally, Latvia had not developed "... its five-year plan, we also have no formal four-year plan",[133] but that there was an ongoing transition to economic planning. It is significant that these references were to totalitarian states — the USSR (five-year plans) and Nazi Germany (four-year plans).

[129] LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 303. l., 193. lp.
[130] Lejiņš, J. *Mana Dzimtene. Atmiņu un pārdomu atspulgā*, 152. lpp.
[131] LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 304. l., 119. lp.
[132] Ceihners, A. *Kārļa Ulmaņa saimnieciskā politika.* Rīga: Zemnieka Domas, 1939, 431. lpp.
[133] Ibid., 486. lpp.



Mums nepieciešama plānsaimniecība

Tirdzniecības un rūpniecības kameras priekšsēdētāja Andreja Bērziņa noslēguma runa lielajā kongresā

Tirgotāji un rūpnieki ir nacionāls elements mūsu valsts vispārējā un arī saimnieciskā politikā.

Mums reiz par visām reizām ir jābūt skaidrībā par vienu lietu, par to, ka

savas domas un savus centienus mums jāizsaka pilnīgi atklāti un ka tas ir nevien mūsu tiesību jautājums, bet ka tas ir arī pienākums.

Visi tie jautājumi, kādi bija likti kongresa plenārsēžu un sekciju apspriežu dienaskārtībā, bija tādi, kas deva iespēju ikvienam izteikt savas domas, savu kritiku un savus priekšlikumus.

Jautājums par brīvo netraucēto konkurenci ir joprojām tas jautājums, kas ir visakūtākais mūsu tirgotāju un rūpnieku sabiedrībā. Pēc manas pārliecības,

šāda vai citāda plānsaimniecība, šāda vai citāda iejaukšanās, sistēmatiska iavesta tirdzniecības un rūpniecības darba lauka, peļņas, cenu un tamlīdzīgu citu ražošanas momentu organizēšana un kontrole mūsu laikme-

Fig. 5. Excerpt of a speech by Andrejs Bērziņš at the 1st Congress of the Traders, Industrialists and Homeowners of Latvia, 29 November 1939; the speech advocated introduction of a planned economy, published in *Brīvā Zeme*, 29.11.1937

It was the essence of Andrejs Bērziņš' policies — implement the state to intervention in the economy, allowing for substantial elements of economic planning, but avoiding formulation of an explicit national plan, which would place obligations (and restrictions) on those who regulate the economy and who carry out intervention, including A. Bērziņš, who was justly described in February 1938 by the British Ambassador to Latvia as "... a confidential financial adviser and close friend of the dictator [K. Ulmanis]".[134] (For example, it was up to A. Bērziņš to decide which private undertaking, and how (against how much investment) "to be saved", i.e., nationalised, and no plan was allowed to influence his decisions, including not to nationalise any undertaking which would according to the criteria in the plan have to be saved, against his wishes.[135])

L. Ēķis was fully prepared to adopt a formal national plan which would be worked out in detail. On 26 March 1938, he announced that a plan for the economy "... has been worked out for many years to come".[136] The Ministry had, in fact, worked out a six-year plan for 15 sectors of the economy, which foresaw even greater concentration

[134] Dunsdorfs, E. *Kārļa Ulmaņa dzīve. Ceļinieks. Politiķis. Diktators. Moceklis*, 406. lpp.

[135] For example, despite the widely proclaimed policy of "Latvianisation", the largest enterprise owned by Jews in Latvia, the Linen Manufacturing enterprise owned by two brothers Hoffe was not nationalised — in 1938 it employed 1637 persons, and it was the largest private company in Latvia (and the second largest,, after VEF, which was state-owned). (*20. gadsimta Latvijas vēsture*. 2. sēj. Neatkarīgā valsts. 1918–1940, 660. lpp.). It might have been the case that the Hoffe brothers had found the right path to the door of A. Bērziņš, and avoided nationalisation, paying a modest price — by appointing several Latvians to their company board (Stranga, A. *Ebreji un diktatūras Baltijā. 1926–1940*, 185. lpp.).

[136] *Ceturtais gads. 1937.15.V – 1938.15.V*, 345. lpp.

of power in the hands of the Ministry (of the Minister L. Ēķis).[137] This turned out to be a fateful step for the Minister and for the plan itself: Andrejs Bērziņš was not prepared to give such power to the Minister. It is important to recall that in November 1937 A. Bērziņš had insisted that a single "Centre for public scrutiny of the economy" would be needed to manage the economy.[138] It might be that he wished to be the Director of such a centre, but L. Ēķis had the same ambition. L. Ēķis lost his post as Minister, the plan was not adopted, and the sole "Centre for the economy" was K. Ulmanis, which does not mean that economic planning — in the absence of a formal plan — was substantially weakened as a result (the ideas of economic planning were clearly evident, for example, in the "6 year construction plan", which was published in early 1939, and which provided for rural construction projects to be carried out over a six year time span[139]). A. Bērziņš was free to manage the economy as he wished and, it is possible that economic planning without a formal plan appealed to K. Ulmanis too, who wished to supervise matters down to the smallest detail.[140] Almost every matter and event, even the most ordinary, was described as one for which a "National plan" was necessary — a plan for ice-breaking, planting alleys of trees, "a production and work plan for agriculture". K. Ulmanis also concerned himself with questions such as, "... the roofing material for the bus garage of the capital city", or how many "horse-drawn rakes" are to be bought; he recommended establishing "the post of a person responsible for tree alleys", etc.[141] No plan was needed with such a dictator, nor would any such plan be useful for K. Ulmanis, who was always approving new plans. Dissatisfaction with the socialist orientation of economic policies appeared among members of the government. As K. Ulmanis admitted in the notes written in November 1940 during his exile, the Deputy Prime Minister M. Skujenieks was forced to resign in 1938, "... protesting excessive government intervention in industry, seeing in these a threat to private ownership rights". General J. Balodis, formally the second person in the state, also became dissatisfied, in which regard K. Ulmanis wrote: "... he began to criticise my political line as too radical, and partly too left-wing."[142] Nothing changed, even the opposite occurred: on

[137] Initially development began on a five-year plan, but this approach was abandoned, most credibly, because it would be all too similar to plans in the USSR, while Germany developed four-year plans. Latvia followed its own path, and developed very broad theses of a six-year plan (concerning the proposed five-year economic plan, see: LVVA, 6824. f., 1. apr., 138., 3.–51. lp.; 83. lp).

[138] Mums nepieciešama plānsaimniecība. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 271, 1937, 29. nov., 1. lpp.

[139] 6 gadu celtniecības plāns. *Rīts*, Nr. 54, 1939, 23. febr., 5. lpp.; see also the speech by Finance Minister A. Valdmanis on 28 March 1939 at the plenary session of the Chamber for Trade and Industry, wherein he announced that, "a national economic plan for 1939–1940" had been drawn up (*Rīts*, Nr. 88, 1939, 29. marts, 1. lpp.).

[140] During September 1937, L. Ēķis had very precisely described the attitude of K. Ulmanis towards economic planning: "… he has never restricted himself to leading through only generating ideas. His nature is characterised by the fact that for the very beginning he has always been not only the premier builder during the construction of government buildings, but also the premier worker. Thus, there is no important issue in the plan, which has been approved in detail for reconstruction of our economy, that the Leader has not had his say giving incisive practical instructions" (Ēķis, L. Dr. K. Ulmanis kā saimnieciskās dzīves veidotājs. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 199, 1937, 4. sept., 5. lpp.). Nothing then had been "fully thought through", and the thoughts of the "premier worker" could change, or would have to change.

[141] K. Ulmaņa "verbālnotas". *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1, 1994, 19.–25. lpp.

[142] *Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un cietumā. Dokumenti un materiāli*, 317. lpp.

1 January 1940, Jānis Blumbergs, Minister for Trade and Industry announced that "even greater state intervention in the private economic field" is forthcoming.[143]

Labour force problems had seriously dogged the economy and politics of Latvia ever since the agrarian reform of the 1920s was implemented along egalitarian lines. The reform had resulted in tens of thousands of small farms, where everyone was both owner and servant, while the larger farms and those which supplied produce to the market were short of labour. From the second half of the 1920s there were attempts to resolve these problems through an apparently temporary measure, whose instigator was K. Ulmanis: encouraging labour to immigrate from Lithuania and Poland. What had been intended as a temporary measure became indispensable with the development of agriculture in Latvia. During the 1920s, the rural labour shortage was not yet exacerbated by the migration from rural areas in Latvia to the cities, since industry then developed rather slowly. The situation changed during the 1930s, rapidly and defying resolution. Industry in Latvia, benefiting from protection from foreign competition, customs and quotas, enjoyed some of the most rapid rates of development in Europe, but the rise in output was not due to introduction of modern technology, but by a rise in the labour force (in 1934, the number employed in industry was 84 669, but in 1938, already 117 199);[144] its dependence on imported raw resources also increased. The crux of the problem was: industry attracted rural residents and entered into competition with agriculture which already suffered from labour shortages, the latter was compelled to find even more manpower, following the K. Ulmanis regime's revival of subsidies and export possibilities. The government was fully aware of the core of the problem, but was unable to decide how to react. At the government meeting of 14 March 1935 L. Ēķis reported "... on the industrial situation in the country. He found that industry, thanks to high customs duties on imports had reached its highest level of development. In future there might be a discussion about a reduction in industry, but not about its further expansion. Less foreign currency was earned through export of industrial production than was spent for the import of raw materials and semi-finished products."[145]

Although industry, trade, and financial services constituted more than 60% of the Gross National Product, the contribution from agriculture was very considerable, and after 15 May it gained in ideological importance, with agriculture deemed to be "national" sector (as opposed to industry, where there was a great presence of Germans and Jews) as well as a "united" sector. This ideological and political dimension is well illustrated by the government decision of 30 April 1935: "Our farmers [peasantry] — this term encompasses all — large, small, old, new — is not and cannot ever be a capitalistic enterprise."[146] The Ministry for Agriculture was instructed to fix prices for purchase of agricultural produce, and also to encourage growing new produce which did not require as intensive a reliance on foreign farm labourers. The development of industry and agriculture had to be aligned and equilibrated "by means of regularisation", even more so — "... study of the rules and circumstances of our agriculture, and their

[143] *Ekonomists*, Nr. 1, 1940, 1. janv, 5. lpp.
[144] *Latvijas vēsture.* 2. sēj. Neatkarīgā valsts. 1918–1940, pp. 658.–659. lpp.
[145] LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 304. l., 65. lp.
[146] Ibid., 121. lp.

clarification must take place independent of foreign influence".[147] Therefore, agriculture had to develop independent of foreign influence and outside of capitalism, in idyllic Latvianness; while "non-national" industry had to be reduced (there was a rise in state-owned enterprises). Neither one, nor the other was practically feasible, and the government began to work out radical plans to "balance the sectors".

Government worries were no longer concealed by the spring of 1936, when on 26 March L. Ēķis announced publicly that: "Nevertheless, employment in certain sectors is rising too quickly [in industry] and we are obliged to think about limiting this rapid rise, since excessively rapid development of a single sector, disturbs the balance with other sectors and causes them to suffer losses; this may be even happening to sectors which are perhaps more important in terms of production and employment [agriculture] (…) Now we must spend expensive foreign currency to attract 50 000 farm labourers from Poland,[148] while the total number of farm labourers is only 100 000. You can imagine, what that means."[149] In May 1939, the government decided to resolve this problem in a bureaucratic way by establishing a Central Employment Office, which had to lead and regulate the movement of the labour force in the country. Until then, Labour Offices had worked as part of the Chamber for Agriculture, but they had played a minor role: a request could be made of these offices for help with seasonal (summer) work, but these offices did not regulate, let alone effect, labour mobility. The Law on a Central Labour Office was of such importance, that K. Ulmanis personally offered extensive comments in an untypically dramatic tone ("... the law on procuring labour and its disposition is a difficult, an incredibly difficult law"[150]), particularly, during his visit of 1 June 1939 to the cement factory at Brocēni (such assessments were published in the press under the title "The instructions issued by the State President Kārlis Ulmanis at Brocēni"). K. Ulmanis admitted that, "we are short of labour", and that this has led to "difficult reflections". Industry attracts manpower away from rural areas, and this was to be solved as follows: rationalisation of industry (it could not be done quickly), but without delay — regulation of the labour force, and furthermore "... we have not yet introduced all the needed provisions in this law". What provisions were included? According to K. Ulmanis, "there are two onerous provisions". One of these was: women younger than 22 would only be allowed to work in cities as housemaids if they had lived in the said city at least for the previous five years.[151] This represented a desire to keep women in the country areas. The other provision was: women and men younger than 22 would be allowed to work in industrial undertakings in Riga, Daugavpils, Liepāja, Ventspils only provided that they had lived the previous five years in the respective city. Young people could only be employed if they had

[147] LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 304. l., 123. lp.

[148] The precise data offered by the Finance Ministry was: 47 824 field workers in 1937, 46 363 workers — in 1938. (LVVA, 6824. f., 1. apr., 183. l., 9. lp.). The situation became quite dramatic in 1939 when Poland was annihilated through aggression by Germany and the USSR and the number of farm labourers coming to Latvia decreased sharply, the total number, together with Lithuanians, who came to Latvia was only 16 749 (Pagājušā gadā Latvijā ieceļoja 16 749 laukstrādnieki. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 118, 1940, 29. maijs), leading thereby to manpower problems for agriculture in Latvia which could not be resolved.

[149] Svarīgi pārkārtojumi valsts saimniecībā. *Rīts*, Nr. 86, 1938, 27. marts, 1. lpp.

[150] "Jāsamazina rūpniecībā nodarbināto darbaroku skaits. Valsts Prezidenta Kārļa Ulmaņa norādījumi Brocēnos". *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 121, 1939, 2. jūn., 1. lpp.

[151] A campaign began in the press against the practice of having house maids as an inefficient use of labour resources. The distinguished writer Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš disparaged the practice of hiring housemaids: "We

lived without interruption for five years in the place of their employment. This law also was extended to apply to construction, the building of roads and streets, as well as other forms of seasonal employment; no secret was made of the fact that there was an intention of sending young people who had finished secondary school as well as students to work in the countryside.[152]

However, as K. Ulmanis had admitted, not everything had been included in the provisions of this law: it regulated labour mobility, but the Central Employment Office did not supply manpower as needed. For example it was noted that: "The leadership of the Central Employment Office informs the public that presently this office cannot undertake to provide workers for seasonal work. It can only issue permits to employers to engage a certain number of seasonal workers, but the employer must find these individuals by himself."[153] It turned out that this was insufficient, and quickly, quicker than K. Ulmanis had expected it (it is true that the large negative impact of the Second World War was responsible for it) the law had to be amended radically, with not just provisions on who could not be offered employment, but who must be employed and where, including against their will: farms had to have the necessary manpower. The outbreak of the world war and breakdown of the economic links between Latvia and the West (the sea route) led to the most serious consequences. Poland was destroyed and one could not count on it to provide manpower, so that it was necessary to think about a replacement source. Industry which had expanded struggled with a lack of raw products, but the entire country was faced with a growing lack of fuel, given that coal imports had decreased dramatically, and this led to a reduction in industrial production; the level of unemployment rose, the standard of living of workers declined rapidly. Latvia was gripped by a new economic crisis. On 21 December 1939, the government was forced not only to allocate 306 000 lats to an unemployment restriction fund (by comparison, this fund had

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have ladies… who are bursting with health, who are childless, who have no other occupation except to window-shop and meet in cafes with their lady friends, but occasionally they have even two maids servants at home (…) Stopping this practice a substantial number of women could enter the labour force available for productive work, perhaps just as many as eliminating loafers. In this way such people, if not this year, then another year shall have displaced foreign workers who are nothing other than moss growing on the tree of the people." (Jaunsudrabiņš, J. Slaists un slīmests. *Jaunākās Ziņas*, Nr. 102, 1939, 6. maijs, 2. lpp.). The Central Employment Office resorted to police methods and began to verify the presence of housemaids: verification took place in Riga and in Jūrmala, "... to determine whether home owners had not engaged individuals who are either under age or who otherwise do not conform to the provisions of labour laws" (Mājkalpotāju pārbaudes Rīgas Jūrmalā. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 188, 1939, 22. aug., 8. lpp). House servants had, in early 1940 until March 1st, to renew their work contracts. This procedure was intended as a measure to reduce the total number of house servants and their redeployment to work in rural areas. However, if the house servant was employed by rural school teachers, medical doctors or officials, did not have to renew their work contracts (Sāk atjaunot mājkalpotāju darba līgumus. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 33, 1940, 9. febr., 3. lpp.). House servants employed by Jewish families attracted particular attention from the government and from K. Ulmanis personally. Although Jews were citizens of Latvia enjoying equal rights, the fact of Jews employed a large number of non-Jewish servants was considered to be unacceptable. In April 1939, shortly before the Central Employment Office was established, K. Ulmanis entered a personal note: "Jewish servants (…) regulation — to forbid hiring non-Jews as house servants if all possible Jewish candidates have not been considered. Is this then the first anti-Jewish law?" (LVVA, 5969. f., 1. apr., 235. l., 23. lp.). Here the essential aspect is the idea to adopt a law applying solely to Jews which would forbid them to hire non-Jewish house servants. This disgraceful law was not adopted and the hiring of house servants by Jews was regulated through the Central Employment Office.

[152] See reference 153.

[153] Darba centrāles uzdevumi kļūst arvien plašāki. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 121, 1939, 2. jūn., 1. lpp.

received 32 000 lats on 15 January 1935[154]) and a further 126 000 lats to job seekers' employment, as well as 73 000 lats for feeding children and their mothers living in hardship in Riga, Liepāja, Ventspils, Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Jelgava, Kuldīga, Ludza.[155]

On 28 May 1940, the government adopted the most radical law in the history of the 15th May regime to solve the problems of fuel supply and manpower shortages in rural areas — the Law on Economic Service demonstrated that the Central Employment Office was no longer enough to deal with problems. The differences from the existing body were the following: 1) the Central Office only regulated and managed the movement of labour force, and even this, it did only partially, whereas the new law called for provision of manpower; 2) the manpower provision was carried out in a semi-military fashion, through "mobilisation": part of the manpower resource would be called up, others reclassified; 3) stringent penalties were foreseen for those who avoided their service, akin to those applicable for shirking military service (the Ministry for the Interior provided for those who violated this law incarceration in one of four categories of facility, run with a different level of severity, depending on the nature of the offense; for example, facilities with a particularly harsh regime were foreseen for "loafers", although there was no definition of what constituted loafing, but there is no doubt that this could be attributed arbitrarily and widely; work records would be kept in special logbooks, and a note would be entered in an individuals' passport, allowing easy identification of those who had avoided service[156]); 4) the law addressed a wide swathe of the population, the largest group of people being government clerks (K. Veidnieks, the Minister for the Interior considered that there were approximately 100 000 (!)... individuals working in Latvia, some 20 000 of which would have to start field works), owners of undertakings, 20 000 youth in school over the age of 14 and approximately 2000 students.[157] This would not have been the end of it. But for the occupation of Latvia, K. Ulmanis would have sought to implement an idea which had never been contemplated, even by the Social Democrats. With a view to eliminating the issue of rural manpower shortage his intention was to divide-up farms ("... my programme had enough points to the detriment of the large landowners"), every year creating thousands of new small farms with "compulsory cooperation": "... the law which I had yet to promulgate provided for the reduction of paid farm labour, if not the complete elimination of all large farms, through their step-wise division."[158] This would have been a second even more egalitarian agrarian reform.[159]

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[154] LVVA, 1307. f., 1. apr., 304. l., 12. lp.

[155] LVVA, 1313. f., 1. apr., 140., 287. lp.

[156] LVVA, 1368. f., 3. apr., 51. l., 2. lp.

[157] For details see: Bleiere, D., Butulis, I, Feldmanis, I, Stranga, A, Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*. Rīga: Jumava, 2008, 175.–176. lpp.

[158] *Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un cietumā. Dokumenti un materiāli*, 322., 324. lpp. Significantly, stronger left wing rhetoric was evident in the approach taken by government officials in economic matters. For example, Finance Minister J. Kaminskis admitted in early March 1940 that it would be necessary to reduce subsidies for butter, eggs, and seeds; it is clear, that the principal reason for this position was the financial situation which grew more difficult during the autumn of 1939 as a result of the economic crisis; however, J. Kaminskis justified this action since "... rich farmers receive these subsidies" (LVVA, 6824. f., 1. apr., 38. l., 58. lp.).

[159] The idea of a second agrarian reform appeared in January 1939, when it was noted that there were too many farms which cannot be intensively used for agricultural purposes, but which tie up imported labour. At that time the idea of a second agrarian reform was associated purely and simply with rationalising agriculture (Zemei — piemērotāku saimnieku. Mūsu otrā agrārā reforma. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 3, 1939, 4. janv., 1. lpp.).

Other no less radical ideas, brought about by the rapidly developing economic crisis, were outlined by the Finance Minister, Jānis Kaminskis, at a meeting of leading staff of his Ministry on 2 March 1940: "In order to prevent excess cash available compared to the availability of goods, we must consider the possibility of reducing the purchasing power of the public. The options are a) not to allow salaries to rise in step with price rises. Raise the salaries only of those workers paid less than 100 lats; b) to compel part of the available funds to be deposited or to be loaned to the government until the end of the war. Voluntary savings deposits through beneficial interest rates will not produce an adequate result; c) to ration the availability of all other imported essential goods (up to then rationing (ration books) were in force for sugar, petroleum and for a locally produced fuel — Latol — *A. S.*); d) to raise taxes on middle income earners. In order to achieve this the following has to be done: 1. To lower the non-taxable threshold for calculating income tax; 2. To impose a tax on cosmetics, furs, silk, woollen products, sweets, radio, entertainment, the cinema..."[160] As we see the attempt to deal with economic challenges, including a rising shortage of goods, included recourse to truly "totalitarian methods", as had been noted by A. Bērziņš in December 1939 (the idea about a "compulsory savings deposit or loan" is telling in this regard[161]). There is no doubt that these measures would have been very unpopular, but the government had not been able to turn to these before the occupation of Latvia which happened shortly thereafter.

[160] LVVA, 6824. f., 1. apr., 38. l., 52. lp.

[161] The idea of a internal state loan was contained at a speech given by K. Veidnieks at a staff meeting of the Ministry for the Interior on 21 February 1940 (Stranga, A. Kas Latviju nestiprināja: K. Ulmaņa režīma sociālekonomiskās iezīmes valsts bojāejas priekšvakarā. *Izglītība*, Nr. 32, 1991, 16. aug., 6. lpp.).

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Inesis Feldmanis

LATVIA DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1939–1945)

The Second World War, which began on 1 September 1939, was a conflict of unprecedented scale. The war substantially changed the course of world history, and caused enormous damage to practically all the countries of Europe. Many peoples had to accept occupation and arbitrary foreign rule for shorter or longer periods. Poland lost its independence during the first year of the war as the result of aggression by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. By the summer of 1940, the Nazi regime had defeated Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, Holland, Belgium, and France. Finland, and Romania were forced to cede part of their territory to the USSR.
The Baltic States were in a unique position. They were independent states during the first 290 days of the war and had to resolve issues arising from the new circumstances, but then they suffered three separate occupations within a few years. The Soviet Union first occupied Latvia in the summer of 1940, followed by Nazi Germany in 1941, and then in 1944–1945, the Soviet Union returned. Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia only regained their independence lost during the Second World War in 1991.

Keywords: Latvia, Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, Second World War, international relations, occupation, resistance movement, collaboration, collaborationism, "the victors' version", the Latvian Legion.

The historians of Latvia are charged with the important task of establishing an accurate, scholarly portrait of the events of the Second World War as these transpired in Latvia. The residual influence of the so-called version formulated by the victors[1], usually based on the axiom of Nazism being the sole source of all evil while ignoring all crimes committed by Communists, needs to be amended. It is difficult to unravel and to evaluate objectively the complex period of the Nazi occupation of Latvia, if one does

[1] The notion of the "victors' version" derives from the so-called Nuremberg Consensus, i.e. the decision by the Great Powers after their victory in the Second World War to condemn only those criminal acts committed by the Nazis and their allies, which were indeed horrific (the Holocaust, etc.), but were not the only such acts. This resulted in a conviction by the public that, when discussing the war, only the opponents of fascism and the victims of fascism merited sympathy. Furthermore, all individuals and peoples who, in one way or another, fought alongside Germany were labelled, then and now, as collaborators, and could be accused, alongside the Nazis, of criminal acts.

not keep in mind the two sources of evil — Communism and Nazism,[2] given that the attitude of Latvians vis-à-vis the German occupation authorities was based on memories of atrocities carried out by the Soviet authorities during their first year of occupation, as well by hope that national independence might be restored. After their experiences in 1940–1941, which are recalled in collective memory as the Year of Terror, many Latvians considered Germans to be a lesser evil than the Russians, since the latter personified Communism and the threat of extinction.

Owing to the limited length of this chapter, it is not possible to delineate all of the topics related to events of the Second World War and their consequences for Latvia. The topics that will be discussed are those which allow evaluation of the principal processes of the war. These topics have been selected to allow examination to a greater or lesser extent of important war time events and associated processes. Considerable attention will be paid to contentious historiographic issues, difficulties in researching them as well as possible resolutions in future.

Many historians have studied the events which occurred in Latvia during the Second World War.[3] Different aspects of these historical events have been assessed by different historiographic traditions: Soviet Latvian historians, Latvians living in exile, historians in restored independent Latvia, in Western European countries, in Russia, and elsewhere. Many compilations of articles have been written, some of which will be evaluated here.

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[2] The distinguished American historian Timothy Snyder has published a comparison, which has become widely popular, of the attitude of the Soviet and Nazi regime towards civilians in the territories which they occupied. In his opinion, the attitudes towards civilians by the Stalin and Hitler regimes were equally cruel and terrible, with both meriting condemnation. Snyder offers a precise characterisation in general terms, unsparing of their inhumanity, of Communist and National terror instituted in countries from Ukraine to the Baltic region. Snyder, T. *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin.* New York: Basic Books, 2010, 524 pp.

[3] A number of historiographic articles have assessed historical studies about Latvia during the Second World War. Neiburgs, U. *"Dievs, Tava zeme deg!": Latvijas Otrā pasaules kara stāsti*. Rīga: Lauku Avīze, 2014, 370.–385. lpp.; Feldmanis, I. "Vācu laiks": pētniecības problēmas un to risinājumi. Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945).* Rīga: Jumava, 2008, 28.–45. lpp.; Zunda, A. Vācu okupācijas varas politika Latvijā: nostādnes vēstures literatūrā. *Totalitārie režīmi un to represijas Latvijā 1940.–1956. gadā: Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas 2000. gada pētījumi.* 2. izd. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 186.–207. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 3. sēj.); Ivanovs, A. Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā: izpētes gaita Latvijas jaunāko laiku historiogrāfijā, izpētes rezultāti un perspektīvas. *Otrais pasaules karš un Latvija: notikumi un sekas. 20. gadsimta 40.–60. gadi.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2011, 15.–46. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 27. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv /images/modules/items/PDF/Latvijas%20Vesturnieku%20komisijas%20raksti_27.pdf

Occupation and illegal annexation

Currently, the concept of three occupations as developed in Latvia[4] (two Soviet and one German occupations)[5], has become the majority approach, but not the only one, in describing the history of Latvia during the Second World War, as well as throughout the post-war period up until 1991. This does not mean that there is complete consensus among historians in Latvia in assessing a number of issues and processes related to occupation. Debate continues concerning a number of problems, which strengthen the concept of occupation, as well as providing deeper understanding of certain aspects of occupation.

The Non-Aggression Pact between the USSR and Germany, including its integral Secret Additional Protocol concerning spheres of interest in Eastern Europe, was signed on 23 August 1939, and prefigured eradication of the independence of Latvia.[6] The Pact was intrinsically illegal and a cynical agreement to the detriment of third parties. It was a death sentence for Poland; it gave a green light to general Nazi and Soviet aggression in Europe, and resulted in the Second World War. Germany initiated hostilities on 1 September. Great Britain and France declared war on Germany two days later. With the aid of the Soviet Union, which joined the attack on Poland 16 days later, Germany crushed Polish independence within a few weeks. As the initiator of war, division, and annihilation, the secret additional protocol to the pact signed on 23 August has no counterpart in the modern history of Europe. The Pact was a

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[4] The first Soviet occupation has been extensively documented in the following collections of articles: *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940: dokumenti un materiāli.* Grava-Kreituse, I., Feldmanis, I., Goldmanis, J., Stranga, A. (sast.) Rīga, 1995, 606 lpp.; *The Occupation and Annexation of Latvia 1939–1940: Documents and Materials.* Grava-Kreituse, I., Feldmanis, I., Loeber, D. A., Goldmanis, J., Stranga, A. (eds.). Riga: Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, 1995, 362 pp. and others.

[5] Certain historians in Latvia, for example Kaspars Zellis, are of the opinion that it would be more correct to speak of two occupations only, recommending that the second Soviet occupation in 1944–1945 not be considered as an occupation. His rhetorical justification for this position is, however, not convincing — is it possible to occupy a second time a territory that has already been annexed (but why not? – *I. F.*), and which has not for a single instant recovered its sovereignty? Zellis, K. *Komentārs. Okupācija, kolaborācija, pretošanās: vēsture un vēstures izpratne: Starptautiskās konferences materiāli 2009. gada 27.–28. oktobrī Rīgā*. Rīga: Latvijas Okupācijas muzeja biedrība, 2010, 137. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 26. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/items/LVK %2026%20PDF.pdf

[6] The first paragraph of this Protocol states that Latvia, Finland and Estonia were handed over to the Soviet Union: "In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilna area is recognized by each party." The third paragraph spelled out the boundaries of each other's sphere of interests in Poland, as well as alluded to its disappearance as a state: "The question of whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish state and how such a state should be bounded can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments." The third paragraph accented the interests of the USSR in Bessarabia and the complete disinterest of Germany: "With regard to south-eastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas". See the Russian language version in Секретный дополнительный протокол. *Новая и новейшая история*, № 1, 1993, с. 89. Советско-германские документы 1939–1941 гг. Из Архива ЦК КПСС. Accessible at: http://annales.info/sbo/contens/ nni.htm#93_01

criminal conspiracy against peace and national sovereignty.

The question has been posed in Latvian historiography: at what point can we begin to speak about occupation of the state? The historian Heinrihs Strods is a partisan of the view that, "the principal breaking point in the history of Latvia — its actual occupation — did not take place on 17 July 1940", but actually in October 1939, when Latvia was compelled to sign a mutual assistance treaty with the Soviet Union. His principal arguments are that the Soviet military massively outnumbered the Latvian national army, and blocked off the only two ice-free ports in the Baltic Sea. Furthermore, the Soviet army was located in the rear of national army units, making any resistance by the national army to aggression futile.[7]

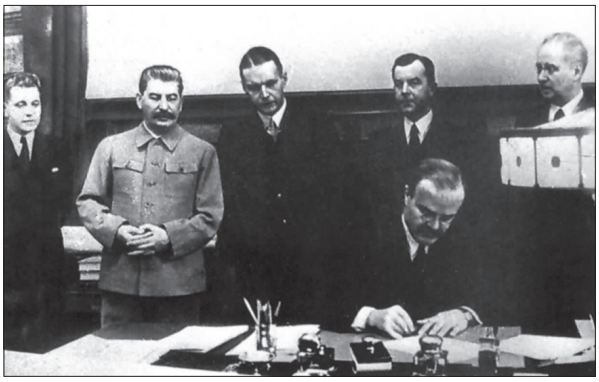


Fig. 1. The signing in the Kremlin of the Mutual Assistance Pact between Latvia and the USSR, on behalf of the USSR by Vyacheslav Molotov, USSR Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Standing behind him (from left to right): Ivan Zotov, Representative of the USSR accredited to Latvia, Joseph Stalin, General Secretary of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Vilhelms Munters, Foreign Minister of Latvia, Fricis Kociņš, Envoy of Latvia to the USSR, and Vladimir Potemkin, 1st Deputy USSR Peoples' Commissar of Foreign Affairs. Moscow, 5 October 1939. (*Latvijas ārpolitika un diplomātija divdesmitā gadsimtā*, 1. sēj. Rīga: Jumava, 2014, 305. lpp.)

One can partially agree with this thesis. But it would not be correct to speak about real occupation of Latvia and the other Baltic States during the autumn of 1939. In this case it would be appropriate to speak of preparing the way for eventual occupation, about restricted sovereignty, etc. It is also evident that the situation in Latvia in the autumn of 1939 differed substantially from the situation in June 1940. In any event, the Government of Latvia was still free to act in the autumn of 1939, as its territory was not in its entirety controlled by a foreign army. Designating this period as an "occupation" means unnecessarily restricting the meaning of this term.

Another unpleasant surprise was in store for Latvia after the agreement on military bases was signed with the USSR. On October 6, Adolf Hitler announced that Baltic Germans were to leave Latvia and Estonia for Germany. This was a death sentence for these two Baltic States, since the interest of Germany in their continued independence diminished. The principal motives for this decision were to save the Baltic Germans from "Soviet clutches" (Berlin was afraid that in case of Soviet occupation, left-wing circles in Latvia might massacre local Germans, etc.), weaken Soviet potential, source people to settle the conquered western territory of Poland, as well as raising the military and economic strength of Germany.[8]

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[7] Strods, H. Latvijas okupācijas pirmais posms (1939. gada 23. augusts – 1940. gada sākums). *Okupācijas režīmi Latvijā 1940.–1959. gadā*. 2. izd. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 73. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 10. sēj.).

[8] See, for example: Bosse, L. Vom Baltikum in den Reichsgau Warteland. *Deutschbalten, Weimarer Republik und Drittes Reich*, Bd. 1. Köln: Bohlau Verlag, 2001, S. 320–322.



Fig. 2. Departure of the Baltic Germans in the autumn of 1939. Last document check before embarkation. (*Atpūta*, No. 781, 1939)

The first official act with which Berlin secured emigration by Baltic Germans was a Soviet–German protocol signed on 28 September 1939, one of three protocols which amended and clarified the German–Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Demarcation. The final preparatory work at inter-governmental level was completed on 30 October 1939, when Germany signed a treaty with Latvia to regulate matters. This became the legal basis for the departure of the Baltic Germans, which ought to have occurred as a one-off activity (which turned out not to be the case) and ended the presence in Latvia of the Baltic Germans as "a national group" (with a well-defined status). All Germans who wished to leave the country were required to submit by no later than 15 December 1939 a voluntary declaration of their will, "for all time, to renounce citizenship of Latvia". For its part, Germany undertook to take in these persons "with the intention of granting them German citizenship".[9]

The result of this emigration (which came to an end only in the spring of 1941) was the departure of a "national group" which had made an enormous cultural contribution to Latvia. The authoritarian regime headed by Kārlis Ulmanis did not try to hinder the departure of Germans from Latvia; rather, it facilitated the process. The question has been raised as to whether here an opportunity was missed, however slight, to deflect the course of events set in train by the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, and which was so fatal to the independence of Latvia. Had Latvia not cooperated with Berlin's plans concerning the emigration of the Baltic Germans, then following the precedent of the so-called Bromberg incident[10] Germany would have acted to defend the Baltic Germans, provoking it to breach the agreements in force between Germany and the Soviet Union.

[9] The State Historical Archives of Latvia, part of the National Archives of Latvia (further — LVVA), 2570. f., 3. apr., 368. l., 8. lp. Text of the Treaty on Movement of Latvian Citizens with German Nationality to Germany, 30 October 1939.

[10] After the German attack on Poland in September 1939, ethnic Germans in Poland often fell victim to violent personal attacks by their fellow Polish citizens. The best-known of these attacks were the events of 3 September (a Sunday) in Bydgoszcz or Bromberg (*Bromberger Blutsonntag*). Berlin took advantage of all of these excesses (German historians estimate that approximately 5000 Germans living in Poland perished, whereas Nazi propaganda put the figure at 55 000), to justify the cruel revenge taken later against the Polish people. The Bromberg bloodbath left a deep impression on the political leadership of Germany. Several German politicians and diplomats spread the view that the events in Bromberg prompted Hitler to decide in September 1939 to recall the Germans from Latvia and Estonia, i.e. those living in the sphere of interests of the USSR, so that, in case of occupation of the Baltic States, there would be no repetition of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. The "Bromberg Complex" often prevented German politicians from taking a realistic assessment of matters. The bloody events in Bromberg and other atrocities committed against local Germans were for a long time ignored by Polish historiography. The situation has changed today in that Polish historians admit to these events, but seek to minimise the number of victims. Kroska, M. Der "Bromberger Blutsonntag" 1939. Kontroversen und Forschungsergebnisse. *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, H. 2, 2012, S. 237–249.

The government of K. Ulmanis, which pinned its hopes of safeguarding state independence on Germany, decided on a different tactical course. It hoped for continued interest by Berlin in Latvia, by assuming external debt to compensate for property left behind by the Baltic Germans. Data from the Bank of Latvia show that, as of June 1940, Latvia had paid Germany a total of 24.9 million lats.[11] Germany considered that, at the time when Latvia was occupied, the total outstanding debt of Latvia in its favour was an additional 75.6 million lats.[12]

There was some rationale for this choice of tactic, since in the autumn of 1939 Berlin had for economic reasons[13] changed its hitherto indifferent position vis-à-vis the Baltic States[14] and showed interest in retaining future economic benefits from the Baltic region. Germany intimated to the Soviet Union that it would be best to separate their respective spheres of interest in the Baltic region, i.e. the Soviet Union would dominate the region politically and from a strategic stand point, whereas Germany would be guaranteed economic benefits.[15]

Moscow did not seek to contest the position advanced by Germany, and this encouraged Berlin in the belief that the Soviet Union would not seek to radically change the *status quo* in the Baltic States. Thus, the events of 15–17 June 1940, namely, the massive incursion by Soviet armed forces into the Baltic States, were an unexpected surprise. The speeded-up Soviet aggression in the Baltic (and simultaneously in Romania) greatly annoyed, even shocked, Berlin.[16] Initially (on 16 June) Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, wanted to assess the option of resisting Soviet actions, and asked his staff to prepare an appropriate report.[17] However, a day later (of course, after consulting with the Führer) he decided not to complicate Soviet–German relations following the events in the Baltic States, and wrote in a circular letter

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[11] LVVA, 6209. f., 1 apr., 41. l., 31. lp.

[12] *Diktierte Option: die Umsiedlung der Deutsch-Balten aus Estland und Lettland*. Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag, 1972, S. 408.

[13] The importance of exports from the Baltic States to the German war economy (raw materials, food) rose following the blockade declared by Great Britain in the autumn of 1939. German economic circles became convinced that handing the Baltic States to the Soviet Union had been a serious error. Berlin sought to mitigate this damage by establishing closer economic ties with Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Intense negotiations took place with the Baltic States about economic matters. These produced results that generally favoured Germany. The latter was able to take the lead position in the foreign trade of the Baltic States, partially integrating them into the "greater economic space" of Germany. In the spring of 1940, approximately 70% of exports by the Baltic States went to Germany. Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (PA AA), R 105190, 381715, Werner von Grundherr's Aufzeichnung, 17. Juni 1940.

[14] The fate of the Baltic States was of little importance to Germany even as late as September 1939. Edgars Krieviņš, the envoy of Latvia to Germany, sent a telegram to Riga on 26 September: "One hears talk in German economic circles that the Russians have not yet demanded the Baltic States, but if they were to do so, we would have to hand them over. Under today's circumstances three train-loads of fuel outweigh the worth of one Baltic State". LVVA, 2570. f., 5. apr., 62. l., 131. lp.

[15] Oberländer, E. Latvian–German Relations, 1939–1940. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2000, 41. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 1. sēj.).

[16] Fleischhauer, I. *Diplomatischer Widerstand gegen "Unternehmen Barbarosa": die Friedensbemühungen der Deutschen Botschaft Moskau 1939–1941*. Berlin: Ullstein, 1991, S. 170.

[17] Legationsrat von Sonnleithner (Büro RAM) an das Auswärtige Amt, 16. Juni 1940. *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik*, Serie D, Bd. IX. Frankfurt/Main, 1962, S. 482.

distributed to German ambassadors that these events were a matter concerning only Russia and the Baltic States.[18]

The Soviet Union had carefully prepared its incursion into the Baltic States and their occupation. A directive issued on 9 June 1940 by the USSR People's Commissariat for Defence contains important information about preparatory work to be undertaken for action against the Baltic States; until recently, this directive has rarely been mentioned by historians. The Baltic Sea Fleet was ordered to be ready by 12 June to carry out various combat operations including seizure of the Baltic navies and commercial fleets, to block access to the Gulf of Riga, and to patrol the Estonian and Latvian coast so as to prevent their governments from escaping and national armed forces evacuating, as well as removal of property; in addition, to organise landing a force in Paldiski and Tallinn, etc. According to the directive, the start of military operations would be ordered by the Commander of the Leningrad Military District.[19]

Military units of the USSR attacked the Latvian border post at Masļenki on 15 June 1940. This incident was intended either as a provocation, or a warning expressed in Stalinist style to the Latvian government not to resist under any circumstances. At 14:00, on 16 June, Vyacheslav Molotov, Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, read out to Fricis Kociņš, Envoy of Latvia, a fantastic and mendacious ultimatum by the Government of the USSR which demanded the resignation of the government of Latvia and the admission of an unlimited contingent of Soviet military units into Latvia,[20] with the remark: if no reply would be forthcoming by 23:00 from the Latvian Government, Soviet armed forces would enter Latvia and suppress all resistance.[21]

The government led by K. Ulmanis decided, on the evening of 16 June, to accede to the Soviet ultimatum and resign. The Cabinet of Ministers rejected the possibility of military resistance since this would entail bloodshed without saving the Latvian state.[22] Ulmanis, who entertained certain illusions about the possibility of retaining Latvian sovereignty, albeit in reduced form, decided against even symbolic resistance and even did not run the risk of expressing any diplomatic protest, actions which are evidence of incredible political myopia. Furthermore, Kārlis Zariņš, the Envoy of Latvia to Great Britain, received no instructions to activate the extraordinary powers that he had been granted on 17 May 1940, in order that he might politically and diplomatically continue the fight on behalf of Latvia.

Several Latvian and foreign historians have assessed the aggressive acts of the Soviet Union committed against the Baltic States in the light of provisions of the Hague Convention, The Laws and Customs of War on Land (1907). Usually reference is made to the definition therein of occupation as seizing territory belonging to another state

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[18] Legationsrat von Sonnleithner (Büro RAM) an das Auswärtige Amt, 16. Juni 1940, S. 492.

[19] Директива 02622 НКО СССР от 9 июня 1940 г. о действиях против Прибалтийских государств. Feldmanis, I. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945): jauns konceptuāls skatījums*. 2. pārstrād. izd. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2015, 96.–97. lpp.

[20] *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940*, 340.–342. lpp.

[21] Ibid., 348. lpp.

[22] Ibid., 21. lpp.

by military force, the occupying power taking over a number of administrative functions in the occupied territory. Article 42 of the Convention is usually cited, in which it is stated that an essential characteristic of occupation is "the territory … actually placed under the authority of the hostile army".[23]



Fig. 3. Soviet tanks on the streets of Riga, 17 June 1940. (*The Occupation Regimes and their Crimes in Baltic, 1940–1991.* Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia Publishers, 2006, p. 12)

This latter detail very precisely describes the situation in which the Baltic States found themselves as of June 1940. The legitimate governments of these countries lost their freedom to act, with real power exercised by Soviet embassies and by emissaries sent from Moscow.[24] The Soviet side, through recourse to threats, forced a new governments to be installed. Thus, on 20 June, the former Cabinet of Ministers headed by K. Ulmanis was replaced by an illegitimate and illegal Soviet puppet government headed by Augusts Kirhenšteins. This body was not an executive organ of Latvia; it represented the USSR's interests, and using it as a smoke screen Moscow prepared for the annexation of Latvia.

Many Russian historians have followed the line decreed by the Kremlin and seek to ignore the evident reality that occupation does not necessarily follow solely from explicit hostilities, since in international law distinction is drawn between various forms of occupation.[25] For example, Stanislav Chernichenko, a Russian specialist in international relations, is convinced that it is possible to speak only of a military form of occupation, which applies when a state of war exists between countries, but not to occupation that occurs during peace time, since "no such institution has ever been a part of international law, and none exists today". In his opinion non-military operation is only possible in cases where uninhabited territory which belongs to no one is acquired.[26]

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[23] Meissner, B. The Occupation of the Baltic States from a Present-Day Perspective. *The Baltic States at Historical Crossroads*. 2nd ed. Rīga: Latvian Academy of Sciences, 2001, p. 441; Feldmanis, I. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 32. lpp., etc.

[24] Andrei Vyshinsky arrived in Latvia on 18 June 1940 to take real power in the country as the official representative of the Soviet Union. The dispatch to Riga of a Soviet emissary for the purpose of nominating a new government was a blatant violation of Article 5 of the USSR–Latvia Mutual Assistance Pact which stated that implementation of the Pact in no way impacts the sovereign rights of the signatories, their form of government, their economic and social systems, as well as military activities. See: *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940*, 119. lpp.

[25] Мялксоо, Л. *Советская аннексия и государственный континуитет: муждународно — правовой статус Эстонии. Латвии и Литвы в 1940–1991 гг. и после 1991 г.* Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2005, с. 202.

[26] Черниченко, С. Об "оккупации" Прибалтики и нарушении прав русскоязычного населении. *Международная жизнь*, № 8, 2004, с. 12. Accessible at: http://shtab-media.russian-latvia.info/docs/occupation-chernichenko.pdf

In his discussion of the question of the Baltic States, S. Chernichenko ignores the fact that incursion by the Soviet Union was not covered by any provision set out in a legal document, given that the agreement on military bases did not call for introduction of additional military units. This does not preclude his assertion that there can be no discussion of the Baltic States being occupied by the Soviet armed forces since in 1940 the Soviet Union was not in a state of war with Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The Red Army did not attack these countries and did not occupy their territory without their consent. Therefore, the Soviet armed forces did not constitute a hostile military force, and "their entry into the territory of the Baltic States cannot be deemed to have been occupation".[27]

A similar view is taken by the Russian historian Mikhail Meltyukhov[28] in his recent book, *The Baltic Springboard*.[29] In contrast, the Russian scholar Jelena Zubkova concedes that the activities of the Soviet Union in the Baltic from the start of the invasion (15–17 June 1940) until the decision by the Supreme Soviet to accept the "accession" of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to the Soviet Union in early August, can be seen as "a military occupation", if not "literally" then by its nature.[30]

After the occupation of Latvia in June 1940, Moscow worked toward complete annexation. The Soviet side actively interfered in the internal affairs of Latvia. Soviet authorities created a powerful security apparatus in which all the decisions were taken by individuals who had come to Latvia from the USSR. They took over the political institutions of Latvia and began surveillance of the inhabitants, their arrest, and deportation.[31] An unprecedented incursion into internal affairs was the creation of the Baltic Military District with headquarters in Riga. The relevant order was issued by the USSR Defence Commissar dated 11 July 1940.[32] Thus, a military administrative structure of another state — the Soviet Union — was established on the territory of another formally independent state.

The Soviet Union paid great attention to misleading public attention. It sought to portray the annexation of Latvia as a legitimate process which took the form of "voluntary" accession. Actions taken by Latvian State President K. Ulmanis proved to be very helpful to the Soviet side. He continued in office after 17 June 1940 and collaborated with the Soviet occupation authorities, signing and promogulating laws which helped to eradicate Latvian independence. Until 21 July 1940, when he lost his post as State President, Ulmanis approved more than 50 such laws.[33] Dietrich André Loeber, a respected Baltic German constitutional legal scholar, is unsparing in his as-

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[27] Черниченко, С. Об "оккупации" Прибалтики и нарушении прав русскоязычного населении, с. 13.

[28] Мельтюхов, М. Борьба за Прибалтику. *Историк*, 2015, ноябрь, с. 71. Accessible at: http://xn--h1aagokeh.xn--p1ai/journal/борьба-за-прибалтику/

[29] Мельтюхов, М. *Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940): возвращение Советского Союза на берега Балтийского моря.* Москва: Алгоритм, 2014.

[30] Зубкова, Е. *Прибалтика и Кремль: 1940–1953*. Москва: Российская политическая энциклопедия; Фонд первого Президента России Б. Н. Ельцина, 2008, с. 100.

[31] Lēbers, D. A. Latvijas valsts bojāeja 1940. gadā. Starptautiski tiesiskie aspekti. *Latvijas valsts atjaunošana: 1986–1993*. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 1998, 23.–24. lpp.

[32] *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940*, 461.–462. lpp.

[33] Lēbers, D. A. Latvijas valsts bojāeja 1940. gadā, 33. lpp.

sessment: by promulgating laws passed by the government headed by A. Kirhenšteins, Ulmanis strengthened "Soviet power and with it the occupying regime".[34]

This harsh assessment is readily substantiated, for example, by K. Ulmanis' promogulating, on 10 July 1940, of a law abolishing the Latvian Home Guard, which dealt a fundamental blow to the basis of the state of Latvia. The remit of this, the largest mass organisation in Latvia, was to promote public order and peace in the country, to support the police, and during war the armed forces.[35] The Home Guard also guided the public in raising national spirit. Now, thanks to the signature of its "highest leader", i.e. Ulmanis the solemn oath sworn by members of this organisation "to defend the independence of Latvia" became a hollow phrase.[36]

K. Ulmanis had almost no means of influencing the government led by A. Kirhenšteins. We must agree with D. A. Loeber who pointed out that: "With the Saeima (the Latvian Parliament) not working, the power of the State President to dissolve the Saeima, and then to nominate a new Prime Minister was void. The State President was also unable, in the absence of a functioning Saeima, to exercise his right of veto: not to promulgate laws (Article 72 of the *Satversme*, the Constitution of Latvia). K. Ulmanis never exercised his remaining right to protest matters by resigning from office (Article 52 of the *Satversme*)."[37]

The collaboration tactic followed vis-à-vis the Soviet Union was quite unsuccessful. K. Ulmanis and his associates achieved nothing through placating the Soviet side and being compliant[38], and had no chance of achieving anything. They simply failed to understand the dishonest and shameless policies of Joseph Stalin, and his gigantic ambitions. Still it is debatable how harshly we should judge Ulmanis' tactic. Latvian historian Daina Bleiere offers her view, with which one may tentatively agree: "No matter how we might judge the actions of K. Ulmanis during June and July 1940, they were based on an attempt to save the Latvian state, even one with the same status as Mongolia.[39] If his calculations turned out to be wrong, then the fault was human and political weakness, not malevolence or a desire to harm the state."[40] It is, however, clear that the position adopted by Ulmanis showed glaring political myopia, and its deleterious consequences for the interests of Latvia are still felt today. Several Russian historians and international legal experts have been quick to seize upon the fact of this cooperation to deny that the occupation of Latvia ever took place.

Holding elections in 1940 for a new convocation of the Saeima had a special place in the Soviet strategy as it was followed in Latvia. With disregard for constitutional provisions, new elections were called in all three Baltic States, and these duly took

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[34] Lēbers, D. A. Latvijas valsts bojāeja 1940. gadā, 33. lpp.

[35] *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940*, 457. lpp.

[36] Lēbers, D. A. Latvijas valsts bojāeja 1940. gadā, 33. lpp.

[37] Ibid., 33.–34. lpp.

[38] On 22 July 1940, K. Ulmanis was deported to Russia on the basis of an administrative act. He was arrested in June 1941 after the outbreak of war between the USSR and Germany. He died in prison on 20 September 1942.

[39] The People's Republic of Mongolia became the second socialist state in the world on 26 September 1924.

[40] Bleiere, D. Par kolaborāciju: definīcijas, klasifikācija, pielietojamība vācu un padomju okupācijas pētniecībā Latvijā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 2014, 153. lpp.

place in the presence of the occupying Soviet military units. In Latvia the government headed by A. Kirhenšteins did not act according to constitutional provisions for constituting a new convocation of the Saeima, which was the sole legal manner to proceed, but instead adopted a new special law on holding elections for the Saeima, a law which contradicted fundamental principles of the *Satversme*.[41]

Elections were duly held in Latvia on 14 and 15 July 1940, but votes could be cast only for a single list of candidates — that of the "Block of the Working People" — since all other candidate lists had been refused registration. The official result was that this list had received 97.6% of all votes cast.[42] The results of these elections were falsified,[43] and did not reflect the will of the people. The Soviet news agency TASS provided information in Moscow about the election results 12 hours before the start of vote counting in Latvia.[44]

Notwithstanding the fact that the political platform of the "Block of the Working People" contained no reference to establishing Soviet power in Latvia and joining the USSR,[45] the Saeima, which had been illegally elected and which acted as an agent of Moscow,[46] proclaimed Latvia to be a socialist republic and submitted an application to be received into the USSR.[47] A declaration, "On the Admission of Latvia to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics", was adopted without any debate; it changed the form of governance of Latvia and formally liquidated its independence, ignoring constitutional requirements such as Article 77 of the *Satversme*. Therefore, the Declaration and subsequent admission of Latvia to the USSR contravened Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the *Satversme* and, as such, were anti-constitutional.[48]

The illegal annexation of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and their incorporation by the Soviet Union was completed in August 1940, when the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted laws to this effect. Many countries around the world did not recognise these changes brought about by force in the Baltic region,[49] which furthermore contravened

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41 Ziemele, I. *Latvijas republikas starptautiski tiesiskais statuss. Latvija. Starptautiskās organizācijas. Starptautiskie līgumi.* Rīga: Saeimas kanceleja, 1995, 9. lpp.

42 *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940*, 554. lpp.

43 Kusiņš, G. Latvijas valstiskuma konstitucionālā attīstība. *Latvija. Starptautiskās organizācijas. Starptautiskie līgumi*. Rīga, 1995, 15. lpp.

44 Newmann, B. Baltic Background. London: Robert Hale, 1948, p. 163.

45 Par mieru, par maizi, par tautas brīvību. *Cīņa*, Nr. 19, 1940, 1. lpp.

46 Lēbers, D. A. Latvijas valsts bojāeja 1940. gadā, 28. lpp.

47 See the record of the first session in 1940 of the newly elected Saeima, Latvijas Tautas Saeimas 1. sesija. 1940. gada 21.–23. jūlijs: stenogrammu atreferējums. Rīga: Valsts apgādniecība, Latvijas Tautas Saeima, 1940, 33.–35. lpp.

48 Kusiņš, G. Latvijas valstiskuma konstitucionālā attīstība, 15. lpp.

49 The policy of non-recognition of the annexation of the Baltic States was initiated by the United States of America. On 23 July 1940, Acting US Secretary of State Sumner Welles issued a Declaration in which the American position was clearly defined as regards the Soviet occupation of the Baltic State, strongly condemning the devious ways and methods the USSR employed in extinguishing the independence of the Baltic States, a process which at that time was nearing completion. From the date of this Declaration onwards the USA did not recognise the incorporation of the Baltic States by the USSR either *de facto,* or *de iure*. This was a unique precedent in international relations, since it was a position sustained for more than 50 years.

a number of multi-lateral and bi-lateral international agreements,[50] and the absence of any voluntary Treaty of Union, together with transgression of the principles of international law. Boris Meissner, the recognised German legal scholar, has highlighted the fact that, "the Soviet Union concluded a contract with itself, and through the act of annexation, explicitly violated the sovereignty of the Baltic States, and also trampled on the right to self-determination of the Baltic peoples which was the basis for the 1920 Peace Treaties".[51]

Debate about the issue of the illegal annexation and occupation was revived among Baltic historians in 2006 by the publication of a collection of documents with the title, "The USSR and Lithuania", which were jointly selected by historians from Russia and Lithuania, wherein the fact of an occupation was recognised.[52] Two members of the editorial board of this compilation, Alvydas Nikžentaitis and Česlovas Laurinavičius, in an article in the journal, *Akiračiai,* clearly state that: "After long discussion, those compiling this collection decided to consider the date 3 August 1940 (the date of annexation of Lithuania by the USSR – *I. F.*) to mark an end to the occupation of the Republic of Lithuania and the start of its annexation. This was a prerequisite to clarify the legal tangle resulting from the use of the concepts of occupation and annexation in Lithuania and the other Baltic States, and it is this conclusion, not the new facts, which is the most valuable contribution made by this publication."[53]

This meant that these Lithuanian historians (as well as historians from Russia involved in the project[54]) defend the unacceptable thesis that the start of annexation of Lithuania on 3 August 1940 marked the end of the occupation of Lithuania. The Lithuanian historian Tomas Baranauskas correctly pointed out that in legal terms, this might mean only one thing: recognition that annexation was legitimate and also that from August 1940 Lithuania was legally a part of the USSR.[55]

The Russian historian J. Zubkova has expressed views that are similar in political terms to those offered by the editors of the previously mentioned publication. She points out that the concept of "occupation" does not correspond to the long-term plans the USSR had for the Baltic region, nor for how events developed in this region. First, Soviet power was intended to exist there for a long time, while occupation is a transient phenomenon. Secondly, and this is the crux of her argument, the Baltic States lost their sovereignty and became part of the Soviet Union, with, furthermore, the same order and laws applicable to the Baltic region as throughout the entire territory

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[50] The USSR violated the Kellog–Briand Pact of 27 August 1928 (Aristide Briand — Foreign Minister of France, Frank Kellog — US Secretary of State) which outlawed war as a means of conducting national policy. The Pact was agreed by 63 states from around the world. Moscow also violated a number of bi-lateral agreements with the Baltic States such as the 1920 Peace Treaties, and the 1939 Mutual Assistance Pacts, etc.

[51] Meissner, B. The Occupation of the Baltic States from a Present-Day Perspective, p. 444.

[52] *СССР и Литва в годы второй мировой войны. Т. 1. СССР и Литовская Республика (март 1939 – август 1940): сборник документов.* Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2006, с. 55.

[53] Cited from: Baranausks, T. Kurp ved Alvīda Nikžentaiša Lietuvas vēstures revīzija? *Latvijas Vēsture. Jaunie un Jaunākie Laiki*, Nr. 4, 2008, 114. lpp.

[54] Aleksandr Chubarian and Natalja Lebedeva were the historians from Russia who helped compile this publication.

[55] Baranausks, T. Kurp ved Alvīda Nikžentaiša Lietuvas vēstures revīzija?, 115. lpp.

of the USSR. The inhabitants of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia became Soviet citizens and received Soviet passports, which does not correspond to practices carried out under occupation.[56]

It is very difficult to agree with the views of J. Zubkova. First of all, one must note that Soviet order was imposed on the Baltic peoples, including Latvians, with the majority not regarding themselves as Soviet citizens, and remaining loyal to the state of Latvia, which *de facto* had been destroyed by Soviet occupation. They felt no ownership of the Soviet republic that was established, and did not feel themselves beholden to it. This is readily understood. The German historian Björn Felder has formulated an accurate picture of the past in his book published in 2011, *Latvia during the Second World War*, where he states that: "The Latvian SSR in fact was not a Latvian entity: Russians and Russian-speakers increasingly dominated leading positions of state and Party authority."[57]

The question of the duration of the period of occupation of the Baltic States is relevant with respect to international law. Moscow was unable to gain acceptance by international opinion that the annexation and incorporation of the Baltic States in 1940 by the USSR was a legitimate process, given that this annexation was based on illegal actions — intervention and occupation. It was acquisition by force of territory of a different state, a form of annexation forbidden by modern international law, and, therefore, it had no legally valid consequences. There was furthermore no legitimate change in sovereignty — the annexed states retained their sovereignty, but the state which annexed them did not acquire it. The status of the Baltic States as subjects of international law did not lapse. Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia continued to exist *de iure*, and this was recognised by more than 50 states.

Many specialists of international law are of like mind that, until the end of the Second World War, international legal practice admitted that annexation may be legal if the international community grants recognition. This did not happen in the case of the Baltic States. Annexation was not legal, and, therefore, occupation persisted for these states until 1991. The Estonian lawyer Lauri Mälksoo has pointed out in his publication, *Soviet Annexation and State Continuity*, that: "Given that the annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union was not based on international law, and also since a substantial part of the international community refused formally to recognise this conquest, means that the USSR failed to achieve complete legal title to the Baltic States, and this means that automatically the occupation regime continued until Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia renewed their independence in 1991."[58]

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[56] Зубкова, Е. *Прибалтика и Кремль: 1940–1953*, с. 100.

[57] Felder, B. *Lettland im Zweiten Weltkrieg: zwishen sowjetischen und deutschen Besatzern 1940–1946*. Padeborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009, S. 93.

[58] Мялксоо, Л. *Советская аннексия и государственный континуитет: муждународно – правовой статус Эстонии. Латвии и Литвы в 1940–1991 гг. и после 1991 г.*, с. 219–220.

Sovietisation and repression

Sovietisation proceeded at a rapid pace after the illegal annexation of Latvia by the USSR,[59] a process which meant that Latvia was to be as quickly and as fully as possible integrated into the political, administrative, and economic system of the Soviet Union.[60] An extensive programme was set in motion to transform or to abolish certain Latvian national institutions. In an effort to isolate Latvia from foreign contacts Soviet authorities hurriedly closed the foreign trade department of the Finance Ministry,[61] the Ministry for Foreign Affairs[62], and partially eliminated Latvian diplomatic representation abroad, formally closing 16 legations and 194 consulates.[63] Some members of the diplomatic and consular services of the Republic of Latvia remained abroad and strove to represent internationally the interests of the *de iure* existing Republic of Latvia; from 1940 to 1963 they were led by Kārlis Zariņš, the envoy of Latvia resident in London.

The Sovietisation of Latvia was a process led by and strictly supervised by Moscow.[64] The occupation authorities sought to impose radical changes in all aspects of public life, which touched each and every member of the population. All public organisations were rapidly liquidated and the basis for civil society was destroyed.[65] Fundamental changes took place in public social life; the old elite lost its influence, while a new elite was in the process of formation, an elite that was loyal to the Soviet regime. However, it proved impossible during the space of one year of "socialist transformation" to complete the process, and in some domains this transformation was purely formal and remained incomplete.

While members of the Communist Party were assigned a leading and important role in the Sovietisation process, the Latvian Communist Party at the outset of Soviet occupation was numerically quite small, with only 967 members.[66] Nevertheless, it proved possible to achieve a rapid rise in these numbers (in December 1940, there were at least three times as many members as at the moment of occupation), with this increase mostly due to individuals coming to Latvia. Latvia was deluged with hundreds of party and other officials of different ranks who were sent in from Moscow; these

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[59] The first preparatory Sovietisation measures affected Latvia during the last ten days of July 1940, while it was formally still an independent state. On 22 July, the newly "elected" People's Saeima, ignoring pre-election promises, declared all land to belong to the people, as well as prescribed the nationalisation of all banks and large industrial, commerce, and transport enterprises. This was immediately followed by confiscation of all banks, credit institutions, and medium sized commercial, industrial, and transport undertakings.

[60] Bleiere, D. Latvijas sovetizācija un tās ietekme uz sabiedrību un ekonomiku. *Latvieši un Latvija, II sēj. Valstiskums Latvijā un Latvijas valsts — izcīnītā un zaudētā*. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 470. lpp.

[61] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991: dokumentu krājums*. Rīga: Nordik, 1999, 103. lpp.

[62] The Ministry for Foreign Affairs notified the Telegraph Agency of Latvia and other institutions that its central institution has ended its operation as of 31 August 1940. See: Lerhis, A. *Latvijas Republikas Ārlietu dienests 1918–1941*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2005, 241. lpp.

[63] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991*, 102. lpp.

[64] Bleiere, D. Latvijas sovetizācija un tās ietekme uz sabiedrību un ekonomiku, 471. lpp.

[65] Ibid., 472. lpp.

[66] *Коммунистическая партия Латвии в цифрах (1904–1971 гг.).* Рига: Лиесма, 1972, с. 72.

persons were concentrated in central administrative bodies, as well as in the larger cities. There were a particularly large number of such arrivals, i.e. Party members, in the security services.

The occupation authorities paid particular attention to the armed forces of Latvia, initiating reforms in the Latvian Army with a view to disbanding it piece by piece. The old leadership of the Latvian Army was dismissed and replaced in June 1940 with headquarters staff obliged to cooperate with the commanders of the Red Army; all patriotic army officers were dismissed. An important step in the reform of the Latvian armed forces consisted of introduction of the same internal control system as was present in the Red Army. On 4 July, the government of A. Kirhenšteins honoured the demand made by Lt. General Fyodor Kuznetsov, commander of the Red Army units stationed in Latvia, and adopted a law on the introduction of political officers, with this law promulgated on 8 July by K. Ulmanis. This law provided for "the education of all army personnel in the spirit of democratic changes under way in the country, one that was based on the brotherly friendship of the Latvian people and the peoples of the Soviet Union".[67] (Bruno Kalniņš, a Social Democrat, was appointed as political commander of the army.) D. A. Loeber points out that this law flagrantly violated the Defence Law adopted on 3 May 1940 which required all citizens to defend "state independence" and required that the armed forces "take part in defence of the state".[68]

On 27 August 1940, Aleksandr Loktionov, Commander of the Special Baltic Military District, issued an order forming the 24th Territorial Corps comprising two divisions on the basis of the Army of Latvia;[69] one month later, the Ministry of War of Latvia ceased its function. Simultaneously there was an increase in repression of soldiers and officers of the Army of Latvia, which "culminated on 14 June 1941 when some 550–555 army personnel stationed in summer camps at Litene, Ostrovieši, and elsewhere were arrested, and transported to previously readied train carriages and then deported to places of confinement in Russia, where most were either killed or died after being subjected to inhuman living and working conditions".[70]

The Sovietisation of the economy which had begun in the last ten days of July 1940 progressed at a rapid pace. Nationalisation was all-encompassing — not only all banks, industries and commercial enterprises were nationalised without compensation, but also workshops, privately-owned dwellings, hotels, hospitals, and pharmacies. In general terms, nationalisation was complete by the beginning of 1941, although nationalisation of small privately owned entities continued through the spring months. Even small shops were eliminated during the month of May. Latvian historian Aivars Stranga has pointed out that on the eve of the Nazi German invasion in June 1941 the

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[67] *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940*, 457.–458. lpp.

[68] Lēbers, D. A. Latvijas valsts bojāeja 1940. gadā, 33. lpp.

[69] Jēkabsons, Ē., Bambals, A. Latvijas armijas iznīcināšana un represijas pret tās karavīriem 1940.–1941.gadā. *Totalitārie režīmi un to represijas Latvijā 1940.–1956. gadā*, 138. lpp.

[70] Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas armijas iznīcināšana un Sarkanās armijas 24. teritoriālais korpuss 1940.–1941. gadā: izpētes stāvoklis un iespējas. *Otrais pasaules karš un Latvija: notikumi un sekas. 20. gadsimta 40.–60. gadi.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2011, 215. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 27. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/ items/PDF/Latvijas%20Vesturnieku%20komisijas%20raksti_27.pdf

private sector was responsible for less than 5% of total industrial output, while private commerce contributed less than 10% of total turnover.[71]

The financial policies implemented by the regime had catastrophic consequences. A crisis in the money system started to appear during the summer of 1940, with the rapid fall in the purchasing power of the lat, since both locals and new arrivals bought up everything massively and without discrimination. The situation became truly difficult after 25 November, when the worthless Soviet rouble was declared to be legal tender in parallel with the lat, at a ridiculous rate of one rouble equals one lat (a few months earlier when Latvia was still independent 1 lat could be bought for 10 roubles).[72] The lat was taken out of circulation on 25 March 1941, with only the rouble remaining as legal tender. The residents of Latvia were compelled, shortly before the German invasion, to take out state loans, which was yet another form of expropriation.[73]

Agrarian reform took place during the first year of Soviet occupation (it had to be completed by 25 September 1940), the true purpose of which, according to the Latvian researcher Irēne Šneidere, was two-fold: "to nationalise land in private ownership (land had been declared by law[74] to "belong to the people", and all land was confiscated without compensation, with farm land allocated only for use) and to create a large number of small holdings in the countryside (…), which later could readily be collectivised".[75] Land reform restricted the maximum size of individual farms to 30 hectares.[76] Small strips of land taken from large farms, as well as all land owned by churches, parishes, monasteries, by "enemies of the people" (the latter label could be attributed to anyone seen as undesirable by the occupation authorities), and land speculators, was placed into a state land trust and parcelled out to landless peasants and small holders. In all 51 762 new farms with 10 hectares of land were created together with a further 23 321 small holdings (with land less than 10 hectares).[77] These small holdings were not viable and those farming them were destined for poverty, but many who had been allotted such holdings became supporters of Soviet power, since they felt that the authorities were attending to the needs of the poor. The Soviet regime accomplished its second goal in that land reform exacerbated political and social differences among the rural population.

The ultimate aim of Soviet agrarian policies was and remained collectivisation. Nevertheless, the possibility of kolkhozes being created was an issue that greatly perturbed the residents of Latvia. Therefore, explicit discussion of this issue was avoided,

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[71] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvijas vēsture. 20. gadsimts*. 2. papild. izd. Rīga: Jumava, 2005, 225. lpp.

[72] Ibid., 226. lpp.

[73] Ibid.

[74] The Law on Land was adopted by the A. Kirhenšteins-led government on 29 July 1940.

[75] Šneidere, I. Padomju valdības plāni Baltijā pirmajā okupācijas gadā. *Ārvalstu arhīvu dokumenti par okupācijas režīmu politiku Latvijā 1940–1968*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, 21. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 22.sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/items/PDF/item_1677_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti _22_sejums.pdf

[76] Law on Land, published in, *Valdības Vēstnesis*, Nr. 171, 1940, 1. lpp.

[77] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvijas vēsture. 20. gadsimts*, 228. lpp.

but, instead, practical measures were implemented so that this process might eventually take place.[78] Movement towards collectivisation was accelerated after an investigative commission headed by Andrei Andreev, Central Committee Secretary of the All-Union Communist (bolshevik) Party arrived in the Baltic in December 1940 to assess the progress of Sovietisation in the Baltic. His recommendation, contained in a report to the leadership of the USSR, was to begin creation of kolkhozes and sovhozes[79] in the Baltic.[80] Three officially recognised kolkhozes were established in Latvia in June 1941, shortly before the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union.

Sovietisation processes relied upon terror as the principal means to accomplish their goals. In November 1940, laws of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic entered into force on the territory of Latvia: namely, the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code. These laws had retroactive force, which resulted in many tragic outcomes.[81] Arrested individuals were accused of crimes that they could not have committed while living in independent Latvia, at a time when the Criminal Codes of Russia were not in force in Latvia. A. Stranga has remarked that: "The most odious provision was Article 58-1a, which foresaw the most stringent penalties for "treason". Not one resident of Latvia arrested and tried under this article had committed treason against Latvia, yet they were accused of having committed treason against Soviet Russia allegedly during the 1920s and 1930s when they were not citizens of Russia."[82]

Thousands of individuals in Latvia were subjected to repression by the occupation authorities. At least 7292 individuals were arrested in Latvia during the first period of Soviet occupation.[83] The most publicly visible example of terror was a mass deportation from Latvia which took place on 14 June 1941. On that day, 15 424 individuals[84] were transported against their will to northern Russia and Siberia, out of which 15%

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[78] The creation of motor tractor stations and their associated facilities to loan out farm machinery and horses, may be seen as a measure aimed at facilitating the creation of kolkhozes. The first motor tractor stations were set up starting in September 1940.

[79] Soviet (state-owned) farms (sovkhozs) were also parts of the socialist sector in agriculture. In the spring of 1941, in total 33 Soviet farms were organised in Latvia.

[80] For the text of his report, "VK(b)P Centrālās komitejas sekretāra A. Andrejeva ziņojums VK(b)P CK sekretāram J. Staļinam un PSRS Tautas komisāru padomes priekšsēdētājam V. Molotovam par stāvokli Latvijā, Lietuvā un Igaunijā pēc to okupācijas un par turpmākiem sovetizācijas plāniem", see: *Ārvalstu arhīvu dokumenti par okupācijas režīmu politiku Latvijā 1940–1968*, 35. lpp.

[81] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991*, 100., 122. lpp.

[82] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvijas vēsture. 20. gadsimts*, 233. lpp.

[83] Stranga, A. Latvijas okupācija un iekļaušana PSRS (1940–1941). *Latvijas Vēsture. Jaunie un Jaunākie Laiki*, Nr. 2, 2004, 70. lpp.

[84] Of those to be deported, 5263 residents of Latvia were arrested and tried later. See: Riekstiņš, J. 1941. gada 14. jūnija deportācija Latvijā. *Aizvestie. 1941. gada 14. jūnijs*. Rīga: Nordik, 2001, 14. lpp. It is known that heads of families (usually men) were informed of their arrest at the railway stations where deportees were concentrated; they were then separated by force from their families and sent to Gulag camps (acronym derived from the Russian title for the Chief Directorate of Labour Corrective Camps, i.e. *Главное управление исправительно — трудовых лагерей — I. F.*) — Vjatlag, Norillag, Sevurallag, Usollag, etc. Hundreds of deportees were condemned to death. See: Šneidere, I. Padomju pirmā okupācija: daži aspekti. *Totalitārie okupācijas režīmi Latvijā 1940.–1964. gadā*. 2. izd. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 19. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 13. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president .lv/images/modules/items/PDF/item_1618_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_13_sejums.pdf

(in absolute numbers, more than 2300) were children ten years old or younger.[85] Of all who were deported, 6081 individuals perished (700 were shot during incarceration, and 5381 died in prison, or in special settlements),[86] i.e. nearly 40%. Many of those who died were infants.

The aim of this deportation was to eradicate or to neutralise the political, economic, and social elite of Latvia. Individuals were deported without charges being brought, without trial, and without the possibility of defence. The grounds for arrest and deportation of individuals (their family members were also deported) was their profession, social standing, membership of certain political and public organisations. The deportees included merchants, entrepreneurs, army officers, members of the police, as well as officials, schoolteachers, medical doctors, religious ministers, etc.[87]

Soviet terror took on a particularly inhuman form after Germany attacked the Soviet Union. Secret policemen (*chekists*) arranged mass murder in the prisons of Latvia, where at least 349 political prisoners were killed, and the remainder (3458) "were evacuated to the interior of Russia, where the majority were killed".[88] By an irony of fate, the invasion by the Nazis prevented further mass deportations of the residents of Latvia, as the deportation effected on 14 June 1941 was to be followed by other similar actions. Documents held in archives show that additional lists of "harmful elements" were being drawn up.[89]

Loss of state independence and repression were the principal reasons why many residents of Latvia did not wish to acquiesce to the Soviet regime. Resistance to the occupation regime was heightened by economic policies which destroyed the well-organised, prosperous economy of Latvia, impoverishing many persons. Soviet ideology, which was foisted upon them in all manner of ways, was unacceptable for the majority of the population. Communist ideas were disseminated intrusively, and popularised by the press and radio. Schools were transformed into ideological establishments where all manner of free thought, that which did not conform to Marxist-Leninist dogma, was extirpated. Even the daily life of individuals was saturated with ideological events organised by the occupiers through special meetings at places of work, agitation via the cinema and through theatre performances, etc.

National resistance to the occupation regime started in the autumn of 1940 involving patriotic school children, students, officers, and officials. A number of resistance groups and organisations were formed — *Tēvijas sargi* (Guards of Fatherland), Latvian National Legion, *Jaunlatvieši* (New Latvians), *Latviešu tautas apvienība* (Latvian People's Union), *Kaujas organizācija Latvijas atbrīvošanai* (Battle Organisation for Liberation of Latvia), whose main goals were to overthrow the occupation regime, and to

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[85] Zālīte, I., Eglīte, S. 1941. gada deportācijas struktūranalīze. *Aizvestie: 1941. gada 14. jūnijs*. Rīga: Nordik, 2001, 687.–688. lpp.

[86] Ibid., 688. lpp.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Stranga, A. Latvijas okupācija un iekļaušana PSRS (1940–1941), 70. lpp.

[89] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991*. 101. lpp.

renew Latvian independence.[90] However, due to a lack of conspiratorial skills and underestimation of the abilities of the Soviet special services, most of these resistance groups were eliminated by the spring of 1941.

Armed resistance groups, so-called national partisan units, sprang up haphazardly at various locations in Latvia after the deportations of 14 June 1941, and the outbreak of the Soviet–German war on 22 June. Many Latvian historians share a consensus opinion that the goal of these national partisan groups was restoration of Latvian independence and saving the people from actions that would repeat the deportations of 14 June. The results of these partisan units is assessed in much the same way by various historians — they helped the Germans driving Red Army units from Latvia, and in many cases prevented the Red Army from taking out its wrath on the civilian population, or laying waste to the countryside. The only differences of opinion concern the extent and methods of fighting carried out by the partisan units. For example, Andrievs Ezergailis considers that, "the total number of armed units could not have exceeded 20 over the entire territory of Latvia",[91] while Heinrihs Strods asserts that the partisan movement was very wide-spread, in that it encompassed one quarter of all civil parishes (i.e. 129 civil parishes), and the total numbers involved were between 6000 and 8500 men. He initiated labelling this movement as "an uprising of the people against communist occupation".[92]

Disappointed expectations

The Soviet occupation of Latvia was replaced, for a time, by Nazi occupation. Germany attacked the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. Combat operations reached the territory of Latvia within the first few days thereafter. The German Army had prepared well, and rapidly achieved decisive results; active fighting ceased on the territory of Latvia by 5 July. Latvia passed completely under the control of Nazi Germany, and the regime installed by the Nazis lasted for nearly four years.

In any analysis of the complex situation in Latvia during the period of Nazi occupation, due account must be taken of the sentiments, needs, and interests of the people of Latvia, as these are important and inalienable elements for evaluating the overall picture of events during this period of history. Every attempt at precisely reconstructing these leads to better understanding of historical reality. It is inappropriate, as has long been the case by advocates of the "victors' version", simply to moralise and reproach Latvians that they chose the wrong strategy in their struggle to renew their state, given that Germany was then the only real power that could help sustain this struggle.

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[90] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 211. lpp.

[91] Ezergailis, A. *Holokausts vācu okupētajā Latvijā 1941–1944.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 58. lpp.

[92] Strods, H. Sarkanarmijas haotiskā atkāpšanās no Latvijas (1941. gada 22. jūnijs – 5. jūlijs). *Latvijas Okupācijas muzeja gadagrāmata 2001.* Rīga: Latvijas 50 gadu okupācijas muzeja fonds, 2002, 54. lpp.



Fig. 4. German forces in Riga. 1 July 1941. (Archive material held at Latvijan War Museum)

The general attitude of the Latvian people and that of various social classes and groups during the second period of occupation, as well as changes in their attitude towards Germans, is an important issue that merits investigation. Despite several positive tendencies in studying this question which have appeared in recent years, it is premature today to speak of great advances in understanding. Publications which have appeared thus far about the attitude of the Latvian people feature only general assessments. For example, the Year of Terror had caused Latvians to feel such grief, to feel doomed, and aroused such hatred of the Russian occupiers that many persons welcomed the "ancient enemy", the Germans, as liberators in the summer of 1941. A Swedish reporter, Arvid Fredborg, who was present in Riga on 1 July when German Army units entered Riga, wrote a book in 1944 where he recalled that: "Another advantage enjoyed by the Germans was public feeling. An overwhelming majority of Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians — perhaps more than 95 percent — saw the Germans as liberators. (…) No one could mistake the spontaneous outburst of deeply-felt emotions."[93]

People in Latvia felt as if they had been saved from certain death, they regained their joy of living, self-respect, hopes. They felt as if Latvia had returned to Europe after an enforced stay abroad. They were convinced that they as a people and a country had regained their freedom. Modris Ekšteins, a Canadian historian of Latvian origin, is precise, even poetic in his evaluation of the time: "After a year of Bolshevik terror, German rule was like a sweet dream, the return of light; Germans were taken to be friends and saviours."[94] The Latvian historian Indulis Kažociņš presents a similar view of events of those days[95], with other colourful and positive views of the new occupiers found in Latvian literary works.[96]

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[93] Cited from: Lācis, V. *Latviešu leģions patiesības gaismā*. Rīga: Jumava, 2006, 44. lpp.

[94] Eksteins, M. *Walking Since Daybreak: a Story of Eastern Europe, World War II and the Heart of Our Century*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999, pp. 131–132.

[95] See: Kažociņš, I. *Latviešu karavīri zem svešiem karogiem*. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 1999, 69. lpp.

[96] An eyewitness, the well-known Latvian author Zigmunds Skujiņš, has written: "Elegant persons walked without a care in the world through the centre of Riga, elegant German military gentlemen, wearing medals, rings, with deerskin gloves clenched in hand. (…) Artists in military uniforms were seated among the ruins and debris — one was finishing a water-colour, another was painting with oil colours, yet another was sketching with a piece of graphite. Oh, how these self-confident Europeans differed from the hounded, haggard mob of exhibitionists who had just departed from Riga!" Skujiņš, Z. *Sarunas ar jāņtārpiņiem (no bezmiega melnrakstiem).* Rīga: Preses nams, 1992, 91. lpp.

However, Latvian enthusiasm about the Germans was short-lived. It faded rapidly as instead of bringing independence and liberty, the Nazis instituted a new, brutal occupation with repression and intolerable economic and social policies. Once all illusions had dissipated, Latvian society was overcome by a sense of having been deeply deceived. Latvians became ever more convinced that one evil had replaced the previous evil. A tipping point was reached towards the end of 1941 and early 1942.[97] Several German documents prove that it was during this period that the Nazis began to resort to methods which had been tried and tested during the inter-war period. Estonians were unremittingly praised by the Germans for the fact that they retained a positive attitude towards Germans for a longer time, contrasting their attitudes with those of Latvians and Lithuanians.[98] These efforts did not alter the overall situation. The Latvian public gradually came to fear the Russians and hate the Germans.

The historians of Latvia need to investigate in detail changes that occurred in the attitude of Latvians towards the German occupation authorities, and to ensure thereby that this evolution of public opinion become integral to understanding historical events, as opposed to it currently being a minor feature, an interesting episode, or simply illustrative. Already a number of Latvian historians are following in their studies a recommendation made by the Swedish writer of Latvian origin, Leonīds Siliņš, by studying the wartime attitudes of the Latvian people with reference to two paradigms — hopes and deception.[99]

A comprehensive understanding of the sentiments of the people of Latvia during the Second World War is an important prerequisite for serious research into a number of different problems arising from the Nazi occupation period. The American historian Robert Waite has ascertained and characterised this correlation. In one of his publications, he mentions some of the first acts undertaken by the German occupation authorities, and concludes that: "Latvian national feelings were hurt by the renaming of streets, the insistence on primacy of the German language, the ban on celebrating the national holiday on 18 November, the integration of occupied Latvia into a larger territory called "Ostland". These acts taken together rather quickly led to the first signs of dissatisfaction, anti-German and anti-Nazi attitudes and actions. Growth of opposition was particularly rapid during 1942 and 1943. Firstly, dissatisfaction was expressed in public by individuals in the form graffiti, or through hand-written public appeals. Secondly, Latvian patriots began regularly to distribute in Riga and elsewhere, either hand-to-hand or through the post, their printed message. Thirdly, youth groups sprang

[97] For example, a document dated 10 March 1942, registered with the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry, indicates that Latvian public sentiments are unfavourable: "In any event there are more complaints about German requisitions and measures taken by public administration, than about red terror." PA AA, R 105186, 448885, Auswärtiges Amt. Politische Abteilung. Aufzeichnung, 10. März 1942.

[98] Ibid., R 105182, 218738, Auswärtiges Amt. Politische Abteilung. Aufzeichnung, 30. Dezember1941.

[99] Zellis, K. Nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas propaganda okupētajā Latvijā (1941. gada jūnijs – decembris). *Okupētā Latvija 20. gadsimta 40. gados: Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas 2004. gada pētījumi*. 2. izd. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 243. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 16. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/ images/modules/items/PDF/item_1639_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_16_sejums.pdf; Feldmanis, I. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 57.–60. lpp.

up which demanded restoration of Latvian independence and liberation of their country from Nazi occupation."[100]

Investigation and analysis of the attitudes of the residents of Latvia during the Second World War is also important given the political and educational aspects of this topic. In-depth studies strictly based on a wide variety of documentary evidence about changes in the attitude of the Latvian people will present an opportunity to discover all initiating causes and events to present the unique circumstances that obtained in the Baltic region in a consolidated, logical, and irrefutable manner that would be convincing to outside readers. The famous British historian Norman Davies has observed that, it is still difficult in the West to grasp the fact that, seen from the standpoint of Riga, Tallinn, and Vilnius, the arrival of the Nazis was seen as liberation from Soviet tyranny.[101]

In any examination of the radical change in attitude of Latvians and the other Baltic peoples towards the German occupation authorities it is important to ascertain the context of these changes and to highlight the reasons for them.[102] The critical moment appears to have been when Berlin initially refused to countenance restoration of true independence of the Baltic States. Nazi plans called for transformation of the Baltic region into "a space for German life and colonisation".[103] The Baltic peoples would have had to acquiesce to a lowly status of participating in the management of these territories. In Lithuania a special institution was set up, inclusive of the General Commissar[104], whose task it was to implement policies of the occupation authorities. A Local Self-government was established in Latvia,[105] while in Estonia an Estonian Local Self-government was created headed by Hjalmar Mäe. The remit of these civilian

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[100] Waite, R. Some Aspects of Anti-German Sentiment in Latvia (1941–1944). *Latvija nacistiskās Vācijas okupācijas varā, 1941–1945. Starptautiskās konferences referāti 2003. gada 12.–13. jūnijs, Rīga.* 2. izd. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 176. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 11. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/items/PDF/item_1616_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_11_sejums.pdf

[101] Davies, N. *Europe — a History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 41.

[102] Many nuances of the policies pursued by the Nazi occupation authorities in the Baltic are evaluated by the Finnish historian, Seppo Myllyniemi in his book. See: Myllyniemi, S. *Die Neuordnung der baltischen Länder, 1941–1944: zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt des deutschen Besatzungspolitik.* Helsinki, 1973, 290 S.

[103] LVVA, P-1018. f., 1. apr., 2. l., 77. lp. Der Reichskommissar für das Ostland. Abteilung Politik. Zum "Entwurf einer Anordnung über die Führung der Verwaltung im Generalbezirk Lettland und zu ihrer Begründung vom 24. November 1941", 10. Februar 1942.

[104] The Baltic countries (together with most of Belarus) became part of Reichskommissariat Ostland (Eastern Land) as General Districts. The centre of Ostland was located in Riga, with Hinrich Lohse head of the Reichskommissariat. Otto-Heinrich Drechsler was appointed Generalkommissar for Latvia, Adrian Teodor von Renteln, for Lithuania, and Karl-Siegmund Litzmann, for Estonia. The territory of a General District was subdivided into districts, in which leading positions were occupied by German officials. Nazi institutions of repression operated fully autonomously of the General Districts, and were subordinated to a higher authority for the SS (Schutzstaffel — guards units) and Head of the Police for Northern Russia and Ostland, namely Friedrich Jeckeln. The Reichskommissariat Ostland was subordinated to the German Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Countries (Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete), headed by Alfred Rosenberg, the chief Nazi theoretician and Chief Ideologue, whom the German Fuhrer A. Hitler appointed in post on 17 July 1941.

[105] The precursors to a Local Self-government in Latvia were created during the summer of 1941, when during combat operations and for a short time thereafter all power was in the hands of the German Military Administration. Legally the civilian Local Self-government started to function only in the spring of 1942. See a description in English of the work of the civilian authority in Latvia. Swain, G. *Between Stalin and Hitler: class war and race war on the Dvina 1940–1946.* London: Routledge, 2004.



Fig. 5. Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln, highest ranking commander of the SS and police forces in Ostland. 1944 (*Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*. Rīga: Jumava, 2008, 384. lpp.)

authorities was quite limited; they acted supplementary to the German civilian authorities[106] and had no power to decide any political issue of consequence.

The Nazis rejected Baltic arguments that despite the Soviet occupation their state sovereignty was still in effect[107] (the first instance of this thesis being advanced was a memorandum submitted to the German authorities in Lithuania on 5 August 1941)[108] and that they continued to exist under international law. Werner Hasselblatt, an expert on the rights of minority peoples, prepared legal justification for the position adopted by Berlin.[109] In his reply to the Lithuanian memorandum he asserted that, from the international legal point of view, the annexation carried out by the Soviet Union was legally sound, and in force, whence Lithuania had lost its state sovereignty.[110] Hasselblatt fully supported the position of Nazi officials, that Lithuania occupied by the German army was nothing more than a former district of the USSR. In his opinion the vitally important interests of its inhabitants did not require restoration of Lithuanian sovereignty.[111]

The negative attitude of Berlin towards renewal of Baltic state independence was determined by a wish not to complicate future changes in the Baltic region, and it was variously expressed in instructions issued by the Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Districts. In his first directive sent to Hinrich Lohse, Alfred Rosenberg, Reichskommissar for Ostland, strongly emphasised the need for Lohse to do everything in his power to delay submission of demands to renew "Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Belarusian states that would be independent of Germany".[112] He was everywhere and always to insist that these territories were under German jurisdiction, and that the latter would only discuss matters with peoples and not governments. Lohse was never to fail on insisting that these governments were responsible for the loss of their independence. They had wished to cooperate with Western countries and had let slip the exceptional opportunity to strike an agreement with Germany and form a union with it.[113]

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[106] A Military Authority operated in Lithuania and Kurzeme as of 25 July 1941, and it was extended to include all of Latvia on 1 September, and it replaced the civilian authority in Estonia on 5 December.

[107] Bundesarchiv Berlin (henceforward – BA-B), R 92/122, S.1, Der Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete an den Reichskommissar für das Ostland, 11. September 1941.

[108] Ibid., R 90/122, S.2., Denkschrift über die rechtliche Lage und die tatsächlichen Verhältnisse in Litauen nach Beendigung der bolschewistischen Okkupation, 5. August 1941.

[109] For details see: Kangeris, K. Izvēles iespējas: "Jaunā Eiropa", padomju republika vai neatkarīga valsts. Valststiesiskie jautājumi un "lielā politika" kara gados (1941–1945). *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2000, 84.–85. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 1. sēj.).

[110] BA-B, R90/4, S. 4, W. Hasselblatt. Bemerkungen zu der litauischen Denkschrift vom 5. August über die Fortexistenz des litauischen Staates (ohne Datum).

[111] Ibid., S. 10.

[112] Ibid., R 92/952, S. 4, Der Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete. Anweisung an den Reichskommissar des Reichskommissariats Ostland, 21. Juli 1941.

[113] Ibid.

The Nazis wished that Balts would forget their past statehood. The Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Districts issued special instructions regarding terms which could and could not be used in describing events in the east (*Sprachregelungen über Begriffe des Ostens*). For example, an injunction issued 31 March 1942 stated that use should be avoided (in documents about constitutional or historical questions) of concepts such as "the Baltic States", "the former Baltic States", or "the former peripheral countries" (*ehemalige Randstaaten*).[114] Any General District which would be extended eastwards (or which was to be extended in future) was not to be called "Greater Lithuania", "Greater Estonia", or "Greater Latvia".[115] The neutral terms, "the Baltic lands", "the territory inhabited by the Baltic peoples", etc. were to be used instead of the previously listed terms.[116]

As circumstances changed, and following military reverses on the Eastern Front, German policies became more flexible and clever. An idea slowly matured during 1942 among the senior ranks of the SS to constitute larger Baltic military units as Waffen SS units. The issue of Latvian and Estonian autonomy gained greater importance in the relations between Germans and the Baltic peoples simultaneously with the hopes for constituting Baltic Legions. Lithuania only figured in German documents in this regard up to the spring of 1943.[117]

Certain initiatives were undertaken by the Local Self-government which on 30 November 1942 made a proposal to Otto Drechsler, the General Commissar for Latvia.[118] It proposed, in return for restoration of independent Latvian statehood, to

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[114] Ibid., R 90/253, S. 4, Der Reichskommissar für das Ostland an die Hauptabteilungs- und Abteilungsleiter und General- und Gebietskommissare, 29. April 1942.

[115] For example, the Lithuanian General District was augmented by three districts which formerly belonged to Belarus. The Nazis had planned on extending the borders of Latvia and Lithuania eastward. A. Rosenberg had already invented new equivalents for Greater Latvia and Greater Estonia — the Land of the Daugava (*Dünaland*) and the Land of Peipuss (*Peipusland*). See: Myllyniemi, S. *Die Neuordnung der baltischer Länder, 1941–1944: zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt des deutschen Besatzungspolitik*, S. 89.

[116] BA-B, R 90-253, S. 4, Der Reichskommissar für das Ostland an die Hauptsabteilungs- und Abteilungsleiter und General- und Gebietskommissare, 29. April 1942.

[117] An Estonian SS Legion began to be formed starting in August 1942, and SS Legions were to be formed, starting with February 1943, in Latvia and Lithuania. Unlike efforts in the other Baltic States, the attempt failed in Lithuania. A relatively low number of men responded during the first weeks of being called up (starting as of 1 March), and only 23.5% had appeared by 10 March. In the light of the negative response by Lithuanians, SS Reichführer H. Himmler ordered recruiting of legionnaires to stop, which was followed by an announcement by Generalkommissar A. von Renteln who refused to form the planned Legion in Lithuania, a fact which became publically known on 17 March. Some German documents show that Nazi officials interpreted this announcement and presented it as such to mean it to be directed against Lithuanians, which implies that the Nazis themselves might not have been willing to constitute a Lithuanian Legion. See: BA-B, R 6/68, S. 36, Schreiben des Generalkommissars in Kauen an Reichskommissar für Ostland, 31. März 1943.

[118] This proposal originated with a memorandum written by Alfrēds Valdmanis, Justice Director-General of the Local Self-government of Latvia, with the title "The Latvian Problem", which he had submitted in November 1942 to O. Drechsler, General Commissar of Latvia. The memorandum called for constituting a Latvian armed force under overall command by Germans, provided that Latvia would gain a certain measure of independence. See: "Pašpārvaldes direktora A. Valdmaņa iesniegums (memorands) ģenerālkomisāram O. Dreksleram, 1942. gada novembris," published in *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja likteņgriežos: vācu okupācijas laika dokumenti 1941–1945*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1990, 59.–68. lpp.

mobilise all men born between 1907 and 1925, "so as to form an army of at least 100 000 men".[119] The Local Self-government was of the opinion that this armed force could also have the requisite number of officers.[120]

During January and February 1943, the Ministry headed by A. Rosenberg worked on several drafts of a decree by the Führer, wherein an attempt was made to define the legal status of the Baltic countries.[121] A number of variants were considered but largely the Baltic General District would have the same status as the protectorates of Bohemia and Moravia, although there were a number of different features.[122] It was stated in one draft decree that: "The Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian states are self-governing," while remaining under the protection of Germany (*Schutzhoheit*).[123] Reichskommissariat Ostland would have to be dissolved, and the Reichskommissar replaced by a German Resident, who would represent interests of the Reich in all administrative matters.[124]

On 8 February 1943, A. Rosenberg informed Hitler about the plans drawn up by his Ministry, including changes in the legal status of the Baltic General District, and the closely linked matter of forming national Legions. He was left with the impression that the Führer had not completely made up his mind, but had no objections in principle to granting autonomy to the Baltic lands.[125] Rosenberg ordered his Ministry to continue drafting concrete proposals. In his discussions as late as February with Hans Lammers, Head of the Reich Chancellery, he was convinced of the virtues of his proposal, and considered that the notes taken by Martin Bormann, Head of the Nazi Party Chancellery, of his conversation with the Führer were incorrect, in that they emphasised Hitler's view that a decision on the autonomy issue would have to be put off until the end of the war. Rosenberg asked Lammers to clarify this matter by asking Hitler who confirmed Bormann's notes to be correct.[126]

The Nazi leadership thus rejected the rules of the game as suggested by the Latvians (Latvians had asked for the Germans to grant state autonomy to Latvia in return

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[119] *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja liktenģriežos: vācu okupācijas laika dokumenti 1941–1945*, 68.–69. lpp.

[120] This submission by the Self-Government Authority attracted the attention of the SS High Command. Gottlob Berger, head of the main office of the SS leadership, analysed the Latvian proposal and rejected the offer of creating an army of 100 000 in return for Latvian independence as "utterly useless" and "more than dangerous". He urged instead formation of military units from "racially completely useful" Latvian volunteers (not excluding the option of using the name the Latvian Legion), which would be put at the disposition of the SS Reichsführer. BA-B NS 19/382, S. 249, Chef des SS – Hauptamtes an den Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei, 11. Dezember 1942.

[121] Myllyniemi, S. *Die Neuordnung der baltischen Länder, 1941–1944: zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt des deutschen Besatzungspolitik*, S. 216.

[122] BA-B, R 6/249, S. 1, Reichsminister und Chef der Reichskanzelei an den Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete, 8. März 1943.

[123] Cited from: Strods, H. *Zem melnbrūnā zobena: Vācijas politika Latvijā 1939–1945*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1994, 114. lpp.

[124] Myllyniemi, S. *Die Neuordnung der baltischen Länder, 1941–1944: zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt des deutschen Besatzungspolitik*, S. 217.

[125] Ibid., S. 218.

[126] BA-B, R 6/249, S. 1, Reichsminister und Chef der Reichskanzelei an den Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete, 8. März 1943.

for promised military units which would fight alongside the Germans), and mobilisation of the population of Latvia was begun in the spring of 1943 without granting any concessions in return. However, by the autumn of that year, the military situation of Germany had substantially worsened, and the Nazi leadership was forced to think about a more effective way to use Baltic forces in the fight against Bolshevism. The issue of Baltic autonomy again became the subject of discussion. This time SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler initiated such considerations after he visited Riga and Tallinn, where he expressed repeatedly his view that it would be right and proper to grant state independence to Estonia and Latvia.[127] A. Rosenberg also continued to support the idea of autonomy. Three possible versions of an appropriate constitutional framework for Latvia and Estonia were discussed at his Ministry on 11 October: in the form of a Protectorate; by issuing a short general decree establishing autonomy; the possibility of issuing a decree on autonomy containing provisions for police subordination, defence sovereignty, the nature of the economy and other matters.[128]



Fig. 6. Newly called-up Latvian Legionnaires in the summer of 1943. (Archive material held at the Latvian War Museum)

Otto Bräutigam, Head of Department at the ministry led by A. Rosenberg, adopted a very interesting position at this meeting. He insisted that it was impossible to renew independence in the form that it had existed before the war. Nevertheless, it was necessary to induce a sense of freedom among Estonian and Latvians, to grant them a measure of independence.[129] Bräutigam proposed that the General Directorates of Latvia and Estonia be transformed into "independent states (Länder)". Each state would have a President, representation by the people, a government, a single ministry and constitution, the latter drafted to conform to German interests. The position taken previously by a Reichskommissar would be transformed into that of a Resident of the Reich, who would look out for German interests. The latter would be instructed by the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, but German military matters in the Baltic would be regulated through treaties signed with the government of each state.[130]

At the end of October 1943, the ministry led by A. Rosenberg drafted a new decree for the Führer about the state independence of Latvia and Estonia. The first article

[127] Neulen, H. W. *An deutscher Seite. Internationale Freiwillige von Wehrmacht und Waffen-SS*. München: Universitas Verlag, 1985, S. 285.
[128] PA AA, R 29670, 193899, Gesandter von Tippelskirch. Aufzeichnung, 12. Oktober 1943.
[129] Ibid., 193900, O. Bräutigam. Aufzeichnung, 4. Oktober 1943.
[130] Ibid., 193901-02.

of the draft text of 30 October stated: "To transform the existing General Directorates of Estonia and Latvia into states. Each state has its own flag, coat of arms, and state seal."[131] Nevertheless, the state independence foreseen under this decree would be quite limited. In the event, several provisions contained in the decree could not truly satisfy demands made by the Estonians and Latvians: "The defence of Estonia and Latvia is subordinated to the sovereignty of the Reich. The Reich is sovereign in matters of defence, customs, and monetary matters."

The attitude of leading officials in Reichskommissariat "Ostland" differed in the matter of a restricted form of state independence, or autonomy, on offer for Latvia and Estonia. The General Commissars of Latvia and Estonia, Otto Drechsler[132] and Karl Litzmann,[133] respectively, expressed their support, while the Reichskommissar H. Lohse rejected the concept. Afraid of being confronted with a fait accompli, Lohse chose to approach Hitler directly. In November 1943, he sent a letter to the Führer wherein he pointed out, in addition to his opposition to political autonomy for Latvia and Estonia, that "granting at the present time a broad measure of independence [to these entities] would mean delegating authority to (…) uncontrollable forces at a time of heightened threat, when we should keep them on a firm leash".[134] This initiative by the Reichskommissar led to a firm reply from the leadership of the SS. In his letter of 20 November 1943 to Himmler, Gottlob Berger described Lohse as "a very incorrect individual".[135]

On 16 and 17 November 1943, Hitler met with Rosenberg, Bormann, Himmler, H. Lammers, and H. Lohse. The Führer rejected any plan for immediately granting state independence or autonomy to Latvia and Lithuania, indicating that it was not necessary "to be forthcoming to such an extent", under the difficult conditions of the time.[136] At the same time, he did not object, in principle, that a decree be published promising cultural autonomy to Latvians and Estonians after the end of the war. However, before taking a decision Hitler wished to coordinate this matter with Foreign Minister J. von Ribbentrop.[137] A telegram from Lammers to Rosenberg, on 20 November 1943, asserted that the German Foreign Minister, during a conversation with Hitler, had deemed publication of such a decree "to be inopportune at this time" and suggested that he rejected it. The Minister for the Occupied Eastern Districts was allowed, if he so wished, to continue to work on the text of a declaration, but only in coopera-

[131] Okupēto Austrumu ministrijas izstrādātais projekts par Latvijas un Igaunijas autonomiju, 1943. gada 30. oktobris. *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja likteņgriežos: vācu okupācijas dokumenti, 1941–1945*, 129. lpp.; BA-B, R 90/2, Erlass des Führers über die Errichtung der Länder Estland und Lettland, Oktober 1943.

[132] O. Drechsler continued to reject proposals to grant autonomy to Latvia and Estonia up until the end of 1942

[133] See: BA-B, NS 19/3894, S. 61, Chef des SS-Hauptamtes an Reichsführer SS und Reichsminister des Innern, 26. November 1943.

[134] Ibid., R 90/1, S. 5, Der Reichskommissar für das Ostland an den Führer Adolf Hitler, November 1943.

[135] Ibid., NS 19/ 382, Chef des SS-Hauptamtes an Reichsführer SS und Reichsminister des Innern, 20. November 1943.

[136] Myllyniemi, S. *Die Neuordnung der baltischen Länder, 1941–1944: zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt des deutschen Besatzungspolitik*, S. 251.

[137] Ibid.

tion with von Ribbentrop.[138] Cautious future attempts by Rosenberg came to nothing. The publication of such a declaration, after the failure of the plans for autonomy, would only have aroused serious disappointment in the Baltic.

Failure to adopt any plan for state independence or autonomy clearly demonstrated that the Nazi elite had become entangled in unresolvable contradictions of their own making, and had reached an impasse. The elite proved incapable of reacting in an adequate and effective way to challenges thrown up by changing circumstances. It was able, in practice, to take, often too late, unprincipled decisions.

The endeavours launched (or supported by) Nazi leaders at the end of the war for propaganda purposes, whose aim was to satisfy Latvian longing for national independence so as to raise the fighting spirit of Latvian soldiers, have no historical significance. During the autumn of 1944, when most of the territory of Latvia was again under Soviet army occupation, the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Districts recommended that the Local Self-government be replaced by a National Committee of Latvia which would represent the Latvian people in Germany. The National Committee, which was to be selected from Latvians in Germany, was not intended to be the institution of an independent state. A. Rosenberg was quite categorical and clear in this regard: "No binding promise can be made at present about an independent state, since this question does not only concern Latvians, but also other peoples, and thus requires a decision at the highest level."[139]

SS Reichsführer Himmler also became involved in this political game "at five minutes before midnight". On 20 February 1945, he gave his blessing to the formal creation in Potsdam of a National Committee of Latvia as a public organisation comprising Latvian refugees, members of public organisations, soldiers from the frontlines and other Latvians living in Germany, who had formed a National Council of Latvia. Rūdolfs Bangerskis, Inspector-General of the SS Volunteer Legion (henceforward, the Latvian Legion), was elected as President of the National Committee; at that time Bangerskis no longer enjoyed support by a wide sector of the Latvian people. Several sources provide evidence for the distinct lack of faith in Bangerskis: "Often Bangerskis is regarded as an unqualified supporter of the Germans, a weak-willed defender of Latvian interests against the Germans. On separate occasions the name of Bangerskis evokes hatred and contempt. Bangerskis was called [Andrievs] Niedra No. 2[140] [Augusts] Kirhenšteins No. 2."[141]

On 3 May 1945, when the Soviet army had captured Berlin, the National Committee decided to dissolve itself. A new government was formed in Liepāja (Kurzeme was still controlled by the German army) led by a regimental commander of the

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[138] BA-B, NS 19/3894, S. 57, Der Reichsminister und Chef der Reichskanzelei an den Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete, 20. November 1943.

[139] Ostministrijas paskaidrojums par Latviešu Nacionālo komiteju, 1944. gada 30. novembris. *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja likteņgriežos: vācu okupācijas laika dokumenti: 1941–1945*, 164. lpp.

[140] Translator's note: in 1919, Andrievs Niedra headed a German-installed puppet Latvian Government.

[141] SS Jagdverband pasākuma "Mežakaķi" operatīvā štāba informācija, 1945. gada 15.–31. marts. *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja likteņgriežos: vācu okupācijas laika dokumenti: 1941–1945*, 180. lpp.



Fig. 7. Officers meeting with Rūdolfs Bangerskis, Inspector General of the Latvian Legion. Summer 1943. (Archive material held at the Latvian War Museum)

Latvian Legion, Roberts Osis. At the first session, which took place on 4 May, the government decided to convene a People's Council which would give legal basis for a provisional government, as well as to draft a Memorandum addressing the Western Allies. Osis entertained illusory hopes that a separate peace could still be concluded by Germany with the British and the Americans, with fighting to continue against the Soviet Union. He contacted General Carl Hilpert, commander of the German Army Group "Kurland", and tried to convince him to continue to resist in Kurzeme for as long as possible, until the Western Great Powers undertook to guarantee the security of Kurzeme. Hilpert rejected this proposal. The efforts exerted by Osis were in vain; no one, in fact, took any notice of the manoeuvres of his government. Osis and members of his government succeeded in fleeing to the West shortly before the German army capitulated in Kurzeme (8 May).[142]

Despite the inability of either the National Committee of Latvia, or the government led by Osis, to represent Latvian independence in foreign countries, the fact of their creation is remarkable, in particular given the unfavourable and complex circumstances, because they represented unwillingness to accept the looming second Soviet occupation. All Latvian activities of that time which had as their aim the restoration of true independence merit comprehensive study by the historians of Latvia.

Most of the residents of Latvia were disheartened not only by the inconsistent Nazi attitude to restoration of Latvian independence, but also by their destructive occupation policies, which took the form of large-scale repression of the civilian population of Latvia.[143] Nazi terror was driven by explicit racism and political considerations. First of all repression affected Jews living in Latvia.[144] Jews constituted the principal group of residents who were targeted by German terror in both Latvia and Lithuania. During the war years, 195 000–196 000 Jews in Lithuania (approximately 80% of all resident

[142] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I. Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 287. lpp.

[143] The Nazis set up a network of prisons, ghettos, and concentration camps in Latvia. The largest ghetto was located in Riga, with 29 602 Jewish residents.

[144] Andrievs Ezergailis, a US historian of Latvian origin, has extensively studied the Holocaust in Latvia, see: Ezergailis, A. *The Holocaust in Latvia. 1941–1944: the missing Center*. Riga: The Historical Institute of Latvia, 1996; Ezergailis, A. *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation about the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Latvia: Daugavas Vanagi: Who are they? – Revisited*. Rīga: Latvijas 50 gadu okupācijas muzeja fonds, 2005 etc.

on the territory of Lithuania),[145] and approximately 70 000 Jews in Latvia were killed.[146] A different situation obtained in Estonia, where Jews were the third group in terms of priority subjected to Nazi terror (behind Estonians and Russians); 929 or 931 individuals were killed (11.9% of all victims of repression).[147] This relatively small number of victims is explained by two factors, i.e. few Jews had previously lived in Estonia, and with the approach of the Germans, most managed to leave Estonia.

German sources have given indications that the execution of Jews resulted in unrest and indignation among the urban population of Latvia. The Deputy Mayor (*Bürgermeister*) of Riga, Hugo Wittrock, mentions the residents of Riga reacting with intense disapproval when news spread of the elimination of the Jews of Riga on 20 November and 8 December 1941 at Rumbula[148] (located approximately 10 km outside the city). In January 1942, Walter Alnor, Commissar of the District of Liepāja, informed O. Drechsler, the General Commissar for Latvia, that the execution of Jews in Liepāja, which took place in the Kara osta (Military Port) from 14–17 December 1941, had "aroused great concern". He had no doubt that this resulted "in great damage to German authority".[149]

The question of the extent of involvement in the Holocaust by local residents of Latvia is still disputed in historical literature.[150] This question has been extensively studied by the German historian Katrin Reichelt in her book published in 2011.[151] One of her principal conclusions, namely that on many occasions Latvians murdered Jews acting on their own initiative, without any orders from German occupation authorities, is baseless and highly subjective.[152] In his review of the said book, the Latvian historian Kārlis Kangeris is emphatic that he does not find this assertion to be well proven.[153]

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[145] *Lietuva 1940–1990. Okupuotos Lietuvos istorija*. Vilnius: Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo centras, 2005, 222 pp.

[146] Stranga, A. The Holocaust in Occupied Latvia: 1941–1945. *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations 1940–1991. Selected Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia*. Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia Publishers, 2005, p. 161 (Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol.14). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/items/PDF/item_1619_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_14_ sejums.pdf

[147] Stranga, A. Holokausts vācu okupētajā Igaunijā: 1941–1944. *Latvijas Vēsture. Jaunie un Jaunākie Laiki*, Nr. 4, 2005, 81. lpp.

[148] Wittrock, H. *Kommisarischer Oberbürgermeister von Riga 1941–1944: Erinnerungen*. Lüneburg: Verlag Norland-Druck, 1979, S. 37.

[149] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā, 1939–1991: dokumentu krājums*, 190. lpp.

[150] The Latvian historian A. Stranga has pointed out that Holocaust researchers have found no evidence for the view that Latvians spontaneously murdered Jews during the so-called period with no public authority. The Holocaust was devised and planned by the Germans, and mass murder was carried out under their direction. Involvement by Latvians and other local inhabitants was exclusively at the direction of the Germans, i.e. carrying out orders issued by the German occupiers. Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 47. lpp.

[151] Reichelt, K. *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1844: der lettische Anteil am Holocaust*. Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2011, 428 S.

[152] Ibid., S. 91.

[153] Kangeris, K. Review of: Katrin Reichelt. Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*: der lettische Anteil am Holocaust.* Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2011, 428 S. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 1, 2012, 196. lpp.

In addition to the Holocaust, gypsies (Roma) and the mentally ill were also killed in Latvia. Of the 3480 Roma living in Latvia (data for 1935) more than 2000 were killed during 1941 and 1942.[154] In an article published in 2016, Ieva Garda-Rozenberga and Kaspars Zellis show that a labour shortage in occupied Latvia coupled with chaos in the occupation regime's administration prevented the complete elimination of the Roma population.[155]

Nazi repression also targeted Communists and Soviet activists, and later members of national resistance groups. In 1944, German security services arrested Konstantīns Čakste, leader of the national resistance centre the Central Council of Latvia (CCL)[156]. The Nazis also eliminated the military wing of the CCL[157], a unit led by General Jānis Kurelis.[158] In November, the group was disarmed and disbanded, and several of its officers were arrested and executed. In a detailed report, SS Obergrupenführer Friedrich Jeckeln stated that: "Agents of Kurelis working at the Port of Liepāja reported that Kurelis had received certain guarantees from England. (…) With the help of Latvian former statesmen (…) Kurelis was to maintain contact via Sweden with Western Great Powers."[159]

An important question concerns the total number of victims of the Nazi occupation. Coming up with a precise figure remains a challenge for future research work. The total number of Jews and gypsies killed in Latvia during this time has been calculated with some precision. A database was established 15 years ago about the number of residents of Latvia repressed during the second period of occupation,[160] who on 17 June 1940 were citizens of the Republic of Latvia, independent of their nationality (these are mainly Latvians and Russians),[161] but it is incomplete. Quite often historians still quote numbers published in the afterword of the collection of documents, *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā* (Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia). The com-

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[154] Rosenberga-Garda, I., Zellis, K. Atceroties genocīdu: romu iznīcināšana nacistu okupācijas laikā Latvijas romu kolektīvajā atmiņā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 2, 2015, 68. lpp.

[155] Ibid., 71. lpp.

[156] About activities of the CCL see: Ibid., 45.–46. lpp.

[157] Some researchers in Latvia, for example, Dzintars Ērglis, point out that the group led by General J. Kurelis "while it cannot be seen as an armed force fully at the disposition of the CCL, at the same time close contacts with the CCL cannot be denied, in particular maintaining radio contact with Sweden". Ērglis, Dz. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes vēstures nezināmās lappuses*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 170. lpp.

[158] At the end of July 1944, the Nazis concurred to General J. Kurelis taking command of a special unit which was constituted in Vidzeme (Skrīveri civil parish) from defenders in the district of Riga. It was intended initially to deploy this unit to stabilise the collapsing front lines in the Pļaviņas – Ķegums area, as well as to train groups of saboteurs and partisans to be sent to the rear of the Red Army. In September, the group retreated to Kurzeme where they camped near Strazde and Ugāle.

[159] BA-B, R 90/4, S. 8, Der Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer Ostland und Russland Nord: Bericht über die Auflösung des Verbandes des lettischen Generals Kurelis, 25. November 1944.

[160] Zellis, K., Neiburgs, U. Vācu okupācijas laikā represētie Latvijas iedzīvotāji (1941–1945). Datu bāzes apraksts. *Totalitārie režīmi un to represijas Latvijā 1940.–1956. gadā*, 227.–239. lpp.

[161] Latvians who arrived in Latvia from the USSR after the loss of Latvian state independence are excluded from the category of "Residents of Latvia". This category also did not include Jews and gypsies as the authors of this data base sought to study repressions which occurred due to the racist National Socialist ideology separately. See: Zellis, K., Neiburgs, U. Vācu okupācijas laikā represētie Latvijas iedzīvotāji (1941–1945). Description of the database (Datu bāzes apraksts), 231. lpp.

pilers of this collection of documents, "assert that the Nazi occupiers killed 110 000 persons on the territory of Latvia, out of which around 90 000 were citizens of Latvia (including 70 000 Jews, 2000 gypsies)".[162]

Examination of the number of victims in Nazi occupied Latvia reveals many cases of imaginary numbers. For example, works published in Russia contain false allegations that the camp at Salaspils, which was small and did not figure on the list of Nazi concentration camps, was the largest facility to kill civilians in the Baltic region (also falsely claiming it was equipped even with gas chambers), multiplying by a factor of 40 or greater the number of actual victims.[163] It is still asserted today that more than 100 000 Soviet citizens were killed at Salaspils.[164] Exaggerations which are difficult to fathom are found in the number of Nazi victims in other categories. Historians from Russia often make use of these grossly exaggerated and fabricated numbers which are based on a report issued in 1945 by an Extraordinary Commission of the Latvian SSR for the purpose of blackening the defeated enemy for ideological reasons. Such publications claim that during the Nazi occupation regime more than 250 000 peaceful civilians and 327 000 Soviet prisoners of war were killed in Latvia, and 175 000 residents of Latvia were driven into German slavery.[165]



Fig. 8. Konstantīns Čakste, Chairman of the Latvian Central Council. 1930s (*Latvija un latvieši. II sēj. Valstiskums Latvijā un Latvijas valsts — izcīnītā un zaudētā*. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 416. lpp.)

The German occupation authorities ignored international law in Latvia. Local residents were taken into service by the repressive agencies, military formations were mobilised, and persons were sent for labour service to Germany. Initially labour was recruited on a voluntary basis, with the largest numbers recruited from Lithuania, where 75 000 individuals responded.[166] This approach did not yield similar number of workers from Latvia and Estonia. Thus, the German authorities were compelled to call up entire cohorts for labour service. Three campaigns ("*Jaunsaimnieks*", "*Latgale*", and "*Vasaras ceļojums*") resulted in 12 800 individuals compelled to leave for Germany up until 1 March 1944.[167]

While Nazi cultural policies were dominated by National Socialist ideology and concealed ideas about Germanisation, economically they were oriented towards the exploitation of Latvia and the other Baltic countries. Many publications which have

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[162] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991*, 540. lpp.

[163] In January 2015, a book was published by Latvian historians about the Salaspils Camp: Kangeris, K., Neiburgs, U., Vīksne, R. *Aiz šiem vārtiem vaid zeme: Salaspils nometne 1941–1944*. Rīga: Latvijas Avīze, 2016. This study showed that fewer than 2000 persons died at this camp.

[164] Крысин, М. *Прибалтийский фашизм: история и современность*. Москва: Вече, 2007, с. 218.

[165] See, Vācu fašistisko iebrucēju un to līdzdalībnieku pastrādāto noziegumu konstatēšanai un izmeklēšanai ieceltās Valsts Ārkārtējās komisijas ziņojums par vācu iebrucēju noziegumiem Latvijas Padomju Sociālistiskajā Republikā. Rīga, 1945, 4. lpp.

[166] *Baltijas valstu vēsture. Mācību līdzeklis*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 2000, 172. lpp.

[167] Kangeris, K. *Latvija un tās iedzīvotāji Trešā reiha plānos un okupācijas varā (1941.–1945. g.): publikāciju kopa*. Promocijas darba kopsavilkums. Rīga, 2002, 7. lpp.

examined Nazi economic policies reveal an interesting conjunction of findings.[168] Independent of when and in which countries these investigations were carried out, almost all come to the same conclusion, i.e. that the Germans mercilessly pillaged Latvia.

This conclusion is well-founded, but it has to be said that a certain measure of restraint was evident in the exploitation of Latvia, which was determined by specific German political and economic interests, as well as short-term and long-term goals. The short-term goal was to ensure food supply for military units engaged at the front, as well as to provide maximum resources for the German war industry. The long-term goals foresaw selective development for various occupied territories. After the war, Ostland was to be integrated into a new European Economic Community, and it was to supply food and raw materials to industrial Europe.[169]

An important aspect of relations between the residents of Latvia and the Germans was restitution or reprivatisation of property nationalised by the Soviet authorities. This process began in October 1941 on the basis of an order given by Reichskommissar H. Lohse of Ostland, which allowed small businesses (with no more than 20 employees) to be given back into private ownership. The process was hampered by a number of restrictions imposed on it. In order that small businesses might be privatised they had to be solvent, and the owner had to be a professional and politically reliable. By the end of 1942, only 153 small businesses and 636 craft enterprises were privatised. The public in Latvia came to regard this process as buying back one's own enterprises, rather than reprivatisation.[170]

Substantial reprivatisation only occurred during the final years of Nazi occupation. A. Rosenberg issued an order on 18 February 1943 which allowed the institution of private ownership to be renewed in the General Districts of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The Latvian historian Antonijs Zunda considers this order to be based on political considerations, because "after its defeat at Stalingrad Germany began to suffer from a lack of soldiers at the Eastern front. The German regime sought to gain broader public support through restitution of property".[171] It remained impossible, however, to privatise property which was vital for the German war economy.

Overall, the policies pursued by the German Occupation Authority in Latvia were so short-sighted that it concerned even a number of Nazi leaders. Thus, in a report of 19 June 1943 by O. Drechsler, General Commissar for Latvia, to H. Lohse, Reichskommissar for Ostland, Drechsler openly declared that many German actions in the political, administrative, and economic fields had been wrong, and, that the Latvian

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[168] See, for example: Aizsilnieks, A. *Latvijas saimniecības vēsture 1914–1945*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1968; Czollek, R. *Faschismus und Okkupation: wirtschaftspolitische Zielsetzung und Praxis des faschistischen deutschen Besatzungsregimes in den baltischen Sowjetrepubliken während des zweiten Weltkriegs*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1974; Eicholtz, D. *Geschichte der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1939–1945*, Bd. III, T. 1. München: K. G. Saur, 2003; Kalniņš, R. *Vācu civilpārvaldes ekonomiskā politika okupētajā Latvijā 1941–1944*. Doctoral thesis, Rīga, 2014, et al.

[169] Kalniņš, R. *Vācu civilpārvaldes ekonomiskā politika okupētajā Latvijā 1941–1944*, 5. lpp.

[170] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 291. lpp.

[171] Ibid., 292. lpp.

attitude towards the Germans had substantially deteriorated as a result. Drechsler was convinced that the situation could still be substantially remedied. He offered one measure which could yet improve Latvian attitudes towards Germans, i.e. the introduction of a mixed Latvian–German administration throughout the General District. Furthermore, Berlin would have to finally work out clear guidelines for the issue of the political outlook for the Latvian people.[172]

Resistance and collaboration

Latvian historians still need to give a more precise definition, or to define such concepts as "the resistance movement" and "collaboration". Quite a bit of progress has been achieved thus far in this regard. The Latvian historian Uldis Neiburgs, who has actively studied the history of the resistance movement, points out that persons researching the resistance movement in Latvia have abandoned the distinction that was created at the beginning of the 1990s between resistance in Latvia by national and by Soviet groups, instead ascertaining the presence on the territory of Latvia during the period of Nazi occupation of different resistance groups, i.e. those of Latvia, the USSR, and Poland.[173]

U. Neiburgs has recently written a comprehensive article about theoretical issues associated with the resistance movement in Latvia during the Nazi occupation period.[174] He has advanced a number of interesting conclusions of the character and substance of the national resistance movement, how it manifested itself, as well as how appropriate it is to use the term "movement" in regard to instances of resistance in Latvia. The guidelines will promote future discussions between historians about unique and specific aspects in the context of resistance movements in Eastern Europe and elsewhere in Europe.

It is difficult to agree with all of the notions put forward by U. Neiburgs in his article. For example, the guideline which he takes as the primary characteristic of a resistance movement is defined not by its aims, but by the fact of its resistance to the occupation regime.[175] The author of this paper is firmly convinced that the unique and specific features of the situation in Latvia mean that the concept of a resistance movement in Latvia "during the German period" can cover only those groups which were prepared to resist both occupation powers, having the goal of the restoration of the Latvian state. Members of the local Communist underground and the so-called Soviet partisans (many of whom had been sent to Latvia across the front lines from interior regions of the USSR) fought the Germans, but were in favour of renewed Soviet occupation. These groups were collaborators seen from the point of view of the national

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[172] LVVA, P-1018. f., 1. apr., 2. L., 1.–9. lp., Der Generalkommissar in Riga an den Reichskommissar für Ostland, 19. Juni 1943.

[173] Neiburgs, U. *"Dievs, Tava zeme deg!": Latvijas Otrā pasaules kara stāsti*, 376. lpp.

[174] Neiburgs, U. Pretošanās kustība nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas okupētajā Latvijā (1941–1945): jēdzieniskā izpratne un teorētiskās nostādnes. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2012, 74.–96. lpp.

[175] Ibid., 76. lpp.

interests of Latvia. They could be called members of a Communist movement of saboteurs. This label is appropriate since it highlights the subordination of these groups to Moscow and their extremely negative attitude towards Latvian independence. At that time, Latvia had not been completely extinguished in the sense of international law and continued to exist *de iure*.

Latvian historiography includes controversial assessments of the relationship between Gustavs Celmiņš, leader of *Pērkonkrusts* (Thundercross)[176] and the resistance movement during the period of German occupation. For example, Andrievs Ezergailis points out that after 17 August 1941, the date when the Germans banned *Pērkonkrusts*, Celmiņš "led part of the group in the struggle to resist the Nazis, creating the "widest underground network in Latvia (after the Communists).[177] A newspaper *Brīvā Latvija* (Free Latvia) was published".[178] Aivars Stranga has assessed matters differently, and in an article he states that: "It has been asserted that he (G. Celmiņš — *I. F.*) had joined the resistance movement. This is an exaggeration, and, although the Germans indeed arrested him, and he was sent as an "honourable detainee" to a concentration camp, none of his resistance activities are known, excepting the distribution of a few flyers."[179]

The historians Uldis Neiburgs and Dzintars Ērglis have cast doubt on both of these views and characterised them in an article published in 2001, as "exaggerations, both on the one hand and on the other". They suggest more careful study of the resistance movement, as well as "to refrain from making hasty, categorical judgements".[180] To his credit A. Stranga produced later, in 2003, a revised assessment. No longer denying any link between G. Celmiņš and the resistance movement, he points out that this nonetheless, "does not obviate an essential question, notably, what predominated in his varied biography — collaborationism or resistance, and which activity was more purposeful — heading the "main committee" involved in recruiting Latvians for service in police battalions commanded by Germans, or resisting. Some members of *Pērkonkrusts* remained loyal to the Germans to the end, and needed no encouragement to carry out any deed, including criminal acts".[181]

Out of all national resistance groups which operated in Latvia during the period of the Nazi regime, special mention has to be made of the Latvian Central Council led by Konstantīns Čakste — "principally on account of its political ideals".[182] Although the idea of creating the CCL arose among diplomats of the Republic of Latvia resident

[176] The Union of the Latvian People, *Pērkonkrusts* (1933–1944), was an extreme right-wing Latvian political organisation.

[177] For more about the activities of the Communist underground, see, for example: Neiburgs, U., Ērglis, Dz. Nacionālā un padomju pretošanās kustība: kopīgais un atšķirīgais. *Totalitārie režīmi un to represijas Latvijā 1940.–1956. gadā*, 240.–267. lpp.

[178] Ezergailis, A. Latviešu tautas pretestības izpausmes pret okupācijas varu 1940–1945. *Jaunā Gaita*, Nr. 3, 1989, 45. lpp.

[179] Stranga, A. Kas bija Pērkonkrusts. *Diena (pielikums "SestDiena")*, Nr. 256, 1997, 10. lpp.

[180] Neiburgs, U., Ērglis, Dz. Nacionālā un padomju pretošanās kustība: kopīgais un atšķirīgais, 313. lpp.

[181] Stranga, A. Priekšvārds. Ērglis, Dz. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes vēstures nezināmās lappuses*, 11. lpp.

[182] Ibid.

abroad,[183] it was founded on 13 August 1943 by representatives of the largest pre-war political parties of the Republic of Latvia (the Social Democratic Workers Party of Latvia, the Peasants Union, the "Democratic centre", and the Christian Peasants Party of Latgale). These parties had seen 49 deputies elected to the last convocation of the Saeima (out of 100), and this allowed the founders of the CCL to regard themselves as empowered to represent a majority of the people of Latvia.[184]

The CCL[185] took an unqualified position opposing both forces which had occupied Latvia — the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany — and rejected collaboration with either one of these countries. It demanded restoration of an independent and democratic Latvia. The CCL was the only democratic and national resistance movement which could legally speak on behalf of Latvia and the Latvian people. One of its important functions was to provide information to the Western allies about the situation in Latvia.[186] The CCL also drafted a number of significant political documents, and using its contacts abroad, sent these for consideration by Western governments and international organisations. These documents condemned the Soviet and Nazi periods of occupation and demanded restoration of Latvian statehood.[187]

Modern discussions about the CCL often mention the memorandum it adopted on 17 March 1944[188], which was written by Konstantīns Čakste and Fēlikss Cielēns, and which was signed by 189 (perhaps 190) political and public figures of Latvia. Contradictory evidence has been found in memoirs and historical literature about the manner whereby this memorandum was drafted and signed;[189] it was a political challenge demanding immediate renewal of *de facto* sovereignty of the Republic of Latvia,

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[183] Ērglis, Dz. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes vēstures nezināmās lappuses*, 19. lpp.

[184] Kuzmins, V. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes Memorands — unikāla kultūras un vēstures liecība. Virzība uz demokrātisko Eiropu 2. pasaules kara laikā. Latvijas Centrālā padome un "kurelieši"*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2010, 50. lpp. Accessible at: http://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/lu_portal/apgads/PDF/LCP-kureliesi.pdf

[185] Academic investigations of the history of the CCL were started by Edgars Andersons, a US historian of Latvian origin, continued by Leonīds Siliņš. A monograph by Dzintars Ērglis appeared in 2003, about the unknown pages of the CCL. Uldis Neiburgs has published a number of articles about various aspects of CCL activities. Andersons, E., Siliņš, E. *Latvijas Centrālā Padome — LCP. Latviešu nacionālā pretestības kustība 1943–1945*. Upsala: LCP, 1994; Siliņš, L. Nacistiskās Vācijas okupanti: mūsu tautas lielās cerības un rūgtā vilšanās. Rīga: LU žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2001; Ērglis, Dz. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes vēstures nezināmās lappuses*, 231. lpp., etc.

[186] Kuzmins, V. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes Memorands — unikāla kultūras un vēstures liecība. Virzība uz demokrātisko Eiropu 2. pasaules kara laikā. Latvijas Centrālā padome un "kurelieši"*, 50. lpp.

[187] The CCL also assisted persons fleeing to Sweden. Starting in 1944 the CCL organised boat traffic for the journey to Sweden from Latvia: a total of 2 541 refugees escaped this way. Andersons, E., Siliņš, L. u.c. *Latvijas Centrālā padome — LCP. Latviešu nacionālā pretestības kustība 1943–1945*, 214. lpp.

[188] On 17 March 2009, UNESCO included this memorandum in the Latvian National Register of its Programme, "Memory of the World".

[189] Neiburgs, U. Latvijas Centrālā padome nacistu okupētajā Latvijā (1943–1945): izpētes aktualitātes un rezultāti. *Okupācijas režīmi Baltijas valstīs 1940–1991*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2009, 235.–279. lpp. Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/items/PDF/item_2205_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_25_sejums.pdf; Kuzmins, V. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes Memorands — unikāla kultūras un vēstures liecība. Virzība uz demokrātisko Eiropu 2. pasaules kara laikā. Latvijas Centrālā padome un "kurelieši"*, 49.–53. lpp., etc.

to form a coalition government, and to create an army in order to defend the territory of Latvia against "the impending incursion by the Soviet Union".[190]

A cogent exposition of the meaning of the terms, "collaboration" and "collaborationism" has been presented by the Latvian historian Daina Bleiere, including classification of these concepts, and their practical relevance when studying events during the German and Soviet occupation periods.[191] The historian offers a typology for collaboration/collaborationism which can be used practically by researchers into the history of Latvia. The term *collaboration* is defined to cover voluntary or involuntary cooperation with the occupiers, with the underlying idea of preserving statehood. Collaborationism is "voluntarily enlisting in the service of the occupying state for ideological reasons, or by reason of the attraction of its system of governance, or for selfish reasons".[192]

Many historians in Latvia refer to *collaboration* and *collaborationism* in their publications, and this has given the terms a negative connotation when describing the relations of local inhabitants with the Germans during the Nazi occupation of Latvia. It is difficult to accept such usage, since the concept of collaboration is not really applicable or appropriate to describe the behaviour of residents of a state who have survived several occupations. The views of A. Ezergailis, a US historian of Latvian origin, are appropriate when he disagrees with "the use of the concept of collaboration to the period of German occupation in Eastern Europe, in particular in the case of Latvia".[193]

The concept of collaboration, which after the end of the Second World War became a weapon in political struggle, is closely related to the problem of loyalty and betrayal. In Latvia collaboration took a very special form, which only reinforces the fact that use of the term *collaboration* it is not appropriate. Most residents of Latvia did not regard the Soviet state hurriedly created during the summer of 1940 as theirs, and they felt no loyalty towards it.[194] This was entirely understandable, since the Latvian SSR, in fact, was not a Latvian state: "leading administrative positions and in the Party were dominated by Russians and Russian-speakers".[195] Therefore, the correct question to be answered is — what was to be the object of loyalty by Latvians, or — what did they betray?

At the onset of "the German period" a majority of Latvians had kept their loyalty towards the Latvian state which the Soviet authorities had eradicated *de facto.* Many hoped that the Nazis would tolerate renewal of this lost statehood. In Latvia this was

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[190] Neiburgs, U. LCP memorands par Latvijas neatkarības atjaunošanu. 1944. gada marts. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata II*. Rīga: Latvijas Kara muzejs, 2001, 189. lpp.

[191] Bleiere, D. Par kolaborāciju: definīcijas, klasifikācija, pielietojamība vācu un padomju okupācijas pētniecībā Latvijā, 139.–163. lpp.

[192] Bleiere, D. Par kolaborāciju: definīcijas, klasifikācija, pielietojamība vācu un padomju okupācijas pētniecībā Latvijā, 139. lpp.

[193] Ezergailis, A. Kolaborācija vācu okupētajā Latvijā: piedāvātā un atraidītā. *Latvijas Vēsture. Jaunie un Jaunākie Laiki*, Nr. 2, 2004, 42. lpp.

[194] The German author Dieter Pohl is completely correct when he poses the following question in one of his publications: "For example, why was it possible to demand that Balts be loyal to the Soviet Occupation authorities." Pohl, D. Die deutsche Besatzung und die Gesellschaften Europas. Süß, D., Süß, W. (Hrsg.). *Das Drittes Reich. Eine Einfüruhrung*. München: Pantheon, 2008, S. 277.

[195] Felder, B. M. *Lettland im Zweiten Weltkrieg: zwishen sowjetischen und deutschen Besatzern 1940–1946*, S. 93.

the primary motivation for cooperation with the German occupation authorities. Therefore, if we wish to use the term *collaboration* in a historical study of the Nazi occupation period, we must prove that the activities of certain groups of individuals were essentially oriented not against Soviet Latvia, but against the Republic of Latvia, or the interests of the Latvian people.

Seen in this light, only a relatively small group of Latvians may be deemed to have been collaborators who helped the Germans to implement the Holocaust. Furthermore, the concept of collaboration may be refined in order that it better describes actions and the orientation of individuals. In this case, in addition to use of the terms *collaboration* and *collaborationism*, it is possible to make use of the concept of tactical collaboration, this referring to cooperation with the German authorities insofar as this allowed reaching goals that in some way corresponded to Latvian national interests. A separate question which merits consideration is whether tactical collaboration might not be considered to be a form of resistance.

It is necessary to determine which individuals might be described as *tactical collaborators*. Undoubtedly, one candidate for this label is Alfrēds Valdmanis, Director-General for Justice of the Latvian Local Self-government.[196] Historians have uncovered considerable evidence that his well-known and widely discussed (including earlier in this article) memorandum, "*Latviešu problēma*" (The Latvian Problem), which invited the creation of Latvian military units in return for Latvian autonomy,[197] was written to demonstrate a wish to officially collaborate with the Germans, while also containing unrealistic demands, so as to delay the German occupation authorities in reaching their goals.[198]

Different historians have different views concerning A. Valdmanis and his activities during the period of Nazi occupation, but they are largely critical and negative. Haralds Biezais considered him to have been a true and convinced apologist for German policies[199] and the biggest collaborator of the time.[200] Documentary evidence for the activities of A Valdmanis is contradictory, but it does not support such a negative assessment. Many documents indicate that several German officials were very reserved in their relations with Valdmanis, and did not consider him to be a friend of the Germans. In 1943, A. Rosenberg, Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, described him as "the chief spokesman for Latvian demands".[201]

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[196] See the book written about A. Valdmanis: Bassler, G. P. *Alfred Valdmanis and the politics of survival*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.

[197] At a meeting of the Latvian Local Self-government of 29 January 1943, A. Valdmanis raised the topic of renewing Latvian independence coupled with plans for the Latvian Legion. He stated that, "all of us have the same common and only one ideal and only one wish: that the free Latvian State be renewed as quickly as possible". BA-B, R 6/5, Protokoll der Sitzung der Lettischen Selbstverwaltung und der Führung des Generalkommissariats, 29. Januar 1943.

[198] Neiburgs, U., Ērglis, Dz. Nacionālā un padomju pretošanās kustība: kopīgais un atšķirīgais, 312. lpp.

[199] Biezais, H. *Latvija kāškrusta varā: Sveši kungi, pašu ļaudis*. [Īstlansinga]: Gauja, 1992, 145. lpp.

[200] Ibid., 150. lpp.

[201] BA-B, R 6/5, S. 105, Politische Lage in den Generalbezirken Estland und Lettland, 23. November 1943.

The Latvian Legion

Residents of Latvia fought in both occupation armies during the Second World War. According to assessments made by Latvian historians, over 200 000 residents of Latvia fought in the armed forces of the Soviet Union and Germany, out of which 80 000–100 000 fought in the Red Army.[202] The total number in German military units was slightly larger, approximately 110 000.[203] Most of the latter were part of the Latvian Legion, more than 52 000 in all.[204] Historians are still debating the question of the total number of Latvian casualties while fighting in German units. Various figures have been published, ranging from 15 000 to 80 000.[205] Determining of the total number of those who fell fighting is an important topic for future study.[206]

There is a very broad documentary basis for study of the history of the Latvian Legion. Various documents and other materials are found in state archives (in Latvia, Germany, Russia, Sweden, the USA, etc.). A number of collections of important documents and other materials about the Legion have been published, for example the multi-volume set *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā* (Latvian Soldier During the Second World War)[207], the collection compiled by A. Ezergailis, *Latviešu leģions. Varoņi, nacisti vai upuri?* (Latvian Legion. Heroes, Nazi, or Victims?)[208], the book published by Mirdza Kate Baltais, *Latviešu leģions dokumentu gaismā* (Latvian Legion in Documents)[209], and the book *Ārvalstu arhīvu dokumenti par okupācijas režīmu politiku Latvijā* (Documents from Foreign Archives on the Policy of Occupation Regimes in Latvia)[210] in a series published by the Commission of the Historians of Latvia.

In regard to the principles underpinning the study of the history of the Latvian Legion, Latvian historiography has tended to examine and evaluate issues in the context of how military units were constituted and functioned in territories occupied and administered by the Nazis. This approach is historically justified since it brings out the

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[202] Jermacāne, I. *Sarkanās armijas 201. (43. gvardes) latviešu strēlnieku divīzija: sociālpolitiskie procesi, 1941. gada augusts – 1943. gada aprīlis*. Promocijas darba kopsavilkums. Rīga, 2014, 5. lpp.

[203] Kangeris, K. Nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas militārajos formējumos iesaistītie Latvijas iedzīvotāji. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata.* Rīga: Latvijas Kara muzejs, 2000, 139. lpp.

[204] Kangeris, K. Piezīmes pie jautājuma kompleksa "Latviešu leģions". *Latviešu leģions. Varoņi, nacisti vai upuri?: no Amerikas Savienoto Valstu Nacionālā arhīva kara noziegumu izmeklēšanas materiāliem 1945–1950.* Ezergailis, A. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1998, 118. lpp.

[205] Kangeris, K. Nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas militārajos formējumos iesaistītie Latvijas iedzīvotāji, 137. lpp.

[206] In a study of the Latvian Legion by U. Neiburgs, a figure of approximately 30 000–50 000 casualties is given for Latvian soldiers fighting in the German armed forces during the Second World War. Neiburgs, U. Latviešu leģiona izveidošana. *Latviešu leģionāri. Latvian Legionnaires.* Rīga: Daugavas Vanagi, 2005, 15. lpp.

[207] *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā. Dokumentu un atmiņu krājums*, 1.–11. sēj. Västeras, Toronto, Linkolna: Daugavas Vanagu centrālā valde, 1970–1993.

[208] *Latviešu leģions: varoņi, nacisti vai upuri?: no Amerikas Savienoto Valstu Nacionālā arhīva kara noziegumu izmeklēšanas materiāliem 1945–1950*.

[209] Baltais, M. K. *The Latvian Legion in Documents*. Toronto: Amber Printers and Publishers, 1999.

[210] Ārvalstu arhīvu dokumenti par okupācijas režīmu politiku Latvijā 1940–1968. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008 (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 22. sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/ items/PDF/item_1677_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_22_sejums.pdf

specific aspects of the situation Latvia found itself and allows breadth for comparison. The Latvian Legion in Europe was not a singular phenomenon. Early in the Second World War, volunteers from "Germanic" countries, i.e. Denmark, Norway, Holland, Sweden, and Belgium, joined the Waffen SS. During the final years of the war, the SS lost its elite nature, shifting from the "Guards of the Führer" to a multi-national army. After the German military situation worsened, with tremendous numbers of casualties as well as a crisis in the Germanic volunteers movement, the leadership of the SS was forced to renounce its "racial prerequisites and criteria" in constituting SS units and to accept members of "non-Germanic" peoples. SS divisions and smaller units appeared consisting of French, Walloon, Ukrainian, Russian, Italian, Belarusian, Kazakh, Hungarian, Rumanian, Croatian, Latvian, Estonian, and other nationals. A unique phenomenon was the appearance of SS units made up of Muslim soldiers, for example, an Eastern Turk unit, as well as divisions and regiments of peoples living in the mountainous regions of Crimea and in the Balkans. In 1944, more than 910 000 men were members of the Waffen SS, of which approximately 57% were not Germans living in Germany (*Reichsdeutsche*).[211] None of the 38 divisions which constituted the SS was made up only of German soldiers, and 19 divisions consisted almost entirely of non-Germans, with members of practically all of the peoples of Europe to be found in these units.

Latvian historians have successfully dealt with a number of specific issues in the history of the Latvian Legion. Nuances in the important question of the very definition of what constituted the Legion have been carefully addressed. The necessity for this clarification resulted from a chaotic situation in historical literature, where at least three, even four definitions were used. A discussion begun ten years ago proved to be very useful.[212] A number of historians studying the Latvian Legion considered that the most appropriate definition of the concept of the Latvian Legion was the narrowest one, namely that the Legion comprised two Waffen SS divisions which were formed sequentially: the 15th Division and the 19th Division of the Waffen SS.[213] The view expressed by Rūdolfs Bangerskis, Inspector-General of the Latvian Legion, wherein the term, the *Latvian Legion,* covers all Latvian military formations constituted during the war (including those which were part of the Wehrmacht), was rejected as inconsistent with reality[214], as was the definition due to SS Reichsführer Himmler (expressed 26 May 1943) which held "that the name, *The Latvian Legion*, is one covering all Waffen SS and police units made up from Latvians".[215] The SS

[211] Lumsden, R. Himmler's Black order: a history of the SS, 1923–1945. Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1997, p. 207.

[212] See: Feldmanis, I. Nacistu okupācijas politika Latvijā (1941–1945): pētniecības problēmas, iespējamie risinājumi un varianti. *Totalitārie režīmi Baltijā: izpētes rezultāti un problēmas*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2005, 58.–61. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 15.sēj.). Accessible at: http://www.president.lv/images/modules/items/ PDF/item_1620_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_15_sejums.pdf

[213] Feldmanis, I., Kangeris, K. Par Latviešu SS brīvprātīgo leģionu. *Totalitārie režīmi Baltijā: izpētes rezultāti un problēmas*, 239. lpp.

[214] See: Kangeris, K. Piezīmes pie jautājumu kompleksa "Latviešu leģions", 113. lpp.

[215] Ibid.

Reichsführer's definition was dictated by administrative interests (all German police were subordinated to the SS), and it ignores the difference between police battalion and front-line combat.

Discussion of the issue of the Latvian Legion's association with the SS has been brief. Recent Latvian historical literature shows near consensus that the association of the Legion with the SS was purely formal. The Latvian (also the Estonian) Waffen SS divisions were not the same as the German Waffen SS units. Latvian soldiers were neither members of the National Socialist Party nor members of the SS organisations. It is customary to point to the conclusions of the USA Displaced Persons Commission of 1 September 1950: "The Baltic Waffen SS units (the Baltic Legions) in terms of their goals, ideology, actions, and composition are to be considered as separate from German SS units, in which case the commission finds them not to be hostile to the US government."[216] It is possible that a similar assessment about the non-Nazi nature of the Estonian and Latvian SS divisions had previously been made at a high level within the US government. A tantalising hint that this might have been the case is offered by an interesting page of post-war history. Latvian soldiers (including those who had served in the Legion) together with Estonian and Lithuanian soldiers and other nationalities were chosen to serve as guards from the summer of 1946 to 1949 for the Nuremberg trials of Nazi war criminals, under American command. A further 12 trials took place after the conclusion of the Nuremberg War Tribunal (20 November 1945 – 1 October 1946), at which 23 major Nazi leaders were tried.

The topic of the soldiers of the Latvian Legion is complex and features a number of issues which are difficult to resolve. Whereas in Western Europe the majority of recruits voluntarily joined the Waffen SS, the situation in Latvia was different.[217] There were few real volunteers. A precise number is not known but historical literature usually puts this number at no more than 15–20%.[218] The principle procedure that was followed was outright mobilisation carried out as campaigns. Five such campaigns were organised in Latvia between March 1943 and September 1944. Historians have documents available describing almost all of these campaigns in quantities sufficient for study, with detailed summaries concerning the first three campaigns.

The engagement of Latvian soldiers on the side of Germany was largely due to the aggressive and criminal activities of the Soviet Union in the Baltic during 1940–1941 and the attendant consequences and socio-psychological trauma. Quite a few Latvian soldiers regarded the Latvian Legion as the nucleus of a future Army of Latvia and fought against the USSR because they wished to prevent its return to occupy Latvia

[216] Pārvietoto personu komisijas locekļa H. Rozenfilda vēstule Latvijas pilnvarotajam lietvedim Vašingtonā J. Feldmanim 1950. gada 12. septembrī. *Latviešu leģions. Varoņi, nacisti vai upuri?: no Amerikas Savienoto Valstu Nacionālā arhīva kara noziegumu izmeklēšanas materiāliem 1945–1950*, 103. lpp.

[217] M. K. Baltais, a Canadian researcher of Latvian origin, considers that the most pressing research problem concerning the Latvian Legion is whether or not it consisted of volunteers. Her views are clear: there are many factors which speak against the volunteer label. For example, soldiers in the Legion were convinced that they were fighting against the Soviet Union, rather than for Germany, as well as about the fact that disobedience could be punished according to the military code during wartime. See: Baltais, M. K. *The Latvian Legion in Documents*, pp. 10–11.

[218] See, for example: *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991,* 169. lpp.

and terrorise its inhabitants. The soldiers did not interpret their fight against the Soviet Union as a struggle against the anti-Hitler coalition, despite the Soviet Union being allied with Great Britain and the USA. By and large, they were positively oriented towards the Western countries.

The feelings of Latvian soldiers, i.e. their deep hatred of the Soviet Union was described in a very credible manner in a report by SS Oberführer Adolf Ax, Commander of the 15th Division. On 27 January 1945, he wrote that: "First and foremost they are Latvians! Their desire is an independent Latvian national state. Faced with a choice — Germany or Russia, they chose Germany (…), since they sought a tie with Western civilisation. Germans as overlords they view as the lesser of two evils. Hatred of Russia (…) was reinforced (…) by the occupation of Latvia (…). They see the struggle against Russia as their national duty."[219]

The Latvian exile historian, Haralds Biezais, who regarded the formation of the Latvian Legion to be a tragic event in the life of the Latvian people,[220] wrote in his book *Latvija kāškrusta varā* (Latvia Under the Swastika) as follows: "The contradiction between enforced mobilisation at the same time as the fight for a free Latvian state is evident. It needs to be clarified."[221] Without claiming it to be the absolute truth, it is nevertheless the case that this contradiction is more apparent, than real. What is evident is more of an incompatibility between an objective reality (also Nazi political orientation) as it was understood then and now, the latter as it has emerged after the Second World War under the influence of the version of the victors. Essentially, while the Nazis undoubtedly carried out forced mobilisation (failure to turn up was punishable), many who were subjected to the draft accepted the situation given the circumstances of the time. Joining the Latvian Legion was in their eyes the only real opportunity to fight against the enemy and to prevent a second Soviet occupation. Many who served in the Latvian Legion did so beset by illusions, and they needed an attractive ideal in order to fight — a free and independent Latvia. They did not understand "grand politics"; they hoped for British aid to renew independent Latvia, or a repetition of the events of 1919, when they had been able to defeat the Bolsheviks with the help of Germans, and then afterwards to defeat the Germans. However, in one respect they were realistic, since they recognised that armed national contingents are instruments of power which command respect. The Latvian Legion was to be a powerful argument, a convincing demonstration of the fact that Latvians were not prepared to accommodate themselves either the "New Europe" of the Nazis, nor in the Stalinist Soviet Union.

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[219] Neulen, H. W. *An deutschen Seite. Internationale Freiwillige von Wehrmacht und Waffen-SS*, S. 382.

[220] For many years, Latvian exile historiography was dominated by the axiom that the Latvian Legion was necessary to fight for restoration of an independent Latvia. See, for example: Silgailis, A. *Latviešu leģions: dibināšana, formēšana un kauju gaitas Otrajā pasaules karā.* 3. izd. Rīga: Militārās literatūras apgādes fonds, 2006. H. Biezais established in Latvian exile historiography a critical attitude towards the Latvian Legion. He pointed out that it had been formed in a criminal manner, in violation of international law. In his opinion responsibility for this criminal behaviour lay with the German occupation authorities, but "responsibility had to be shared by all Latvian politicians whose cooperation was voluntary". Biezais, H. *Latvija kāškrusta varā: Sveši kungi, pašu ļaudis*, 390. lpp.

[221] Ibid., 101. lpp.



Fig. 9. Latvian refugees leaving Riga. October 1944. (Archive material held at the Latvian War Museum)



Fig. 10. Captain Emīls Palencs of the Red Army raising the red flag over Riga. October 1944. (Archive material held at the Latvian War Museum)

The first battles in which units of the Latvian Legion took part were on the Eastern front on the outskirts of Leningrad at the beginning of 1943 as part of the German Army Group "Nord". In May, the SS Latvian Brigade (as of 22 October, the 2nd SS Latvian Volunteer Brigade) was deployed to positions at Volkhov from which it retreated in January 1944, together with the German Army, after coming under attack by the Red Army. At the end of February, they reached the so-called Pantera positions and undertook defence of an assigned region along the banks of the Velikaya River, to the left of the other Latvian unit, the 15th Division,[222] which had until then fought several defensive battles in Russia.

Both units of the Latvian Legion — the 15th Division and 2nd Brigade (as of 22 March the 19th Division) engaged in fierce defensive fighting along the right bank of the Velikaja. On 16 March, during this fighting, Red Army units captured a high point referenced as 93.4. A battlegroup consisting of both units of the Latvian Legion was formed to retake the position.[223] On 16 March, the battle group counter-attacked and after several days of fighting retook the position. As noted by the Latvian historian Valdis Kuzmins, the date 16 March began to be commemorated after the Second World War as the day honouring the Latvian Legion, due to the composition of the battle group, its leadership, and the success of the counterattack.[224]

During the latter part of April 1944, both divisions began to redeploy to new positions 50 km to the east of Opochka. As a result of attack by the Soviet Army in this sector of the front at the end of June and at the beginning of July, both units of the Latvian Legion suffered serious casualties and began a chaotic retreat in the direction of Latvia.

[222] The Germans ordered the formation of a Latvian SS Volunteer division on 15 February 1943. Between October 1943 and June 1944, it was designated as the 15th Latvian SS Volunteer Division, and afterwards as the 15th Waffen SS Grenadier Division (Latvian No. 1).

[223] Silgailis, A. *Latviešu leģions: dibināšana, formēšana un kauju gaitas Otrajā pasaules karā*, 48. lpp.

[224] Kuzmins, V. Latviešu leģionāri cīņās Austrumu frontē. *Latviešu leģionāri. Latvian Legionnaires*, 91. lpp.

The 15th Division suffered particularly heavy casualties during the fighting retreat and its remaining elements were evacuated to Vidzeme, and later to Germany in order to be reconstituted. In Western Prussia the Division was topped up with Latvians who had completed their one year's stint in the German Labour Service, as well as with other young men who had been mobilised in Latvia and who had come to Germany. At the end of January 1945, the refurbished division engaged in fighting against the Soviet Army on the territory of Germany, in Western Prussia, in the Danzig area, around Mecklenburg and in the region of Brandenburg in Pomerania. Several units of this Division were able to disengage at the end of April and at the beginning of May and surrender to the Western allies.

Once the 19th Division fell back to Latvia (17 July 1944), it took part in unsuccessful defensive battles against the 10th Soviet Army in the vicinity of Lake Lubāns, and for several days it was successful in stopping attempts in the vicinity of More by the Soviet armies to break through to Riga, with this delay allowing the Germans to evacuate their army units from Estonia. In October the 19th Division retreated across the Daugava into Kurzeme (one of the four regions of Latvia), where it found itself encircled. Members of the Latvian Legion took part in five of the six battles in Kurzeme, and on 8 May 1945 surrendered to the Red Army in Kurzeme.

As we have seen, the reoccupation of Latvia, and renewal of the Soviet regime occurred in steps. In the second Soviet occupation period, Sovietisation had to be virtually started from scratch. On the one hand, this process was hindered to a greater extent compared with the first exercise by organised armed resistance, since a national partisan movement arose, swollen by several thousand former members of the Latvian Legion. On the other hand, the process of Sovietisation was made easier by the fact that 200 000 individuals left the country at the end of the war, including many members of the elite, i.e. people who might have actively resisted Sovietisation.

Conclusions

The policies implemented by the Soviet Union early in the Second World War were oriented towards gradually drawing the Baltic States into its orbit, and eventually destroying their independence. In June 1940, the USSR, then allied with Nazi Germany, engaged in unprovoked military aggression and occupied all three Baltic States. In August of that year, Moscow annexed the Baltic States. However, the international community refused to recognise this annexation as legitimate, but saw it rather as violent acquisition of foreign territory. Thus, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia continued to exist in international law.

The totalitarian system which was a stable form of governance in the Soviet Union was foisted upon Latvia during the first year of Soviet occupation. Terror was unleashed against real and imagined opponents. Terror culminated in a vast, public mass deportation on the night of 14/15 June 1941, included many farmers, merchants, entrepreneurs, politicians, and members of the intelligentsia. This deportation caused severe psychological trauma to the population of Latvia.

The German Occupation Authority established in the summer of 1941 implemented contradictory and short-sighted policies. Although the attitude of the Germans towards Latvians, Lithuanians, and, in particular, towards Estonians, was definitely more favourable than towards many other peoples living in the Soviet Union, they almost completely ignored vital and important interests of the Baltic peoples, and adopted a negative stand (and during the final war years an evasive position) on renewing statehood in the Baltic region. Implementing more astute policies was impossible given their arrogance and superiority complex, which on occasion bordered on glaring narrow-mindedness, as well as the excessive ambitions of the Third Reich and the narrow vision of its Führer — "victory or death". Giddiness owing to their victories during the Blitzkrieg of 1941 might somewhat explain their behaviour, which clearly shifted under changing circumstances once Germany encountered an endless series of military reverses. However, the destructive features of their occupation policies persisted to a greater or lesser extent to the end as an example of "constant values".

For the Nazis, the "racial quality" of a people was important. In terms of German categorisation of race the Baltic peoples rated rather highly, although this ranking was not strictly determined, nor fixed. Usually Estonians were ranked the highest, the most suitable for assimilation to become Germans. The Nazis praised Estonians as a distinguished example, thanks to their particularly friendly attitude towards the Germans. Estonians were held out as examples for Latvians and Lithuanians to emulate. A number of German officials insisted that Estonians deserved special consideration.

The German occupation authorities in the Baltic ignored international law. Local residents were widely recruited into Nazi repressive agencies, called up for military service, as well as sent to Germany for labour service. Initially, labour was recruited on a voluntary basis, and this system reached its apogee in Lithuania. The same did not hold as successfully for Latvian and Estonia. Towards the end of the war the Germans were obliged to mobilise entire age cohorts for labour service and to transport them against their will to Germany.

The population of Latvia decreased considerably during the period of German occupation, and its economic potential also greatly weakened. Nazi economic activity, despite some degree of restraint, was oriented towards exploitation and pillaging of the Baltic countries. The Germans wished to extract the maximum economic resources they could from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Nevertheless they took care to renew local economic potential and to preserve it for future needs. This was dictated by the fact that were the war to be prolonged, it would be necessary to resolve supply problems for their armed forces.

About the author

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Ēriks Jēkabsons

LATVIA, LITHUANIA, AND ESTONIA, 1918–1940: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

The goal of this paper is to describe the common and the different aspects of how the Baltic States developed in the inter-war period. Principal attention is paid to critical turning points in the history of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, i.e. the formation of the states and their fight for independence in 1918–1920, as well as the destruction of this independence in 1939–1940 during the early phase of the Second World War. It was particularly during these periods — times of crisis — that we can most readily see the common and the differing characteristics of these states. Internal political events as well as foreign policy directions are examined and the conclusion is drawn that the Baltic States which were then successfully integrated into the European state system showed many identical features as well as differences both domestically and in their international relations.

Keywords: Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, inter-war period, wars of independence, domestic political developments, authoritarian coups d'état, basic foreign policy directions, democracy and authoritarianism, occupation and annexation

Today the Baltic is largely, if not always, perceived around the world as a single, united territory, i.e. one whose states share a similar history. But while there is clear evidence for many similarities between the Baltic States, there are also many differences. One can only speak of a common Baltic history to a limited extent, and even then, only starting with the Middle Ages. Differences which were the result of their history became evident during the period when the Baltic peoples — Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians — gained their independence for the first time, namely during the inter-war years of the 1920s and 1930s.[1]

Given the complex nature of various issues the history of the Baltic States is not set out in detail, with only the salient developments described in this paper. Analyses which are the base for this paper examine events through the prism of their mutual relations since this approach permits better insight into the similarities and differences

[1] In view of the nature of this paper (numerous facts from historiography are common knowledge), summary references are firstly given as a list of literature used in this paper, secondly, in detail where facts are not generally known, and thirdly, pointing to recent literature where it is possible to gain considerably more information about a specific event or situation.

alluded to previously. There is practically no analysis presented here of the economic development of the three Baltic States. The situation in Latvia is at the centre of this paper with comparisons offered to a reasonable extent with processes in the other Baltic States. The topics covered here are the situation during the Wars of Independence, domestic political developments, principal tenets of foreign policy, and events during the period of destruction of independence in 1939–1940.[2]

During the Middle Ages, the lands of the Baltic tribes were subjugated by various foreign rulers. After a fierce struggle, the Brethren of the Livonian Order, were able, during the 13th century, to subjugate the Balts and the Livs living on the present-day territory of Latvia. The Semigallians were forced to capitulate in the face of overwhelming force, but a substantial fraction of this tribe first burned down their castles, and then, in 1290, departed from their land for Lithuania, where together with the Lithuanians, they continued to resist the encroaching German knights. Lands of the Livonian Order and of the Bishoprics were established on the modern territories of Latvia and Estonia, whereas the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which later united with Poland, was established on the territory of modern Lithuania. Some lands inhabited by the Couronians. Semigallians, and Selonians remained outside of Livonia (of these, the Couronians living outside of Latvia, in Germany and in Lithuania in the Curonian Spit, retained their identity the longest, up until the 20th century). The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia existed from the 16th to the 18th century, finally absorbed by the Russian Empire at the end of the 18th century as the Governorate[3] of Courland (Kurzeme), with its immediate neighbour, the Governorate of Kovno which consisted of part of the territory of modern Lithuania. In 1819, Palanga and its surrounding region were added to the Governorate of Courland. In turn, present-day northern Vidzeme and southern Estonia were parts of the same administrative entities from the Middle Ages onwards (as part of the Livonian Order lands, briefly within the borders of Poland and Lithuania, later within those of the Kingdom of Sweden, and, from the 18th onwards, as the Governorate of Livonia within the Russian Empire).

It is known that at the end of the 18th century there were a significant number of Latvian Lutheran parishes in the Governorate of Kovno. Furthermore, many Latvian peasants from the Governorate of Courland acquired land and moved there during the 19th century from the Governorate of Courland. There were 6341 Latvians in the

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[2] The following works have been used in this presentation of the principal on-going processes in the Baltic States: Gerutis, A. *Lithuania: 700 years*. New York: Manyland Books, 1969; Rei, A. *The Drama of the Baltic Peoples*. 2nd printing. Stockholm: Kirjastus Vaba Eesti, 1972; Vardys, S., Misiunas, R. *The Baltic States in Peace and War, 1917–1945*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978; Raun, T. *Estonia and the Estonians*. 2nd updated ed. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2001; Laur, M., Tannberg, T. *History of Estonia*. 2nd ed. Tallinn: Avita, 2002; Kiaupa, Z. *The History of Lithuania*. Vilnius: Baltos lankas, 2002; Rowell, S., Griškaite, R., Rudis, G. *A History of Lithuania*. Vilnius: Inter Se, 2002; Senn, A. *Lithuania 1940: Revolution from Above*. Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2007; Kasekamp, A. *A History of the Baltic States*. Houndmills, Bassingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010; Eidintas, A., Bumblauskas, A., Kulakauskas, A. *The History of Lithuania*. Vilnius: "Eugrimas" Publishing House, 2013; O'Connor, K. *The History of the Baltic States*. 2nd ed. Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2015; etc.

[3] This is the currently accepted equivalent of the Russian term *gubernia* which appears in older literature (translator's note),

Governorate of Kovno in 1836, while during the 1890s they numbered nearly 20 000. According to the census of 1897, there were 35 188 Latvians in the Governorate of Kovno. Many of these individuals lived close to the border with the Governorate of Courland. Different paths were followed by Latvians to arrive in the land of the Lithuanians. For example, some came from the civil parishes of Nīca and Rucava to live as tenants on land owned by Count Tyszkiewicz in Būtiņģė (Būtiņi, in Latvian), located in the region of Šventaja and Palanga. Land inhabited by Latvians could be found along the border with the Governorate of Courland from Palanga to Ābeļi, while several Latvian colonies existed in the interior of the Governorate of Kovno.[4]

In this way, ethnic mixing was evident between Latvians and Estonians, and Latvians and Lithuanians, in areas where their lands were in contact with one another; in the 20th century, this led to some territorial friction and disputes once Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia became independent states.

The Wars of Independence, 1918–1920

The situation in the region and in Latvia in particular. The Baltic Sea region stood out during 1918–1920 as one of the hottest spots of the nascent Versailles–Riga system. The fact that this period in history is characterised differently in five of the Baltic Sea states testifies to significant differences (excluding Russia, as it was only indirectly part of the region until after the Second World War). In Finland, this is called the Civil War and the War with Soviet Russia; in Estonia — the War of Liberation; in Lithuania — the Struggle for Freedom; in Poland — the Struggle for the Borders; while in Latvia the war during 1918–1920 is called War for Independence, Fight for Independence, Fight for Freedom, the War of Liberation, or the Liberation War. Therefore, there is no single conceptual image of this period which is understandable from the point of view of democracy, as well as due to objective conditions (matters were most complicated in Latvia). Elements of civil war were evident throughout the region, most acutely in Latvia until June 1919, when the entity of Soviet Latvia ceased to exist in fact (if not with legal finality).

Throughout this time, Latvia found itself not only at the geographic but also the military-political centre of events, which position it occupied from 1915 onwards when the front-lines of Russia and Germany stabilised on its territory.[5] This was the

[4] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latviešu nacionālā minoritāte Lietuvas Republikā 1918.–1940. gadā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 2003, 94.–119. lpp.

[5] For details concerning processes in Latvia during this and other periods, see: Spekke, A. *History of Latvia: an Outline*. Stockholm: Goppers (Zelta Ābele – The Golden Apple tree), 1957; Duhanovs, M., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A. *1939: Latvia and the Year of Fateful Decisions*. Riga: The University of Latvia, 1994; Grava-Kreituse, I., Feldmanis, I., Loeber, D., Goldmanis, J., Stranga, A. (eds.). *The Occupation and Annexation of Latvia 1939–1940: Documents and Materials*. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, 1995; Plakans, A. *The Latvians: a Short History*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1995; Puisāns, T. *The Emerging Nation: The Path of Agonizing Development from Baltic Tribalism to Latvian Nationhood*. Riga: Centre of Baltic–Nordic History and Political Studies, 1995; Ābols, G. Contribution of History of Latvian Identity. Riga: Nacionālais Apgāds, 2002; Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *History of Latvia: the 20th Century*. Riga: Jumava, 2006; etc.

main reason why Latvia's independence could only be proclaimed in November 1918, whereas Lithuania, which had been under occupation by the German army since 1915, did so on 16 February 1918 (at that time the Russian negotiators were refusing to compromise at the peace talk under way in Brest-Litovsk, whereupon Germany in preparing for a major offensive all along the front line with Soviet Russia allowed the proclamation of the Lithuanian state, since the Germans, firstly, were unsure of what the legal status might be of the occupied eastern territories, with one possibility consisting of the creation of mini-states closely linked with Germany, and secondly, since a Lithuanian state would act as a counter weight to growing demands by the Poles, demands particularly threatening to Germany). However, the German occupation authorities did not allow the formation of even a provisional government, and the first Lithuanian government was formed in November 1918. Estonia was practically spared fighting on its territory since the German army only reached Estonia in February 1918; independence was proclaimed on 24 February 1918 when remnants of the Russian army, then under Bolshevik influence, had departed, one day before the German occupation army arrived (the German occupation authorities interdicted the work of the Estonian government, and repressed several members of the government, and it could also only start to function in November 1918). In comparison with conditions in the other nascent Baltic States, the situation in Latvia was the most complex, even from the point of view of proclamation of independence — it alone had seen constant combat on its territory throughout the preceding years, suffering the attendant consequences. A large fraction of the national intelligentsia, i.e. the elite, had evacuated, and fighting occurred on both sides of the front lines, which precluded free assembly, let alone any public pursuit of national political activities, etc.

During the period 1918–1920, Latvia's territory was the arena for the collision of interests of the nascent Republic of Latvia, of Soviet Russia and the Latvian Bolsheviks, the Baltic Germans and Germany, anti-Bolshevik Russians, the new and restored neighbouring states of Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Finland, the Belarusian People's Republic, which had declared independence yet failed to secure it, and, finally, the Western Great Powers. During this time three governments were in place on the territory of Latvia (the national government, the Bolshevik, and pro-German governments), each with its own armed forces, as well as a civilian authority situated immediately in the rear of the army of P. Bermondt; some territories in Latvia found themselves administered, for a shorter or longer period, by neighbouring states, i.e. Estonia, Poland, and Lithuania. This has meant that understanding events and processes in Latvia — an apparently contradictory situation even at first sight whose details are difficult to unravel — shows the lack of sufficient historiography, which also characterises the situation in all of the neighbouring states. Thus, when one reads official national historical accounts and those by scholars recognised as authoritative, at least those accounts which circulate in scholarly circles or which are used as textbooks for educational purposes, one may conclude that historians in all three Baltic States have analysed complicated events and outcomes in isolation.

The independence of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania resulted from wars waged to achieve this result, with the prosecution of these conflicts showing both common and

very different features. All three countries embarked during November 1918 on a protracted armed struggle on their territories under complicated conditions — the German occupation regime collapsed, followed immediately by the westward movement of the Red Army of Soviet Russia, under the guise of establishing three Baltic States: Soviet Latvia as a formally independent satellite state of Soviet Russia, Soviet Estonia as a commune within Soviet Russia, and the Lithuanian and Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic. Estonia was the first Baltic State to achieve political and military stability despite conditions there being initially similar to those in Latvia (a substantial part of the population did not want to take up arms to defend the Provisional Government, there were residual illusions about the nature of the Bolshevik regime, etc.). Partly because a substantial proportion of soldiers from the Estonian Division of the former Russian Army, demobilised by the German occupation authorities in February 1918, remained on the territory of Estonia, important assistance was extended by Finland and the Scandinavian countries to the army and by the government of Estonia. Thanks to the help of volunteer units and not taking into account errors committed by the Estonian Soviet Commune, ones typical of all "national" Bolshevik regimes, combat units were soon formed and it was possible to liberate almost the entire territory of Estonia by early 1919. Subsequently the Estonian army command initiated combat operations for strategic tactical reasons on territory outside of Estonia, i.e. in Latvia and in Russia; in the former case this involved cooperating with units of the Provisional Government of Latvia, while in the latter case with the anti-Bolshevik Volunteer Army of North-West Russia led by Nikolai Yudenich (this force had been constituted on the territory of Estonia with assistance from Great Britain). At the same time when Yudenich's army was retreating in the Estonian territory, the Estonian government was the first from the Baltic states to begin peace negotiations with Soviet Russia, seeking to resolve matters arising from the complete defeat on the Petrograd Front of the army led by Yudenich. This army was interned during the peace talks and soldiers in camps suffered a lethal typhus epidemic; at the end of 1919, the Soviet side compelled Estonia to accept peace terms after a threatening attack was launched against Narva, which turned into the most critical development during the conflict and threatened Estonian independence. Following this a truce was agreed on 31 December 1919, while on 2 February 1920 a peace treaty was signed with Soviet Russia; in many respects, this agreement was for Estonia apparently advantageous, including in economic matters. These developments affected the military situation in Latvia, since the positions of the Red Army on its front line in Latvia was enhanced.

The Lithuanian government retreated to Kaunas at the beginning of January 1919, and then began to establish its armed forces. In early 1919, the Lithuanian army clashed with units of Soviet Russia (also those of Soviet Latvia). The Polish Army captured Vilnius in April 1919, and ever since, this issue has soured relations between the two states. During the summer of 1919, the armed forces of Lithuania and Poland advanced, actually in parallel, in a north-easterly direction and entered the territory of Latvia, with Lithuanian units taking up a 20-kilometre-long front line against the Red Army situated to the north of Daugavpils (this contact between Lithuanian forces and those of Soviet Russia was broken off in January 1920, once the Poles and Latvians

attacked the Red Army in Latgale). During the second half of November 1919, the Lithuanian Army attacked units of the army led by Bermondt on its territory. On 12 July 1920, Lithuania concluded a Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia, as a result of which it gained Vilnius, Grodno, and their extensive surrounding districts; however, these territories were handed over to Lithuania only at the end of August after the defeat of the Red Army at Warsaw, which precluded launching a coup in Lithuania (a group of 2000 saboteurs had already been infiltrated for this purpose by the Soviet government)). During this time, Polish armed forces pushed forward and clashes occurred in the vicinity of Seinai, a town which had been taken by the Lithuanians but which the Poles considered as theirs. In October, as a result of pressure exerted by the Western Allies, both sides signed an agreement on ending hostilities; however, on 9 October an army led by General Lucjan Żeligowski, which claimed to have separated from the Army of Poland, captured Vilnius, formally creating a buffer state adjoining Poland, the so-called state of Central Lithuania (in 1922 it was incorporated into Poland).

During the wars for independence, the Estonian army numbered 70 000, that of Latvia numbered 75 000, and that of Lithuania had 30 000 soldiers. The political campaign of the Baltic States for their independence ended with their international recognition — for Latvia and Estonia on 26 January 1921, while for Lithuania on 20 December 1922 (this international recognition occurred later as the issue of its border with Poland was not settled), and on 22 September 1921 all three Baltic States joined the League of Nations as sovereign entities.

Relations during the period of the wars of independence: attempts at forming a union. Representatives of the Baltic States sought as early as in the autumn of 1919, at a conference held in Tartu, to coordinate a common policy vis-à-vis Soviet Russia, but on this occasion their mutual differences and incompatibilities were all too evident (firstly, these were the Lithuanian dispute with Poland, the unwillingness of Latvia and Estonia to enter this argument supporting the Lithuanian side, etc.). The same can be said about the next conference of the Baltic States which took place in Helsinki in January 1920, and these were particularly evident during the conference held in Riga (Bulduri); the Conference of the Baltic States, originally scheduled for May 1920, had to be delayed owing to developments in several conflicts then under way, and in fact it took place in August and September. The opening session took place on 6 August; many statesmen expected it to be very productive, and indeed, the parties were able to reach agreement on many important matters. However, none of the draft agreements was ratified[6]. Responsibility for this impasse lay with the different interests and situation prevailing in six of the participating states — Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and the Ukraine People's Republic (UPR); these differences were glaringly evident during the course of the conference. Representatives gathered in Riga from Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, and, somewhat later, from Ukraine. The principal

[6] See: Andersons, E. Toward the Baltic Union 1920–1927. *Lituanus*, Vol. 12. No. 2, 1966; Toward the Baltic Union 1927–1934. *Lituanus.* Vol. 13, No. 1, 1967; Toward the Baltic Union: The Initial Phase. *Lituanus*, Vol. 14, No. 14, 1968.



Fig. 1. Leaders of the Baltic States delegations in front of Riga Castle prior to the opening session of the conference of the Baltic States. Kārlis Ulmanis, Prime Minister of Latvia, centre in the front row. Riga. August 1920. Photograph by Mārtiņš Lapiņš. LNA LVKFFDA, 1. f., 46681N

goal of the conference was to create a military defence union, as well as to discuss economic, legal, cultural, medical, and other issues. The conference was opened in Riga Castle by Kārlis Ulmanis, Prime Minister of Latvia, while later sessions took place in a hotel in Bulduri. Work progressed well in the Political, Legal, Economic, and Culture Committees. A number of draft agreements were drafted on citizenship, the equality of foreigners in civil rights, trade and industry, arbitration, criminal offences, copyright, medical research, and a decision was taken to create a joint propaganda office abroad and a standing council of the participating states, and to call a congress of representatives of mail and rail companies. In all, 21 resolutions on economic matters, seven draft Agreements, and 11 draft Conventions (including a military and a political convention) were adopted.[7]

Nevertheless, differences between the states participating in this Conference could not be bridged and when the fate of Poland was decided in battles at the gates of Warsaw, the Lithuanian delegation demanded that part of the districts of Jēkabpils and Ilūkste be given over to a line Susēja–Dviete–Daugava. The Foreign Minister of Latvia, Zigfrīds Anna Meierovics, drew the conclusion that, "the conference at Bulduri closed as had all of the previous ones with the result that agreement on the Lithuanian–Latvian border issue, unfortunately, could not be reached".[8] The traditional Lithuanian differences with Poland intruded on negotiations even more. The Polish delegation declared that the position of Lithuania was an impediment to agreeing the convention, while Witold Kamieniecki, a member of the delegation, was of the opinion that this was the principal reason for the failure of the conference. Instructions from the Lithuanian government to its delegation underlined the need to quietly search for a compromise and not to undertake initiatives, leaving this to the "conference organisers", and to keep in constant touch with representatives of the Entente, in particular, with the British. In case the British and French positions differed, the delegation was to align itself with the British, while at the same time seeking to avoid leaving the impression that the Lithuanians were under their sway.[9] The other delegations even considered agreeing on a convention without any Lithuanian participation, but they were

[7] See: Skrzypek, A. *Związek Baltycki: Litwa, Łotwa, Estonia i Finlandia w polityce Polski i ZSRR w latach 1919–1925*. Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1972, s. 68.

[8] Počs, K. *Sanitārā kordona valgos: Baltijas savienības jautājums buržuāziskās Latvijas ārpolitikā 1919.–1925. gadā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1971, 104., 106. lpp.

[9] Lietuvos Centrinis Valstybinis archivas, 383. f., 7. ap., 72. b., 53. lp.

dissuaded from doing so because they feared that then Lithuania would fall under greater influence of Germany and Soviet Russia. The Polish General Staff determined (on 15 August) that the Peace Treaty between Latvia and Soviet Russia notwithstanding, Latvia and Estonia demonstrated the greatest interest to agree a military convention, while Lithuania demanded removing this item from the agenda of the conference (allowing for secret negotiations on this point), and Finland was inactive on this issue. This meant that the discussions at Bulduri took on an "apolitical" character.[10]



Fig. 2. Participants of the Conference of Baltic States. Conference Chairman (centre) – Kārlis Ulmanis, Prime Minister of Latvia. Jūrmala. 6 August – 4 September 1920. Photograph by Jānis Rieksts. LNA LVKFFDA, 1. f., 10611P

Events at the front-lines influenced the course of this conference (the Polish Army was able to halt the advance of the invading Red Army in front of Warsaw and force it to retreat). Polish historian Andrzej Skrzypek has concluded that, "the draft agreement on a Baltic Union undoubtedly was dominated by the interests of Poland, which followed from its military successes".[11] Participants at a reception held by the Poles on 26 August included J. Čakste, Chairman of the Latvian Constitutional Assembly, K. Ulmanis, Z. Meierovics, and other senior Latvian politicians and military, as well as French and Italian diplomats, conference delegates, representatives of the local Polish community, correspondents, a photo reporter from *The Times* of London, etc. Discussions centred on events at the Polish–Soviet front and Polish diplomats and politicians were exuberant.[12]

Delegations from the UPR and the Belarusian People's Republic sought permission to participate in the conference, and on this point the stance taken by Lithuania differed from that of the other Baltic States. On 19 August, Jurgis Šaulys, head of the Lithuanian delegation, described the position of the UPR as precarious and also that their participation might incur the displeasure of Soviet Russia. On 20 August, conference participants unanimously turned down the Belarusian request. Z. Meierovics was very active in favour of granting the request from the UPR delegation and the other participants were convinced by his arguments, thus the UPR participated in the conference as a full member.

At first the Lithuanians rejected outright the idea of establishing a military union, since their Peace Treaty of 12 July with Soviet Russia gave Lithuania control of

[10] For details see: Jēkabsons, Ē. *Piesardzīgā draudzība: Latvijas un Polijas attiecības 1919.–1920. gadā*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2007, 188.–190. lpp.

[11] Skrzypek, A. *Związek Bałtycki*, s. 69.

[12] Rīga. Rauts pie poļu sūtņa. *Brīvā Zeme*, Nr. 195, 1920, 3. lpp.

territories which were the subject of a dispute between Lithuania and Poland. Later the Lithuanians offered to establish a union of countries which had concluded a peace treaty with Russia. The Polish delegates stated that in case no convention would be signed by all of the participating states due to the intransigence of Lithuania, Poland would reserve the right to deal freely with this state. The Great Powers of the Entente exerted pressure so that the Lithuanian delegation finally participated in drafting a military convention. It was foreseen that a unified military high command would be formed in peace time, and a military political council would be created in case of war. The draft treaty on a political union was signed on 30 August (the Lithuanian party signed subject to a number of reservations); this treaty was to be ratified by 15 December and would enter into force even if not all parties were to ratify it (the parties allowed that Lithuania might not ratify the treaty and remain outside of the Union). The conference closed on 4 September, and the Council of Representatives of the Baltic States convened its first session on 7 September. This council was active for two years without any significant impact; Lithuania did not participate in its work. None of the signatory parties ratified this treaty, despite official satisfaction expressed at the result of negotiations in Bulduri.[13]

Latvia and Lithuania. The first disagreements on border issues between these two states appeared during 1918–1920, when both were fighting for independence, in the context of the Versailles Peace Conference in the spring of 1919. The Foreign Minister of Latvia suggested retaining unaltered the border between the former governorates, while the Lithuanians demanded Palanga and its adjoining territory up to the Sventāja River. When the Latvians expressed doubts about the basis for this demand, the Lithuanians demanded respect for their interests in Latgale, threatening to hold a referendum in this region. The Lithuanian army occupied part of Ilūkste District in September 1919 up to the banks of the Daugava River. Constant friction set in afterwards between Lithuanian and Latvian authorities as the former sought by different means to have this district included into Lithuania. The poet Atis Ķeniņš, also a diplomat, who traversed this region in November on his way to Poland, wrote: "Driving from Eglaine to Turmonti, we gained the impression that the Lithuanians were making serious preparations to remain permanently in Ilūkste District. The Lithuanian civilian administration was being introduced, the residents were being lobbied in favour of Lithuania, and residents were asked to sign up for joining Lithuania. This cast doubt on assertions by the Lithuanian government that their occupation of Ilūkste District was necessary politically to demonstrate that Lithuania is holding the front line against the Bolsheviks. Further clarification from Lithuania is highly desirable."[14]

As a result of these territorial disputes, in December 1919, Latvia drew closer to Poland, who Lithuania regarded as its principal enemy, while Poland had the political foresight to declare in favour of Latvia as regards Latgale. In reply to a demand by the

[13] Skrzypek, A. *Związek Bałtycki*, s. 66–68.
[14] Latvian State Historical Archives (further LVVA), 2575. f., 15. apr., 11. l., 81. lp.

Latvian government for Lithuania to cease concentrating its armed forces in the area around Subate (which might imply preparation for the capture of Daugavpils), the Foreign Minister of Lithuania Augustinas Voldemaras, a remarkably politically short-sighted individual, replied that his country regarded as its territory the "Lithuanian regions of the Governorate of Courland" and insisted on taking the fortress at Daugavpils which "is the key to Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania" and which neither historically nor ethnically belonged to Latvia.[15] The consequence was that the Latvian and Polish armies combined in early 1920 and liberated Latgale from the Red Army, at the same time removing front-line contact by the Lithuanian army with the Bolsheviks; the existence of the front line was crucial for winning support by the Western Great Powers.

The first set of negotiations aimed at defining the Latvian–Lithuanian border took place in January 1920 in Jelgava, but these were not productive, since Lithuania demanded Ilūkste District, and the Latvians demanded Mažeikiai and Palanga; this was despite both sides agreeing on the principle of basing the border on the ethnic make-up of the regions concerned. This confrontation was repeated at meetings in Kaunas during February and March — the parties were unable to agree about Palanga, or Ilūkste District. During this time, the Lithuanian armed forces in Ilūkste District began to disband the local Latvian government authorities. Elections for delegates to the Latvian Constitutional Assembly were not allowed to be held in areas occupied by Lithuania, and in some instance residents were pressured to vote in elections for the Lithuanian Seimas. The tone and substance of demands issued by Lithuania were, however, largely determined by the military and political situation in Poland, its principal enemy.

The approximately 4000 Lithuanian soldiers present in Latvia at this time fully controlled several civil parishes around Ilūkste, which were predominantly Latvian in terms of their ethnic composition. Furthermore, the Lithuanian army gradually but relentlessly increased the area under its control, advancing slowly northwards and chasing Latvian administrative bodies away from these territories. In turn, the army of Latvia occupied, starting in 1919, the largely Lithuanian town of Palanga. Small-scale conflicts took place, provoked by both sides, such as terrorising the opponent's citizens, delaying trains, etc.

On 21 August, Oskars Dankers, commander of the Zemgale Division of the Latvian Army, declared that "recently" the Lithuanian army was beginning to make life "difficult, even intolerable" in Ilūkste District, and that the Lithuanians completely ignored the Latvian commander in Subate "robbing him of the possibility of carrying out his duties", also that residents throughout the district "were being subjected to agitation, inciting them to disaffection", and that Lithuanian units were moving "ever forward". There followed some harsh words, for example: "the Lithuanian yoke lies ever heavier on the local Latvians", "the harvest in Kurzeme might well wind up in the granaries of our shameless neighbours; local Latvian residents await impatiently and earnestly that their fellow Latvians come to liberate this disheartened corner of Kurzeme".

[15] LVVA, 2575. f., 11. apr., 8. l., 9. lp.; Archiwum Akt Nowych, Attachaty, A–II/81/1.

The government, therefore, has decided that "we ourselves must protect our brothers in Kurzeme against all that they now must suffer. Our heroic soldiers must bring peace and order there (…). We do not want war, but only to put an end to the shameless intrusion by our Lithuanian neighbours. (...) We do not want what is not ours, but we will not give up what is ours to anyone".[16]

The 12th Bauska Infantry Regiment, a squadron of cavalry, and an artillery battery were ordered to cross the Daugava River and to push back the Lithuanian forces to the line Asare–Bebrene–Daugava. In fact, this was to be a military engagement against a formally friendly neighbouring state after the end of the War of Independence. The order was given not to fire on the Lithuanians, to disarm them in case they failed to withdraw and then to send them on their way "to Lithuania". Nevertheless, several small-scale skirmishes took place on 24 August, while the 12th Regiment carried out the order on 26–27 August, pushing back the Lithuanian units which had significantly overstepped the demarcation line, and on 27 August the regiment was able to inform the local people that from this day forward they were living in Latvia. The recollections of Private Žanis Strautnieks testify to the serious nature of this event. In advance of being sent to "chase away the Lithuanians from Subate, which they had occupied", Krišs Ķūķis, Commander of the 12th Regiment, addressed the soldiers "in a very bellicose manner, out of which [I] remember the order to shoot aiming at their stomachs".[17] Agreement was reached the following day on drawing the frontier (along the main road from Subate to Laši and Ilūkste); however, when on 3 September the Latvian forces attempted to enter the northern part of Subate, and the civil parishes of Laši and Pilskalne, which was their due, the local Lithuanian commander informed them that such an act would mean the start of war between Latvia and Lithuania. When the soldiers of the 12th Regiment advanced in lines to attack, the Lithuanians retreated from the town. In Subate, 21 soldiers were captured and a further two Lithuanian soldiers were taken elsewhere (all were released the following day after receiving back their weapons). A fire fight broke out with one Lithuanian soldier killed (Justinas Krupšaitis) and two wounded. The Lithuanians retreated from Subate and Pilskalne following talks, but remained in Laši. It was from this location that the Lithuanians fired upon the Latvian forces during the night of 4 September; the flamboyant Col. K. Ķūķis then announced that, if such an incident would occur again, he would "pound Laši into the ground". The Lithuanians retreated on 5 September, but held on to the important railway station at Eglaine. The issue was fully resolved only in October 1920 once Polish General Żeligowski assaulted Vilnius and this city was lost to the Lithuanians. Under these circumstances, J. Balodis, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Latvia, declared that he was forced to act to defend national security, and the army advanced to the border of the former Governorate. There is no doubt that these events only served as a pretext. The Lithuanian forces remaining in Ilūkste District were few in number, and, therefore they retreated to Lithuania without incident. Latvians freed 22 Polish soldiers whom they found

[16] LVVA, 1527. f., 1. apr., 617. l., 34. lp.

[17] Strautnieks, Ž. Kāda jātnieka atmiņas. *Kara Invalīds*, Nr. 30, 1985, 60. lpp.

working in Eglaine as prisoners of war, and were contemptuous towards their former guards.[18]



Fig. 3. Latvian border guards at the Latvian–Lithuanian border, early 1920s. Latvian War Museum, 4-656-FTp

Inasmuch as the two sides had not been able to come to an agreement during the winter and spring of 1920, in April 1920 Latvia and Lithuania invited the military mission of Great Britain to nominate an individual to arbitrate the dispute, and James Simpson, a Scottish professor was nominated for this task. The committee chaired by J. Simpson began its deliberations only towards the end of 1920 (there were equal number of representatives of both parties, with J. Simpson having the deciding vote). Arbitration was completed in March 1921, with the result that Lithuania gained Palanga, the railway junction at Mažeikiai, and part of the civil parish of Rucava. In turn Lithuania was precluded from further demands on Ilūkste District, and Latvia acquired a small tranche of the territory of the former Governorate of Kaunas south of Bauska, as well as the civil parish of Aknīste. In all, Latvia granted Lithuania 283.3 sq. km. of land, while Lithuania gave up 290 sq. km. of land to Latvia. The Lithuanian Army entered Palanga and the fishing port of Sventāja on 31 March 1921. In this way Latvians living in the area (approximately 16 000–20 000 individuals) and some Lithuanians (in Kurzeme and Zemgale) came to live under the jurisdiction of another state.[19]

Latvia and Estonia. It is symbolic of the close ties which existed at this time between Estonia and Latvia that the very first soldier to become a casualty of the Estonian War of Independence was Jānis Muižnieks, a Latvian, who fell while fighting against Red Guards fleeing from Tallinn on 25 February 1918.[20] For their part, the German occupation authorities interdicted the work of the Estonian government. Only in November 1918, after the collapse of the German Empire, Estonia was able fully to realise its independence; through a combination of circumstances (many Estonian soldiers found themselves in their homeland, support by Finland, etc.), the government and army high command were able relatively quickly to liberate their territory from Estonian Communist authorities, the Red Army, and units of the Army

[18] See: LVVA, 1490. f., 1. apr., 404. l., 115., 160. lp.; 3601. f., 1. apr., 291. l., 66. lp.; 6033. f., 1. apr., 25. l., 34.–43. lp.; Butkus, Z. *Lietuvos ir Latvijos santykiai 1919–1929 metais*. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1993, 39–47 plp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Lietuvas karaspēks Ilūkstes apriņķī 1919.–1920. gadā. *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa. Sociālās un humanitārās zinātnes*, 59. sēj., Nr. 2, 2005, 49.–64. lpp. See also: Lietuvos kariuomenė Ilūkstės apskrityje 1919–1920 metais. *Karo archyvas*. XXI. Vilnius, 2006, 41–66 plp.

[19] See: Butkus, Z. Great Britain's mediation in establishing Lithuanian–Latvian frontier, 1920–1921. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, No. 4, 1993, p. 362.

[20] Pumpuriņš, T. Raunēnietis Jānis Muižnieks – pirmais kritušais par Igaunijas Republiku. *Druva*, Nr. 195, 2011, 9. lpp.

of Soviet Latvia. As part of this process they were compelled to withdraw from Valka which they considered to be theirs from the very beginning (on 8 December 1918, the Commander of the Estonian Army South-eastern "Unit" which was "temporarily" operating in Valka, with the concurrence of the Latvian authorities, informed Kārlis Ulmanis, Head of the Provisional Government of Latvia, that the German occupation authorities had invited the Estonians to leave Valka and had "arrested" 50 rifles, therefore, in view of "common goals", K. Ulmanis was entreated to make sure that the Germans not interfere with Estonian defence activities in Valka ("it appears that the Germans wish to deliberately deliver us to the Bolsheviks with our hands tied")).[21] This did not bring the desired results and the small Estonian unit was forced to retreat.[22]

In early 1919, fighting its enemies, the Estonian Army entered the territory of Latvia.[23] At the end of January 1919, a group of cadets from the Estonian Army College arrived by ship in Liepāja and from there they joined, on 27 January, the headquarters of the 1st Separate Latvian Battalion led by O. Kalpaks at Rudbārži, and several days later took part in the capture of Skrunda.

Estonian units engaged in fighting in Vidzeme including Finnish soldiers and a Danish company. The Estonians pursued the retreating Germans all the way to Riga, and the Western Allies with assistance from the Estonians, forced the Germans to conclude the Ceasefire of Strazdumuiža. However, the Estonians were bitterly disappointed when the Latvian government would not recognise this agreement which had been signed by J. Zemitāns on February 18 with the Government of Estonia and the provisions of which prescribed that the Estonian army would help to free the territory of Latvia and help create Latvian armed forces subordinated to the Estonian army; Estonia, on the other hand, would receive Valka and several civil parishes in Valka and Valmiera districts.

Two Estonian armoured trains arrived in Riga in October 1919 as the Army of Bermondt attacked the city and their artillery support was decisive for the Latvian Army units. Later, when the situation became critical, the trains were recalled since negotiations about Estonian support had reached an impasse over excessive Estonian territorial demands.

Territorial claims largely touched upon Valka and its surrounding districts, the most important regional centre. A slightly greater number of Latvians than Estonians lived in Valka before the First World War; however, registration of inhabitants carried out by Estonian authorities on 1 August 1919 revealed that there were 7705 Estonians, 6560 Latvians, 784 Jews, 481 Russians, 337 Germans, and 310 members of other nationalities. Estonians owned more property in the city than the Latvians (by a ratio of 5 : 3); however, there were more Latvians than Estonians in the suburbs of Lugaži and Putraskalns (there were 1372 Latvians and 326 Estonians in the former, and 256 Latvians and 148 Estonians in the latter), while the suburb of Purakula was decidedly populated by Estonians. Areas inhabited by Latvians were found on what today is Estonian

[21] LVVA, 1468. f., 1. apr., 131. l., 10. lp.

[22] Par Valkas krišanu. See: LVVA, 1468. f., 1. apr., 131. l., 30. lp.

[23] For details see the section "Creation of the armed forces and their initial activities" in the article by Ē. Jēkabsons "Military Processes Which Led to Latvia's Statehood (1918–1920)" in this volume.

territory, and vice-versa; for example, Estonians lived in the area around Liellugaži, whereas the identity of Veclaicene District was debateable since Estonians constituted a bare majority there, etc. The Latvian–Estonian border issue was eventually settled in July1920 by a mixed border commission with Steven Tallents representing Great Britain as chairman. Valka was divided into two parts (the result was not entirely to the satisfaction of both parties, as could be expected).[24] The gravity of the situation at that time was such that an armed conflict was not excluded. On 5 July, Oļģerts Grosvalds, a Latvian diplomat stationed in Paris, warned the Latvian Foreign Minister, Z. Meierovics, that fighting with the Estonians had to be avoided: "If eventually it comes to an armed conflict with the Estonians, I permit myself to say that our relations with the Allies, which currently are good, would be completely ruined, and the common cause of the Baltic peoples would be damaged to the greatest possible extent. We must, therefore, avoid such conflict."[25] Matters were settled peacefully, although there were certain complications, and this indicates that issues such as those between Latvia and Estonia were no exception in the nascent Versailles–Riga system, and settling borders between newly established countries led to problems in this case as well.



Fig. 4. Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic of Estonia. Army parade. Verava. 1926. Latvian War Museum, 4-131-123-FT

The Baltic States during the inter-war period

Borders and residents. Border demarcation issues for Latvia were fully resolved by March 1921, when agreement was reached with Lithuania, and Latvia handed Palanga and its surrounding district to Lithuania, giving Lithuania access to the sea (previously it had none since Klaipeda and its district were only to be attached to Lithuania in 1923).

The Estonian and Latvian borders were largely defined by the peace treaties signed with Soviet Russia on 2 February 1920 (Estonia gained some territory from the former Governorate of Pskov) and 11 August, respectively (Latvia acquired Pitalovo and several civil parishes around it from the former Governorate of Pskov, and some territory in Drisa District from the former Governorate of Vitebsk).

The inter-war border of Lithuania developed in a complex manner even after the fighting stopped. In January 1923, the Lithuanian government organised an uprising by apparently local Lithuanians in the district of Klaipeda, which temporarily was

[24] Mieriņa, A. Latvijas valsts robežas (1918–1940). Caune, A. (sast.). *Latvijas zemju robežas 1000 gados*. Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 185.–198. lpp.; Grinberga, S. *Robežu veidošanās Baltijas jūras reģionā pēc 1. pasaules kara: Latvijas piemērs*. Bakalaura darbs LU Vēstures un filozofijas fakultātes Centrālās un Austrumeiropas vēstures katedrā (vad. Ē. Jēkabsons). Rīga, 2007, 35.–45. lpp.

[25] LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 6. l., 310. lp.

being administered by the League of Nations but had previously belonged to Germany; afterwards the territory was officially included in Lithuania with concurrence by the League, with the Lithuanian authorities agreeing to autonomous rights for this area. Later, after result of an ultimatum delivered by Germany to Lithuania in March 1939, Germany took back Klaipeda (the other Baltic States were indifferent to this, remaining outwardly neutral, although deeply disquieted).[26] In the autumn of 1939, the Soviet Union temporarily handed Klaipeda over to Lithuania, as well as the city and district of Vilnius which the USSR had taken from Poland; however, the complex process of integrating the official capital city into Lithuania only started with this step.

Table 1

The Baltic States: global indicators

State	Area	Population (year)	Capital city, population (year)	
Latvia	65 791.4 km²	1 950 502 (1935)	Riga	385 063 (1935)
Estonia	47 550 km²	1 126 413 (1934)	Tallinn	131 400 (1931)
Lithuania	55 670 km² (1923–1939)	2 028 971 (1923)	Kaunas	"provisional"; 92 446 (1923)

The following is a breakdown by nationality of the residents of Latvia in 1935: 76.9% were Latvians, 8.8% Russians, 4.9% Jews, 3.3% Baltic Germans, 2.6% Poles, 1.4% Belarusians. It must be noted that the survey replies were falsified in a number of border areas, largely to the detriment of the number of Polish and Belarusians; nevertheless it can be assumed that Latvians constituted approximately 75% of the total population.

The breakdown by nationality in Estonia in 1934 was: 88.1% were Estonians, 8.2% Russians, 1.5% Baltic Germans.

The only census in interwar Lithuania took place in September 1923 and officially determined the total population to be 2 028 971 (excluding Klaipeda District): 84% were Lithuanians, 7.6% Jews, 3.2% Poles (this figure appears to be lowered for obvious political reasons), 2.5% Russians, 0.7% Latvians, and 0.2% Belarusians. In turn, the census of 1925 carried out in Klaipeda yielded a figure of 141 645 residents (26.6% Lithuanians, 24.2% "Memel Landers", 41.9% Germans, together with a few Russians, Jews, and other nationalities, among them 47 Latvians). In 1923, 44.1% of the residents of Lithuania were illiterate (including 32.6% of the population over the age of ten), and 75% were engaged in agriculture. These figures show that national minority groups constituted a significant percentage of the total population.

[26] See: Safronovas, V. *Klaipėda Europos istorijos kontekstuose: straipsnių rinkinys*. Klaipėda: Klapėdos universiteto leidykla, 2013. Concerning the position adopted by Latvia on the Klaipeda issue, see: Jēkabsons, Ē. Klaipēdas jautājums un Latvija 1923. gadā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 2002, 56.–89. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Klaipēdas nonākšana Vācijas varā 1939. gada martā: skats no Latvijas. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1/2, 2011, 108.–134. lpp.

Representatives of the minority groups were politically active, including in parliament. In Estonia minorities were guaranteed cultural autonomy by provisions in the constitution. In Latvia, there were no constitutional provisions granting cultural rights, but nonetheless minority rights up until the 1934 coup were very extensive. In Lithuania, representatives of the national minorities were active in various state structures (including the government where initially there were ministers for Jewish and for Belarusian affairs), minority organisations were active as were schools; however, restrictions were placed on Polish activities as a minority as a result of the conflict with Poland.

Political system: the period of parliamentary democracy. From the beginning of their existence all three states had to elect a parliament, establish procedures for the adoption of laws, state institutions, as well as reorganise the complete system of local government and the social order. The novel feature of these activities was the fact that a Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian state were in existence for the first time in history (notwithstanding the fact that Lithuanian politicians occasionally sought to link with it their modern statehood, the Polish–Lithuanian state which was liquidated at the end of the 18th century should be seen as a special case).

Elections for the Estonian Parliament (Constituent Assembly) were the first to be held, in the spring of 1919; the Constituent Assembly began its deliberations in April, while the Constitution of Estonia was adopted in June 1920, whereupon the People's Assembly (*Riigikogu*) was elected. Constitutional Assemblies were elected in Latvia and in Lithuania during April 1920; both started deliberations in May and adopted their respective Constitutions in 1922 (elections were held the same year for the Saeima in Latvia and for the Seimas in Lithuania).

The State President in both Latvia and Lithuania held the highest public office, i.e. head of state, effective in Lithuania from April 1919, and in Latvia from 1922 onwards. In Estonia, the head of state was described as a State Elder (in drawing up the Constitution, Estonian Social Democrats objected to a potentially excessive concentration of power in the hands of the State President, whereupon provision was made for the office of State Elder with a limited remit who at the same time would be the head of government).

When describing the range of political forces represented in their parliaments and their influence in society, in Latvia, and in Estonia social democratic parties gained the greatest voter support (this party was more moderate and nationalistic in Estonia than in Latvia, where the Social Democratic Workers' Party was split into various groups), together with parties defending the interests of farmers. In Lithuania, left-wing political forces gained less support, and the Catholic Christian Democratic Party won the most votes.

Radical left- and right-wing political groups were active in all three Baltic States. The illegal Communist Parties were the most prominent among radical left groups; these parties had small memberships (several hundred) and they depended on the Soviet Union for support. Their illegal activities were coordinated by Moscow and were aimed at wrecking the existing order by all possible means.

Radical nationalist groups began to form in these states during the 1920s, attracting a gradually rising level of popular support, in particular during the economic crisis at the end of the 1920s and early 1930s. In Estonia, the Central League of Veterans of the War of Independence (*Eesti Vabadusséjalaste Keskliit*, whose members were called in abbreviated form *Vapsid*) was established in 1929, while in Latvia the Union of the Latvian Nation *Ugunskrusts* (Firecross) was established in 1932; after this was closed in 1933 it was renamed *Pērkonkrusts* (Thundercross), and after this organisation was closed in January 1934, its members continued their work in other organisations which had been created with foresight about the possibility of closure. The *Vapsid* organisation in Estonia and the *Pērkonkrusts* structures in Latvia were officially shut down during 1934 after the authoritarian coups d'état, but they partly continued with illegal activities.[27] In Lithuania, the development of a national radical organisation was largely muted since the end of 1926 by the partially authoritarian regime which took power then, and which developed into an authoritarian regime.

Governments in the Baltic States changed rather often during the period of democracy, just as in the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe of the times. In Estonia, 21 governments were in power during the period 1920–1934, while there were 15 governments in Latvia over the period 1921–1934. Even in Lithuania, where the parliamentary period was considerably shorter, eight governments were in power through to the end of 1926, and furthermore, the first convocation of the Seimas had to be disbanded and new elections called since the Seimas was unable to form a government.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the people of Estonia and Latvia several times exercised their legal rights to hold a referendum; referendums for revision of acts which took place in Estonia early in the 1930s played a more important role, as in the result a new constitution entered into force in January 1934, changing the status of State Elder, i.e. a change in selection procedure (from a Prime Minister nominated by the parliament to one elected by the people) and an increase in powers.

One of the most important tasks of the governments, in addition to maintaining stability and conducting foreign policy, was to regulate the economy, a task which was far from easy. This was done by carrying through quite radical agrarian reform, as well as introducing national currencies to replace the temporary ones in circulation during the first years of independence. The so-called Latvian *rublis* (rouble) circulated in Latvia as a temporary currency from 1919 to 1925; the *lats*, tied to the gold standard, was introduced in 1922, while in 1936 it was tied to the British pound sterling (with a fixed exchange rate 1 £:25.22 lats). Initially the Estonian mark circulated in Estonia, and was supplanted in 1924 by the Estonian crown, tied at parity with the Swedish crown; in 1933, it was tied to the British pound sterling (with a fixed exchange rate 1 £:18.35 crowns). In Lithuania, the national currency the litas, was introduced in 1922 (with exchange rate 1 $ US:10 Litas).

[27] See: Kasekamp, A. *The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia.* London: Macmillan Press, 2000.

Domestic processes: coups and authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian coups d'état took place in Lithuania on 1 December 1926, in Estonia on 12 March 1934, and in Latvia on 15 May 1934. It is well-known that the drift to authoritarian government in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe had three causes: 1) lack of experience with democracy, which resulted in domestic political crises in a state governed ineffectively and chaotically; 2) economic considerations (the national economy could be more easily controlled with a firm hand at the helm; moreover coups, were made easier to mount by recurring periods of economic difficulties and the global economic crisis which set in in the early 1930s); 3) foreign policy considerations. All three of these factors were present in the Baltic States, but their precise impact on events was different in all three cases. For example, in Lithuania, foreign policy considerations were in evidence over and above the domestic political crises; an authoritarian coup took place in May 1926 in Poland, which was perceived as the main external threat, and with the arrival in power of Jozef Piłsudski, the Lithuanian government realised that it needed to exercise its authority more effectively, removing the obstacles in form of the so-called democratic elements.

In all three cases, as in Poland, the coup was instigated by a specific leader, i.e. a statesman who had led the country during the time of its coming into existence, i.e. during the war for independence in 1918–1920. These leaders either had been compelled to temporarily distance himself from politics (in Lithuania, this was the case for Antanas Smetona), or were active politically with greater or lesser success up until the coup was mounted, holding senior positions in government (Kārlis Ulmanis in Latvia, and Konstantin Päts in Estonia). In Latvia and in Estonia those behind the successful coups were seriously concerned, with good reason, about the outcome of elections which had been scheduled for 1934 (a substantial rise in representation by the radical political parties *Pērkonkrusts* and *Vapsid* was expected). A number of similarities and differences are evident regarding the consequences of the coups. Political trials were held in Estonia and Lithuania against the leaders of the groups designated as the main opponents of the regime (in Estonia the *Vapsid*, in Latvia the Social Democrats), but in both cases it was not possible to prove their complicity to a coup. Both in Lithuania and in Estonia the coup signalled a movement towards authoritarianism, although in Lithuania full authoritarianism only appeared in the early 1930s, and in Estonia towards the end of 1935. Only in Latvia, where the coup happened last, did the transition to fully authoritarian governance take place overnight. In Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland, another neighbour of Latvia, the transition took place gradually, including adoption of a new authoritarian constitution, formation of a new government typical of an authoritarian system and election of a working parliament, which was more or less subservient to the leader; there was also some provision for political opposition, both in theory and in practice, which functioned to a certain extent. Another difference was that in Estonia the office of State President was first created via the constitution adopted in 1938, and which was first held by sitting the State Elder, K. Päts; in contrast to the situation in Latvia, where K. Ulmanis did not openly discriminate in favour of members of his family, in Lithuania relatives of the State President, A. Smetona were placed in important state positions. Furthermore, in Lithuania and

in Estonia, as well as in Poland, political structures or parties, supporting the government were developed, while there was no such development in Latvia. Thus, from a legal perspective, the authoritarian regime in Latvia was the most radical despite repressive measures taken against political opponents being the least draconian (no death sentences were meted out, and not a single individual political opponent disappeared or was killed without a trial).

The approach taken by the Estonian authorities offers an insight into the differences with how matters developed in Latvia. The coup in Estonia took place shortly before the coup in Latvia, i.e. on 12 March 1934, and was led by Prime Minister Konstantin Päts, together with General Johan Laidoner, who justifiably feared the consequences of a possible political victory by *Vapsid* in elections for the State Elder and Parliament which had been called for April. It was the case that the authoritarian regime in Estonia developed gradually — *Vapsid* were almost the only opponents to be repressed, being accused of conspiring to take power to institute an authoritarian regime. However, notwithstanding that in 1934 the state had taken the first steps towards an authoritarian regime, political parties were not suppressed immediately after the coup d'état. This happened only in the spring of 1935, and Parliament began deliberations again in 1938 (having been elected in line with rules which largely forbade the opposition to influence domestic affairs).

The reaction of the public and the press in Estonia to events in Latvia also highlighted differences between the two regimes. On 17 May, the daily newspaper of the War Ministry of Latvia, *Latvijas Kareivis* (Soldier of Latvia), published, in addition to a brief review of reaction in the Lithuanian and Polish press, a major article prepared by the Telegraph Agency of Latvia summarising the approving reaction of newspapers in Estonia to the coup in Latvia.[28] On 18 May, Roberts Liepiņš, the Latvian Envoy to Estonia, personally presented a detailed account of events to the Estonian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and afterwards he had a longer discussion with the Estonian Foreign Minister, Julius Seljamaa.[29] On 25 May, J. Seljamaa accompanied by his deputy, Heinrich Laretei, stopped in Riga on their return to Tallinn from Warsaw, and spent in Riga two hours. They were received by K. Ulmanis, during which meeting the Estonian diplomats "enquired about events which had taken place in Latvia during the previous days and sought to clarify the immediate future intentions of the government". In an interview with the press after returning to Estonia, the foreign minister mentioned this discussion and said: "I have the impression that the new government of Latvia fully controls the situation and also that the steps which it is taking are approved by a majority of the people."[30] Even taking into account diplomatic niceties, it cannot be denied that the official view in Estonia was supportive, although it was to a certain extent also cautious. However, deeper examination shows distinct differences between both states. Of all the Latvian diplomats posted abroad, R. Liepiņš in Tallinn was the most active in seeking, with the support of the Estonian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, to

[28] Igaunija un Lietava apsveic Latvijas valdības rīcību. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 107, 1934, 2. lpp.
[29] Latvijas sūtnis Tallinā. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 109, 1934, 2. lpp.
[30] Pēdējās ziņas. Igaunija. *Latvijas Kareivis*, Nr. 113, 1934, 4. lpp.; Nr. 114, 1934, 6. lpp.

muzzle Estonian press articles critical of those who carried out the coup in Latvia; the Legation in Tallinn rightly concluded that the socialist press was most critical of events in Latvia, although even the nationalist press featured certain disparaging assessments. The Estonian press very clearly saw the differences between the situation in Latvia and that in Estonia (complete authoritarian rule in Latvia compared with rule which for the moment retained elements carried over from the democratic period), although the Estonian press exaggerated the "legality" of their coup d'état. Repeated attempts by the Latvian envoy to convince the Estonian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to influence the Estonian press proved fruitless, which further highlighted the differences in the political situation in Latvia and Estonia after the almost contemporaneous coups d'état. In fact, even leading members of the Estonian Ministry for Foreign Affairs (for example, the deputy minister H. Laretei) refused, with diplomatic tact, to orient the Estonian press to take positions as requested by R. Liepiņš (the latter prodded by directives issued by General-secretary Vilhelms Munters), and the Latvian envoy was informed very diplomatically about concerns that there might be changes in the foreign policy of Latvia to forge closer links with Germany.[31]

In Lithuania, in the same way as happened in Poland, two new constitutions were adopted during the period of authoritarian rule — one in 1928, which *inter alia* granted increased powers to the State President, and another one in 1938, which firmly established authoritarian rule in Lithuania.

Fundamental orientation of foreign policy. The states located between the USSR and Germany sought during the inter-war period to find a way to ensure the security of their borders. One possibility was the creation of a military political union. Attempts continued up until 1925 to form a Union (Entente) consisting of Finland, Estonian, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland (possibly without one of the last two as members); these attempts were unsuccessful given that the differences between Poland and Lithuania could not be eliminated, and also for several other reasons. The intense effort expended by the USSR and Germany as part of their foreign policy to prevent such a union played a significant role (both of these states were united by a common interest to act against Poland) and traditionally very varied methods were resorted to by both states, besides, the foreign policy of Lithuania determined by the conflict with Poland, rendered considerable assistance to these efforts. The different position of Lithuania from 1919–1920 onwards was well visible in its relations with Soviet Russia and the USSR (for example, at the so-called Disarmament Conference in Moscow which took place in Moscow in December 1922, and also later.[32]) rendered assistance to diplomatic efforts by the USSR directed against it. In the light of what has been stated above, the foreign policy of Lithuania up until 1934 was predominantly a so-called horizontal policy, namely prioritising relations with Germany and the USSR, in contrast to the

[31] LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 36. l., 311. lp.; 8. apr., 36. l., 264.–270. lp.; 2574. f., 3. apr., 1839. l., 238.–248. lp. u.c.

[32] For more about this, see, for example: LVVA, 2575. f., 11. apr., 13. l., 417.–427. lp. Document has been published as: Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas diplomāta [V. Šūmaņa] liecība par stāvokli uz Latvijas un Padomju Krievijas robežas un Maskavā 1922. gada beigās. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1, 2003, 75.–85. lpp.

so-called vertical policy direction (prioritising relations with countries in the region which found themselves in a similar geopolitical quandary), which the governments of Latvia and Estonia favoured (elements of a horizontal policy briefly appeared in the foreign policy of Latvia only during the second half of the 1920s).

In 1923, following a repeated attempt at a coup d'état (in Germany) by USSR-supported Communists Latvia and Estonia signed an Agreement on Military Cooperation, which was formally in force until 1934; however, this Agreement had little real impact in terms of strengthening national defence capabilities. The challenge was not going to disappear, as demonstrated by the Communists in December 1924 when the Soviet Union instigated an attempted coup in Tallinn, which was effectively suppressed by the authorities. After their victory in the Civil War, the government of Soviet Russia (afterwards, of the Soviet Union) did not abandon its pursuit of aggressive policies vis-à-vis foreign countries, in the first instance against neighbouring states. In this way, the independence of the Republic of Georgia was extinguished in early 1921; however, for a while this was their only success. A secret campaign of destabilisation of neighbouring states was pursued in succeeding years by the so-called Communist International (Comintern) and its many national branches, supported by the Red Army and its centres for training saboteurs (for example, Finnish and Estonian Communists underwent training at the 3rd International Military School in Leningrad, etc.). Communist nationals from neighbouring states were employed in operations against appropriate states, who then worked together with underground Communist Party members. Up until the end of 1924, leaders of the Comintern planned to overthrow regimes inimical to the "working people" which ruled neighbouring states, and incorporate these states into the Soviet Union through a "revolution" or a coup carried out by internally-recruited terrorists together with those who would come from abroad. The tactics underwent a change in December 1924 after the failure in Tallinn, as it was judged to have been excessively expensive (in terms of human and financial resources) as well as unsuccessful. Had events in Tallinn during December 1924 turned out otherwise, Red Army units massed on the border and naval forces were ready to intervene in response to an invitation from the "revolutionaries" not only in Estonia, but also in its ally Latvia.[33]

The governments of the Baltic States continued to be seriously concerned about security issues. After agreeing on a number of questionable points at the 1925 Locarno Conference, the authors of Latvian foreign policy (Hermanis Albats, General Secretary the Ministry for Foreign Affairs) decided to support a so-called Eastern Locarno Plan, which would guarantee borders in Eastern Europe (at the same time similar proposals were mooted in Poland and Finland). The proposal was to develop a system of many agreements "in the spirit of Locarno" in three stages: to create an alliance between Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, and Poland; to conclude a guarantee agreement with the Soviet Union: to conclude an agreement on arbitration etc. with Germany; and finally to sign a guarantee agreement between the Baltic States, the

[33] See: Walter, H. Uprising of December 1, 1924. *Baltic Defence Review*, No. 2, 1999, pp. 129–140.

Scandinavian countries, the Soviet Union and Germany[34]. However, this plan evinced no support either from Great Britain, whose support was seen as necessary, or from Moscow, which made even greater efforts, as part of its Baltic policy, to prevent the formation of any form of alliance on its borders.



Fig. 5. Official ceremony in Narva, Estonia, with participation of a delegation from Latvia. Jaan Teemant, a Member of the Estonian Parliament, is speaking. 25 April 1932. Latvian War Museum, 4-118-110-FT

The foreign policy of the USSR in regard to its western neighbouring countries was unabashedly duplicitous and tailored case by case, fully exploiting the discord between Lithuania and Poland. After the Locarno agreements were finalised, the Soviet Union attempted to counteract their effectiveness in its immediate neighbourhood (the principal goal was to prevent German reconciliation with Western states and the League of Nations, and any alliance with Poland of states along its own border). Diplomatic outposts in the Baltic capitals began to follow a more pragmatic approach, i.e. organising public outreach meetings, etc. In 1925, the Soviet Union offered to negotiate non-aggression pacts with Poland and the Baltic States, but only bilaterally, rejecting a multi-lateral approach. The aim of this demarche was to isolate the aforementioned countries of Eastern Europe, and to weaken their links with the League of Nations.[35] For example, a demand was issued to Latvia not to engage itself in any form of Union with its neighbours, which was reiterated in person by Georgy Chicherin, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, during a visit to Kaunas and Riga in 1925. In fact, the Soviet side, which was particularly disturbed by more active diplomacy by Poland in this region, sought to achieve the mutual isolation of the Baltic States as well as their isolation from the League of Nations, at the same time increasing its own influence in the region. In order to reach their goals, the Soviet side resorted to offering economically lucrative agreements, which turned out to be a simple diplomatic ruse. Given its special circumstances, Lithuania agreed to a bi-lateral non-aggression treaty, which was signed in September 1926 (after precise conditions were presented at the beginning of that year, negotiations started in the spring). Estonia and Latvia signed non-aggression treaties with the Soviet Union only as late as in 1932.

The Lithuanian and Polish confrontation seriously affected the common security situation, and there even were no diplomatic relations between the two states. These were only established in March 1938 following a border incident and the subsequent

[34] See: Ilmjärv, M. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Eastern Pact Project. Acya Historica Tallinensia. 2006. 10, pp. 69–120.

[35] For more about the participation of Latvia in the League of Nations see: Zemīte, L. *Latvia in the League of Nations*. Riga: University of Latvia, 2002, p. 144.



Fig. 6. Customs post on the Latvian–Estonian border, decorated in honour of Latvia Independence Day commemorations. Valka. November 1938. Latvian War Museum, 4-20274-5917-FT

Polish ultimatum — during the period of crisis just before the war.[36]

Relations between the Baltic States. Despite initial hopes for a Union of the Baltic States, during the entire inter-war period, bi-lateral relations between the Baltic States and Finland and Poland were complicated, including the period of the War of Independence, 1918–1920. After the war, relations between Lithuania and Poland, or more precisely the absence of diplomatic relations, played a significant role in Central and Eastern Europe, as the question of Vilnius was a central factor promoting discord. Proposals advanced in 1925 for a Union of the Baltic States, either broad or narrow in scope, failed essentially because of the Lithuanian–Polish conflict. Latvia always tried to keep the best possible relations with both of these countries, and if necessary, to act as an intermediary. Generally speaking, mediating the conflict proved impossible, since the two countries could not be reconciled. Therefore, the only political result of this action was that relations between Latvia and Lithuania improved whenever, for one reason or another, Latvia's relations with Poland suffered a downturn, and vice versa. Summarising these developments, the principal reason for the policy pursued by Latvia vis-à-vis its two southern neighbours was a realisation that the continued existence of Lithuania was important to the interests of Latvia, while at the same time it was equally important that Poland had to be a strong state and good relations with it were essential (there was also, possibly, the consideration that Lithuania as an independent state ought not to be so powerful as to overshadow the apparently dominant status enjoyed by Latvia among the Baltic States, and Poland ought not to be so powerful as to threaten its borders).[37]

Thus, relations between Latvia and Lithuania during the 1920s featured a degree of cooperation, on the one hand, together with a number of disagreements (firstly as

[36] See: Andersons, E. *Latvijas vēsture 1920–1940. Ārpolitika*. I. Stockholm: Daugava, 1982, 506.–509. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas ārlietu ministra Vilhelma Muntera starpniecības mēģinājums Polijas un Lietuvas konfliktā 1938. gada martā. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 3, 2008, 146.–160. lpp.; Latvijos užsienio reikalų ministro V. Muntero bandymas tarpininkauti Lenkijai ir Lietuvai sprendžiant 1938 m. Kovo mėnesį plukstelėjusį konfliktą. *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis. 2011*. I. Vilnius, 2012, plp. 113–134.

[37] For details see: Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Taurēns, J., Zunda, A. *Latvijas ārpolitika un diplomātija 20. gadsimtā*. 1. sēj. Rīga: Jumava, 181.–212. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. The Genesis of Latvian Statehood in 1918–1919 and the Main Issues of Latvian–Lithuanian Relations in the Early Stage of Independence. *Lithuanian Historical Studies*. 4. Vilnius, 1999, pp. 143–150; Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvia's position concerning the Vilnius question in the 1920s and 1930s. *Lietuvos diplomatija XX amžiuje*. Vilnius: Vaga, 1999, plp. 71–82; Jēkabsons, Ē. Viļņas jautājums un Latvija 1920. gada rudenī. *Latvija–Polija*. Starptautiskas zinātniskas konferences materiāli. Rīga: Polijas Republikas vēstniecība, 1995, 63.–88. lpp.

regards foreign policy, i.e. relations with Poland, the Soviet Union and with Germany) as well as petty, occasionally highly subjective spats. Starting in 1929, a new period of relations set in, in contrast with the previous period which had begun in 1925, and during which an isolationist tendency prevailed, and this period closed with signature of an Agreement in September 1934 in Geneva establishing the so-called Baltic Entente (political cooperation). The route followed to signing this agreement was complicated and traversed slowly; this was determined by the foreign policies of Lithuania and its relations with Poland, the Soviet Union, and with Germany. The closest relations that Lithuania enjoyed with any other Baltic State were with Latvia, who, in turn, as was traditional and as far as was reasonable to do so, sought to maintain good relations both with Lithuania and with Poland, at the same time trying to wean Lithuania away from its reliance on Germany and Russia, so as to come closer to the other Baltic States, i.e. change Lithuania's policy orientation from the horizontal to the vertical geopolitical direction. This task was exceedingly difficult, and pursuit of it started to produce results only because early in the 1930s there was a perceptible and sustained shift in the attitude adopted by Lithuania itself, brought about by increasingly insistent German claims to Klaipeda, and secondly because Poland made efforts to settle its contentious relations with the hostile USSR and Germany.[38]



Fig. 7. The Latvian–Estonian border at Valka in the 1930s. Latvian War Museum, 1855-2262-n



Fig. 8. Latvian-Estonian naval manoeuvres. Kuivaste, Estonia. 1931. Latvian War Museum, 4-22198-6353-FT

The period leading up to signature of the Agreement on the Baltic Entente was very challenging for those who had to formulate national foreign policies in the region. Bilateral relations between Latvia and Lithuania clearly illustrate the reasons why in earlier years there had not been a more effective agreement on a Baltic, let alone a wider regional level. The principal cause was the Lithuanian–Polish conflict. Matters on the ground were considerably more complex: an inability to pull back from narrow, egotistical interests, endless quarrels and recriminations, a lack of unity which was regularly exploited by the hostile great powers of the region (the USSR and

[38] See: Žalys, V. *Lietuvos diplomatijos istorija (1925–1940)*. I. Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2007, plp. 31–554.



Fig. 9. Visit by an Estonian Army delegation to the 7th Sigulda Infantry Regiment. Alūksne. Early 1930s. Latvian War Museum, 4-6218-1958-FT

Germany)[39]; this constituted daily international life. All of these phenomena continued after signature of the Agreement on the Baltic Entente; furthermore, the diplomatic cooperation called up by the Agreement remained quite formal in nature, and given the international state of affairs and the rapid approach of the pre-war crisis, this cooperation was ineffective.[40]

Armed forces. During the 1920s and 1930s, the Armed Forces of Latvia comprised approximately 20 000 soldiers, organised in four infantry divisions, a Technical Division and additional other units, and a Naval Squadron for coastal defence (from 1938 onwards, a Navy). The Estonian Army consisted of three divisions, technical and coastal defence units (approximately 15 000 soldiers). The Lithuanian Army had three divisions, a separate cavalry brigade as well as technical and other miscellaneous units. All three armies possessed examples of all major weapons systems. Compared with the armies of Latvia and Estonia which had one cavalry regiment each, the Lithuanian Army possessed, under peacetime conditions, the largest cavalry force (a brigade with two companies, and one squadron attached to each division). The Lithuanian armed forces also included one mine-laying ship ("*Prezidentas Smetona*").

Defence expenditure in Latvia at the beginning of the 1930s represented 3–5% of gross national product,[41] with a similar level in Estonia. Defence spending in Lithuania was a greater fraction since the gross national product was considerably lower, yet requirements were considerable due to strained relations with Poland.[42]

Border guard units operated in all of the Baltic States, as well as paramilitary units (in Latvia, members of the "*Aizsargi*", in Lithuania the "*Šaulių Sąjunga*", in Estonia the "*Kaitseliit*" organisation[43]; were war to break out, these units would act as a reserve for the standing armed forces, and they also played a certain part in maintaining public order.

[39] See: Butkus, Z. The Diplomatic Cooperation between Germany and the USSR in the Baltic States in 1920–1940. *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, No. 3, 1999, pp. 125–146.

[40] Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Taurēns, J., Zunda, A. *Latvijas ārpolitika un diplomātija 20. gadsimtā*, 287.–409. lpp.

[41] See: Šiliņš, J. Aizsardzības izdevumi Latvijā starpkaru periodā. *Latvijas Arhīvi*, Nr. 1/2, 2015, 121.–140. lpp.

[42] For deails see: Vaičenonis, J. *Lietuvos kariuomenė valstybės politinio gyvenimo verpetuose (1927–1940).* Kaunas: Versus Aureus, 2003, plp. 181–185.

[43] All roughly translate as the Home Guard (translator's note).

Eradication of independence, 1939–1940.

The Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and its effect. The Non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939 between Germany and the USSR assigned Finland, Latvia, and Estonia to the sphere of interests of the USSR and the Treaty on Friendship and Existing Borders of 28 September also consigned Lithuania to this same sphere of interests. This was followed by the armed annihilation of Poland with cooperation between Germany and the USSR; the USSR issued its first ultimatums to the Baltic States in advance of the completion of operations against Poland, demanding the signing of mutual assistance pacts. The governments of each Baltic State were faced, on the one hand, by the threat of open aggression and annihilation of independence, and on the other hand, they were promised to retain part of their independence, and thus signed pacts which called for Soviet military bases to be installed on their territory (the garrisons at these bases were equal or greater in number than the national armed forces of the Baltic States). Finland alone rejected the ultimatum and a protracted bloody war ensued with the USSR; Finland lost territory and lives, but keeping its independence. When war with Poland broke out in September 1939, all three Baltic States declared strict neutrality in this conflict, which they attempted to respect by interning soldiers who arrived on their territory (in the first instance Polish soldiers on Latvian and Lithuanian territory, and also nine German airmen on the territory of Latvia). A Polish submarine, the "*Orzeł*", which had been interned in the port of Tallinn and was inadequately guarded by the Estonians managed to escape on 17 September, the day on which the USSR began its aggression against Poland; the government of the Soviet Union used this as a pretext to start a campaign of vilification against the Baltic States, demanding that each Baltic State separately sign an agreement to deploy Soviet military bases on their territory (threatening military aggression in case of refusal to do so).[44] The so-called Mutual Assistance Pacts were signed thereafter (with Estonia on 28 September, with Latvia on 5 October, and with Lithuania on 10 October). Soviet military bases were deployed on the territory of all three states with the total number of personnel at these bases similar to the size of the national armed forces (the pact with Lithuania differed from the other pacts in that the USSR "returned" Vilnius to Lithuania, which it had just taken from Poland). Lithuania was both economically and in terms of domestic policy the weak link between the Baltic States, with matters now exacerbated since a substantial majority of the residents of Vilnius were of Polish nationality who felt no loyalty towards the Lithuanian state. During the September crisis (facing the threat of military invasion by Soviet Union) the most cowardly behaviour was that exhibited by the authoritarian government of Latvia, which unilaterally broke relations with the Legation of Poland on 21 September, fearing possible recriminations by the Soviet Union

[44] See an account of the situation in Estonia and in Moscow by the then Ambassador of Estonia, August Rei: Rei, A. *The Drama of the Baltic People*, pp. 255–273.



Fig. 10. Col. Boleslovas Jakutis, Military Attaché of Lithuania, meeting with Latvian Army officers. 1930. Latvian War Museum, 4-39296-9781-FT

particularly after what had transpired in Estonia.[45]

Documents found in Lithuanian archives lead to the conclusion that the authoritarian presidents of the Baltic States, more precisely their Foreign Services, considered, given the circumstances, that a meeting should be held of all three presidents to discuss the situation and, possibly, to adopt a common action plan in case of potential threats. In mid-May, Konstantin Päts, the State President of Estonia, ordered the Estonian Envoy in Riga, Hans Rebane, to discuss this question with the Latvian Foreign Minister Vilhelms Munters and the Lithuanian Envoy in Riga, Pranas Dailidė. P. Dailidė reported to J. Urbšys, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister on 21 May that: at a meeting on 15 May 1940 in the Lithuanian Legation in Riga, the Envoy of Estonia emphasised to both of the individuals concerned that such a meeting would "demonstrate the political solidarity of the Baltic States in the present complicated situation" and, also, that no meeting has ever taken place of the three presidents. Munters replied that the Latvian government considered such a meeting as useful and is prepared to host this meeting of the presidents of its neighbouring states. There would, however, be one condition: President Kārlis Ulmanis had resolved "not to leave his country in the near future, and, hence, the meeting must take place in Latvia". The assessment of this meeting offered by P. Dailidė shows the degree to which relations between the Baltic States were complicated and egotistical: "Latvia now seeks by all possible means to retain its central position which it has enjoyed up to now among the Baltic States, and which has started to weaken given the strengthening situation in Lithuania. The possibility of the presidents meeting in Riga has the same goal." Thus, the Lithuanian side did not consider it opportune to hold a meeting in Riga. It goes without saying that the Lithuanian president Antanas Smetona wished that both Presidents come to Lithuania for the meeting. The main reason for this was the same as imputed to Latvia. Nevertheless, discussion continued on this matter, and at the end of May, V. Munters promised the Lithuanian envoy that he would raise the matter with K. Ulmanis, and then to draft a suitable agenda for a meeting of the three presidents. He remarked that "convening such a meeting at this time will not be easy".[46] He was right — it really was too late.

[45] See: Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Virsis, M. *Latvijas ārpolitika un starptautiskais stāvoklis (30. gadu otrā puse).* Rīga: Latvijas Ārpolitikas institūts, 1993, 360.–365. lpp.; Jēkabsons, Ē. Latvijas reakcija uz Otrā pasaules kara sākumu 1939. gada septembrī un attieksme pret Poliju. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata = Yearbook. Latvian War Museum*. VI. Rīga, 2005, 21.–29. lpp.

[46] See: Lietuvos Valstybinis archyvas, 383. f., 7. ap., 1888. b., 572., 575. lp.



Fig. 11. Ludvigs Sēja, Ambassador of Latvia, being met on arrival in Kaunas Railway Station. 1934. Latvian War Museum, 4-28024-7461-FT

Occupation and annexation. In May 1940, when Adolf Hitler, the partner of Joseph Stalin, launched an attack on France, the leader of the USSR decided that the time had come to finally resolve the Baltic question, i.e. to occupy these states. The first step was to stage a number of provocative acts during the first half of June. The overriding consideration was not to allow the targets of these acts to coordinate their replies. Lithuania suffered the first of these incidents. The Lithuanian Envoy in Moscow, Ladas Natkevičius, received a telephone call at nine o'clock in the evening of 25 May (a Saturday) from Semyon Kozyrev, secretary to Vyacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Commissar for Foreign Affairs, asking the envoy to come that evening to the Kremlin. Natkevičius arrived as invited expecting a discussion about the scheduled departure of a Soviet military delegation. With a sour demeanour, Molotov greeted the Lithuanian diplomat and invited him to sit down and listen to a note read out. This note accused the Lithuanian government and its security services of kidnaping two Soviet soldiers, demanding they be released immediately to the Soviet Army command in Lithuania. It was noted that this incident "could lead to serious consequences". On 28 May, Ludvigs Sēja, the Envoy of Latvia to Lithuania, justifiably described this declaration as "truly a fantastic document containing endless serious and unsubstantiated allegations, to the extent that no reasonable point is to be found".[47]

At the beginning of June, the Lithuanian authorities spent every effort to avert further reproach; police presence was increased in the vicinity of Soviet garrisons and a degree of "cleansing" was carried out to remove criminal elements from the vicinity, etc. Prime Minister Antanas Merkys arrived in Moscow, on 7 June, where Vyacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, again expressed concern about "provocations". On 9 June, A. Merkys again heard protests about "the formation of a Baltic Military Union" together with Latvia and Estonia. These accusations were formulated in such serious terms that A. Merkys in desperation asked the Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys to come to Moscow. On 11 June, both met again with Molotov, and during this conversation the baseless accusations were reiterated even more forcefully.[48]

The USSR made the final decision to invade the Baltic States in early June, at a time when the attention of the world was focused on the agonies of France under

[47] Grava-Kreituse, I., Feldmanis, I., Loeber, D., Goldmanis, J., Stranga A. (eds.). *The Occupation and Annexation of Latvia 1939–1940*, pp. 179–180.

[48] For details see: Andersons, E. *Latvijas vēsture. Ārpolitika*. II. Stockholm: Daugava, 420.–422. lpp.

German attack. An overwhelming military force some ten times greater than the combined defence forces of the Baltic States were concentrated at their border on 4–7 June. This consisted of at least 541 000 infantry, 3938 tanks, 2516 aircraft, marines and paratroopers, warships, and units of the Armed Forces of the USSR Ministry for the Interior (*NKVD*), who were ready to carry out mass deportations at once[49] (inter alia, during the period 10–15 June; the *NKVD* made provision to receive 56 000 prisoners of war from the Baltic armies, placing them in camps including those which had been emptied in April when the Polish army officers were executed en masse[50]). The plan of attack was discussed in the Kremlin with Stalin on the night of 5/6 June and on the evening of 7 June. On 13 June, Lev Mekhlis, Head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, declared: "We will carry out our historical tasks in Estonia and in Latvia, eliminating the ruling clique in Estonia, in Latvia, and in Lithuania, at the same time as assisting the workers of these States to free themselves from the "exploiting class of capitalists and aristocratic landlords".[51] In this way, a signal was given that the previously agreed plans for occupation had changed; a declaration made in early June by L. Mekhlis to several Communists of Latvian origin attests to this, namely that in case the ultimatum issued to the Latvian government were to be rejected they had to be ready to travel to the city of Rēzekne, which would be captured by the Soviet army, where a provisional revolutionary Soviet government of "Latvia" would be established there).[52]

On 14 June 1940, Vyacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, sent the following telegram to the accredited representatives of the USSR in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland: the Baltic Entente formed in 1934, which provided for diplomatic cooperation, has not been liquidated (in October 1939, he had personally informed the Latvian Foreign Minister V. Munters that this Entente did not interest him "in the slightest"[53]), military cooperation had set in (exchange of visits by military personnel), and the Lithuanian Prime Minister had failed to express any flattering comments about the USSR in the journal *Revue Baltique*. This note was intended to "orient" the recipients, and in fact, it was a draft of the ultimatums being prepared at that time. That very same day, the Red Army and Navy started a complete naval blockade of the Baltic States and blocked Estonian air space.

Lithuania was the first of the Baltic States to receive an ultimatum, which included a demand for Kazys Skučas, Minister for the Interior, and Augustinas Povilaitis, Head of the Security Department, to be brought to trial on charges of engaging in "provoca-

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[49] For details see: Pētersons, A. *Krustugunīs: Latviešu karotmāka, 1940–1945: 60 gadus no tautas slēptais*. Rīga: aut. izd., 2007, 57.–59. lpp.

[50] See: *Катынь: март 1940 г. – сентябрь 2000 г. Расстрел, судьбы живых, эхо Катыни: документы*. Лебедева, Н. (сост.). Москва: Весь мир, 2001, с. 180–181.

[51] Петров, Б. Н. Вооруженные формирования Прибалтики накануне и в начале Великой Отечественной войны. *Военно-исторический архив*, Nr. 10, 2000, с. 276–277.

[52] Lerhis, A. Ceļš uz 1940. gada 17. jūniju: meli, viltus lētticība. Accessible at: http://lpra.vip.lv/lerhis.htm

[53] Gore, I., Stranga, A. *Latvija: neatkarības mijkrēslis. Okupācija. 1939. gada septembris – 1940. gada jūnijs*. Rīga: Izglītība, 1992, 111. lpp.

tions against Soviet soldiers" (both attempted to flee to Germany, but were detained at the border and wound up in Soviet prisons); the demand was that a government be formed without delay which "is capable of and willing to act in accordance with the mutual assistance pact between the USSR and Lithuania"; to ensure free entry of Soviet armed forces into Lithuania and its deployment at important centres, in order that the Red Army could "ensure" implementation of the mutual assistance pact, and to prevent the occurrence of provocations against military units of the USSR. After lengthy discussions, the Lithuanian government decided to comply with the ultimatum, while President Antanas Smetona fled to Germany.

On 14 June 1940, the Kremlin began an operation of overt aggression against the Baltic States by issuing an ultimatum addressed to Lithuania, and aggression was launched against all three states. In the case of Latvia and Lithuania this took the form of attacks on border posts on the night to 15 June. Furthermore, the plan of attack in both cases was identical, which points to the inevitable conclusion that they were coordinated by the same command. In the case of Latvia, the attack was launched against the living quarters of border guards unit at Masļenki, where Soviet soldiers attacked around 3 am on the night of 15 June, firing shots and lobbing hand grenades, killing three border guards, two wives and one child, with ten border guards and 27 civilians forcibly taken across the border. Documents at the Russian State Central Soviet Army Archive[54] show a direct link between this incident and the planned general attack. At approximately the same time, at 3:40 am on the night of 15 June, Soviet soldiers broke into the living quarters of Lithuanian border guards, firing shots and lobbing a hand grenade into the building. A border guard captured in his underwear was taken outside, where he was struck by sword cuts to the head and a shot fired into his head. Provocations against Lithuanian border guards continued later that day at 11:00 to 12:00, disarming them and forcibly taking them across the border. The date of 14 June also proved to be tragic in Estonia. Soviet warships blockaded Estonian ports, while units at Soviet bases were brought to the highest state of combat readiness. Two Soviet war planes attacked and downed the Finish passenger airplane "*Kaleva*", at 14:05, i.e. 11 minutes after it had lifted off from Tallinn with destination Helsinki. All on board perished (two Finnish pilots and seven passengers, among them two Frenchmen and a US State Department courier[55], two German businessmen, one Finn and one Swede). Three Estonian fishing boats which arrived on the scene were surprised by a Soviet submarine whose crew searched the vessels, confiscated debris which they had collected and themselves fished everything that floated out of the sea. That same day the Estonian government presented a note to the Soviet Legation in

[54] See: Feldmanis, A. E. *Masļenku traģēdija – Latvijas traģēdija*. 2. papild. izd. Rīga: Latvijas 50 gadu okupācijas muzeja fonds, 2002, 13.–290. lpp.; Петров, Б. Н. *Вооруженные формирования Прибалтики накануне и в начале Великой Отечественной войны*, с. 278.

[55] In 2007, the US State Department courier was honoured by being included on the memorial plaque of officials killed abroad in the line of duty, see: Eric, A. Johnson, E. A., Hermann, A. The Last Flight from Tallinn. *Foreign Service Journal*, May 2007, pp. 46-51.

Tallinn demanding that civilian travel safety be ensured, but this had only symbolic meaning.[56]

The Lithuanian government accepted the ultimatum on 15 June, and the armed forces of the USSR entered Lithuania the same day. Vladimir Dekanozov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars, was dispatched to Kaunas (he arrived the evening of the same day) with the task of coordinating the process of annexing Lithuania. In Kaunas, he was discomfited by the fact of President Smetona's escape (according to the constitution in force, the State President had to appoint a new government); he forced the Lithuanian authorities to send a delegation to the border post at Eitkūnai (Germany) to persuade the president to return, but without success. Following orders issued by the USSR Legation an announcement was made on 16 June that a new government would be headed by Justas Paleckis, a journalist who was born in Riga and who had lived in Riga until the 1930s. The government had no Communist members, and included the former Prime Ministers Ernestas Galvanauskas and the former commander of the Lithuanian Army, General Vincas Vitkauskas. The government was confirmed by A. Merkys, acting as State President (exceeding his constitutional authority), who then resigned. J. Paleckis then immediately took on the function of acting State President. However, the Communist Mečislovas Gedvilas was appointed Minister for the Interior on 19 June; thereafter events proceeded in the same way as in Latvia and in Estonia. Professor Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, who had been appointed Prime Minister, also failed to appreciate what was happening. He travelled to Moscow on 30 June to meet Molotov and express his dismay at excessive "interference" by the USSR in the internal affairs of Lithuania, only to be told openly that the Baltic States would be incorporated by the USSR. Afterwards V. Krėvė-Mickevičius left his post.[57]

On 16 June, at 14:00 and 14.30, respectively, the Latvian and Estonian envoys in Moscow were presented with ultimatums which were practically identical to one another and very similar to the ultimatum presented earlier to Lithuania (they only omitted the demand to punish certain named officials). Both states had to reply within eight hours. Both states yielded to the ultimatums, with the authoritarian presidents and governments hoping that by avoiding an armed invasion, a degree of independence might be retained. Furthermore, the stand adopted by the Latvian government and army was coloured by the threat of invasion directly from the USSR and also from its forces in Lithuania, over and above the presence of Soviet garrisons on the territory of Latvia; the Latvian army had drawn up no plans to deal with such an attack and thus

[56] Concerning events in 1939–1941 in Estonia, see: *Estonia 1940–1945. Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity.* Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity, 2006, pp. 1–399; *От пакта Молотова-Риббентропа до договора о базах: документы и материалы: перевод с эстонского.* Таллинн: Периодика, 1990, с. 11–213.

[57] Regarding developments in Lithuania, see: *Lietuvos okupacija ir aneksija 1939–1940: dokumentų rynkinis*. Vilnius: Mintis, 1993, plp. 5–397; *Lietuva 1940–1990: okupuotos Lietuvos istorija*. Vilnius: Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezystencijos tyrimo centras, 2005, plp. 49–125; Jakubčionis, A., Knezys, S., Streikus, A. *Okupacija ir aneksija: Pirmoji sovietinė okupacija = Occupation and Annexation. The First Soviet Occupation*. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2006, plp. 11–183.

had no opportunity to implement defence. Early on the morning of 17 June, Soviet armed forces crossed their borders with Estonia and Latvia. The Estonian government and army command acted with greater compliance than the authorities in Latvia, who in reply to Soviet demands to begin talks on the procedure for entry of their military units merely sent Colonel Otto Ūdentiņš, deputy to the Chief of Staff of the Latvian Army, to the Latvian border with Lithuania. Upon receipt of a similar demand in Tallinn, on 17 June, General Johan Laidoner, Commander of the Estonian Army, went in person to Narva. He then signed in Narva Railway Station the so-called Narva Edict which surrendered control of all roads and communications channels to the Red Army, forbade all political demonstrations, and ordered all civilians to surrender their personal weapons (this last provision applied primarily to the military reserve organisation *Kaitseliit* — the Estonian Home Guards, whose counterparts in Latvia and in Lithuania were only disarmed during July).

Immediately after occupation, "Special Envoys" of the USSR arrived in Latvia and Estonia, Andrei Vyshinsky, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars, and Andrei Zhdanov, Leningrad Party Secretary, respectively who had received the same instructions a few days earlier as Vladimir Dekanozov in Lithuania. These individuals supervised and coordinated the formation of new governments, and proceedings differed only in unimportant details. A demonstration including clashes with police took place on 17 June in Riga, while on 19–20 June a demonstration of leftist sympathisers, workers and local Communists took place in Liepāja, guarded by Soviet military units, which then proceeded to neutralise the Latvian Army garrison. Government offices were taken over on 20 June, then put under guard by Soviet units, which captured the headquarters of the Latvian Army garrison. A. Vyshinsky informed the State President K. Ulmanis on 20 June about the composition of the new government headed by Augusts Kirhenšteins, and on 21 June this government officially set to work; 253 political prisoners were set free in Riga, and a "demonstration of working people" was held, greeted by A. Kirhenšteins and A. Vyshinsky.[58]

On 20 June, A. Zhdanov in Estonia ordered local communists to organise demonstrations on the following day in Tallinn and other cities in support of "the demands of the Soviet Union" (despite the fact that the Head of the Estonian Government, Jüri Uluots, had already tendered his resignation on 17 June and the government had continued to function for a few days longer; the same situation obtained in Latvia). Several thousand individuals responded in the same way as in Liepāja on 19–20 June, and on 21 June a demonstration in Freedom Square in Tallinn involving mostly factory workers, Russians from Petseri (Pechorsky) District and workers from Soviet military bases, who, in the presence of Soviet armoured cars and Red Army patrols, demanded that the government resign. The demonstration moved from Freedom Square to the residence of the State President, who when he appeared to "address the people", was shouted down by the enraged crowd and forced to keep silent. After K. Päts received a demand that the government resign, some demonstrators proceeded to the prison, set

[58] See: Grava-Kreituse, I., Feldmanis, I., Goldmanis, J., Stranga A. (sast.). *Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939–1940: dokumenti un materiāli.* Rīga, 1995, 129.–134. lpp.

free political detainees, and then took over police stations and government offices, newspaper offices and the radio station. Units of the Estonian army stationed in the city had been ordered to stand down and not to offer resistance and were easily disarmed. Only the Liaison Battalion, in their barracks, engaged in a brief exchange of fire with the mob, following which the crowd withdrew. On the evening of 21 June, A. Zhdanov transmitted a demand for the formation of a new government, as did A. Vyshinsky in Latvia; in both cases these demands were met in full. Power was transferred to a government composed of individuals drawn from a list presented by S. Zhdanov. Johannes Vares-Barbarus, a poet without political affiliation, headed this government. There were no Communist members of the government, just the same as in Latvia.

Further developments in Estonia followed the scenario conceived in Moscow and identical in broad terms for all three Baltic States up until annexation in early August 1940; the scenario continued to play out until the culmination of repressions on 14 June 1941, when tens of thousands of citizens of all three Baltic States were arrested and deported on the basis of administrative orders. "Parliamentary elections" featuring only a single slate of "candidates of the working people" were imposed on all three states to take place on identical dates, 14 and 15 July 1940, under strict supervision with compulsory voting: in Lithuania, the single slate of candidates apparently received 99.2%, in Latvia 97.6%, and in Estonia 92.9% of votes cast. Identical outcomes were produced, with the first decisions to be taken by the "newly elected" parliaments adopted on the same day, 21 July, instituting a change in the form of state governance and granting a mandate to seek admission to the Soviet Union as constituent republics. A "delegation of representatives" from each of the three states was conveyed to Moscow, there to appear before the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Requests to seek admission were granted on 3 August (Lithuania), 5 August (Latvia — with the intervening day being a Sunday, no business was done), and on 6 August (for Estonia). The occupied Baltic States were officially integrated into the USSR on the basis of decisions of the USSR Supreme Council taken by acclamation; the international community refused to accept the legality of the process.[59]

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The three Baltic States gained their independence after waging a difficult and complex struggle in the period 1918–1920, an outcome responding to the legitimate demand of their people for national independence. Step by step these states became actors on the international stage. All three states achieved a certain degree of domestic political stability, which was overshadowed by a transition to authoritarianism. A relatively high standard of living was achieved, and the Baltic States became one of many European States and part of a common space, i.e. fully fledged subjects of international affairs. The Baltic States shared many features in common, but there were many

[59] See, for example: Hough, W. J. H. The annexation of the Baltic States and its effect on the development of law prohibiting forcible seizure of territory. *New York Law School Journal of International and Comparative Law*, No. 2, 1985, pp. 301–533.

differences, both internally and in their pursuit of foreign relations. The differences were most readily observed during the period when these states formed and stabilised over the period 1918–1920; however, differences persisted up to the time when they were occupied and annexed in 1940.

In fact, three different wars of independence were fought with common and differing elements, and they were waged in parallel only for a certain time; furthermore, despite having serious common enemies (the Red Army of Soviet Russia, the forces led by Bermondt), cooperation was episodic and fragmented in substance. In the case of Lithuania, the principal reason for this was hostile relations with Poland, with whom the other Baltic States had good relations. During this time, a stable so-called horizontal direction emerged for the foreign relations of Lithuania, differing from the vertical direction of the foreign relations pursued by Latvia and Estonia; in addition, these tendencies were broadly sustained throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Cooperation did not occur to an adequate extent either during the period when independence was won, nor afterwards. The reasons for this failing originated during the period of the struggle for independence, in addition a successful policy of splitting Baltic unity was skilfully implemented by their large neighbours.

During the inter-war period, domestic politics in the Baltic States was characterised by democratic processes marred by fragmentation, with attendant short-lived governments and instability. There were also differences in the most popular political forces, i.e. in Latvia and Estonia they were Social Democrats, while in Lithuania they were Christian Democrats. A transition to authoritarian rule occurred in all three states, in 1926 in Lithuania, and 1934 in Estonia and Latvia. In Lithuania and Estonia the coups signalled the beginning of a transition to authoritarian rule, while such conditions set in immediately after the coup in Latvia. A legal basis for authoritarian rule was established in Lithuania and in Estonia through adoption of an appropriate constitution and institution of authoritarian parliamentary assemblies, while this did not occur in Latvia.

Despite their essential differences, all three Baltic States came into the zone of influence of the Soviet Union during the period 1939–1940, and after their forcible occupation, they were annexed in the summer of 1940, following a scenario which differed only very slightly, to become part of the USSR.

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Daina Bleiere

THE SOVIETISATION OF LATVIA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BALTIC STATES

The Sovietisation of Latvia and other Baltic States consisted of comprehensive steps, quickly taken, to integrate them into the political, administrative and economic system of the Soviet Union, and covered all aspects of political, economic, social and cultural life. Sovietisation took place over several periods: 1940–1941; 1944–1953; 1954–1980s. In broad terms Sovietisation (especially economy and politically) was completed by the early 1950s. However, the process continued until the collapse of the USSR. Sovietisation of public life and in the cultural and educational areas was more evident during the mid-1950s, the period of liberalisation of the Soviet regime. Nevertheless, liberalisation opened up the possibility for ideological and cultural niches which counteracted Sovietisation. In many respects, the Sovietisation of Latvia was more profound than in Estonia and Lithuania.

Keywords: Sovietisation, Soviet regime, occupation, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, post-totalitarianism, Communist Party, repressions, legitimacy.

Introduction

The term *Sovietisation* describes the process whereby the ideology, administration, economy, culture and public life of a state was either fully integrated into that of the Soviet Union, or a replica of the Soviet model was established in territories annexed by the USSR in 1939–1940, thus implementing provisions of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (the Baltic States, Western Ukraine, and Western Belarus), as well as in the Central and Eastern European States after the Second World War. There were essential differences in the outcome in both these groups of states.

It is currently the consensus that the process of Sovietisation lasted for only a few years in the Central European states (approximately from 1947–1948 until the 1950s) and was associated with political regimes that obeyed Moscow, under whose direction the Soviet model was transferred to these states. The methods and mechanisms for Sovietisation in Central Europe have been extensively studied.[1] Stalinist regimes

[1] See: Schöpflin, G. *Politics in Eastern Europe, 1945–1992*. Oxford, UK; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1993, 336 pp.; Naimark, N., Gibianskii, L. (eds.). *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe 1944–1949*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998, 328 pp.; Tismeanu, V. (Ed.) *Stalinism Revisited: The Establishment of Communist Regimes in East-Central Europe*. Budapest; New York: CEU Press, 2009, 444 pp.; Snyder, T. T., Brandon, R. (eds.) *Stalin and Europe: Imitation and Domination, 1928–1953*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, 352 pp.

implanted by Moscow in these countries considered the Soviet political and economic system as ideal, and sought to reproduce it without pressure being exerted to do so. For this reason, this process has been labelled as "self-Sovietisation"[2]. Nevertheless, emissaries from Moscow scrupulously monitored Sovietisation and made corrections as needed, since Moscow was not convinced of the competence of their satellites to achieve what was expected of them and, in some cases, doubted their loyalty; irrespective of the fact that Communist leaders in Central European countries remained in power solely on the basis of their loyalty to the Kremlin, in some instances they sought to defend their national interests as they perceived them. By the early 1950s, all the basic elements of the Soviet (Stalinist) model (cult of the Leader, one party dictatorship, monopoly of a single ideology, control of information and society, strict central leadership of the economy) and the mechanism to maintain these, most importantly through a system of repression, were present in the Central European states. But several authors maintain that these cannot be regarded as complete analogues of the Soviet model, since consolidation of these regimes was incomplete for various geopolitical, historical and internal political reasons, and that these models failed to take hold and were fundamentally transformed during the process of de-Stalinisation.[3] After the death of Stalin, the leaders of the USSR were forced to abandon direct control of their satellites and to allow several varieties of national communism to appear, while continuing to dominate the region as expressed in the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine[4], along with more flexible and diplomatic methods.

Some parallels undoubtedly existed between the Sovietisation that took place until 1953 in the Central European countries and in the territories annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939–1940, including the Baltic region, as the goals and methods employed were similar. This is not to say that in both cases Moscow followed a fixed plan for Sovietisation. While keeping in mind the desired outcome, both in the Central European and in the Baltic countries, it took local conditions and the geopolitical situation into account,[5] in 1940–1941 and the first post-war years, i.e. 1945–1946.[6]

An essential difference, however, was that how the Kremlin acted in the Baltic region was not limited in any way by formal considerations of national sovereignty, and that the goal of Sovietisation was not to produce cloned models, but to achieve rapid

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[2] See: Connelly, J. *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945–1956*. Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000, p. 45; Leffler, M. P., Westad, O. A. *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume I. Origins*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne etc.: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 195.

[3] Волокитина, Т. В., Мурашко, Г. П., Носкова, А. Ф., Покивайлова, Т. А. *Москва и Восточная Европа. Становление политических режимов советского типа (1949–1953): Очерки истории*. Москва: РОССПЭН, 2002, с. 662–666.

[4] The Brezhnev Doctrine was a foreign policy doctrine of the USSR that was formulated after the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by the countries of the Warsaw Pact: the Soviet Union and the other socialist states reserved the right to intervene militarily if the "socialist choice" were to be threatened in any socialist state.

[5] With respect to this policy in the case of Hungary see Borhi, L. *Hungary in the Cold War 1945–1956: Between the United States and the Soviet Union*. Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2004, pp. 200–202. Concerning parallels between the situation in Central European states and in the Baltic States, see: Зубкова, Е. *Прибалтика и Кремль. 1940–1953*. Москва: РОССПЭН, 2008, с. 128–131.

[6] J. Zubkova regards mid-1947 as marking the end of this latter phase.

and complete integration into the political, administrative, and economic system of the Soviet Union. The pace, form and content of Sovietisation was dictated by Moscow according to its interests, and local elites were assigned the role of obedient implementers. In this situation one cannot speak of self-Sovietisation. In theory, all Soviet republics had to function with a fully identical ideological, administrative, economic, educational, etc. system. The local elite could only hope to achieve a degree of respect for local features; however, during the Stalin period such attempts were largely futile. Immediately after the war most local Communists in Latvia considered that it would be necessary to achieve a degree of consensus with the agrarian sector, including not to hurry the pace of collectivisation, so as to achieve legitimation of the Soviet regime. However, in 1946, the body instituting direct rule by Moscow in the republic — the Latvia Bureau of the Central Committee (CC) of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (AUCP(B)[7]) — condemned these ideas as totally unacceptable.

Sovietisation in the Baltic region, unlike the case for Sovietisation of Central Europe was not limited to the Stalin era. Until 1953, the Sovietisation of many sectors was quite superficial, and the process continued during succeeding decades, in fact until the beginning of *perestroika*. Although some reforms of state policy undoubtedly occurred during the post-Stalin period, these did not change the fundamental parameters of the Soviet model — one party dictatorship, the dominant position of Marxist–Leninist ideology, and the leading role of a centrally planned system of the national economy. Up until the second half of the 1980s it was impermissible to cast doubt on this model, or even to criticise the usefulness of its separate elements. Given that the Baltic republics, including Latvia, were subjected to Sovietisation for much longer than the countries of Central Europe, the influence on their society of the Soviet model was more profound and left longer lasting effects. Reactions to the process of Sovietisation differed, ranging from open opposition to acceptance, various strategies for adaptation, and discursive reformulation of the basic postulates of Sovietisation, in particular in the fields of ideology and culture (for example, using classic Marxist–Leninist quotations to protect national linguistic and cultural interests). Olaf Mertelsmann has taken the long duration of Sovietisation of the Baltic States into account to identify two stages of this process: during the first stage, the Stalinist phase, repression was the principal instrument employed to carry out Sovietisation, with the security services and the Communist Party being the main actors; in the second stage, the Post-Stalinist stage, changes were reinforced and the Soviet model was consolidated. This process took several decades to be accomplished.[8]

The concept of Sovietisation has a distinctly negative connotation, associated with its birth during the Cold War when the term was widely used in Western journalism. The end of the Cold War allowed this issue to be studied from an academic, neutral perspective seeking to identify elements of the Sovietisation process such as the mechanisms involved, division into periods and relationship to other similar concepts.

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[7] From 1952 onwards, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the CPSU.

[8] Mertelsmann, O. Introduction. *The Sovietization of the Baltic States, 1940–1956*. Mertelsmann, O. (Ed.). Tartu: Kleio, 2003, p. 10.

One of these concepts is Russification. Irrespective of the relationship that existed between Russification and Sovietisation the two processes were neither identical nor synonyms.[9] Although it was the case that during the time of Stalin, and also later, there was a conscious attempt to spread Russian culture and use of the Russian language throughout Central Europe, linguistic Russification as a means to accomplish Sovietisation met little success and was not widely implemented. The situation was different within the Soviet Union, where knowledge of the Russian language was identified as an important part of the upbringing of Soviet citizens and a means to create the Soviet Nation. Russian was not defined legally as an official state language, but in the 1960s–1980s it was described as the "language of interethnic communication". Use of Russian was obligatory in all institutions and documentation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), as well as in the military, and in many other ways it dominated *de facto*. Efforts were made to make Russian an obligatory second language among non-Russian peoples; examples of these were the Law on Education of 1958, and during the 1970s and 1980s, intensified teaching of the Russian language, which in the Baltic republics meant that learning Russian began in the 1st grade of elementary schools with Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian as the language of instruction, as well as in the final years of kindergarten, in addition to strengthening the role played by Russian in professional and higher education. The last campaign to further increase the extent to which the Russian language was taught took place in 1983.[10] The Russian language was not only taught in school, but its use was perfected during compulsory military service, in the work place, in public life, and watching television. During the 1960s–1980s, a majority of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians had more or less mastered Russian. In the 1979 Census of the USSR, 52.1 percent of Lithuanians, 24.2 percent of Estonians, and 56.7 percent of Latvians stated that they spoke Russian freely.[11] The 1989 Census gave the following figures, 37.9 percent, Lithuanians, 33.9 percent, Estonians, and 64.6 percent, Latvians.[12] It is true that Russian was least spoken by Estonians, compared with the other Baltic peoples, but the low respective figures reported for 1979 may also be explained by a conscious decision of respondents not to admit the true extent of their knowledge of Russian. Results from the 1989 census were influenced by the process of recovering independence and the associated increase in the desire of the Baltic peoples to distance themselves from the Russian language.

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[9] Weeks, T. R. *Russification / Sovietization*. European History Online. Accessible at: http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/mod els-and-stereotypes/russification-sovietization/theodore-r-weeks-russification-sovietization/ (site last visited 28.10.2015).

[10] See: *In Defence of the Latvian Language Against Russification. 1944–1989. Documents*. Riga: LVA, 2012, pp. 78–89.

[11] *Численность и состав населения СССР. По данным Всесоюзной переписи населения 1979 года*. Москва: Финансы и статистика, 1984, с. 71. Accessible at: http://istmat.info/files/uploads/17649/chis lennost_i_sostav_naseleniya_sssr_1984.pdf (site last visited 25.10.2015).

[12] Болдырев, В. А. *Итоги переписи населения СССР*. Москва: Финансы и статистика, 1990, с. 37. Accessible at: http://istmat.info/files/uploads/17594/naselenie_sssr._po_dannym_vsesoyuznoy_perepisi_naselen iya_1989g.pdf (site last visited 25.10.2015). Data from both surveys refer to members of the respective ethnicity living all throughout the Soviet Union.

The data given above show that linguistic Russification in the Baltic republics achieved its greatest success in Latvia. Furthermore, at the level of everyday communication skills many more Latvians spoke Russian than the other Baltic peoples. If immediately after the end of the Second World War, Russian was spoken by less than half of the Latvian people, then in 1989 this figure had risen to 82 percent[13]. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Latvian language had been progressively squeezed out of the large cities of Latvia, not only for official use, but also in daily life, in the shops, in public transport and at work. This fact made the language issue very contentious. An attempt by the Latvian leadership to deal with this problem in 1956–1958 resulted in accusations of nationalism levelled at many members of the political elite of the republic, resulting in their removal from office.[14] Discussion of the status of the Latvian language in the face of increasing use of Russian was a forbidden subject during the 1960s–1980s, certainly one that could not be discussed in public.

Expansion of the use of Russian in Estonia and Lithuania was likewise felt to threaten the continued existence of their national languages and cultures. A spontaneous demonstration by pupils against Russification took place in Tallinn in 1980, at which time 40 well-known intellectuals sent a letter to *Pravda*, the main newspaper of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, complaining about Russification. This letter was not published, and the signatories were persecuted by Party institutions and the secret police, the *KGB*. In 1982, a group of Estonian dissidents again protested against Russification, including construction of the port at Muugu, since this would facilitate an influx of workers from the other republics of the USSR[15]; linguistic Russification in Estonia and in Lithuania went hand-in-hand with increased migration from other republics that resulted in essential changes of their ethnic composition.

The relative success of Russification in Latvia may be explained by several factors, including a policy instituted by Moscow and implemented by republican leaders of accelerating the pace of socialist industrialisation, as well as by the fact that from 1944/5 onwards many Russian-speakers settled in Latvia, and the linguistic environment, particularly in the large cities, was highly discriminatory against people who did not speak Russian fluently. We also note that in 1989 only slightly more than 22 percent of all non-Latvians resident in Latvia were fluent in Latvian, while only 15 percent of non-Estonians spoke Estonian. In ethnically more homogeneous Lithuania, 35 percent of non-Lithuanian residents spoke the Lithuanian language.[16]

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[13] Eglīte, P., Mežs, I. Latvijas kolonizācija un etniskā sastāva izmaiņu cēloņi 1944.–1990. gadā. *Occupation Regimes in Latvia in 1940–1956*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2002, 438. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 7. sēj.).

[14] See: Prigge, W. D. *Bearslayers: The Rise and Fall of the Latvian National Communists*. American University Studies: Series X Political Science, Vol. 71. New York: Peter Lang, 2015.

[15] Aarelaid-Tart, A. Estonia. *Europe since 1945: An Encyclopedia*. Vol. I. Cook, B. A. (Ed.). London & New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 341; Raun, T. U. *Estonia and the Estonians*. Updated second edition. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1991, p. 198.

[16] Ozoliņš, U. Introduction: the struggle for the status of the Latvian language during the Soviet occupation 1944 to 1989. *In Defence of the Latvian Language Against Russification. 1944–1989. Documents*. Riga: LVA, 2012, p. 15.

The considerable successes of linguistic Russification notwithstanding, the hopes of Soviet ideologists that increased knowledge of the Russian language and its regular use by the Baltic peoples would inspire greater loyalty towards the Soviet state were not fulfilled. Discrimination against use of national languages came to symbolise Soviet colonial policy, and, thus when *perestroika* was implemented during the second half of the 1980s, one of the first demands made by popular movements in the Baltic republics was to obtain the legal status of a state language for their national languages.

A second concept with connotations equally negative as Sovietisation is Soviet imperialism. The similarity of both concepts comes from their being linked to domination and control. Although it is somewhat contradictory, labelling the Soviet Union as an imperial entity is so widespread that it may be regarded as generally accepted.[17] Domination and control allow the defining of the USSR as an empire.[18] Domination and control characterised its relations during the Cold War with the satellite regimes of the Central European countries, i.e. the "outer empire", as well the relationship between the "centre" and the national republics, i.e. the "inner empire".[19] Mark Beissinger has advanced the thesis that there is a difference between a multi-national state and an empire, the basis for this difference being that in an empire a national opposition exists to the actions of the "centre", namely, an empire is an artificial creation wherein the oppressed nations are dissatisfied with their position.[20] The relationship between the centre and the periphery for an empire may be characterised as relations between a metropolis and its colonies. In the study of the Soviet Union this concept is most often applied to the Soviet republics of Central Asia. However, there have been some instances where it is referred to in the study of the Baltic republics as part of the Soviet Empire.[21]

Independent of any objections to its use, the notion of Sovietisation has been employed by many researchers in discussing forcible implementation of the Soviet model on the peoples of both the "outer" and the "inner" empire. At the same time, academic opinion is unanimous that Sovietisation cannot be simply reduced to repression and compulsion, and that it influenced not only the economy and politics, but also impacted broadly on social, cultural and daily life issues. Sovietisation "was a complex modernising/civilising revolution from above, which embraced the construction of

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[17] Beissinger, M. R. The Persistence of the Empire in Eurasia. *AAASS NewsNet*, Vol. 48, No. 1, January 2008, p. 2.

[18] See e.g. Pravda, A. *The End of the Outer Empire: Soviet-East European Relations in Transition, 1985–1990*. London: Sage, 1992, 238 pp.; Pearson, R. *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Empire*. New York: Palgrave, 2002, 240 pp.; Sebestyen, V. *Revolution 1989: The Fall of the Soviet Empire*. London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 2009, 480 pp.

[19] Beissinger, M. R. The Persistence of the Empire in Eurasia, p. 5.

[20] See Beissinger, M. R. Soviet Empire as "Family Resemblance". *Slavic Review*, Vol. 65, Summer 2006, pp. 294–303.

[21] See: Agarin, T. Demographic and Cultural Policies of the Soviet Union in Lithuania from 1944 to 1956. A Post-Colonial Perspective. *The Sovietization of the Baltic States, 1940–1956*, pp. 111–126; Annus, E. The Problem of Soviet Colonialism in the Baltics. *Journal of Baltic Studies,* Vol. 43, 2012, pp. 21–45.

new identities, the reconfiguration of symbolic space, the establishment of new rituals, the introduction of new behavioural codes, cultural norms, communicational practises, and, finally, an attempt to nurture affective relationship between citizens and state."[22]

Studies by a number of researchers of the Sovietisation of the Baltic States have attempted to identify the methods employed and the development periods of this process.[23] Undoubtedly Sovietisation of the Baltic States took similar forms, but despite centralisation and unification, differences existed and stubbornly persist between the Baltic republics. Although the political pressure exerted by Moscow was identical, the manner and outcomes of Sovietisation were rather different in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, for a number of reasons: the demographic situation, degree of urbanisation and industrialisation before the Soviet period, cultural differences, etc. These differences were evident during the process of recovering independence in 1988–1991, and have contributed to different development rates and patterns among the Baltic States after regaining their independence.

Many studies of the Sovietisation of Latvia have been carried out after the restoration of independence, examining different sectors and dealing with a wide range of topics, such as transformation of political and economic structures, eradication of the pre-Soviet political elite and creation of a new Soviet political elite, evolution of the instruments of domination and repression, as well as resistance of society to Sovietisation. Less attention has been paid to strategies that were followed in adapting and adjusting to changes, the impact of Sovietisation on social behaviour and cultural norms, values and identity, namely, how and if Sovietisation was internalised in these areas. These topics are best studied not by historians, but through analyses based on communication science, by culturologists, as well as by examining the social context that demonstrates the influence of Sovietisation as a by-product of the main theme being studied; there have been a number of attempts to more closely associate the study of social memory with the reconstruction of social attitudes prevailing during the Soviet period.[24]

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[22] Apor, B. Sovietization, Imperial Rule and the Stalinist Leader Cult in Central and Eastern Europe. *The Shadow of Colonialism on Europe's Modern Past*. Healy, R., Dal Lago, E. (eds.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 235.

[23] Oberländer, E. Instruments of Sovietization in 1939/40 and after 1944/45. *The Soviet Occupation Regime in the Baltic States 1944–1959: Policies and Their Consequences*. Materials of an International Conference. Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia Publishers, 2003, pp. 50–58; Mertelsmann, O. Introduction, pp. 9–18; Mertelsmann, O. What is Sovietization? *Everyday Life in Stalinist Estonia*. Mertelsmann, O. (Ed.). Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 9–25.

[24] Zirnīte, M. Mutvārdu vēstures liecības konfrontācijā ar 20. gadsimta 60.–80. gadu presi. *Latvija un Austrumeiropa 20. gadsimta 60.–80. gados.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 146.–155. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 20. sēj.); Saleniece, I. Mutvārdu vēstures avotu izmantošana 20. gadsimta 60.–80 gadu Latvijas vēstures pētīšanā: reliģiskā dzīve. Ibid., 156.–165. lpp.; Šūpulis, E. Atmiņu politika: vēlīnā sociālisma vērtējums dzīvesstāstos. Ibid., 166.–171. lpp.; Saleniece, I. (sast.) *1949. gada 25. martā izvesto balsis*. Daugavpils: Daugavpils Universitātes Akadēmiskais apgāds "Saule", 2008, 400 lpp.

Periods and instruments of Sovietisation in Latvia

The progress of the Sovietisation of Latvia, as is the case for all three Baltic countries, may be divided into several time periods: 1) 1940–1941; 2) 1944–1953; 3) 1954–1980s. It is important to note that division into these periods is arbitrary and reflects changes occurring in the Soviet Union in general; this was a consequence of Sovietisation being implemented and directed "from above", and it is difficult to discern any features that are independent of policy changes dictated by the leadership of the USSR.

During the first two periods of Sovietisation, the primary instruments to accomplish change were terror and repression. The most prominent examples were the mass deportations from Latvia on 14 June 1941 and 25 March 1949, in the course of which 15 424[25], and 42 125[26] residents, respectively, were simultaneously transported to Siberia; however, there were many other instances of repression, individual arrests and imprisonment for long terms in the Gulag, executions, and smaller-scale deportations. The author has estimated the total number of individuals that were repressed as approximately 180 000–190 000, fewer than in Lithuania but greater than the number in Estonia. Direct repression no longer occurred widely after the death of Stalin in 1953; however, Moscow did not hesitate to resort to repression if it detected essential deviation from a prescribed line. Other instruments employed to achieve Sovietisation included propaganda as well as exploitation of national traditions to achieve internalisation by society of the Soviet way of life and ideology, following the thesis of a national form for socialist culture with socialist content. However, these efforts would not have had the desired effect in the absence of actual or threatened repressions.

Sovietisation was closely controlled by Moscow, but its forms and methods changed over time. Although the Baltic communist parties were assigned the role of initiators of the "socialist revolution" during the summer of 1940, in reality they simply carried out orders from Moscow. The actual leader of Sovietisation in Latvia during the summer of 1940 was Andrei Vyshinskii, emissary of the USSR (until 26 July), supported by the Embassy of the USSR and agents of the USSR People's Commissariat for the Interior (*NKVD*). The Communist Party of Latvia (CPL[27]) took on the role of being a "supplier of personnel", for Soviet representatives and also found individuals prepared to collaborate with the Soviet regime. The Embassy of the USSR in Latvia was closed in mid-September 1940 after the annexation of Latvia, and the last ambassador, Vladimir Dereviansky, was appointed as the plenipotentiary representative of the AUCP(b) CC and of the USSR Council of People's Commissars (CPC). The tasks assigned to Derevjanskii and his team were to lead and control the Sovietisation of Latvia. In parallel with monitoring the Sovietisation of Latvia in 1940–1941 he was

[25] Riekstiņš, J. 1941. gada 14. jūnija deportācija Latvijā. *Aizvestie. 1941. gada 14. jūnijs*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts arhīvs, Nordik, 2001, 14. lpp.

[26] Riekstiņš, J. 1949. gada 25. marta deportācija Latvijā. *Aizvestie. 1949. gada 25. marts.* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts arhīvs, Nordik, 2007, 23. lpp.

[27] The party was called the Communist Party of Latvia (Bolsheviks), abbreviation (CPL(B)).

also in charge of various military and security structures. In this way, Moscow received progress reports via several channels on the results of Sovietisation, about the work of the CC of the republican Communist Party and administrative bodies. In Moscow responsibility for monitoring the Sovietisation of the Baltic States was held by Andrei Andreyev, a Secretary of the AUCP(b) CC.

A similar verification scheme was implemented after the repeated occupation of Latvia in 1944–1945 in order to keep track of and to guide the Sovietisation process. Special Bureaus of the AUCP(b) CC were created to assist the Baltic Communist Parties in stabilising the situation. The Lithuania and Estonia Bureaus were established by a decision taken on 11 November 1944, and the decision on the Latvia Bureau was taken on 29 December.

The Estonian historian T. Tannberg has summarised the tasks of the Baltic bureaus as follows: 1) to assist setting up Soviet administrative bodies; 2) to verify implementation of the Soviet economic model; 3) to overcome all armed and unarmed resistance; 4) to give orientation to intellectual life so that it followed Soviet standards; 5) to control the work of the republican leadership, and to inform the centre about progress.[28] The third and fifth of these tasks were the most important. A representative of the state security organs was a member of each bureau and served as the deputy head of the bureau. His duties included not only coordinating the fight against armed resistance, but also reporting to Moscow on the behaviour and loyalty of the leaders of the Latvian SSR. It is significant that, initially, there was no intention of including



Fig. 1. The first day of Soviet occupation — a Red Army tank in the streets of Riga, 17 June 1940. Photographer unknown. (LNA LVKFFDA 1. f., 17565N. l.)



Fig. 2. Vladimir Derevyanskii, Moscow's "governor" in Latvia, 1940–1941 Photographer unknown. (LNA LVKFFDA 1. f., 32735N. l)

[28] Таннберг, Т. *Политика Москвы в республиках Балтии в послевоенные годы (1944–1956*). Москва: РОССПЭН, 2010, с. 28.



Fig. 3. The highest officials of the Latvian SSR, 1940–1959 — Jānis Kalnbērziņš, First Secretary of the CPL, and Vilis Lācis, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars/Council of Ministers. Photo taken during the 1950s. Photographer unknown. (LNA LVKFFDA, 134434N)

members of the republican leadership in the bureau, but in the end these persons were included so as to formally lessen the appearance that the bureaus were instruments of direct rule by Moscow. In the case of Latvia, the two representatives were Jānis Kalnbērziņš, First Secretary of the Republican Communist Party, and Vilis Lācis, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.

The control function of the bureau was demonstrated on various contentious occasions during 1946, when the then head of the bureau, Vasilii Riazanov detected what in his opinion were hints of nationalism. The greatest scandal concerned a position taken by several members of the Latvian leadership with regard to farmers. Jānis Jurgens, third secretary of the CC of the CPL(B), responsible for agriculture, had concluded that the party needed to gain the trust of farmers.[29] This was seen as a nationalist deviation from the party line, since Jurgens was accused of considering all farmers as a single layer of society, failing to distinguish between *kulaks* and "workers-farmers". Such interventions clearly demonstrated who was master in the republic, and one can be quite sure that the republican leadership was relieved when the Latvia Bureau was disbanded on 27 March 1947 (the Estonia bureau and Lithuania bureau were also both disbanded on the same day). Moscow took the step of terminating the work of these Baltic bureaus out of a belief that the situation there had been adequately stabilised. Control (supervision) was subsequently entrusted to permanent instructors as members of the AUCP(b) CC, one for each republic. Thus, a method was found that "was not as visible and overbearing as previously, but nevertheless a form of controlling the republics"[30]. Another form of control exercised by Moscow consisted of the so-called brigades, formally inspection commissions that were dispatched to republics to investigate this or that issue, e.g. to audit the work of the CPL CC after Moscow had received complaints. The report of one such brigade was the basis for the eventual purge of Eduards Berklavs and other National Communists in July 1959.

The role of being the principal "eye" of Moscow in the republic was entrusted to the second secretary of the CPL CC. The second secretary was always transferred to Latvia from elsewhere and usually he was an ethnic Russian. This form of control was

[29] Swain, G. "Cleaning up Soviet Latvia": The Bureau for Latvia (Latburo), 1944–1947. *The Sovietization of the Baltic States, 1940–1956*, pp. 78–79. This conflict has been described in greater detail in: Зубкова, Е. *Прибалтика и Кремль. 1940–1953*. Москва: РОССПЭН, 2008, с. 298–300.

[30] Зубкова, Е. *Прибалтика и Кремль. 1940–1953*, с. 145.

also present in the other Soviet republics. It was particularly diligently and extensively practiced in Latvia during 1940–1941 when ministers and heads of other bodies were drawn from the pool of local Communists, but their deputies were all transferred in from the USSR.

This principle was adhered to in Latvia up until the death of Stalin. In June 1953, following the position taken by Lavrentiy Beria that the second secretaries of republican communist parties be native, Latvian Vilis Krūmiņš became Second Secretary of the CPL. However, in 1956, Moscow sent a Russian, Filipp Kashnikov, to fill this post. At the following Congress of the CPL in 1958, Kashnikov received a large number of no votes and was not re-elected at a plenum of the CC.[31] The very fact of this disobedience demonstrated to Moscow that significant liberalisation had taken place in the thinking of party officials after the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Krūmiņš then again took up the post of second secretary. However, he was removed from this position at the end of 1959. From then on, this position was always filled by a non-Latvian. The fact that "Moscow's eye" was responsible for personnel policy was highly significant, since the actual personnel selected for key posts played a decisive role in carrying out the process of Sovietisation.

In fact, the CPL CC was the highest Institution in Latvia and it had to organise adoption of legal acts to guide the work of all administrative, economic, ideological and cultural institutions in the republic. The Bureau of the Central Committee actually adopted all legal acts, since without its concurrence no law could be enacted, nor any decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet be issued. The date for sessions of the Supreme Soviet was first decided by the Bureau. As far as the executive branch — the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR — was concerned, all important decisions were taken jointly with the Bureau. The remit of the Council of Ministers was to resolve purely technical matters arising during implementation of decisions that had been taken elsewhere. The Bureau also set strategy. Furthermore, directives adopted by the Bureau were merely localisation without modification of decisions taken by the CC CPSU. The laws of the Latvian SSR were identical with laws adopted by the USSR. Minor deviations from All-Union laws were allowed only in rare cases, and even these changes had to be approved in advance by Moscow.

The Communist Party also exercised its authority vertically, from the CC to regional (until 1950 — district) party and executive committees, even down to local councils at the level of villages and small rural districts, factories, kolkhozes and sovkhozes, and at administrative establishments. Party control also existed at the horizontal level. This started at the lowest level by the primary party organisation, which had the task of supervising the work of the office or undertaking it was a part of, and extended up through to regional party committees responsible for the political situation and economic performance in their region.

[31] CPL XV verbatim report of the Congress. State Archives of Latvia, National Archives of Latvia (further LVA), PA-101. f., 21. apr., 11. l., 1.–6. lp. Out of the 653 delegates present, 223 cast their votes against the candidacy of F. Kashnikov, i.e. almost one-third. Although candidates for CC posts had previously received up to several dozen negative votes, such a large negative vote was highly unusual and it was appreciated as giving a serious signal.



Fig. 4. Political meeting of leaders of the Baltic region with military leaders in February 1960. 1st row, 1st from the left, Nikolai Dyomin, Head of the Political Directorate, Member of the Military Council of the Baltic Military District, 4th — Nikolai Konovalov, First Secretary of the CP of the Kaliningrad District, 5th — Ivan Bagramyan, Deputy Defence Minister of the USSR, 6th — Arvīds Pelše, First Secretary of the CPL CC, 7th — Johannes (Ivan) Käbin, First Secretary of the Estonian CP, 8th — Antanas Sniečkus, First Secretary of the Lithuanian CP, 9th — Jānis Peive, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, 10th —Lieut. Gen. Iosif Gusakovsky, Commander of the Baltic Military District. Photographer unknown. (LNA LVKFFDA 1. f., 3561P. L)

At the same time, one of the odd features of the Soviet system was that the republican leadership, the CPL CC, only partially exercised control in the republic and in some instances, had no control over significant areas of the economy and political life. Most importantly, it had no control over the Soviet Armed Forces stationed in Latvia. As cooperation between military units and the government of the republic was desirable, the leadership of the Baltic Military District was co-opted into membership of the Bureau and of the CPL CC. However, the military had the right to disregard the views of republican leaders if this was deemed to be in the best interests of the military.

An attempt was made during the lifetime of Stalin to create a society that in all of its aspects would be controlled by the centre, i.e. a totalitarian society; however, as many scholars have pointed out, this was only an attempt, since achieving complete control proved to be impossible.[32] During the era of Stalin, Moscow sought to establish in Latvia a closely monitored power vertical for socialist industrialisation, resulting in instances where republican interests were subordinated to those of the "centre" in areas that were vital to military needs, as well as to other strategic global interests of the state. Party units in these All-Union undertakings were nominally part of the CPL, but economic and social policies followed by these enterprises were set by their superiors in Moscow, the latter usually immune to entreaties by republican leaders.

Since the rigidly centralised management model was evidently ineffective, in the mid-1950s, the leadership of the USSR searched for better ways to coordinate the interests of the "centre" and those of the republics. The most radical of these consisted of the system of Regional Councils of the National Economy (*sovnarkhozy*), introduced in 1957, wherein management of industry was devolved to territorial units — oblasts

[32] Шубин, А. В. *От «застоя» к реформам. СССР в 1917–1985 гг.* Москва: РОССПЭН, 2001, с. 103.

and republics. It must be said that in Latvia the *sovnarkhoz* functioned rather effectively; however, this was not the case elsewhere in the USSR, and, furthermore Moscow was concerned by particularist tendencies emerging in oblasts and republics. *Sovnarkhozes* were abolished in 1965, with a return to the previous system of vertical management wherein the most important enterprises reported to All-Union ministries. Recentralisation first and foremost concerned the largest and strategically important enterprises.

One of the many paradoxes of the Soviet political and economic system was that the performance (efficiency) of republican leadership was assessed by Moscow in terms of the contribution made by a republic to the common national economy. This was the reason why leaders of the Baltic republics were interested in industrialisation despite having to deal with the demographic, social and political consequences of migration from other Soviet republics, the inability of social infrastructure to keep pace with the development of industry, and strained inter-ethnic relations. In any case, republican leaders had limited authority to regulate development of industry to avoid such gross imbalances.

An essential prerequisite for Sovietisation was ensuring that the Communist Party controlled all aspects of public life, in addition to the conjoining of the party with government structures. The nomenclature was created as the primary instrument to ensure control by the Communist Party. Its highest level comprised the political and economic elite of the Latvian SSR. Initially a majority of members of the political elite were individuals sent to Latvia from other Soviet republics; some were ethnic Latvians (in Latvia they were known as the Latvians of Russia) or members of other ethnic groups (mostly Russians). Positions at the highest levels of republican leadership were reserved for ethnic Latvians, i.e. positions with great visibility, but their deputies and advisers were Russians. An identical approach was followed in Estonia and in Lithuania in 1940–1941 and during the first post-war years. The absence of local Communists was particularly glaring during the first post-war years when local Latvians were not trusted, and their proportion in the Communist Party was very small, i.e. on 1 January 1947 they were only one-tenth of the number of CPL members.[33] The lack of Latvian Communists was partially compensated by recourse to ethnic Latvians living elsewhere in the USSR. Some 4346 individuals were identified at the beginning of 1945 as suitable to be sent to work in Latvia;[34] this was a considerably greater number than the sum of Estonians and Lithuanians with similar origins. Despite the repressions of 1937–1938 in which many Latvian Communists had been executed, a large number of Latvians still lived in Russia, Ukraine and elsewhere; these Latvians were settlers (and their descendants) from Tsarist times, or had stayed on after arriving as refugees during the First World War and Russian Civil War. Latvians returning from Russia and their children resolutely occupied many top positions in state bodies in Latvia up until

[33] Krūmiņš, G. Teritorijas pārvaldes organizēšana un vadošo darbinieku atlases politika Latvijā 1944.–1947. gadā. *Okupācijas režīmi Baltijas valstīs 1940–1991*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2009, 650. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 25. sējums).

[34] Ibid., 651. lpp.

the end of the 1980s. All of the First Secretaries of the CPL until 1989 were members of this group (Jānis Kalnbērziņš, Arvīds Pelše, Augusts Voss, Boriss Pugo), as well as Chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the Republic from 1959 to 1988 (Jānis Peive, Vitālijs Rubenis, Jurijs Rubenis). It is noteworthy that the influence of Latvians from Russia and their children was considerable among the political elite up until the second half of the 1980s.

An intrinsic feature in all three Baltic republics was a trans-republican elite that existed in parallel with the local political and economic elite. This group comprised top commanders of USSR Armed Forces units stationed in the Baltic States, as well as directors of important All-Union enterprises (large factories, the railroad system, maritime transport, civil aviation), whose activities could only be marginally influenced by republican leaders; in its own way, this group was an additional mechanism to solidify Moscow's hold on the republics.

Sovietisation of the Baltic States took place under strict supervision by Moscow, but it was based locally upon the republican communist parties, which had to play the role of principal coordinators of Sovietisation, as well as to become the axis for the local republican political system. When the occupation began in June 1940 the Communist Party in Latvia was very weak, as was the case in the other Baltic States, and initially it was incapable of carrying out the tasks assigned to it.

The Communist Party of Latvia (CPL) was formally legalised on 28 June 1940, but *de facto* already on 21 June. The Communist Party was the only political party granted legal status after the onset of Soviet occupation. Formally the CPL was not part of the power vertical before the annexation of Latvia by the USSR of 5 August 1940; nevertheless, the government led by Augusts Kirhenšteins cleared all of its decisions with the Central Committee of the CPL, as well as with the USSR Embassy.

During the summer of 1940, due to inexperience and having very few members, the CPL was incapable of carrying out the function assigned to it as regards Sovietisation. Official CPL documents assert that it had approximately 500 members at the time of its legalisation.[35] However, other materials suggest that this self-assessment was overly optimistic and that the real number of party members at the time of its legalisation was much smaller. It is important to recall that, after the onset of the occupation of Latvia, the number of party members increased rapidly; initially these were local residents, but the increased party membership during 1941 was almost entirely due to Communists sent to Latvia from other republics of the USSR.

The number of members of the CPL increased very rapidly after the war. Statistics show there were 11 000 members and candidate-members at the beginning of 1946, 48 500 in 1956, 102 800 at the beginning of 1966, and 177 300 at the beginning of 1986.[36] Most of the new party members hailed from urban centres, but a significant number of rural residents also became party members. However, it is important to note that most of this increase in party members consisted of non-Latvians. CPL statistical data on the ethnic origin of party members demonstrate the latter. From the

[35] See: LVA, PA-101. f., 5. apr., 1. l., 14. lp.

[36] LVA, PA-101. f., 8. apr., 50. l., 34. lp.; 18. apr., 136. l., 25. lp.; 28. apr., 127. l., 30.–32. lp.; 55. apr., 154. l., 10. lp.

1960s onwards, more Latvians became members of the Communist Party, but their relative numbers in the Party were never similar to the proportion of Latvians resident in the republic. While at the beginning of 1950, Latvians represented 25.9 percent of the total number of party members, in 1989 this figure was 39.7 percent.[37] In this respect the situation in Latvia was significantly different to that in Estonia and in Lithuania. In Estonia, the proportion of Estonians in the Communist Party rose from 43.6 percent in 1953 to 52.3 percent in 1971. In the 1970s, Estonia was in third place among the republics of the USSR in terms of titular nationality membership of the Communist Party. In later years, as a result of migration by Russians to Estonia, the proportion of Estonians fell and the number of non-Estonians increased among new members of the Party. Nevertheless, in 1981, Estonians still made up 50.8 percent of all members of their republican Communist Party.[38] In Lithuania the proportion of Lithuanians in the republican Communist Party was 37 percent in 1953, rising to 63.7 percent in 1965.[39] Given that membership of the Communist Party was a prerequisite (with very few exceptions) to fill nomenclature posts, the figures on Latvian membership of the Communist Party reflect their relatively weak position within the elite of Soviet Latvia, particularly in areas of most importance from the point-of-view of the Soviet regime, namely various Communist Party entities and large industrial and transport enterprises (the railroad system, the commercial shipping fleet, civil aviation). Only in rural areas did titular nationals occupy a stronger position in the communist elite (however, this situation only developed in the 1960s, whereas during the 1970s–1980s the proportion of Latvians tended to decrease even here), and in terms of public life, this was only held in the agrarian sector, rural regional government, and in culture and education.

Local Communists were fully aware of the low proportion of Latvian membership of the CPL which not only restricted their personal career options, but also reduced the legitimacy of the Soviet regime. During the second half of the 1950s, they tried to popularise the idea that more Latvians ought to become members of the Communist Party. This appeal found a certain resonance among the intelligentsia, who under conditions of liberalisation of the Soviet regime saw the possibility to ameliorate the situation in the republic, as well as to develop a more humane socialist system. In contrast with Estonia and Lithuania, where there were similar tendencies, in Latvia these aspirations were dealt a body blow in July 1959 when attempts by some local Communists to increase the public legitimacy of the Soviet regime were condemned, and the leadership subsequently replaced.

Condemnation of the Stalin Personality Cult in 1956 and a slight liberalisation of the overall Soviet regime induced hope among some of the leaders of the Latvian SSR that an opportunity had presented itself to address acute political, social and economic problems: discrimination against the Latvian language and culture by the

[37] LVA, PA-101. f. 12. apr., 134. l., 65 op. lp.; 63. apr., 5. l., 10. lp.

[38] Raun, T. U. *Estonia and the Estonians*. Updated second edition. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1991, p. 190.

[39] Anušauskas, A., Banionis, J., Bauža, Č., et al. *Lietuva 1940–1990. Okupuotos Lietuvos istorija*, Vilnius: Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo centras, 2005, p. 424.

administration of the republic and in daily public life, extensive industrialisation and the accompanying influx of workers from other republics, unbalanced economic development, and ecological problems that followed from socialist industrialisation, and how to increase the proportion of Latvians in power structures. The basis for these hopes lay in the fact that Moscow had increased the power of the republics. These questions preoccupied the National Communists during the second half of the 1950s. The group of local Latvian Communists (together with a number of Communists of other nationalities and some Latvians from Russia) who during the 1950s were in leading positions in the CPL CC and the government are usually described as National Communists.[40] The key person in their activities is considered to have been Eduards Berklavs, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1954–1956 and 1958–1959 (in the interim he was First Secretary of the Riga City Committee of the CPL) — whose energetic efforts to limit migration and impose requirements that officials and service providers speak Latvian largely determined the course of events. After being removed from his post he underwent a transformation from a convinced communist to one of the nationalist leaders during the second half of the 1980s–1990s. Nevertheless, regarding the second half of the 1950s, we may only speak of there being a wide spectrum of opinion among members of CPL and officials which can be characterised as a confrontation between Stalinists and anti-Stalinists; this struggle was evident in the question of relations between Moscow and the republic, and also in regard to ideological and cultural issues. It is difficult to speak of a united programme pursued by the National Communists; instead, they shared a common approach to resolving certain issues. In June and July of 1959 the National Communists suffered a serious defeat when E. Berklavs was removed from his post and transferred to a post in Russia as the Head of the Cinema Distribution Board in Vladimir. Following this reversal the National Communists were progressively forced out of leading positions, a process that continued up to 1962. The immediate reason for this defeat was that Moscow identified in the push to increase republican autonomy dangerous signs of separatist sentiments. However, it must be said that a similar policy was implemented at that time by leaders in Estonia and Lithuania (preferential advancement of local personnel, strengthening the position of the national languages and cultures). In the case of Latvia, a purge of personnel took place since the republican leadership was divided, and the Stalinist faction was able to play on the fears of N. Khrushchev concerning separatist tendencies in the republics in order to settle scores with their opponents, as well as to eject "liberals" from positions of authority. An important contributing factor was that Soviet military personnel were highly dissatisfied with any restrictions on migration and the language policy changes, and, given that the headquarters of the Baltic Military District was located in Riga, their noisy complaints were more readily heard in Moscow.

[40] See: Prigge, W. D. *Bearslayers: The Rise and Fall of the Latvian National Communists.*

The Sovietisation of Latvia 1940–1941

The annihilation of Latvian independence during June and July 1940 took place under a slogan of a restoration of democracy. In fact, one undemocratic system was replaced by another undemocratic system, although the differences between the dictatorship of Kārlis Ulmanis from 1934 to 1940 and the Soviet regime were enormous. One cannot deny the assertion that to a certain extent the authoritarian Ulmanis regime made Sovietisation easier to accomplish, since Ulmanis had dissolved democratic institutions and banned political organisations that might have attempted to oppose Soviet occupation. The coup of 15 May 1934 had divided society and it provided an excuse for the occupiers to proclaim the restoration of democracy, partly to confuse left-oriented circles (Social Democrats, etc.) and national minorities and engage them in dismantling the political system of independent Latvia.

The first steps in the direction of Sovietisation were taken immediately following the arrival of the Red Army in Latvia on 17 June 1940. During the first days of occupation left-wing radicals and Communists set up various action committees and councils in a number of villages and towns based on examples from the 1905 revolution[41]; these efforts were tolerated, but only as long as the new authorities had not completely established their power. No real dual administration period existed. The management of established state bodies at regional, urban and village levels were quickly replaced by individuals loyal to the USSR, most of whom were drawn from Communist and the left-leaning intelligentsia, as well as by individuals sent to Latvia from the USSR.

Elections to the so-called People's Saeima held on 14 and 15 July resulted in a new hybrid institution which outwardly resembled the former Parliament (the Saeima), but was in fact a complete antithesis of a Parliament. The way in which elections to the Saeima were organised clearly demonstrated that there would be no political pluralism, even of limited scope. Both the manner in which polling took place and sessions of the Saeima followed the Soviet model. Only a single electoral list of candidates, the so-called Block of Working People, was authorised to stand for election. The role assigned to Saeima deputies was to approve decisions already made. After the official annexation of Latvia on 5 August 1940, the Saeima adopted the Constitution of the Latvian SSR on 24 August and declared itself to be the provisional Supreme Soviet.

The Soviet institutional system was rapidly introduced into Latvia. By the outbreak of war between Germany and the USSR, Soviet legal norms and the array of state administrative bodies were already largely in effect in Latvia. All public organisations were disbanded very quickly, thus destroying the foundations of civil society. The structure of society was radically altered through nationalisation of the financial sector, industry, transport and ownership of residential buildings, as well as through agrarian reform and as a consequence of repression. The political elite and the middle class lost their political influence and their economic base. In contrast, social mobility by the lower classes was encouraged. Their representatives would form the new elite. However, Sovietisation of many areas was only carried out as a formality and was far from

[41] Žagars, Ē. *Sociālistiskie pārveidojumi Latvijā.* 1940.–1941. Rīga: Izdevniecība "Zinātne", 1975, 37. lpp.

complete, since it proved impossible to fully to do away with institutions and administrative traditions created by the Republic of Latvia in such a short time. There was also a lack of persons qualified to carry out this process, and, despite intensive transfer of suitable administrators from the "old" Soviet republics, as well as training of local persons supportive of the Soviet regime, this problem could not be solved before the outbreak of war. Thus, 73 percent of the new directors in the light industrial sector were former workers and other employees, while the directors of 27 percent of these enterprises were former owners[42]. While the former were often unqualified, uneducated activists, and the previous owners were undesirable according to the Soviet regime, neither could be readily replaced by more suitable "Soviet" persons. The situation was much the same in other areas. It must be noted that Moscow strictly regulated contacts between residents of the Baltic republics and the "old" Soviet republics. The eastern border of Latvia was still guarded and permission had to be obtained to cross this frontier. The AUCP(b) CC screened and selected persons to be sent to Latvia. Saturation of the local Communist Party and administrative bodies by Communists transferred in proceeded quite slowly thanks to cumbersome bureaucratic procedures; this might have created an illusion among local officials that overall control was in the hands of local Communists and that the "Russian comrades" had been sent to Latvia to stay for a short time only to orient development of the republic along the proper Soviet path.

In 1940–1941, the inclusion of the economic system of Latvia into the economic structures of the USSR was superficial, and one could not yet regard this as real integration.[43] Collectivisation of farming had not started, although steps were taken to facilitate eventual collectivisation. A number of institutions of the Republic of Latvia survived, albeit transformed; these were, however, seen as foreign bodies. The most glaring example was the 24th Territorial Rifle Corps which had been formed on the basis of the Latvian Army. Overall numbers were reduced and units were scrapped, commanders were replaced and the command structure was Sovietised, and the rank and file were also gradually replaced, but nonetheless the loyalty of the corps was uncertain. This mistrust led to repression of military personnel on the eve of hostilities between Germany and the USSR, continuing briefly even after the war commenced, as well as demobilisation of Latvians from this Corps at the start of the war.[44]

Sovietisation after the Second World War

In assessing the extent to which Sovietisation occurred during the first year of Soviet occupation, the relevant point is that neither the majority of the residents of Latvia, nor those involved in carrying out Sovietisation, felt that the process was completed or

[42] LVA, PA-101. f., 1. apr., 52. l., 32. lp.

[43] Шнейдере, *И. Социалистическая индустриализация в Латвии: Ход, итоги, проблемы*. Рига: Зинатне, 1989, с. 93–94.

[44] Jermacāne, I. Sarkanās armijas 24. teritoriālā strēlnieku korpusa liktenis Vācijas un PSRS kara sākumā, 1941. gada jūnijs–augusts. *Otrais pasaules karš un Latvija: notikumi un sekas, 20. gadsimta 40.–60. gadi.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2011, 301.–314. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 27. sēj.).

final. The institutional system set up in 1940–1941 was to serve as a starting point for further Sovietisation after Latvia was reoccupied in the summer of 1944. Nevertheless, circumstances greatly differed before and after the war, rendering the task of integrating Latvia into the Soviet system both easier and at the same time more complicated. The war between Germany and the USSR had produced a discontinuity in the process of Sovietisation, as a result of which many actions had to be repeated anew. Furthermore, changes had occurred in the Soviet regime itself during the war.

Many ideological positions had radically altered during the war. Proletarian internationalism as an ideological position had from the mid-30s onwards been progressively replaced by Russian nationalism. In 1940–1941, this change was scarcely evident, but during the war the idea of the Russian people as having played the leading role in defeating fascism, as well as descriptions of other nationalities in the USSR as "younger brothers", became the dominant ideological position. The official attitude towards organised religion (in particular the Orthodox Church) had also changed during the war[45]. The leaders of the USSR had concluded that the influence of religion could not be completely eradicated, and, furthermore the Church could be useful in mobilising the people during crises, such as war. It was more pragmatic to allow religion to be practised under strict state supervision, rather than seeking to eradicate religious confessions entirely.

Nicolas Werth has shown that the legitimacy of the regime increased in the USSR during the war.[46] Victory in the war raised the confidence of Soviet leaders in their strength, and they believed they could continue to Sovietise the Baltic republics to a far greater extent than before the war by relying on residents of the "old" Soviet republics. The Sovietisation process was greatly influenced by the fact that as a result of the war a large number of individuals had arrived in the Baltic region together with the Army. This made the recruitment of personnel much easier. Demobilised soldiers could be recruited into the repressive agencies, as well as other jobs. After the war, it was impossible to completely control the movement of civilians. Persons who had arrived in Latvia "without being organised to do so" sought work, and they brought with them their Soviet experience and understanding of how the Soviet system really functioned. Such individuals could be rather critical of Soviet power, but they had grown up and lived in this system, knew what it demanded and acted accordingly.

Fighting during the war had devastated Latvia's economy. But from the point of view of Sovietisation these effects of the war proved relatively easy to be put right, and in many ways, they made the task of Sovietisation easier. After the war, it was possible to ignore the residual economic links, institutions, engineers and technicians held over from the independent Republic of Latvia. Therefore, economic planning, setting up the associated system of supply and distribution, administration of industry and transport could be rapidly integrated into the Soviet system. It proved more difficult to Sovietise agriculture, especially since the farmers resisted this process.

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[45] Верт, Н. *Террор и беспорядок. Сталинизм как система*. Москва: РОССПЭН, Фонд Первого Президента России Б. Н. Ельцина, 2010, с. 319.

[46] Ibid., с. 321.

The process of Sovietisation was slightly alleviated by the fact that the 1941 repressions, as well as the wartime flight of residents (120 000 to 150 000 residents of Latvia remained in the West after the end of the war[47]), had substantially depleted the middle class of Latvia, which had constituted the political, business, technical, intellectual and military elite, and which would in different circumstances have overtly or covertly resisted Sovietisation. However, in contrast to the situation in 1940–1941, the Soviet regime, faced significant, organised armed resistance, in particular during 1944–1945.[48] Soviet security service documents give several figures for the total number of partisans operating over the period 1944–1956, ranging from 13 000 to over 20 000.[49] During the first postwar years hope remained that the international situation might change and the Soviet yoke might be thrown off.[50] Organised and unorganised resistance had to be subdued in order to complete the Sovietisation process; this took time, hence the tempo of Sovietisation after the war was not as rapid as it had been during the first period of occupation.

Sovietisation during the liberalisation and "stagnation" periods of the Soviet regime

Sovietisation of the political system and the economy was largely completed in Latvia by the early 1950s. The Sovietisation of farming was, in fact, complete. Armed resistance had essentially been suppressed prior to the death of Stalin in March 1953, although a number of individual partisans and small groups continued to resist. The economy of Latvia functioned as an integral part of the economy of the USSR, administrative bodies were integrated into the Soviet system, and repressive agencies and the party controlled society sufficiently effectively so as to be in a position to deal with any significant renewed resistance. The historiography of the Latvian SSR, it must be noted, described the early 1950s as the end of the transition from capitalism to socialism, equating integration into the Soviet system with the construction of socialism. It was admitted that "a few issues remaining from the transition period still need to be solved", for example, "to complete re-education of non-proletarian elements", "to educate members of kolkhozes about socialism", and "to re-educate the old intelligentsia", as well as to complete eradication of armed resistance.[51] In fact, this was an admission that Sovietisation consisted not merely of attaining formal goals ("stable political power, the dominant role in the national economy of the socialist sector,... the leading role of the Communist Party"[52]), but

[47] Auers, D. *Comparative Politics and Government of the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania in the 21st Century*. Houndmills, Basinstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 29.

[48] See: Statiev, A. *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, etc.: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

[49] Strods, H. Nacionālo partizānu kara upuri (1944–1953). *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 1998. g. 25. martā (Nr. 79/80). Accessible at: https://www.vestnesis.lv/ta/id/31666?search=on (site last visited 26.09.2015); Strods, H. *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karš. 1944.–1956.* Rīga: Preses nams, 1996, 490. lpp.

[50] See: Swain, G. Divided We Fall: Division Within the National Partisans of Vidzeme and Latgale, Fall 1945. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 38. No. 2, 2007, pp. 195–214.

[51] *Latvijas PSR vēsture no vissenākajiem laikiem līdz mūsu dienām*. 2. sēj. A. Drīzulis (atb. red.). 3. pārstr. un papild. izdevums. Rīga: Zinātne, 1986, 251. lpp.

[52] Ibid.

that it was necessary that the Soviet regime, its politics, economy and ideological dogmas be accepted as legitimate and that these gain public acceptance, which was far from the case at the beginning of the 1950s.

According to Soviet ideology, creation of the "material" basis for the Soviet system and its ideological legitimation were sequential, irreversible processes. In fact, their inter-relationship was considerably more complex and was linked to the instruments employed to accomplish Sovietisation. Up until the death of Stalin, repression was effective in ensuring that change took place in the forms of ownership as well as Sovietising institutions; however, it was not able to gain legitimacy for the regime. It was not enough to coerce farmers into joining kolkhozes — they must be seen as normal, inevitable and ultimately the best way to organise agriculture, as the best rural way of life. Ideology alone was not the sole component of the Soviet way of life and its value system; the latter also included administrative institutions and the manner in which economic life was organised. This applied to the planned economy, the state monopoly of industrial production, retail trade and provision of services.

In the mid-1950s, public attitudes towards the Soviet regime began to change in Latvia. This was brought about by several factors. Firstly, a new generation entered public life, one that had grown up and been educated under the tutelage of the Soviet regime. This generation was less critical of the values



Fig. 5. Exploitation and propaganda. During the time of Stalin, every farm holding was required without compensation to cut and to bring out of the forest a set amount of wood. Gatherings of farmers were a convenient occasion for their ideological education. In this picture, the party organiser of Pūre Parish, Tukums District, addresses farmers assembled for work in the forest in honour of the birthday of V. I. Lenin. 21 January 1947. Photograph by Žanis Legzdiņš. (LNA LVKFFDA, 30764N).



Fig. 6. Up until 1957, public bonds were issued to top up the national budget. Annual subscription was in principle voluntary but in fact compulsory. This was an additional tax levied on citizens. Subscription was seen by state authorities as a demonstration of loyalty to Soviet power. In 1953, the annual premium was halved. The photograph shows members of the kolkhoz "*Cīņa*" located in Dreiliņi village in Riga District, signing subscriptions to public bonds. 24 June 1953. Photograph by Jevgēnijs Fadejevs. (LNA LVKFFDA, 1784N)

advocated by the Soviet regime than the older generation. Furthermore, after the Hungarian uprising was suppressed in 1956, it was clear that hopes prevalent at the start of the Cold War that the West would aid the restoration of Baltic independence would have to be abandoned. One would have to live under existing conditions, particularly since there was no realistic possibility to emigrate. Secondly, liberalisation of the Soviet regime after the death of Stalin, as modest as it was, nevertheless made life slightly more bearable in the cities, and in particular in rural areas; the pursuit of certain careers opened up not only for members of the lowest strata of society, but also for descendents of the former elite.

Campaigns to motivate the public by means of ideological appeals gradually became more formal, in particular after Nikita Khrushchev was removed from his post as leader of the CPSU and the Soviet Government in October 1964. During the so-called stagnation period, when Leonid Brezhnev led the Soviet Union, attempts to mobilise the public through ideology were increasingly replaced by "bribery", i.e. guaranteeing various material and non-material rewards in return for an outward display of loyalty. Implementation of these policies led to variable results. Political stability and liberalisation of the regime, in addition to a real improvement in living standards, led to better cooperation by the people with the regime, and greater compliance with the demands of the regime. But cooperation and submission were motivated less by ideological than by pragmatic considerations. For example, joining the Communist Party improved career prospects. Individuals who had grown up under the system could be very critical and cynical about it, but at the same time they continued to avail themselves of the benefits it offered, without seeing any alternative to this behaviour and regarding many of its manifestations as intrinsically understandable. "Double-thinking" was widespread throughout of society. Moreover, most people did not see any alternative, given that their knowledge of politics and life in democratic societies outside the USSR was fragmentary and distorted. In this way, the gradual cooling of ideological fervour and lessening of repression by the Soviet regime actually facilitated the Sovietisation of the people. However, these developments also allowed individuals in certain ideological and cultural niches to work if not against then at least in parallel with the system, and, in the end, they were the core of the National Awakening during the late 1980s.

Sovietisation of the economy and its social consequences

The process of Sovietisation in Latvia emphasised transformation of the pluralistic economy of the independence period into one run by the state. According to the so-called doctrines of Marxism–Leninism, industrialisation and the collectivisation of agriculture were two of three pillars for construction of socialism (the third was the so-called Cultural Revolution). The first steps of Sovietisation consisted of nationalisation, for which preparatory work started immediately after the occupation of Latvia in June 1940. The so-called People's Saeima adopted declarations on 22 July 1940, stating that all land belonged to the people, also detailing how banks and all large factories, businesses and transport companies were to be nationalised; in fact, these declarations

merely formalised a process that had already started. Management of enterprises and their internal practices were changed to conform to Soviet examples. A petty accounting and surveillance system led to rapid inflation of the bureaucratic apparatus[53].

During 1940–1941, Sovietisation in the agrarian sector proceeded more slowly than in other sectors of the economy. Although there were attempts to deceive farmers by statements that no forcible collectivisation would take place, preparations were under way to the contrary. Based on the Declaration of 22 July 1940 nationalising the land farmers not only lost title to their land (they became its users), but all farm holdings larger than 30 ha were declared to be large farm holdings, and land in excess of 30 ha was transferred to a national farmland bank, out of which pieces were parcelled out to landless peasants and smallholders.

One step in the direction of collectivisation was the creation of Machine and Tractor Stations[54] (MTS) and their affiliated Motor and Horse Letting Centres, which began in the autumn of 1940, as well as the creation of sovkhozes. Upwards of 600 large farm holdings were confiscated to establish the MTS and Motor and Horse Letting Centres.[55] Sovkhozes were for the most part created based on state-owned farm holdings and those that belonged to the City of Riga; however, some were based on confiscated farm holdings. Auxiliary farms to supply the army and state offices were established on the basis of confiscated farm holdings.

Nationalisation of land had to be started partly from scratch once the second Soviet occupation began in 1944, but the experience acquired and initial work done before the war made the process substantially easier. The fact that the economy had suffered during the war, there was a shortage of specialists and workers and production was in disarray made the process of centralising management of the economy and subordinating Latvia's economy to the interests of the USSR easier. A certain residual private sector continued to exist during the first post-war years. Although the agrarian sector had not been completely taken over by the state, the state's influence was considerably greater than before the war. During the post-war years, limited private enterprise was tolerated in the commerce, services and micro-factory sectors. Private undertakings however contributed less than one percent to total industrial output. The private sector contributed more visibly in the commerce and services sectors. Taxation was used to destroy the private sector by levying taxes that could not be paid, and eradication of commerce was completed by the summer of 1947. In the services sector, this approach compelled individual service providers to form co-operative associations or join industrial co-operatives or state-controlled enterprises, and this was nearly complete by the early 1950s. A few individual entrepreneurs (for example, carters, cobblers, etc.) continued to ply their trades.

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[53] King, G. J. *Economic Policies in Occupied Latvia: A Manpower Management Study*. Tacoma, Wash.: Pacific Lutheran University Press, 1965, p. 56.

[54] Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS) were operational in the USSR between 1927 and 1958 as state agrarian enterprises that hired out tractors, combine harvesters and other machinery to kolkhozes. After the MTS were abolished kolkhozes gained the right to acquire their own farming machinery.

[55] Krastiņš, A. Lauku saimniecību īpašuma nacionalizācija 1941. gada pavasarī — aizsākums masveida represijām pret Latvijas zemniekiem. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, 1993, 2. nr., 107, 113. lpp.

Industrial, transport and public infrastructure, part of which dated from Tsarist times and some was created during the period of Latvian independence, had suffered relatively little damage during the Second World War,, therefore exploiting it to develop the post-war economy of the USSR was very advantageous, requiring relatively little capital investment. A serious deficiency was the absence of labour for construction and factory work. This problem was solved by bringing in workers from other republics. Considerable natural migration occurred in parallel with this, mostly from devastated villages located in bordering areas of Russia and Belarus. Another labour force was the Soviet Army; soldiers at the end of their compulsory military service and demobilised officers from Soviet army units stationed in Latvia chose in large numbers to remain and to live in Latvia.

Demographers have calculated that approximately 400 000 individuals (including their children who were born in Latvia) arrived this way during the period 1945–1959. A further 708 000 persons entered during the subsequent 40 years.[56] Latvia had the lowest natural population increase by birth among all of the Soviet republics, as well as the largest increase due to migration. Migration brought about a decline in the percentage of Latvians resident in the republic from nearly 80 percent prior to the Second World War to 52 percent in 1989.[57]

Most of the industrial output in the Baltic republics during the post-war years consisted of consumer goods, in contrast to the overall emphasis put on heavy industrial production throughout the Soviet Union (manufacturing machine tools and industrial equipment), i.e. industries meeting the needs of national defence. The nature of the industrial sector in the Baltic republics was determined by specialisation and structures that had taken shape during the inter-war period. As late as in 1960, more than half of industrial output was due to enterprises that produced consumer goods[58]. The relative weight of heavy industry increased gradually, yet more consumer goods were produced in Latvia than in other republics, and, furthermore, they were of higher quality. As a result, shops were better supplied with clothes, footwear, furniture and radio sets than elsewhere, and this fact alone motivated individuals to settle in Latvia.

Latvia was the most industrialised republic in the USSR. In 1970, an average of 130 out of 1000 Soviet residents worked in industry, whereas in Latvia this indicator was 167, the highest among Soviet republics. The situation was nearly the same in Estonia, i.e. 166, whereas in Lithuania the figure was considerably lower, at 132.[59] In Latvia the numbers working in the transport and communications sectors also greatly exceeded the average for the USSR, but lagged slightly behind Estonia. Expansion of socialist industrialisation resulted in negative economic, environmental and other consequences. Industrial production was energy and resource intensive; it was also neither adequately mechanised nor automated, thus much was done by hand. Despite appeals to introduce automation, this happened only very slowly, in part because the

[56] Eglīte, P., Mežs, I. Latvijas kolonizācija un etniskā sastāva izmaiņu cēloņi 1944.–1990. gadā, 417. lpp.

[57] Ibid., 422. lpp.

[58] *Народное хозяйство Латвийской ССР в 1979 году. Статистический ежегодник.* Рига: Авотс, 1980, 1980, с. 54.

[59] Guļāns, P. *Latvijas ekonomika Padomju Sociālistisko Republiku Savienībā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1973, 15. lpp.

USSR proved incapable of producing the necessary equipment, or its products proved to be of poor quality. Thus, factories with equipment dating from the independence period, and even in some cases from Tsarist times, could be found adjacent to relatively modern factories.

Industrial products from factories in Latvia were exported to the internal market of the entire USSR. Certain items manufactured in Latvia were in great demand (passenger trains, minibuses, radio sets, washing machines, food, textiles, knitwear, medicines, etc.), but (with a few exceptions) their quality rapidly fell behind their counterparts in the capitalist world, i.e. they were not competitive in world markets. Soviet style industrialisation gave rise to certain problems which were common to all sectors of the Soviet economy — low productivity, resistance to modernisation and technological improvements, and wasteful use of energy and raw materials.

Starting with the second occupation of Latvia in 1944–1945, preparations were made for the collectivisation of agriculture. A second land reform was carried out which was far more repressive than the 1940 reform, in particular targeting farmers accused of collaboration with the German occupation regime.



Fig. 7. Assembly of "Selga" radio sets at the A. Popov Radio Factory in Riga 1963. Photograph by Jevgēnijs Fadejevs. (LNA LVKFFDA, 24629N)



Fig. 8. A meeting to discuss the new USSR Constitution held in June 1977 at the RAF minibus factory in Jelgava. Photograph by J. Kustovs. (LNA LVKFFDA, 57489N)

During the 1944–1946 period, the policies pursued by Moscow in respect to collectivisation in the Baltic region were relatively circumspect. Collectivisation was presented as voluntary and possibly happening only in the distant future. The policy pursued by Moscow changed in the spring of 1947. Conditions were created that forced farmers to band together in kolkhozes. Kolkhozes were given certain advantages, the most important of which were lowered quotas for compulsory deliveries to the state and lower taxes. The results of this policy were limited. Kolkhozes were created only very slowly. Part of the rural population whose holdings exceeded 30 ha was then classified as *kulaks*; in Latvia this was 4.1 percent, in Estonia, 5.3 percent, and in Lithuania,

2.4 percent of the population.[60] In fact this term was transferred to the Baltic States from application in the USSR during the 1930s without any thought given to its local relevance. This was arbitrarily decided by Moscow and was without any economic basis. Farmers with land holdings exceeding 30 ha were identified as rich and "sucking the blood" of poor peasants whom they exploited. The principal defining characteristic of a *kulak*, according to Soviet propaganda, was implacable hatred of the Soviet system in general, and kolkhozes in particular. The national partisans were identified as *kulaks* and their henchmen. This category, therefore, covered all active opponents of the Soviet regime. Neither repression of *kulaks*, nor pressure exerted on "working peasants"[61], nor privileges accorded to members of kolkhozes produced results that satisfied Moscow. Membership of kolkhozes grew slowly in Latvia, though faster than in Estonia and in Lithuania.

At the end of 1948, Moscow decided to carry out comprehensive collectivisation in the Baltic States, Moldova, Western Belarus and Western Ukraine. The first step in this process was deportation of *kulaks* and "nationalist elements". This concerted action named "Priboi" was carried out simultaneously in all three Baltic republics. It began on 25 March 1949 and lasted until 30 March.[62] In total, 2.2 percent of the residents of Latvia were deported. The operation had two goals – to ensure completion of collectivisation, and also to break armed resistance. These aims were intimately related to one another. Jelena Zubkova remarks that, "Soviet power in the Baltic region had identified as its three principal enemies —"bandits", "*kulaks*" and "nationalists"[63]. The first of these categories referred to partisans, the second to prosperous farmers, while the third included everyone who was suspected of supporting the "bandits" or who was regarded as politically unreliable.

These deportations achieved their goal. Within a few months of the deportation, most farmers in Latvia and Estonia had joined kolkhozes. In Estonia 4800 families joined kolkhozes every day between the 5th and 6th of April 1949, and by May 1st in all 69 percent of all farms were part of a kolkhoz.[64] In Latvia 76.7 percent of all farms were part of a kolkhoz by 1 July 1949, and by 1 July 1951 practically all farms had been collectivised, some 97.7 percent.[65] The economic result of collectivisation was a steep drop in overall agricultural productivity. On 22–23 June 1953, a plenum of the CPL CC admitted that pre-war levels of production had yet to be reached in certain vital agri-

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[60] Feest, D. The Collectivization of Agriculture in the Baltic Soviet Republics, 1944–1953. *The Collectivization of Agriculture in Communist Eastern Europe. Comparison and Entanglement.* Bauerkämper, A., Iordachi, C. (eds.). Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2014, p. 98.

[61] In Soviet ideology, *kulaks* exploited the labour of others, whereas "working peasants" alone worked on their land. The intent of this artificial definition was to divide farmers into two opposing groups.

[62] See Strods, H., Kott, M. The File on Operation "Priboi": A Reassessment of the Mass Deportations of 1949. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2002, pp. 1–36.

[63] Зубкова, Е. *Прибалтика и Кремль. 1940–1953*, с. 181.

[64] Kõll, A. M. *The Village and the Class War: Anti-Kulak Campaign in Estonia*. Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2012, pp. 27–28.

[65] Гулян, П. В. *Латвия в системе народного хозяйства СССР.* 2 изд. перераб. доп. Рига: Зинатне, 1982, с. 221.

cultural sectors.[66] During 1950–1953, fertility had decreased for all principal agricultural crops, as well as the total production of cereals and potatoes. The influence of collectivisation was the main reason for this decrease, which was only partially due to weather conditions unfavourable to agriculture.

The degree to which farmers were exploited visibly increased and their well-being declined. Farmers had to work much longer hours if they wished to carry out the tasks assigned by the kolkhoz and to ensure their livelihood by cultivating their allocated farm plots of 0.5 ha. Although exploitation of these plots was intended to contribute to the livelihood of kolkhoz members, the state insisted on compulsory purchase of crops grown there, and gave low prices. Taxes levied on households grew year on year. The unlimited exploitation of kolkhozes was state policy.

The attitude towards kolkhozes changes after the death of Stalin. Various reforms begun in 1953 substantially changed the economic situation of kolkhozes. The rights of kolkhozes were broadened. The amount of farm products subject to compulsory purchase by the state was reduced, at the same time as raising purchase prices. Compulsory purchase of production from personal allocations was revoked. The level of state subsidies for kolkhozes was raised.

During the 1960s–1970s, various measures were taken to lessen the social discrimination suffered by kolkhozes compared to other occupations, for example work at sovkhozes. Members of kolkhozes gained rights to a state pension, paid vacation leave and other social guarantees. Wages for members of kolkhozes approached the same level as for other occupations. Despite this amelioration of their living conditions during the 1960s–1980s, it was during this period that the deleterious economic and social consequences of the Sovietisation of rural areas were manifested much more explicitly in comparison with the situation during the first years after collectivisation, when regardless of adverse externally imposed conditions, the traditional work ethic and responsibility held by farmers persisted, even to the extent that many saw the kolkhoz as real joint property. Gradually farmers were increasingly placed on the same level as workers employed by the state, and a kolkhoz was seen as a state-owned enterprise where the ordinary worker had few opportunities to influence the outcome of his labour. A certain level of income was guaranteed for all members of a kolkhoz, independent of individual work results, whereas additional income could be obtained through cultivation of personally allocated plots of land. Thus, farmers were reasonably well provided for. This encouraged irresponsibility and consumerist attitudes, since the relationship had weakened between the results of labour and income.

Sovietisation of public life

A number of different public organisations operated in Latvia prior to Soviet occupation. These ranged from cultural and social clubs, to philanthropic and social help groups, as well as professional associations (for example, farmers, craftsmen). Although

[66] LVA, PA-101. f., 16. apr., 9. l., 80.–81. lp.

most of these were not political in nature, they did not fit into the Soviet system and had to be closed. The first ones to be disbanded were those clearly linked to the Ulmanis' regime. Of these the USSR was most afraid of the Home Guard (*Aizsargi*) association (a paramilitary organisation), ignoring the fact that by the first half of 1940 this was no longer a significant military force.[67] On 8 July, the government adopted a law dissolving this organisation, which entered into effect on 10 July.[68] The Riga Latvian Association was shut down on 5 July 1940. The building occupied by this association was given over to the Baltic Military District, which installed an Officers' Club on the premises. Other non-profit organisations, including craftsmen's associations, were dissolved after the incorporation of Latvia by the USSR. This process took considerable time and was completed in the spring of 1941.

The vacuum in organisational capacity was to be filled by Soviet-style organisations. In 1940–1941 and during the first post-war years, there were few public organisations. An organisation specific to the Soviet Union, a branch in Latvia of the Union of Societies of Assistance to Defence and Aviation-Chemical Construction of the USSR, was established at the beginning of 1941; the task of this organisation was to prepare youth for service in the Soviet Army. In 1951, it was reorganised as the Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Navy. Up until 1950, a number of other public organisations were created such as the Red Cross Society, the Volunteer Firemens' Association, the Association of Hunters and Anglers, the Association of the Blind, as well as several scientific, technical and medical science associations. The so-called creative unions had been already founded in 1940–1941, including the Writers' Union, the Architects' Union, the Composers' Union, etc. The Theatre Association was founded in 1944. The task of these creative unions was to act as institutions for self-regulation of intellectual professions such as writers, artists, musicians, etc. The unions would make Party control easier in a domain that was difficult to regulate. It must be recalled that, in parallel to control of the creative unions by the CPL CC, analogous All-Union creative unions also were active in exercising control.

All public organisations had, in principle, to work under the supervision of the Communist Party, although they were nominally independent organisations. Candidates for appointment to the board of these organisations had to be approved by Communist Party institutions. Public organisations were also obliged to participate in various ideological and political campaigns.

Starting from the 1950s, liberalisation of the Soviet regime substantially influenced the development of public organisations. Firstly, their numbers grew. Various kinds of scientific and technical societies were formed. Secondly, public organisations started to appear that were bottom-up as the results of popular initiatives, not an initiative of the leadership of the USSR or that of the republic, providing that it was possible to convince the CPL CC and Moscow of their usefulness. This was how the Nature and

[67] Butulis, I. *Sveiki, aizsargi! Aizsargu organizācija Latvijas sabiedriski politiskajā dzīvē 1919.–1940. gadā*. Rīga: Jumava, 2011, 80. lpp.

[68] *Latvijas Republikas Ministru Kabineta sēžu protokoli. 1940. gada 16. jūnijs – 19. jūlijs*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1991, 271. lpp.

Monument Protection Society of Latvia was established in 1959. We must note that formation of public organisations was in the interests of the authorities as it made it easier to monitor public activities in certain areas. At the same time these associations were crucial for special interest groups. The Soviet system suffered from chronic shortages, and certain materials or equipment were made available centrally with associations as intermediaries. Furthermore, once an association was legally recognised it could organise conferences and other events, publish books and periodicals, and petition party and state institutions to defend their special interests, otherwise an impossible undertaking, since informal activities were not recognised by the Soviet regime as a matter of principle, and these could lead to repression. In addition, it must be noted that association status allowed its members to engage in commercial activities. For example, from the 1960s to the 1980s, the Association of Gardeners and Beekeepers (apiarists) was able to establish a chain of shops across Latvia, and acting as intermediary it supplied flower bulbs, seedlings, etc. to be sold throughout the USSR. Thirdly, from the mid-1950s onwards, the degree of political engagement of many public organisations tended to slowly decrease. In some matters these could occasionally even oppose to Party instructions, as happened in the Artists' Union during the second half of the 1950s, and in the Writers' Union after 1965.

One reason why the number of public organisations was allowed to increase and various interest groups to be established was that the Soviet authorities saw their position as quite stable in the USSR overall, including in Latvia. The various methods developed by the Party and security services to control society were efficient enough to neutralise everyone who overstepped prescribed boundaries. In addition, the existence of associations simplified the task of monitoring interest groups whose activities were particularly disliked by the guardians of ideology and the Committee for State Security, for example collectors of certain artefacts and books.

At the same time possibilities emerged during the 1960s–1980s to engage in public activities that were informal, apolitical and borderline oppositional, provided they happened under the aegis of an official institution, for example, the Young Communist League, creative unions, various legal associations, or by being affiliated with a state organisation or a kolkhoz. Examples were folklore or rock music groups that were based at the house of culture of an enterprise or a kolkhoz, and discotheques organised by the Young Communist League.

Party ideology demanded the introduction of Soviet holidays and traditions. These, however, were unable to displace non-communist traditions and customs, as they were officious, boring and oversaturated with ideology, despite attempts to make them more attractive by integrating national cultural elements.

It is noteworthy that two official Soviet commemorations, International Women's Day (8 March) and Soviet Army Day (23 February) earned a measure of popularity (the latter as Men's Day) and are still commemorated in Latvia today, in particular Women's Day.

Traditional holidays like Midsummer Night (*Līgo svētki*) and the New Year (in large measure replacing Christmas) were celebrated in parallel. While Communists and members of the Young Communist League were forbidden to follow religious



Fig. 9. New Soviet traditions — Coming of Age ceremony in Madona in 1979. The attire and flowers presented to the young people are the same as for Lutheran church confirmations during the 1920s–1950s. Photograph by Oļģerts Skuja. (LNA LVKFFDA, 92114-N)

traditions and customs, the rest of the population often still baptised babies and were married in church, while funerals were held with the participation of clergy. According to statistics for 1961 provided by the commissioner for religious matters, 35.6 percent of all children born in Riga were baptised, 76 percent in mostly Catholic Rēzekne, and 42 percent in Daugavpils and Jelgava. Funerals with religious rites were held in 38.5 percent of all cases in Riga, 29 percent in Rēzekne, and 20 percent in Jūrmala.[69] Even marginally religious individuals behaved this way, i.e. those whose sole contact with organised religion was limited to these two events in their life. The Latvian tradition of holding commemorations at cemeteries once a year during the summer (from June to September), presided over by a clergyman, continued.

During the mid-1950s, a new anti-religion campaign attempted to introduce new non-religious customs, for example, coming-of-age ceremonies to replace Lutheran and Catholic confirmation, name-giving ceremonies in place of baptism, solemn registry office weddings as a substitute for church wedding ceremonies, etc. At the end of the 1950s, the CC of the League of Young Communists took charge of systematising and popularising these new Soviet traditions, and in 1960 it established a Committee for Soviet Customs. Initially the coming-of-age ceremony and civil weddings were the main new customs to be promoted. Shortly afterwards scenarios were prepared for these ceremonies by the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, the Scientific Knowledge Society, and other organisations.[70] There were active attempts at introducing non-religious funeral ceremonies, days of remembrance of the departed, etc. It must be admitted that many of these new customs gained popularity, since their Soviet ideological content was not thrust into the foreground, and because the scenarios for these ceremonies were based on past religious and folklore traditions. People were afforded the opportunity to mark significant milestones in their family life openly, ceremoniously and lavishly, without confronting the state authorities.

One important feature of this aspect of Sovietisation is that non-religious traditions took hold in rural areas and in towns. For example, civil registration of marriage grew in popularity, i.e. out of the average of 9000–10 000 marriages annually in rural

[69] LVA, 1448. f., 1. apr., 180. l., 125.–139. lp.

[70] Zavarina, A. Padomju sadzīves tradīciju attīstība Latvijas pilsētās. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija. IX. Apcerējumi par Latvijas iedzīvotāju darba un sadzīves tradīciju vēsturi*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1970, 198.–199. lpp.

areas at the beginning of the 1960s only a few hundred couples opted for the new style, i.e. registering their marriage at local authorities, at clubs, etc., whereas in 1969 the solemn registration procedure was followed by more than 8700 couples. In rural regions, the non-religious funeral service was followed in 62 percent of all funerals in 1961, while in 1969 this figure was 72.3 percent.[71] The new traditions gained acceptance more readily in regions with a Lutheran population. In Latgale (with a population that was predominantly Roman Catholic) they encountered greater popular resistance, but in the 1970s–1980s they were also widespread among Catholics.[72] Remembrance days of the departed were widely celebrated following non-religious rituals (in place of the former style of commemoration), initially taking place at Lutheran cemeteries, and later at Catholic and Orthodox cemeteries as well, in part because state institutions offered tangible support — kolkhozes provided transport to the cemeteries, arranged for stalls to be opened during these events, and later provided entertainment after the solemn part, i.e. open-air shows and dancing. Religious commemorations remembering the departed were rescheduled for less convenient dates and took place without support from institutions; therefore, only a small number of truly devout persons attended these events. It proved impossible to completely eradicate religious traditions. In 1987, the commissioner for religious matters reported that, in the previous 5–10 years, some 18–19 percent of newborn babies were baptised, 4–5 percent of all



Fig. 10. Children, Latvian folk costumes and militarism — May Day holiday demonstration in Riga in 1971. Photograph by V. Prikulis. (LNA LVKFFDA, 1. f., 35745N)



Fig. 11. A demonstration, "held as usual" in honour of May Day in Riga in 1971. Photograph by Žanis Graubics and Vladimirs Nikolajevs. (LNA LVKFFDA, 1. f., 52866N)

[71] Čivkule, E., Jefremova, L. Padomju sadzīves tradīcijas lauku darbaļaužu dzīvē. *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija. IX. Apcerējumi par Latvijas iedzīvotāju darba un sadzīves tradīciju vēsturi*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1970, 222., 231. lpp.

[72] See also: Pauštytė-Šaknienė, R. Ritual, Power and Historical Perspective: Baptism and name-giving in Lithuania and Latvia. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*. Issue 1 (1), 2007, pp. 115–129. Accessible at: http://www.ceeol.com/search/journal-detail?id=1031 (site last visited 24.10.2015).

marriages took place in churches, and 19–20 percent of all funerals followed a religious ritual.[73]

Some attempts to promote new Soviet traditions failed to gain popularity, such as Young Communist weddings[74], ceremonial presentation of the first Soviet passport, celebratory send-offs of youths to compulsory military service in the Soviet Army, since all of these events were hopelessly ideological and lacked personal warmth, and furthermore were not rooted in local culture. In general, introduction of new non-religious traditions was successful in cases where these rested on or exploited folk traditions and customs, as well as the fact that in much of society relations with organised religion, particularly in Lutheran regions, had been based less on religious conviction than on holding on to established traditions. The new traditions combined conformism with pleasant festivities and traditional rituals.

Sovietisation of culture and education

The Soviet regime was very active in advancing Sovietisation in the areas of culture and education, starting with the annexation of Latvia in 1940. Plans at that time called for complete Sovietisation of the education system by 1942. The outbreak of war prevented these plans from coming to fruition. However, after the resumption of occupation an intensive effort was made to change the education system the first step of which comprised replacing undesirable educators with persons who had themselves been educated in the USSR or in Soviet Latvia, as well as Sovietisation of teaching materials and programmes. Closing schools for minorities fitted well with Sovietisation, as did the creation of two parallel education systems, one in Latvian and one in Russian. The Russian language and parallel courses in Latvian and Russian were also introduced for specialised secondary education and higher education, furthermore, until the mid-1950s the latter institutions actively searched for staff who had been educated in the "old" Soviet republics. During the 1960s–1980s, the process of Sovietising the education system was completed.

Sovietisation of culture was one of the most difficult tasks undertaken by the Soviet regime, and despite some success in this area, the results were not unequivocal. During the time of Stalin, pronounced efforts were made to create a new Latvian Soviet culture. Only a small part of Latvian cultural heritage, the so-called proletarian culture, was accepted. The work of playwright and poet Rainis (1865–1929) was a key part of this heritage (styling him as a poet of the "proletariat" and "father" of socialist realism in Latvian literature, while ignoring his social democratic views and activities, as well as his support for the independent Latvia[75]), as was the literary heritage of nov-

[73] LVA, 1419. f., 3. apr., 266. l., 53. lp.

[74] Translator's Note. Such weddings were not family occasions, but were organised by the League of Young Communists or kolkhozes, to be held at clubs or at the workplace; in addition to the registration of marriage, they featured a significant ideological component, for example, exchange of wedding rings could be criticised as ideologically unacceptable.

[75] See: Ekmanis, R. Soviet Attitudes Toward Pre-Soviet Latvian Writers. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1972, pp. 44–70.

elist and literary critic Andrejs Upīts (1877–1970). Most of the art and literature from the pre-Soviet era was rejected as "bourgeois". Books and artefacts found in libraries and museums which were deemed to be politically harmful and "without value" were destroyed or kept in "special collections". For example in 1940, 303 works of art kept at the Museum of Latvian and Russian Art (today the Art Museum) were "black-listed", among them works by the expressionist Jēkabs Kazāks (1895–1940), the post-impressionist Janis Rozentāls (1866–1917), and even neo-traditionalist Jānis Tillbergs (1880–1972), despite attempts by the latter to accommodate to the demands of the regime.[76]

However, at the same time the Soviet regime sought to integrate some elements of national culture by attributing appropriate ideological content to them. The First Soviet Latvian Song Festival was held in 1948, and Song festivals subsequently became a permanent tradition. Sovietisation consisted of their being linked to anniversaries of Soviet Latvia, as well as in setting the repertoire of these festivals, since most of the content consisted of politically engaged songs in addition to Russian songs and dances of those from other Soviet nations.

Praising of the Stalin regime was based on intensive use of the heritage of Latvian decorative art and design. This was particularly evident in the celebration of Stalin's 70th birthday in 1949, when as in the other republics gifts were prepared in Latvia to be presented to the "Glorious Leader", for example a radio set, a vase, a writing desk, etc. with participation by the most talented Latvian designers. The gifts were decorated with Latvian ornaments fused with Soviet symbols. In the late 1940s and early 1950s stylised Latvian decorative ornaments were widely used in the interiors of the so-called "Stalinist baroque" buildings, for example the Academy of Sciences (construction period 1951–1959) and the *VEF* Palace of Culture (construction period 1951–1960). During the time of Stalin, an attempt was made to Sovietise Latvian folklore, for example by creating Latvian Soviet folksongs about kolkhozes and ascribing their origin to "the people".

Liberalisation of cultural policies during the 1950s and 1960s allowed a return to public circulation of part of the Latvian cultural heritage of the pre-Soviet era as well as a few works created by émigrés. There were some opportunities to appreciate the work of Western writers, artists and composers, although only those seen as "progressive". Officially the "socialist realist" method still had to be the basis for professional Soviet art work, but the boundaries of what this method encompassed were continually expanded. Certain genres were allowed that did not reflect social elements (intimate lyrical poetry, still life and landscape paintings). New writers and artists further broadened culture space during the 1970s and 1980s. This took place not so much as the result of open confrontation as by demonstrating that new literary, theatrical and musical trends were compatible with the aesthetic standards of the Soviet regime. The canon of socialist realism was gradually amended to include features that had nothing in common either with socialism or with realism. Despite efforts by ideologues of the party to the contrary, the prevailing trend was to depoliticise literature and art.

[76] Veikmane, V. Staļiniskās kultūrpolitikas ietekme uz Latvijas muzeju darbu. *Komunistiskā totalitārisma un genocīda prakse Latvijā.* Konferences materiāli. Rīga: Zinātne, 1992, 114. lpp.



Fig. 12. The XIX General Song and Dance Festival of Soviet Latvia. Mārīte Rukmane, head of the Latvian Young Communist League (1st from the left), and Alfreds Rubiks, Chairman of the Riga Executive Committee, a representative of the Baltic Military District, and other officials, at the closing concert held at Mežaparks in Riga on 20 July 1985. Photograph by Māris Bērsons. (LNA LVKFFDA, 1. f., 124041N)

Under the prevailing conditions, no political opposition could exist and it was impossible to openly discuss political and social problems that were deeply worrying for Latvians or general ethical, aesthetic and existential questions. Apolitical intellectual efforts to expand the boundaries tolerated for creative freedom and to follow modern Western trends acquired the flavour of opposition and were regarded by Soviet ideologists as ideological subversion. Nevertheless, intellectuals attempted to circumvent censorship and discuss national oppression, self-awareness and lack of personal freedom through allegory, often using historical metaphors. Communist Party ideologues and censors worked hard to prevent such written works from appearing in public, although occasionally they failed in this task, as happened with a book of poems by Vizma Belševica published in 1969 which contained the poem, "Notes by Henry the Livonian on the margins of his Chronicle".[77] The poem addresses the lack of resistance offered to foreign rule, betrayal, compromise and servility, building on a view current in Latvia that this 13th century chronicler, a priest and part of the Baltic Crusade, was a Latvian.[78] Critics loyal to state power accused Belševica of an incorrect interpretation of history, as well as criticising the fashion among literary figures for writing about historical, ethnographic and folkloric themes instead of revolutionary struggle and the Great Patriotic War which ought to be their principal historical topics. A press campaign against Belševica and pressure exerted on the Writers' Union to censure the poet were unsuccessful, since it turned out these efforts lacked support by the majority of writers (even party members), not to speak of wider intellectual circles or society generally. At the same time, Latvian professional culture was needed by the Soviet regime as a showcase to demonstrate to the West that the Latvian people and their culture were thriving. One and the same thing was given diametrically opposite meanings by the regime and the people. This was most conspicuously evident in the phenomenon of

[77] Belševica, V. *Gadu gredzeni*. Rīga: Liesma, 1969.

[78] The place that this Chronicle occupies in the historical memory of Latvians and the issue of the ethnic origins of the author of the Chronicle is discussed in: Kaljundi, L., with the collaboration of K. Kļaviņš. The Chronicler and the Modern World: Henry of Livonia and the Baltic Crusades in the Enlightenment and National Traditions. Tamm, M., Kaljundi, L., Jensen, C. S. *Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier: A Companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate, 2011, pp. 407–456.

the Song and Dance Festivals, a tradition that was common to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Thanks to financial and organisational support by state institutions, the number of choirs and folk-dance groups increased to a remarkable extent in Latvia during the 1960s–1980s and their performances often reached a very high level. Ideologues of the regime emphasised that these were "festivals celebrating the friendship of the Soviet peoples, and demonstrated that socialist culture was flourishing".[79] However, for Latvians who took part in the concerts and performances of the Song and Dance Festivals, as well as the audience members and participants in the traditional closing parade through the streets of Riga, these were occasions to demonstrate national self-confidence.



Fig. 13. The XIX Song and Dance Festival of Soviet Latvia. Seen in the far background are Imants Kokars, principal conductor, in the middle, Raimonds Pauls, composer, and in the foreground, Jānis Peters, poet. Photograph by Leons Balodis (LNA LVKFFDA, 1. f., 109794)

The results of Sovietisation

Sovietisation substantially altered society in Latvia, and its consequences will be with us for a long time to come. Sovietisation changed the ethnic makeup, the structure of society and the economy and the mind-set of residents. At the same time Sovietisation proceeded at different speeds in various areas and occasionally produced effects opposite to those it set out to achieve.

The most profound change concerned property and the structure of the economy. Private ownership of land, factories, large dwellings, and heavy transport vehicles was quickly and utterly abolished. Private ownership only applied to personal possessions and immoveable property for private use.

These changes in the form of ownership induced changes in how people were employed, as well as how work was organised. The economy of Latvia was integrated into that of the USSR and adapted to satisfy its needs. Although the industrialisation of Latvia was an element of Sovietisation, in fact it restored the industrial structure that had existed in Latvia up until the First World War. Attempts during the 1960s–1980s to modernise industry were only partially successful, as the Soviet economic model did not accept technological innovations. Attempts by republican leaders to make the economy satisfy the needs of local residents first were categorically and adamantly opposed by Moscow.

Changes in the ethnic makeup of Latvia and Russification were a quintessential feature of Sovietisation. These changes came about both as a result of flooding Latvia

[79] Grauzdiņa, I. Koru dziedāšana un dziesmu svētki Latvijā. *Latvieši un Latvija. IV sējums. Latvijas Kultūra, izglītība, zinātne*. Hausmanis, V., Kūle, M. (atb. red.). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 427. lpp.

with party officials, administrators and ordinary workers, following centrally adopted plans, and also in natural ways. The extensive form of socialist industrialisation required a constantly increasing work force, which inevitably meant an increase in the relative number of Russian-speaking residents; when the USSR collapsed this percentage was greater in Latvia than in Estonia or Lithuania. Russification principally took the form of increased use and influence of the Russian language, and this was implemented in various areas of daily life, for example in personnel selection, in state administration and education; however, it was most effective as an instrument of Sovietisation thanks to the increase in the relative numbers of Russian-speakers residing in Latvia. Russification both in administrative matters and in public life was more pronounced in Latvia than in Estonia or Lithuania. The results of linguistic Russification were variable, as it was a constant reminder of the fact that Latvia was not free and that its language and culture were under threat. It is, therefore, understandable that demands to give the Latvian language legal status as the national language attracted a mass following during 1988–1989, and the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR granted this status on 5 May 1989.[80]

Collectivisation of farming resulted not only in changes in the form of ownership, but also altered public life and all organisational structures in rural areas, and introduced a new way of life. All traces of cooperatives that had been put in place prior to Soviet occupation were eradicated. Similarly, the economic and personal independence of farmers was done away with. Farmers were made completely dependent on state subsidies and on rule by the Communist Party and local administrative structures. Whereas until 1940 the farming sector in Latvia was more advanced than in Estonia and Lithuania, as a result of Sovietisation, beginning in the 1960s it started to fall behind the neighbouring republics; this was due to the preoccupation of republican leaders with developing large industrial enterprises, as well as the damage done to agriculture in Latvia caused by collectivisation and repression, both to the infrastructure and to people's consciousness.

The Communist Party of Latvia was assigned the tasks of coordinating and managing the process of Sovietisation. However, its work was closely monitored by Moscow, both by direct and indirect means. Furthermore, the Soviet system was organised in such a way that no republic was able to implement decisions by itself; a considerable part of the economy, independent of the location of its physical plant, was run directly by All-Union institutions, while other economic entities had to report both to Moscow and to the leadership of the republic. Contingents of the USSR Armed Forces stationed in Latvia were completely outside any control by republican authorities. Thus, only part of the economic sector and administrative institutions in Latvia was subject to the authority of republican leaders and the CPL CC. The presence in Riga of the Headquarters of the Baltic Military District, as well other Soviet military entities, resulted in a greater impact by the Soviet military on the republican leadership in Latvia than in Estonia and Lithuania.

[80] See: *In Defence of the Latvian Language Against Russification. 1944–1989. Documents*. Riga: LVA, 2012, pp. 136–153.

The consequences of Sovietisation for public life, culture, and education were many but somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, control was established rather quickly in these areas, and they served the needs of the Soviet regime. Furthermore, many traditional cultural forms were deemed suitable to deepen Sovietisation. However, it was often the case that the process went in the opposite direction — society only accepted those aspects that corresponded to their values and needs, and ignored Soviet ideological components. This was evident in the Latvian attitude towards Song Festivals, where great importance was attached to the opportunity for gathering together and to demonstrate the viability of Latvian culture, whereas the coupling of these festivals to important dates in the history of Soviet Latvia, the presence of Soviet dignitaries and inclusion of songs expressing loyalty to Soviet power, were seen as a necessary and unavoidable evil. Culture became the only legal form of overt opposition to the regime, but rather than directly confronting Soviet ideology, it took on some of its concepts and practices, adapting these to its own purposes. This approach produced results that were somewhat inconsistent since the boundary between collaboration and opposition was often quite diffuse. It must be remembered that in Latvia ideological censorship of the cultural field was more pronounced than in Estonia and in Lithuania.

Repression was the main instrument that underpinned Sovietisation. During the time of Stalin, this instrument was applied systematically and massively. After 1953, repression was carried out more selectively; however, this instrument for the control of society was sufficiently well-tuned that it continued to function with adequate efficiency. Although the repressive policies following in all three Baltic republics were similar, policy implementation was most effective in Latvia during the 1960s–1980s, therefore dissident activity was considerably smaller in Latvia than in Estonia and Lithuania.

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Aldis Bergmanis, Indulis Zālīte

THE POLITICAL SURVEILLANCE ROLE PLAYED BY THE COMMITTEE FOR STATE SECURITY (*KGB*) OF THE LATVIAN SSR, 1940–1991

The security services of the Latvian SSR[1] were created by the aggressor state, the Soviet Union, in order to help establish and support its administrative bodies in Latvia, and to carry out the repressive policies of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union directed against the residents of Latvia. Their principal task during the immediate post-war period was the eradication of armed groups of national partisans opposing Soviet rule, but from the early 1950s onwards, their task was to strengthen the position of Soviet ideology in society, to combat Latvian nationalism and "acts of ideological subversion" instituted in Latvia by "imperialist states". During the late 1980s, the USSR lifted restrictions on freedom of speech and thought, and thereafter the counter-intelligence work of the Committee for State Security was re-oriented in line with these new circumstances. This study examines the political oversight functions of the security services of the Latvian SSR, and their participation in political repression.

Keywords: Latvian SSR state security organs, *KGB*, nationalism, ideological subversion, prophylaxis, political repression, dissidents, the Awakening

Introduction

The fundamental tasks laid down for the organs of state security of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) were the fight against external and internal political and economic enemies of the state, intelligence gathering and counter-intelligence, securing economic sectors against foreign espionage, and investigation of certain types

[1] The organs of state security are defined in the Handbook of the *KGB* of the USSR as follows: "The organs of state security are part of the executive branch of state authority which have been created to protect the Soviet state against internal and external enemies; by their nature these organs have a specific political competence and their work is directly controlled by the Communist Party." (*История советских органов государственной безопасности*. Иванов, В. В. (ред.) Москва: Высшая Краснознаменная школа КГБ при СМ СССР им. Ф. Э. Дзержинского, 1977, с. 5)

of crime; the organs were also given the right to engage in repression.[2] A number of security services (see Tables 1 and 2) were created in occupied Latvia, i.e. in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic (Latvian SSR). Military counter-intelligence and the border guard service were within the remit of the Latvian SSR Committee for State Security and were directly subordinated to the security organs of the USSR.

The security organs of the USSR as opposed to the civilian security services of democratic countries were in fact extensions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU), and during various historical periods, part of the dictatorial rule by the higher echelons of the CPSU nomenklatura. With a special place among administrative state bodies; members of these services were accorded military ranks.[3]

From 1918 to 1959, the work of the state security organs of the USSR was regulated in documents that were internal to the services, as well as by general government and Party decisions; in the latter, the legal status of members of the security organs, as well as their rights, obligations and to whom they were responsible, was not clearly defined.

In 1959, the CC CPSU adopted a highly secret act that regulated the work of all organs of state security[4], and which remained in force until the adoption on 16 May 1991 of the publicly accessible law, "On the State Security of the USSR".[5] The document adopted in 1959 emphasised direct management and control by the CC CPSU of the activities of the Committee for State Security (*KGB*[6]). The Communist Party retained this role until March 1990, when its constitutionally-specified leading role in society was abolished by an Extraordinary Meeting of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, revising the USSR Constitution and allowing a multi-party system to emerge.[7]

The personnel policies and work organisation of the *KGB* were centrally regulated in great detail. Permanent staff were hired or let go on the basis of an order signed by the Chairman of the *KGB*, and the directions of work in the security organs of all USSR Union republics were defined by means of centrally issued orders, directives and instructions.

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[2] The organs of the Interior Ministry were charged with maintaining public order and with protection of the rights of citizens and society. The organs of the Interior Ministry and state security services cooperated, exchanging information that was relevant to each other's work whilst engaging in operations to uncover perpetrators of criminal acts, in deflecting the outbreak of mass unrest, isolation of active opposition figures, etc.; additionally, starting with the second half of the 1980s, organising joint operations against organised crime.

[3] Пожидаев, А. Превращение ВЧК в "боевой отряд партии". *Вестник Воронежского института МВД России*, Выпуск № 4, 2008. Accessible at: http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/prevraschenie-vchk-v-boevoy-otryad-partii (site last visited 10.02.2016).

[4] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–НКГБ–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991.* Справочник. Авторы-сост. А. И. Кокурин, Н. В. Петров. Москва: Международный фонд "Демократия", 2003, с. 302–693.

[5] Воронцов, С. А. *Спецслужбы России.* Ростов на Дону: Феникс, 2008, с. 391, 393.

[6] Articles written in Latvian about the Latvian SSR Committee for State Security refer to it as *VDK*, which derives from the name of the Committee for State Security in the Latvian language; this terminology first appeared during the 1950s. —Translator's note.

[7] *Хронология российской истории. Энциклопедический справочник.* Под руководством Франсиса Конта. Москва: Международные отношения, 1994, с. 275.



Fig. 1. Headquarters of the *KGB* in Latvia at Brīvības iela 61, Riga. This building was popularly known as the Corner Building, being situated at the intersection of the former Ļeņina and Frīdriha Engelsa streets (today Brīvības and Stabu, respectively). Photograph by Indulis Zālīte

The choice of personnel by the *KGB* followed very stringent criteria: loyalty to Communist ideals, integrity, education level, life experience, organisational skills, communication skills, ability to act and to take rapid decisions in extreme situations, knowledge of foreign languages and aptitude to learn these, and good health. Candidates and their family members had to have an impeccable reputation. It was important that the successful candidate had not yet established his own family — this would be formed with the help of the committee corresponding to the nature of work assignments.[8]

Theoretically, the state security organs in Union republics cooperated with the local Communist Party; in practice, this cooperation was only with the First Secretary of the CC, and their work was overseen by a specially empowered member of the Republican Prosecutor's Office. The activities of the republican organ followed the basic guidelines laid down by the central leadership of the *KGB*. Cooperation with the local Communist Party took the form of informative and analytical reports presented to the latter; the security organs were obliged to align all propaganda, counter-propaganda, and active measures that they undertook based on their remit and means with the local Communist Party.[9]

The state security organs of Union republics also had provincial sub-units (after the territorial reforms of 1950, in the regions and in all large cities). Personnel numbers in such units depended on the nature of the tasks set for the unit. Larger numbers of personnel were engaged in units stationed close to significant military and strategic objects, in territories adjacent to the external borders of the USSR, and in cities visited by foreign citizens. The status of the latter was correspondingly higher. Thus, there were departments located in the cities of Riga, Ventspils, Liepāja, Daugavpils, and Jūrmala, but only units operated in the regions surrounding the cities of Rēzekne, Cēsis, and Riga.

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[8] Johansons, E. *Čekas ģenerāļa piezīmes: Atmoda un VDK*. [Rīga]: 1991. gada barikāžu dalībnieku biedrība, 2006, 38., 39. lpp.

[9] Active measures were undertaken by the state security organs to infiltrate opponents, to produce disinformation, compromise weaken, and in a timely manner to disrupt the plans of the enemy, as well as to gain intelligence (*Контрразведывательный словарь*. Москва: Научно-издательский отдел ВШКГБ им. Ф. Э. Дзержинского, 1972, с. 161–162).

When faced with common challenges, the state security organs carried out essentially the same types of activities in all three Baltic Soviet republics, with these being operationally dissimilar to those faced by the other Union republics, namely, a relatively recent extended period of residents having lived in an independent state, a young and active émigré community that formed as a result of Soviet occupation and which was closely linked by family ties to residents of the occupied Baltic republics, negative public attitudes to Soviet power as a consequence of mass repressions during the 1940s, as well as an intellectual affinity for Western culture.

The security organs in the Baltic republics were principally tasked with ideological counter-intelligence: detection, preclusion, and prevention of anti-Soviet manifestations — including nationalism, Zionism, religious sects — as well as combatting the influence of foreign propaganda.[10]

Table 1

Security organs of the Latvian SSR, 1940–1991.
Abbreviations in italics are from the Russian names of the institutions.

PERIOD	NAME	COMMENTS
End of June 1940	Ministry of the Interior of Latvia	The former Security Police Department was integrated into the Ministry which worked under the direction of the USSR People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*NKVD*).
25 August 1940	Latvian SSR People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs	State security tasks are entrusted to the Unit for State Security.
31 March 1941	Latvian SSR People's Commissariat for State Security (*NKGB*)	The Latvian SSR People's Commissariat is divided into the Commissariat for Internal Affairs and the People's Commissariat of State Security (state security organ).
Beginning July 1941		With loss of control of the territory of Latvia by the Soviet regime, the Latvian SSR *NKGB* is evacuated to the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR).
Spring 1943 – July 1944	Operational Group of the Latvian SSR *NKGB*	Personnel selection and their training began in the city of Pavlovsky Posad in Moscow Oblast, for future work in the Latvian SSR.
July 1944	Latvian SSR *NKGB*	After the entry of the Soviet Army into the territory of Latvia, the Latvian SSR *NKGB* restarted its work. The fight against armed groups of national partisans between 1944 and 1947 was directed by the *NKVD*.
24 March 1946	Latvian SSR Ministry of State Security (*MGB*)	The *NKGB* was reorganised as the State Security Ministry (*MGB*); the militia was integrated into the *MGB* in 1949

[10] Interview (11.02.2015) by Amir Weiner and I. Zālīte with Edmunds Johansons, last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

PERIOD	NAME	COMMENTS
13 April 1953	Latvian SSR Ministry for Internal Affairs	The Latvian SSR *MGB* was integrated into the Ministry of Internal Affairs (*MVD*).
10 April 1954	The Committee for State Security (*KGB*) of the Latvian SSR attached to the Council of Ministers	State security functions are removed from the remit of the *MVD*, the *KGB* to the Council of Ministers is created.
7 September 1978	The Latvian SSR Committee for State Security	The *KGB* to the Council of Ministers gains the status of a government committee.
24 August 1991	The Latvian SSR *KGB* is abolished	

Review of literature and sources

Most of the archived and operational documents held by the Latvian SSR *KGB* were either destroyed or transferred to the RSFSR during the late 1980s. Scholars today are only able to access regular and other reports as well as criminal cases investigated by the *KGB* that were transmitted to the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR or to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia; these documents are held at the State Archives of Latvia. An index prepared by the Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia facilitates identification of files of interest to researchers among the voluminous body of dossiers held by the State Archives of Latvia[11]. Documents prepared for the Council of Ministers and the CC of the Communist Party must be treated with care, as their content was often aligned with what was expected by the Republican leadership, or by the leadership of the USSR; often results which were expected were reported as being reached, with no access for modern researchers to the primary data on which such summaries were based.[12] The findings reported from this study of activities carried out during the 1970s–1980s has been based on the electronic database "Delta Latvija", used by the counter-intelligence department of the Latvian SSR *KGB*, which contains texts of reports by agents as well as log books and a register of names.

Once the USSR *KGB* was disbanded, scholars were able to access a number of previously highly secret official *KGB* training manuals.[13] Several books by defectors have appeared[14], who had previously been senior members of Soviet bloc security services

[11] *No NKVD līdz KGB: politiskās prāvas Latvijā, 1940–1986: noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs.* Viksne, R., Kangers, K. (red.). Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999.

[12] Млечин, Л. *Председатели КГБ. Рассекреченные судьбы.* Москва: Центрполиграф, 1999, с. 502.

[13] *История советских органов государственной безопасности.* Учебник. Иванов В. В. (ред.). Москва: Высшая Краснознаменная школа КГБ при СМ СССР им. Ф. Э. Дзержинского, 1977; *Советская контрразведка.* Научно-практическое пособие. Под ред. С. Цвигуна. Москва, 1976.

[14] Gordievsky, O., Andrew, C. *KGB: The Inside Story of Its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990; Mitrokhin, V., Andrew, C. *The Mitrokhin Archive. The KGB in Europe and the West*. London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1999; Rychlak, R., Pacepa, M. I. *Disinformation: Former Spy Chief Reveals Secret Strategies for Undermining Freedom, Attacking Religion, and Promoting Terrorism.* Washington: WND Books, 2013.

and which are based on their professional experience and singular access to documents. Recent studies published by foreign historians deserve special mention as these provide insights into how the repressive Soviet empire came into being and also the history of how the Baltic States were Sovietised.[15]

Significant information was gathered by means of interviews over the period 1993–2015 with middle and senior management figures, formerly members of the Latvian SSR *KGB*. Memoirs published in Latvia[16] were consulted, as well as a groundbreaking study by Fēlikss Sausverds of the wartime struggle between the security services of Germany and the Soviet Union on the territory of Latvia[17].

Documents deposited in the archives of Estonia and Lithuania provide insights into the operational methods, including orders that were issued by the security organs of the USSR. For example, semi-annual activity summaries are available in Estonia up until 1958, while the Lithuanian archive holds operational dossiers for the entire postwar period.

Findings from scholarly studies carried out in Latvia have been reported in collections of articles published by the Commission of Historians of Latvia, as well as in the journal *Latvijas Vēsture* published by the University of Latvia. More comprehensive studies have been done in Lithuania[18], Estonia[19], and Russia[20]. There are on-going studies of the work of Communist security organs in Poland, Germany, and in other former satellite countries of the USSR; the surviving archives of the respective security services are more comprehensive in these countries and are more accessible to historians. For example, in 2005, the Institute of National Remembrance in Poland published *A Handbook of the Communist Security Apparatus in East Central Europe 1944–1989*[21].

The fragmentary nature of information available about the activities of security organs in Latvia precludes a balanced study of their work over the entire Soviet occupation period. Thus, the work done by these organs during several periods will be characterised by secondary documents found in archives and in works by historians.

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[15] Shearer, D. R., Khaustov, V. Stalin and the Lubianka. *A Documentary History of the Political Police and Security Organs in the Soviet Union, 1922–1953.* Yale: Yale University Press, 2015; Statiev, A. *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

[16] Johansons, E. *Čekas ģenerāļa piezīmes: Atmoda un VDK*. [Rīga]: 1991. gada barikāžu dalībnieku biedrība, 2006.

[17] Саусверд, Ф. *Слоны и пешки. Страницы борьбы германских и советских спецслужб*. Москва, Минск: Харвест, АСТ, 2000.

[18] Anušauskas, A. KGB Lietuvoje 1940–1991 metais. *Lietuvos archyvai*, 1997, Nr. 8, 46 pp.

[19] Weiner, A., Rahi-Tamm A. Getting to know You. The Soviet Surveillance System, 1939–57. Accessible at: www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~ewa/Weiner,%20RahiTamm,%20The%20Soviet%20Surveillance%20System%201939%201957.pdf (site last visited 10.02.2016); Jurjo, I. *Pagulus ja Nõukogude Eesti*. Tallinn: 1996.

[20] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–НКГБ–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*. Справочник. Кокурин, А. И., Петров, Н. В. (авторы-сост.). Москва: Международный фонд "Демократия", 2003.

[21] *A Handbook of the Communist Security Apparatus in East Central Europe 1944–1989*. Persak, K., Kaminski, L. (eds.). Warsaw: Institute of National Remembrance, 2005.

The occupation and Sovietisation of Latvia

The Soviet Union occupied the territory of Latvia in 1940. A central role in preparations for the implementation of this occupation was played by the civilian and military security services of the USSR. Operatives of the USSR Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*NKVD*) were illegally sent to Latvia during the 1920s and 1930s, including groups of agents, with remit to prepare the ground for an easy occupation of the country, to recruit and to activate agents of influence, and to gain control of the Latvian government. In its integration of the Baltic States, the USSR followed lessons learned during the occupation of Polish territory in 1939; however, the Sovietisation of the Baltic republics proceeded more cautiously than had been the case for Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. Questions of who was recruited to work in Soviet administrative bodies and the associated security services were resolved by the security organs of the USSR, in the case of Latvia transferring inwards large numbers of Latvians who had previously lived in Russia, and in addition other Soviet citizens, many of whom arrived in June 1940 during construction of Soviet military bases.[22]

Semyon Shustin, who had been sent to Latvia from Russia, was installed as Chairman of the State Security Department once it was established within the *NKVD* of the Latvian SSR. Alfons Noviks, formerly an underground member of the Communist Party, was designated as the first Commissar for the Internal Affairs; once the Soviet Army regained control of the territory of Latvia in late 1944, he was appointed as the People's Commissar for State Security of the Latvian SSR.

While the precise number of individuals and their identity who worked in the state security department has not been established, it is known that at the beginning of 1941, 218 operational members of the department were members of the Communist Party and a further 14 were candidates for membership.[23] One of the first acts of the occupying power was to take over control of the Political Police Unit of the Security Police Department of the Latvian Ministry of the Interior, installing as its head Vikentijs Latkovskis, formerly an underground member of the Communist Party and newly appointed as Deputy Interior Minister. The Soviet security organs were thus able to acquire a nearly complete set of documents that allowed them without difficulty to identify the personal traits of members of the political police unit, the names of their agents and the thrust of their work.[24]

The historian Amir Weiner has shown that the USSR *NKVD* had already begun to gather information about potential enemies in Eastern Europe several years before the outbreak of the Second World War, in particular in Poland and in the Baltic States,

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[22] Судоплатов, П. А. *Разведка и Кремль. Записки нежелательного свидетеля.* Москва: ТОО "Гея"", 1997, с. 116. J. Verbovska 1974. gada 14. februāra iesniegums LPSR Ministru Padomes priekšsēdētājam Jurijam Rubenim. LPSR SNM personālo pensiju fonds, lieta Nr. 7563, 27.–28. lp.; *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*. Bleijere, D., Butulis, I. Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. Rīga: Jumava, 2008, 194., 197., 198. lpp.

[23] Справка о количественном составе членов и кандидатов ВКП(б) по республиканскому аппарату НКВД Латв. ССР. LVA, PA-101. f., 2. apr., 11. l., 49. lp.

[24] *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 206. lpp.

which was used to organise repression in Soviet-occupied territories.[25] Once the security services of the Republic of Latvia had been taken over and liquidated, the first task of the Soviet security services was to neutralise individuals and organisations which might become the focus for organised resistance to the Soviet regime. The Home Guard organisation was seen by Soviet security organs as offering the most serious potential threat, given its paramilitary features, strong organisational structure and large number of members (approaching 32 000). All political and other public organisations that might directly or indirectly lead to consolidation of opponents of the regime were liquidated or taken under control. Extensive repression was suffered by border guards, policemen, and members of the political police. Soviet security organs mounted operations to liquidate residents in the occupied country of the security services of Germany and other capitalist states.[26]



Fig 2. Semyon Shustin (1908–1978), People's Commissar for State Security of the Latvian SSR. In 1941, this individual signed the decree for deportation of 6636 residents of Latvia[29]

A total of 3231 individuals were arrested by the security organs between the start of occupation and 14 June 1941, and the organs also assisted in the deportation to Russia on a single day, 14 June, 15 424 persons, out of which 5263 were arrested that day. The goal of these repressive acts was to destroy or to neutralise the economic and social elite of Latvia.[27]

One example of trivial reasons that could result in a death sentence and execution is offered by the case of Olga Dumpe, a railway worker. She was arrested on 14 June 1941 on the basis of a denunciation and deported to Usollag (*Усольлаг*), a camp run by the *NKVD*, for refusing to attend a meeting at her workplace at which singing of the "Internationale" was being taught. In 1942, an *NKVD* Institutional Commission sentenced her to death, but her relatives were informed in 1955 that Dumpe had died of stomach cancer in 1945.[28]

The wide-spread campaign of terror unleashed by the Soviet security organs in Latvia and the deportation to the Soviet Union's interior regions of more than 15 000 inhabitants served during the course of just one year to shatter the friendly image of Russians that Latvians had previously held, and which had been formed over the course of several centuries.

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[25] Эпплбаум, Э. *Железный занавес. Подавление Восточной Европы (1944–1956).* Москва: Московская школа гражданского просвещения, 2015, с. 149.

[26] Vēvers, J. *Indīgās saknes. Čekista dokumentāls apraksts.* Rīga: Liesma, 1970, 5.–71. lpp. *История советских органов государственной безопасности*, с. 315, 316, 320.

[27] *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 208.–209. lpp.; *No NKVD līdz KGB: politiskās prāvas Latvijā, 1940–1986: noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs*, 971. lpp.

[28] ОДТО НКВД агентурное донесение № 183, источник "Перов", принял оперуполнемоченныи ОДТО НКВД ст. Рига сержант госбезопастности Дрега 4. XI 1940 г. LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., 7818. uzraudzības lieta, 15. lp. Начальник учетно-архивного отдела КГБ при СМ Латв. ССР полковник Назаров 15 января 1957 г. Начальнику 1 спецотдела МВД СССР гор. Москве; Начальнику 1 спецотдела МВД Латв. ССР подполковнику тов. Карпач гор. Рига. LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., 7818. l., 1. sēj., 25. lp.

[29] Kovaļevskis, P. *Baigais gads: attēlu un dokumentu krājums par boļševiku laiku Latvijā no 17.VI.1940 līdz 1.VII.1941*. Rīga: Zelta ābele, 1942, 65. lpp.

Table 2

Senior members of the security services of the Latvian SSR

CHAIRMEN	DEPUTY CHAIRMEN	DEPUTY CHAIRMEN FOR PERSONAL MATTERS
Noviks Alfons, 08.1940–03.1941	**Shustin Semjon** (Chairman of the State Security Department), 1940–03.1941	
Shustin Semjon, 03.1941–07.1941	**Brezgin Aleksandr**, 03.1941–07.1941 **Cinis Jānis**, 05.1941 **Shipachev Semjon**, 05.1941	
Noviks Alfons, 05.1944–02.1953; confirmed by CC CPL(B) on 20.08.1944, relieved on 14.02.1953; CC AUCP(B) 15.05.1944–31.03.1953	**Salomatov Aleksei**, 09.1944–03.1949 **Kozin Viktor** (operational work), 07.1949–10.1951 **Prozorkin Nikolai**, 1952 **Koshelev Aleksei** (militia), 10.1949–6.01.1951 **Ivanov Ivan** (militia), 01.1951–04.1953 **Peshehanov Fotii** (operational work), 10.1951–04.1953 **Vēvers Jānis** (operational work), 11.1944–06.1952	**Vēvers Jānis**, 08.1944–11.1944 **Lavrentiev Aleksandr**, 02.1945–01.1946 **Jefimov**, 1946 (?)–1952 **Allabert Vladimir**, 01.1952–05.1953
Kovalchuk Nikolai 02.1953–05.1953; confirmed by the CC CPSU on 12.02.1953; relieved on 23.05.1953		
Zujāns Ivans, 29.05.1953–04.1954; confirmed by the CC CPSU on 23.05.1953 (Interior Minister of the Latvian SSR)	**Vēvers Jānis**, 04.1953–04.1954 **Sieks Alberts**, 05.1953–04.1954 **Krastiņš Nikolajs** (militia), 05.1953–04.1954	
Vēvers Jānis, 04.1954–02.1963; confirmed by the CC CPL on 30.03.1954, relieved on 28.01.1963	**Ziediņš Mintauts**, 05.1954–06.1959 **Velikanov Nikolai** (operational work), 11.1954–01.1958 **Avdjukevičs Longins**, 13.01.1958–01.1963 **Palkin Aleksei**, 11.1961–02.1969	**Allabert Vladimir**, 05.1954–05.1955 **Avdjukevičs Longins**, 08.1955–13.01.1958 **Sēja Vladimirs**, 13.01.1958–4.03.1958, 08.1959–02.1963

CHAIRMEN	DEPUTY CHAIRMEN	DEPUTY CHAIRMEN FOR PERSONAL MATTERS
Avdjukevičs Longins, 01.1963–11.1980; confirmed by the CC CPL on 22.01.1963, relieved on 20.11.1980	**Lukaševičs Jānis**, 02.1963–10.1964, 02.1969–11.1972 **Rullis Jānis**, 01.1965–09.1968 **Galkin Nikolai**, 02.1969–10.1974 **Izvestnii Vladimir** (first deputy), 20.10.1972–14.06.1977 **Kravchenko Jevgenii**, 15.11.1974–22.09.1981 **Pugo Boriss** (first deputy), 06.1977–11.1980 **Zukulis Staņislavs**, 1979–1984	**Karpovs Georgs**, 02.1963–02.1986
Pugo Boriss, 11.1980–04.1984; confirmed by the CC CPL on 20.11.1980, relieved on 22.05.1984	**Vasiliev B. F.** (first deputy), 1981–? **Kučāns Miervaldis** (second deputy), 22.09.1981–1986	
Zukulis Staņislavs, confirmed by the CC CPL on 22.05.1984, relieved by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet (PSS) of the Latvian SSR 05.03.1990	**Gulin Stanislav** (first deputy), 16.01.1985–20.01.1987 **Chervinski Jurii** (first deputy), 01.1987–06.1991 **Johansons Edmunds** (second deputy), 06.1986–04.1989	**Vanags Andris**, 11.03.1986–08.1991
Johansons Edmunds, 05.03.1990–24.08.1991; confirmed by the Latvian SSR PSS on 5.03.1990	**Balev Jurii** (first deputy), 06.–08.1991 **Trubiņš Jānis** (second deputy), 04.1989–08.1991	

The struggle against armed groups of the national underground during the post-war years

Starting in 1943, once the tide of war had turned in favour of the USSR, the security organs began in Pavlovsky Posad (Moscow Oblast, Russia) to recruit members for an operational group of the Latvian SSR *NKGB*, using individuals drawn principally from security service personnel who had been evacuated in 1941 from Latvia and from members of the Latvian Divisions of the Red Army.[30] The remit of the *NKGB* between 1944 and 1947 was not as extensive as it became in later years. During this time,

[30] Anušauskas, A. *KGB Lietuvoje: slaptosios veiklos bruožai.* Vilnius: Vilniaus krašto kultūros, verslo ir pilietinės iniciatyvos asociacija "Atvažiavo meška", 2008, p. 26; Служебная характеристика. На лейтенанта Биндемана Валдемара Яковлевича, 1906 г. р., 3 мая 1949 года. LVA, PA-7962. f., 1. apr., 21. l., 106.–107. lp.

repression of armed resistance was the responsibility of the Ministry for Internal Affairs, whereas in counter-intelligence matters a number of tasks had been assigned up until 1946 to the military counter-intelligence agency *SMERSH*[31], which reported to the USSR People's Commissariat for Defence. From 1947 to 1951, intelligence gathering was the task of the Soviet foreign intelligence agency, the USSR Committee of Information, and operational games played by the Latvian SSR *MGB* with foreign security services were categorised as counter-intelligence work.[32]

The residents of Latvia held a largely negative view of the restoration of Soviet power in Latvia after the end of the Second World War, with fresh, painful memories of the 1941 Year of Terror (in Latvian, *Baigais gads*). On the whole, the citizens of Latvia, irrespective of their national origin, rated the economic advances that had been achieved during the 1930s positively, and hence hoped for the restoration of their independent state. The negative view of the Soviet authorities was exacerbated by their evident mistrust of local residents, since all positions of responsibility were filled by individuals from the "old" Soviet republics.

Although the majority of the inhabitants did not actively engage in anti-Soviet acts, Balts were regarded in the Soviet Union as potentially disloyal Soviet citizens, and the Communist Party insisted that Balts be subjected to more intensive ideological surveillance.[33]Although armed resistance groups formed in many parts of Latvia, their total membership was not as large and nor were they as well-organised as in Lithuania, which was a consequence of Latvians fighting in the ranks of both aggressor armies and thereby losing a substantial fraction of the population who had military experience.

The official view was that foreign radio broadcasts which could be received on the territory of Latvia constituted an essential factor in stimulating anti-Soviet sentiments among the inhabitants of Latvia, whence the security organs were ordered to limit the spread of information derived from such broadcasts.[34] During the post-war years, there were relatively few radio receivers, thus persons who spread news from radio broadcasts, largely by speaking confidentially among themselves, readily attracted the attention of security services as "individuals engaged in anti-Soviet agitation".[35]

Individuals who repatriated to Latvia after time spent in the capitalist states of Europe were regarded as highly suspicious persons.[36]

The following tasks were assigned to the state security organs of the Latvian SSR, the *NKGB* (*MGB*), during this period:

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[31] The abbreviation derives from the Russian slogan "*Смерть шпионам!*" (Death to spies!).

[32] *Государственная безопасность России: история и современность*. Под ред. Р. Н. Байгузина. Москва: Российская политическая энциклопедия (РОССПЭН), 2004, с. 596–597.

[33] *История России: XX век: учебное пособие для вузов*. Дмитренко, В. П. (отв. ред.). Москва: АСТ, 1996, с. 518.

[34] A newspaper published by national partisans, *Kurbads*, in an article of 10 January 1946, issue Nr. 1 gave information about foreign radio broadcasts that could be received in Latvia. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 1126. l., 4. sēj., 135.–138. lp.

[35] Протокол Н 16 Закрытого партийного собрания Ливанского РОМ МВД от 27 марта 1958. LVA, PA-4133. f., 01. apr., 23. l., 20. lp.; programmes in Latvian were broadcast starting 1 March 1953, first by the radio station *Liberation*, later by *Freedom*. See: Strods, H. Četri zāģi. *Mājas Viesis*, 19.04.2003.

[36] Вдовин, А. *И. История СССР от Ленина до Горбачева*. Москва: Вече, 2011, с. 257.

- To detect the presence of and to eradicate armed anti-Soviet groups. These groups in fact posed no threat to the continued existence of Soviet power, but their activities had internal and external political ramifications since they demonstrated Latvian resistance to the occupation regime;
- To identify anti-Soviet organisations and individuals who were critical of Soviet power, and to take the necessary steps to neutralise these;
- To identify the authors of anonymous anti-Soviet documents and leaflets;
- To avert anti-state activities by religious ministers or members of their congregations.[37]

Campaigns were instituted in pursuit of these goals, often timed to coincide with particular episodes in political relations between the USSR and Western countries. Secret assistants — informers, agents, residents, and individuals whose flats were the venue for secret meetings — were engaged by Soviet state security organs in their work. The task of the former was to gather information about individual nationalists, armed resistance groups and their supporters, to provide information on the general attitude of the public towards Soviet power and to obtain other information sought by the security organs. Information gathered in this way was used in operational and repressive actions. Those individuals who maintained flats as the venue of clandestine meetings provided a secure location for operational meetings with agents.

For specialised combat operations, agents-fighters were recruited, who often fought against members of the national resistance.[38] Approximately 80 such agents-fighters were recruited during the post-war struggle with armed groups of national partisans.[39]

One of the most successful operations mounted by the state security organs (the *MGB*) comprised the arrest in Riga, on 13 October 1946, of 14 persons, representatives of different national partisan groups operating in Kurzeme, who arrived, unarmed, in Riga "to meet a representative of the English intelligence services". This "meeting" had been arranged by *Tankist,* an *MGB* agent who had personally visited all of the partisan groups and who claimed to be the representative of the English Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). The *MGB* obtained photographs of partisans which the agent had taken "in order to prepare new passports".[40] Over the period up to 1953, the security organs killed a total of 2321 members of the armed resistance movement.[41] The organs attempted to recruit captured partisans and their supporters, threatening them with repression in case of refusal. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, recruitment also occurred on the basis of compromising documents, for example, if an individual had failed to disclose information in his biography, or had committed illegal acts.[42] Other

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[37] *Iосударственная безопастность России: история и современность*. Под общей редакцией Р. Н. Байгузина. Москва: Российская политическая энциклопедия (РОССПЭН), 2004, с. 619–622.

[38] *Контрразведывательный словарь*, с. 7.

[39] LPSR VDK aģentūras kartotēka. TSDC arhīvs, 1. f., 30. apr., 1., 2. l.

[40] The archival record "Lursen-S". *Latvijas Arhīvi*, 1996, Nr. 1/2, 93. lpp.

[41] Gore, I. Politiskās norises Latvijā 1953. gada vasarā. Latvijas Komunistiskās partijas Centrālās komitejas VI plēnuma stenogramma. 1953. gada 22.–23. jūnijs. *Latvijas Vēsture*, 1992, Nr. 1, 40. lpp.

[42] See the Lithuanian Special Archive (LSA), K-1. f., 15. apr., 1254. l., 83. lp.

motivating factors for recruiting an individual could include political sympathies, the expectation of personal benefits, jealousy, and grudges.[43] While poor farmers who had never been involved in the resistance movement could avoid being manipulated into being recruited, former national partisans, officers of the Latvian national army or men who had been drafted by the Germans into the Latvian Legion, well-off farmers, members of the urban middle class and religious ministers could all be compelled to collaborate under threats of repression as "supporters of banditry" or as "class enemies".

Agents recruited through blackmail were usually ineffective and quickly lost the confidence of the special services, as these persons sought to avoid gathering information, or passed on misleading information, or in some cases even informed their fellow citizens that they had been recruited. In these cases, "bad agents" were either dropped from the information gathering network, or efforts were made to re-educate them; they might also be briefly detained, or more rarely arrested and threatened with criminal prosecution for having disclosed secret information in time of war.[44] Whenever these efforts failed, either collaboration was discontinued, or the name of the disgraced agent was included in the list of persons to be deported.

A productive agent could be rewarded by the security organs by rescinding deportation orders adopted by the local Party organisation.[45] Occasionally, newly recruited agents sought to avoid providing information about fellow citizens and any ensuing repression by living clandestinely. The security organs regularly verified the reliability and loyalty of agents with the assistance of other agents.[46]

People were quite reserved in their attitude towards efforts by the security services to recruit them as collaborators, since during the immediate post-war years it was widely believed that Soviet power in Latvia would be short-lived. It was the fervent hope that the events of 1919 would repeat themselves, and that Latvia would again protect its sovereignty supported by England.[47] With the passage of time, the inhabitants of Latvia began to appreciate that the military and political positions of the USSR were much stronger than they had initially supposed. The mass deportation carried out by the USSR on 25 March 1949, wherein more than 10 000 families were dispatched to distant regions of Russia, was a key event in damaging the psychological resolve of Latvians. Those who remained behind were justifiably afraid that similar campaigns might occur in the future whereby all remaining Latvians would be deported to Siberia.[48] Campaigns of mass repression ceased after the death of Stalin,

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[43] Statiev, A. *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 233.

[44] Пакет к Особому совещанию при МГБ СССР на обв. Траллис И. П. След. Деле Н 9098 НКГБ Латвийской ССР Второй отдел 31 декабря 1945 г. Агентурное донесение, источник "Эрна". LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., 1371. l., 1. sēj., 56. lp.

[45] Statiev, A. The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands, p. 234.

[46] Ibid., p. 94.

[47] Differentiation between England and Great Britain only became current in everyday Latvian language use after the restoration of independence in the 1990s. — Translator's note.

[48] Справка по материалам расследования о майоре Ватлецове С.Р.; проведенного в период с 17. I – 52 г по 4. III – 1952 года Особой Инспекций ОК МГБ Латвийской ССР 7 апреля 1952 г. LVA, PA- 7962. f., 1. apr., 28. l., 179–180. lp.

and the atmosphere of fear among the population gradually lifted.[49]

In order to effectively combat armed partisan groups, the security organs needed personnel who were familiar with local conditions, who knew the territory as well as the Latvian language. In 1944, so-called destruction battalions (*истребители*) were recruited from among Soviet activists, members of the League of Young Communists, and poor peasants, and these were stationed throughout the country. Unit commanders were salaried members of the state security organs, while the others were either drafted or treated as volunteers. Some of these units persisted until the mid-1950s, but most were disbanded earlier, once the extent of armed resistance diminished in the regions. During the period of 1944–1956, a total of 44 000 individuals were recruited into these battalions; nevertheless, their effectiveness was judged to be unsatisfactory, and regular army units were also needed to wage this struggle.[50]


Псевдоним «ТАНКИСТ»
№ 1247 личн. дела № 68016 архива
1. Фам. ВИТОЛИН
2. Имя МАРГЕР
3. Отч. ИВАНОВИЧ
4. Год рожд. 1912 Дата рожд.
5. Место рожд. г. Рига, Латв. ССР
6. Адрес г. Рига, ул. Яненскаяна д. №26
7. Место работы и должность издательство худ., Беркита, художник
8. Парт. б/п
9. Нац. латыш 10. Гражд. СССР
11. Образов. высшее
Зс-35
Категория агент
Когда заверб. 1936 г.
Кем заверб. Рижская резидентура 5 отдела МВБ СССР
орган
Оформить личное дело и взять на учет
Нач. 2 отдела МВД Латв. ССР
подпись (Зуян) фамилия
Алфавитная карточка, форма 3
ПОДЛЕЖИТ ПОСТОЯННОМУ ХРАНЕНИЮ
ПОСТОЯННОГО ХРАНЕНИЯ

Fig. 3. File card record of the agent *Tankist*. The USSR security services resident in Riga recruited Marģeris Vītoliņš in 1936, while the latter was serving in the Latvian Army; during the post-war years, this agent was engaged in eradicating national resistance groups. Archive of the *TSDC*

In 1952, the *MGB* issued an order to downsize by a factor of two to three the number of agents, as their numbers had increased disproportionally during the war years and the campaigns of mass denunciation, with the result that these agents had become ineffective.[51] The criteria for recruiting new security service personnel and secret informers were qualitatively upgraded, the system of overseeing secret collaborators was optimised and terminology revised to emphasise the fundamental nature of these reforms, i.e. in lieu of "a network of agents", reference was made to an "agent apparatus".[52] In contrast to previous practice wherein an agent was not assigned a precise task and "everyone informed the organs about everyone and everything", agents were subsequently given specific tasks.

Effective from the autumn of 1952, the *MGB* was forbidden to recruit into its counter-intelligence activities individuals who held nomenklatura positions in the

[49] Стецовскии, Ю. И. История советских репрессий. т. II, Москва: Обществ. Фонд "Гласность", 1997, с. 202.

[50] Bambals, A. Latvijas PSR Valsts drošības ministrijas iznīcinātāju bataljoni (1944–1956). *Okupētā Latvija 1940–1990. Latvijas Vēsturnieku Komisijas Raksti*, 19. sējums. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 277.–314. lpp.

[51] *История советских органов государственной безопасности*, с. 459–461; Воронцов, С. А. *Спецслужбы России*. Ростов на Дону: Феникс, 2008, с. 365.

[52] Север, А., Колпакиди, А. КГБ. Москва: Эксмо, 2010, с. 363–364; this change was purely cosmetic.

Communist Party, the League of Young Communists, and trade unions (and such persons who had been previously recruited were to be released from their commitments); these restrictions substantially downgraded the capability of the security organs to gather information and to undertake operational measures in this segment of society.[53]

In order to improve how information was gathered in practice, the *KGB* created a centralised operational register of individuals who came to their attention.

No information has been found in archives in Latvia about the number of individuals who worked during the post-war period in the state security organs of the Latvian SSR, except for 1955, when there were 1315 permanent staff members of the Committee for State Security of the Latvian SSR, of which 919 were engaged in operational activities. This organ released 98 persons from service in 1956.[54] According to statements made by leading members of the Latvian branch of the *KGB*, more than 1000 persons worked there during the 1980s, of which approximately 360–400 were engaged in operational activities. Each of the latter coordinated the work of 12–18 agents; every head of a department or unit also worked with two or three agents.[55] The personnel policy of the *KGB* in the Latvian SSR (up until it was abolished) was set by the central *KGB* authorities, with candidates to fill senior positions aligned with the CC CPL. The first Deputy Chairman of the *KGB* branch in Latvia oversaw activities on behalf of central authorities and was not subordinated to any local authority. For a long time, only non-Latvians or Russified Latvians occupied leading positions. In 1952, Latvians constituted only 17% of the staff of the Latvian SSR *MGB*, and only 6% occupied leading positions.[56] Information is not available about the nationality breakdown of staff during the 1960s or in later years, but it is known that annual statistics were prepared for the benefit of the central leadership of the *KGB*.

No precise figures are available for the number of informers who worked for the *MGB* in Latvia prior to the reorganisation carried out in 1952, but in the light of the prescribed reduction of such numbers by a factor of two to three[57], this figure could have been in the range of 8000–12 000 individuals. It is known that in 1953, 4428 persons were recorded by the Latvian SSR *MGB* as active agents, including in this number those carried over from previous years in addition to newly recruited secret informers (see Diagram 1). For the Lithuanian SSR *MGB*, the same reforms led to the number of secret informers being reduced from 27 711 to 9571.[58]

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[53] 27 октября 1952 года Министру государственной Безопастности СССР тов. Игнатъеву С. Д. гор. Москва выполнении директивы МГБ СССР № 161 ОТ 26 сентября 1952 года Министр госбезопастности ЭССР полковник госбезопастности Москаленко, State Archives of Estonia, 131. f., 1. apr., 264. l., 3. lp.

[54] Докладная о проделанной работе Комитета госбезопастности при Совете Министров Латвийской ССР по подбору, расстановку и воспитанию кадров за 1955 год. LVA, PA, 101. f., 19. apr., 79. l., 2.lp.

[55] Interview (10.03.1994) by I. Zālīte with Edmunds Johansons, last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

[56] Зав. административного отдела ЦК КП(б) Латвии Дроздов секретарю ЦК КП(б) Латвии тов. Ершову В. Н. Справка о недостатках с кадрами Министерства государственной безопасности Латвийской ССР. 25 сентября 1952 года. LVA, PA, 101. f., 15. apr., 90. l., 9. lp.

[57] Воронцов, С. А. Спецслужбы России. Ростов на Дону: Феникс, 2008, с. 365.

[58] Anušauskas, A. KGB Lietuvoje 1940–1991 metais. *Lietuvos archyvai*, 1997, Nr. 8, p. 46.

In 1994, the Prosecutor General's office of the Republic of Latvia initiated criminal proceedings against two former heads of Soviet state security organs who had during 1941 and 1949 been responsible for carrying out mass deportations: Semyon Shustin and Alfons Noviks, respectively. In 1996, A. Noviks received a life sentence for his role in these deportations as well as for mass repression of civilians; he died in prison that same year. S. Shustin had died much earlier. Four other former members of the Soviet security organs have been called to answer for their part in illegal acts of repression in Latvia during the Soviet period; two of these persons committed suicide during the pre-trial investigation period.

The security organs are strengthened and the Communist Party gains increased authority Early 1950s – mid-1960s

In the early 1950s, reforms of the state security organs were made. The justification for these reforms was the transition from wartime and post-war to peacetime conditions within the USSR. Despite a few radical suggestions, these reform plans rarely achieved their stated goals, as ideological positions held by the Communist Party played a key role. Many senior members of the state security organs had been repressed during Stalinist purges, while others were guilty of illegal repression of individuals. Those who implemented these reforms at the lowest level often misunderstood the intended goals, or displayed excessive zeal, fearing punishment for sabotage of the reforms.

The Committee for State Security of the Latvian SSR was reorganised in 1953–1959, but continued its activities without any essential changes up until the Awakening. Jānis Vēvers, chairman of this service from 1954 to 1963, had worked in Soviet security organs starting in 1922 and had been awarded a medal (the Order of the Red Flag) for his part in organising the 1949 deportations (A. Noviks also received this medal).[59] In 1957, Nikolajs Bisenieks as Secretary of the CPL requested the USSR Prosecutor General to investigate allegations about J. Vēvers' falsifying accusations in 1937 whilst serving in Kazan in the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of which several persons were executed who were later rehabilitated during the late 1950s. J. Vēvers denied his guilt, avowing that he had followed orders from his superiors at the time. The matter was closed without action taken by the courts, thanks to a very conservative stance adopted by the leaders of the CC CPL. In 1959, N. Bisenieks was removed from his post as part of the campaign against national Communists in Latvia.[60] Exposure of the crimes of Stalin made by Nikita Khrushchev during his speech to the XX Congress

[59] Личный листок по учету руководящих кадров. LVA, PA-15 500. f., 2. apr., 8108. l., 4. op. lp.; Дополнение к личному листку по учету кадров. LVA, PA-15 500. f., 2. apr., 8108. l., 2.–3. lp.; *Правда*, 25 августа 1949 г.

[60] Секретарь ЦК КП Латвии Н. Бисениек 21 дек. 1957 г. Генеральному прокурору Союза СССР тов. Руденко. LVA, PA-101. f., 21. apr., 85. l., 58. lp.; Веверс Я. Я. 15 июля 1958 г. Центральный Комитет КП Латвии, тов. Плесуму П. П., тов. Калнберзину, тов. Круминьш В. К. LVA, PA-101. f., 21. apr., 85. l., 67.–69., 75. lp.; Стенограмма беседы т. Веверс Я. Я. в парткомиссии при ЦК КП Латвии 19 января 1959 г. LVA, PA-101. f., 21. apr., 85. l., 63. lp. Тепляков, А. Т. *Машина террора: ОГПУ-НКВД Сибири в 1929–1941 гг*. Москва: Новый Хронограф, АИРО-XXI, 2008, с. 522.



Fig. 4. Senior officials of the Latvian SSR *KGB* during the mid-1950s. Fourth from the left in the front row — Major General Jānis Vēvers, Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*. Archive of the *TSDC*

of the CPSU provoked discussion as well as sowed confusion among members of the nomenklatura.[61] The leadership of the *KGB* branch office in the Latvian SSR held predominantly conservative views, and adopted a cautious attitude towards the revelations disclosed by Khrushchev. However, in 1956, Soviet authorities began a number of official measures to deal with the consequences following on the disclosure of illegal acts in the secret speech, i.e. administrative Communist Party penalties could be imposed for exceeding tolerated limits on public discussions.[62] The relaxation of the Soviet repressive regime in the subsequent years could not have taken place without the removal of old conservative members from their leading positions in the state security organs.

After concluding that the reforms begun in 1952 had failed to deliver the intended results, the CC CPSU adopted, on 12 March 1954, a decision on how the network of agents reporting to the *KGB* would in future be optimised so as to perform more effectively. Overly zealous implementation of this decision meant that several senior members of the services were left with only one or two agents under their control.[63] For its part the *KGB* issued Order No. 00420, in 1955, raising the education qualifications for agents, and also recommending that more agents be recruited with secondary or higher education.[64] The security organs were ordered to compensate for the loss of agents resulting from implementation of reforms with a view to ensuring continued gathering

[61] Вдовин, А. И. *История СССР от Ленина до Горбачева*, с. 366; Записка руководителя бригады начальника II отдела 2 гл. управления комитета госбезопастности при СМ СССР полковника Хамазюка 1 июля 1961 года Комитет госбезопастности при Совете министров СССР. LVA, PA-101. f., 24. apr., 728. l., 468.–469. lp.

[62] Кузовкин, Г. *Партийно-комсомольские преследования по политическим мотивам в период ранней оттепели. Корни травы.* Сборник статей молодых историков. Общество "Мемориал", Фонд имени Г. Бёлля. Москва: Звенья, 1996, с. 92.

[63] *История советских органов государственной безопасности*, с. 508.

[64] Ibid., с. 506–508; Протокол партийного бюро первичной парторганизаций Аппарата Уполномоченного КГБ при СМ Латв. ССР в г. Лиепая от 2 марта 1956 года. LVA, PA-987. f., 1. apr., 9. l., 8. lp.

of the necessary information by engaging a greater numbers of reliable individuals[65], who were defined as, "Soviet citizens who at the request of the *KGB* will report on suspicious individuals and facts worthy of note"[66].

Reliable individuals were most often identified among members of the nomenklatura and Communist Party whose recruitment was forbidden for purposes of counter-intelligence; frequently such persons were agents who had been dropped following recent reforms. As opposed to agents, reliable individuals could not be assigned fixed tasks, and it was forbidden to require their signature on an agreement to secretly collaborate with the state security organs. Furthermore, the names of individuals recognised as reliable were not entered into any register and personal files and records of their activities were not kept.[67]



Fig. 5. The 7th Department of the Latvian SSR *KGB* was housed in a building located in the courtyard behind a church at Mēness iela 4, Riga; with responsibility for external surveillance, this department engaged in surreptitious surveillance of the residents of Latvia and foreign visitors. The name plate on the façade of the building bore the false inscription "Inspectorate of Baltic Liners" (*Балтийская инспекция линейных перевозок*). Photograph by Indulis Zālīte (2015)

During the 1950s and 1960s, Communist Party officials continued to predict the imminent formation of a communist society, one where the security organs would no longer need to recruit residents of the USSR as agents, since all of the information necessary for the *KGB* to carry out its tasks would be provided on a voluntary basis by Party members and responsible Soviet citizens.[68] However, independent of this view and based on an analysis of results from previous years' work, a vital role was again assigned to the work of agents from 1958 onwards.[69]

The next optimisation of the numbers and quality of agents occurred in 1959, and was applicable to the entire USSR. Clear guidelines were laid down on how agents were to be recruited, as well as the criteria for discontinuing collaboration with an agent. In exceptional cases, an agent with whom collaboration was terminated could henceforth have the status of a reliable individual.[70] Formally, each operative of the security organs would direct the work of 12–15 agents[71]; however, not all of these informers were equally active and effective. The number of agents that a single operative could handle was limited by practical considerations, given that there had to be regular

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65 *История советских органов государственной безопасности*, с. 503.
66 *Контрразведывательный словарь*, с. 93–94.
67 LSA, K-1. f., 24. apr., 3. l., 10. lp.
68 Бережков В. *Внутри и вне "Большого дома"*. Санкт-Петербург: Библиополис, 1995, с. 270.
69 LSA, K-1. f., 24. apr., 10. l., 65.–66. lp.
70 LSA, K-1. f.,24. apr., 9. l., 174.–175. lp.
71 LSA, K-1.f., 24. apr., 3. l., 110. lp.

meetings with secret informers at which they be assigned new tasks and transmit the information that they had gathered. Information obtained in this manner was processed and verified; agents also had to be trained in operational security matters and in methods for gathering information. Operatives employed various techniques to control the work of agents, including calling upon other secret helpers to prevent an agent's cover being blown, and to reduce the possibility of receiving disinformation or the agent being turned. In addition to his other tasks, an operative documented the work and progress of the agent.[72]

Based on records kept for agents including logs of their work, it can be deduced that the Latvian SSR *KGB* recruited 22 926 agents between 6 March 1953 and 12 January 1987 (see Diagram 1).[73]

The Latvian SSR *KGB* registered 4300–4500 individuals as operating agents in August 1991, of which nearly 600 informers had previous experience in counter-intelligence matters.[74]

It is noteworthy that, in addition to agents of the *KGB*, the special services of the USSR Armed Forces were active in Latvia, as were the agents of the Border Guards and the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet Army General Staff General Staff; their numbers possibly doubled the number of *KGB* agents.[75]

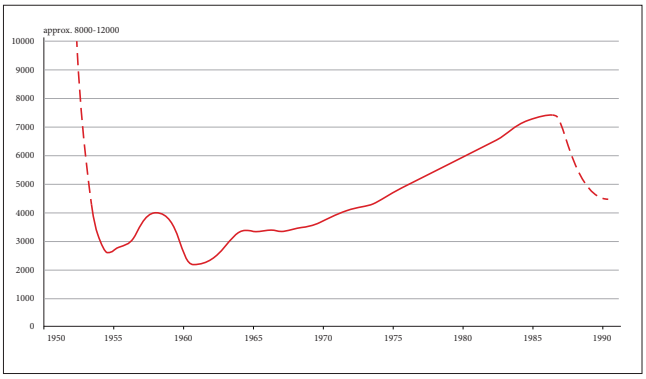


Diagram 1. The numbers of agents in Latvia reporting to the *KGB* over the period 1953–1991. Information was obtained through analysis of 53 volumes of the personnel files and log books of Latvian SSR *KGB* agents for the period 6.03.1953–12.01.1987. The extrapolated numbers for 1952 are based on the *MGB* order of 1952 on reducing the number of agents by a factor of two to three. For the period 1987–1991, no detailed information is available, but it is known that in 1991 there were approximately 4500 agents reporting to the Latvian SSR *KGB*.[76]

The Soviet security organs always rated highly the critical abilities of the intelligentsia, i.e. the potential for the intelligentsia to organise and to inspire society, and therefore it was constantly under scrutiny by these services. Winning the loyalty of the intel-

[72] Johansons, E. *Čekas ģenerāļa piezīmes*, 40.–41. lpp.

[73] Залите, И. Отражение контрразведывательной оперативной работы в материалах КГБ Латв. ССР и их использование в иследовании деятельности КГБ. *Эстонско-латышско-литовский совместный семинар "Документы КГБ в Балтийских странах": доклады*. Таллин: Eesti Riigiarhiivi filiaal, 1996, с. 31.

[74] Cf. LPSR VDK aģentūras kartotēkas dati. SAB TSDC archive, 1. f., 30. apr., 1., 2. l.; interview by I. Zālīte (10.09.1993) with P. Bitenieks a former employee of the Latvian SSR KGB.

[75] Interview with E. Johansons, LPSR VDK labā strādājusi tikai trešdaļa aģentu. *Lauku Avīze*, 25.11.1999, 5. lpp.

[76] LPSR VDK Aģentūras personas un darba lietu reģistrācijas žurnāli 1953.–1987. g. TSDC arhīvs, 1. f., 25. apr., 1.–53. lp.

ligentsia was not a simple task for the regime, and the state security organs constantly assessed the progress towards reaching this goal. Engagement of the intelligentsia in Soviet propaganda was achieved by skilfully playing on relations between individual members of the creative professions, by granting privileges and high public status, as well as by buying off, frightening, restricting or repressing those who failed to comply.

A tendency set in during the mid-1950s for literature and art to move away from banal praise of Soviet power and to begin reflecting without distortion the reality of life in the Soviet Union; the Communist Party, however, saw this as turning against Soviet power. For example, the writer Visvaldis Lāms was barred from publishing for several years after his novel *Kāvu blāzmā* (Under the Aurora Borealis) described the life led by Latvians during the Second World War.[77] After the national Communist wing of the CPL was repressed in 1959, the *KGB* also suggested that top management be changed for several popular periodicals in Latvia, such as *Zvaigzne* and *Liesma*, as well the newspaper *Rīgas Balss*, since these were perceived to contain articles that demonstrated free thinking.[78] Notwithstanding an initial nervous reaction by the Communist Party and the *KGB*, the extent to which culture was supervised changed, in particular when compared with the Stalin era. Control functions were delegated by the state security organs to the unions of creative professions which had been established by Soviet authorities, as well as to units of the Communist Party and the trade unions. The *KGB* only began surveillance of prominent cultural figures in special cases, principally if there was a potential threat to the Soviet state; more often, contacts were established for operational reasons, at which time these figures became agents or gained the status of a reliable individual. The *KGB* took advantage of rivalry and envy between creative persons for its own purposes.[79] Thanks to a more tolerant environment, residents of the Latvian SSR began to engage in correspondence with relatives and friends living in foreign countries. These letters only dealt with mundane everyday matters, as they were subject to strict control and censorship. People ironically remarked that writing a letter to a foreign destination was the same as writing to the *KGB*. Latvian SSR *KGB* statistics indicate that 120 000 letters were sent to or received from foreign countries during 1960.[80]

The 1956 crisis in Hungary provoked the leadership of the USSR to take extraordinary preventative steps. Analyses of those events led to decisions being taken to avert the possibility that similar evens might occur in the Soviet Union.[81] Western Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were designated as potentially susceptible regions. On

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[77] Протокол №-3 общего закрытого партийного собрания парторганизации Комитета госбезопасности при Совете Министров Латв. ССР от 17 июля 1959 года. LVA, PA-7962. f., 1. apr., 54. l., 121. lp.; *Latviešu rakstniecība biogrāfijās*. Stašulāne, I. (red.). Rīga: Zinātne, 2003, 346. lpp.

[78] Протокол №-3 общего закрытого партийного собрания парторганизации Комитета госбезопасности при Совете Министров Латв. ССР от 17 июля 1959 года. LVA, PA-7962. f., 1. apr., 54. l., 121. lp.

[79] Нечипоренко, О. М. *Жизнь в конспирации*. Москва: Кучково поле, 2011, с. 332.

[80] Центральному Комитету комунистической партий Латвий, город Рига. Докладная записка О враждебных проявлениях в республике Председатель Комитета госбезопасности при СМ Латв. ССР генерал – майор Веверс 6 февраля 1961 года. LVA, PA-101. f., 24. apr., 98. l., 18. lp.

[81] *История России: XX век: учебное пособие для вузов*, с. 518.

the basis of recommendations by Ivan Serov, Chairman of the All-Union *KGB*, the CC CPSU decided to station in the Baltic republics a special unit with 1800–2000 effectives, which could, in case of need, be employed to quell anti-Soviet unrest.[82] At the same time, the *KGB* began to pay greater attention to the German diaspora living in Latvia and activated operational work among those who sought repatriation.[83] Another round of repression of free thinking individuals set in with increased force during the summer of 1959, as the conservative wing of the CC CPL began to purge national Communists in their midst.

In the 1950s and during the Korean War, US President Harry Truman called for a "Campaign of Truth" to be waged against Communists by addressing the national pride of the various peoples of the USSR.[84] Western countries began transmitting informational and propaganda radio programmes by short-wave in some of the languages of the peoples of the USSR. This psychological information war together with the arms race were significant manifestations of the tense relations between the USA and the USSR, in which the Soviet security organs played an ever increasing role.

Responsibility for containing the influence of the information war waged by foreign countries fell to the state security organisations; these activities were "explicitly led by the Communist Party and carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications"[85]. The security services submitted reports to the Party organs as well as to the USSR Ministry of Communications about citizens' reactions to foreign radio propaganda, and they identified weak spots in radio jamming and radio interference systems; use of radio equipment in carrying out official duties as well as the activities of radio amateurs was also subject to control. At the same time, the counter-intelligence organs identified individuals who "systematically listen to foreign anti-Soviet broadcasts and who are then led to draw unhealthy conclusions"[86]. The Communist Party was tasked with developing counter-propaganda tactics.

A network of facilities was constructed across the Soviet Union to block to the greatest possible extent the spread throughout Soviet society of foreign broadcasts, denying access for citizens to information that contradicted official ideological views. In Latvia, jamming of foreign radio broadcasts was initially effected from Soviet warships moored in various ports, but from the 1950s onward, four transmission towers were erected in Riga, Liepāja, Ventspils, and Daugavpils to interfere with radio reception.[87] These facilities were rather ineffective in the provinces. Evidently it was impossible to censor the content of foreign radio broadcasts as easily as publications, books, theatre

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[82] Танберг, Т. *Политика Москвы в республиках Балтии в послевоенные годы (1944–1956)*. Исследования и документы. Москва: Российская политическая энциклопедия (РОССПЭН), 2010, с. 178.

[83] Вентспилский райком КП Латвии. Протокол партийного бюро 1 марта 1958 года. LVA, PA-1178. f., 1. apr., 15. l., 10. lp.

[84] Cull Nicholas, J., Culbert, D., Welch, D. *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A historical encyclopedia, 1500 to the present*. Santa Barbara: CA, ABC-Clio, 2003, pp. 93, 215.

[85] *Советская контрразведка*, с. 185–186.

[86] Ibid.

[87] See Latvijas PSR Ministru Padomes sevišķi slepenais lēmums Nr. 498-ps "Par pasākumiem aizsardzības pastiprināšanai pret naidīgiem radioraidījumiem Latvijas PSR teritorijā". 1953. gada 21. maijs. LVA, 270. f., 1. s. apr., 854. l., 62.–65. lp.

performances etc. in Riga. A substantial proportion of the population was very critical of the news that they received via the Soviet mass media, leading to a rise in the popularity of foreign radio broadcasts as people constantly searched for alternative sources of information.

By the 1950s, Soviet power had been consolidated, as most of the armed resistance groups had been eradicated and the general public was cowed by the deportation of residents that occurred on 25 March 1949. It was in this context that the first broadcast of the *Voice of America*, in Latvia, occurred on 3 June 1951.[88] The broadcast began with the Latvian national anthem and an invitation for the listeners to resist the occupation regime[89]; for some Latvians, this produced illusions that Western countries were prepared to support the restoration of Latvian independence.

The intensity of the ideological conflict between the USSR and Western countries did not decrease during the period of liberalisation that set in after the death of Stalin. The USA continued the propaganda projects launched in the early 1950s, and the struggle by the great powers for "the hearts and minds" of the people of Latvia continued.[90] The importance of foreign radio news broadcasts increased during political crises, in particular during the events in Poland and Hungary in the autumn of 1956.[91] Soviet mass media either avoided discussion of unpleasant events or portrayed a very one-sided image of them.[92] Diligent censorship and an inflexible approach to many political issues severely limited the Soviet propagandists' freedom to act.[93]

Jamming of the *Voice of America* broadcasts was temporarily lifted during periods when relations improved between the USSR and the USA, i.e. 1963–1968 and 1973–1979, but jamming resumed after Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, respectively.[94] One of the most effective means of carrying on the ideological struggle comprised propaganda works aimed at influencing public opinion, particularly in the old Soviet republics. At this time, the *KGB* branch in the Latvian SSR undertook special active measures abroad to discredit émigré activists and organisations which sought to keep alive the issue of the Soviet occupation of Latvia and who condemned Soviet policies in the occupied Baltic States. These measures were carried out with the help of *KGB* front-organisations. From 1958 onwards, the *KGB* began to distribute publications in those foreign countries, i.e. the Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden, the USA, and elsewhere, that were home to Latvian émigré communities; the newspaper *Dzimtenes Balss* (Voice of the Homeland) addressed émigrés with a positive

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88 Cf. *Latvju enciklopēdija. 1962–1982*. 1. sēj. Rockville, MD ASV: Amerikas Latviešu apvienības Latviešu institūts, 1983, 27. lpp.

89 Strods, H. *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karš 1944–1956*. Rīga: Preses Nams, 1996, 485. lpp.

90 Kotek, J. *Youth Organizations as a Battlefield in the Cold War. The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe 1945–1960*. London, Portland, OR: FRANK CASS, 2003, pp. 168–183.

91 31 XI 1956. Сектор информаций ЦК КП Латвии. Информация РК КП Латвий о настроении трудящихся в связи с событиямы в Венгрий и Польше. Секретаръ Кировского РК КП Латвии А. Страуюмс. LVA, PA-101. f., 19. apr., 507. l., 66. lp.

92 Богомолов, А. Человек в калошах. *Совершенно секретно*, 2012, № 3/274, с. 24–25.

93 Eiduss, Z. *Inde un pretinde: piezīmes par cīņu pret antikomunismu*. Rīga: Liesma, 1973, 82.–84. lpp.

94 Cull, N. J. *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 236–396.

image of life in the Latvian SSR, and tried to discredit leaders of the exile community. The content included interviews with leading figures from the independence period as well as their articles and books, all of which were written in collaboration with the *KGB*. The book *Kas ir Daugavas Vanagi?* (Who are the Daugavas Vanagi?) which appeared in 1962 disturbed émigré communities; the book consisted of disinformation concocted by the *KGB* alleging that leaders of émigré organisations were guilty of war crimes committed during the Second World War.[95] This book was translated into English and an abbreviated version appeared in Swedish, and these were widely distributed abroad (and were extensively quoted by Western researchers). Later a number of similar books were published and distributed world-wide. The pamphlets "Reflections (1963)" and "Enemies of their people (1964)" written by the last Foreign Minister of Latvia, Vilhelms Munters (1936–1940), caused consternation among Latvian émigrés; in these publications, the author criticised the policies of the leaders of "bourgeois Latvia" whom he had personally worked with, attempted to "refute lies" about "Soviet colonialism", expressed the conviction that anti-communism was the road to national perdition, everyone in the Latvian SSR was happy, justice reigned there, and the Soviet way of life had led to "immense achievements in the economy and culture accompanied by social advances".[96]

Creating the image of a foreign enemy, the fight against "ideological subversion" by imperialist countries; mid-1960s to mid-1980s

During the 1960s, the *KGB* fundamentally changed its approach to overseeing political processes by separating out the unit for political counter-intelligence, whose task was to deal with the influence of foreign ideologies from the directorate for overall counter-intelligence. The CPSU was unable to discern the true threats facing the state, which were to be found in the fields of economic, social and inter-ethnic relations. And so it was incapable of reforms that would lead to economic development, choosing instead to "freeze" social processes and focus on the image of a foreign enemy, i.e. Western imperialist countries.[97] There was a widespread view in the USSR that imperialist countries, recognising that they would be unable to defeat the USSR militarily, would try to destroy it using an information war. The *KGB* was given the task of controlling the flood of foreign information, as well as the right of censorship and strengthening controls at the Soviet borders.[98] The USSR could not afford to cut itself off completely from the outside world for economic reasons and due to scientific contacts, which were crucial for its survival as a state.

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[95] Avotiņš, E., Dzirkalis, J., Pētersons, E. *Kas ir Daugavas Vanagi?* Rīga: LVI, 1962. Ezergailis, A. *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation About the Holocaust in Nazi Occupied Latvia, Daugavas Vanagi: Who are they?* Revisited: E. Avotiņš, J. Dzirkalis, V. Pētersons. Rīga: Latvijas 50 gadu Okupācijas muzeja fonds, 2005.

[96] Munters, V. *Pārdomas*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1963; Munters, V. *Savu tautu ienaidnieki*. Rīga: LVI, 1964, 148., [3]. lpp.

[97] *Государственная безопасность России: история и современность*, с. 658.

[98] Jērāns, P. *Uzmanību! Ēterā antikomunisms*. Rīga: Liesma, 1972, 10. lpp.

The term "ideological subversion" was officially adopted by the Soviet Union and defined as "the influence of hostile political ideas on citizens of socialist states (…), the formation of opposition groups and organisations in these states for the purpose of evoking anti-socialist tendencies and processes, which, according to the imperialists, would open the way for transformation of the socialist system to a capitalist one through a clandestine "evolutionary" process".[99]

The CC CPSU decided, on 17 July 1967, to allow the creation by the *KGB* of a new specialised 5th Chief Directorate, whose principal task was the struggle against "ideological subversion organised by the intelligence services of countries hostile to the USSR, as well as by foreign anti-Soviet centres". The text of the decision affirms that under the conditions of "fully developed socialism" then prevailing in the USSR, there was no objective basis for anti-Soviet manifestations of any kind. Attempts by citizens in the Soviet republics to form anti-Soviet groups calls for dismantling the Soviet regime or for "improving socialism" by legal means within the framework of Soviet law were regarded as examples of ideological subversion.[100] Despite there being few open opponents of the Soviet regime living in the USSR, *KGB* Chairman Yuri Andropov thought there were several hundred thousand individuals in the Soviet Union who, in one way or another, were involved in anti-Soviet activities, or who would be prepared to do so if circumstances were to allow it.[101]

Latvian dissatisfaction resulted from the parlous state of their native language and the rapid implementation by Soviet authorities of Russification.[102]

In 1967, a substantial number of senior Communist officials experienced in ideological matters were assigned to work in the *KGB* to intensify the struggle against ideological subversion.[103] This allowed for stronger CPSU control of the work of the security services.

The *KGB* Latvian SSR was adept at gathering and analysing information about diverse anti-Soviet activities in the republic, and it was able to effectively counter these. Latvian nationalism, based both on a sense of ethnic belonging and on historical experience, continued to pose a challenge to the security organs, and expressions of nationalism were equated with anti-Soviet activity; for the most part these took non-violent expression as a rejection of everyday Soviet activities. The security organs were oriented towards preventative measures, i.e. to gather information, to identify and to avert possible opposition events, to reduce the risks of mass protest demonstrations and the outbreak of conflict[104]. When required, activists could be charged with criminal acts: until 1961, recourse was made to Article 58 of the RSFSR Criminal Code, but after the adoption in 1961 of the Criminal Code of the Latvian SSR, several articles

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[99] *Советская контрразведка*, с. 171.

[100] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–NKGB–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 711–714.

[101] Вдовин, А. *И. История СССР: от Ленина до Горбачева*, с. 456; Семанов, С. Н. *Юрий Андропов: генсек из КГБ*. Москва: Эксмо, Алгоритм, 2011, с. 266.

[102] Полынов, М. Ф. Исторические предпосылки перестройки в СССР. Вторая половина 1940 – первая половина 1980-х гг. Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2010, с. 286.

[103] *История советских органов государственной безопасности*, с. 555.

[104] Interview (07.09.2005) with Latvian SSR *KGB* employee Arnis Jumītis.



Fig. 6. A collection of card files containing data on agents which came into the possession of the Republic of Latvia after the liquidation of the Latvian SSR *KGB* in August 1991. These contain the particulars of approximately 4500 residents of Latvia who had secretly collaborated with the *KGB*. Photograph from the *TSDC* archive (1993)

could be freely interpreted as "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", or "deliberate spreading of false information seeking to discredit the Soviet state and existing social order"[105].

The selection of personnel for the department tasked with ideological counter-intelligence was performed differently than for the other departments. As the principal task of the 5th Department of the *KGB* branch in Latvia was combating Latvian nationalism, consequently most of the staff of this department were Latvians who spoke the Latvian language and understood Latvian mentality; however, senior positions of responsibility within the *KGB*, both in Latvia and elsewhere in the USSR were occupied by Russian chauvinists who did not trust their Latvian colleagues.[106] Thus, Longins Avdjukevičs, head of the *KGB* branch office in Latvia (1963–1980), regularly emphasised at staff meetings that the protracted struggle against Latvian nationalism was to be radical, and that this was the chief priority since nationalism is like a genii — once released, it cannot be bottled up again.[107] The outlook for the economic development of the USSR was poor, and social as well as ethnic tensions began to increase, and the decade following 1975 came to be known as the stagnation period.[108] It was clear to the leaders of the CPSU that the optimistic target date set by Nikita Khrushchev for achieving Communism — 1980 — was not going to be met and reaching the forecast standard of living was going to be impossible.

The elderly and sickly political leadership of the USSR was unable to govern effectively and lost the respect of that segment of society which was loyal to their regime. Information that the *KGB* had at its disposal during the mid-1980s showed that the Soviet system was on the verge of collapse.[109] Regular analyses carried out by the Latvian SSR *KGB* of the situation in Latvia indicated that society was ripe for the outbreak of conflict, the result of the poor economic situation and inter-ethnic tensions. These

[105] *Latvijas Padomju Sociālistiskās republikas Krimināl kodekss*. Rīga: Avots, 1984, 73.–161. lpp.

[106] Interview (17.05.1993) by I. Zālīte with Latvian SSR *KGB* employee P. Bitenieks; Leffler, M. P., Westad, O. A. The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume 3: *Endings*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, vol. 3, p. 94.

[107] Interview (12.04.2012) by I. Zālīte with E. Johansons, last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

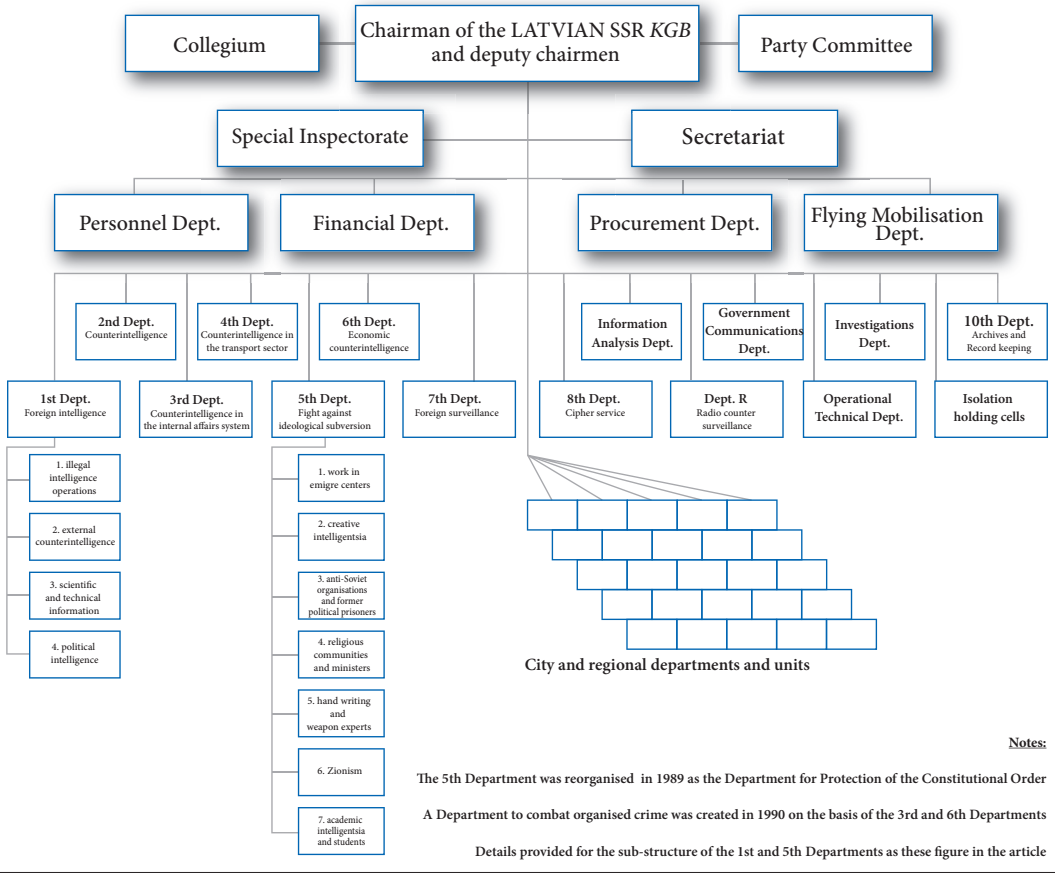
[108] Leffler, M. P., Westad, O. A. *The Cambridge History of the Cold War.* Volume 3: *Endings*, p. 93.

[109] Лекарев, С. КГБ — тайный мотор перестройки. Accessible at: http://argumenti.ru/print/espionage/n130/37547 (site last visited 12.02.2016).

findings were transmitted by the *KGB* to the leaders of the CPL and to their superiors in Moscow.[110] Until the mid-1980s, the majority of the people of Latvia were convinced that struggle against the regime was hopeless. Nevertheless, the residents of Latvia demonstrated, covertly and within limits, their negative attitude to the Soviet regime. Dissatisfaction with continued Soviet occupation and loss of national independence gradually become a topic of private discussions among friends; flowers were openly laid at the Freedom Monument in the centre of Riga, a memorial to those who fell in the War of Independence (1918–1920), as well as at the graves of leaders of the independent state and other symbols of Latvian independence, thereby attracting the attention of the *KGB*. This behaviour was described by the *KGB* as "disguised anti-Soviet activities".

Table 3

STRUCTURE OF THE LATVIAN SSR *KGB* 1982—1990



[110] Interviews by I. Zālīte with two former employees of the Latvian SSR *KGB*, Jānis Trubiņš (06.04.1994) and A. Jumītis (07.09.2005).

The *KGB* came to rely more and more on preventive measures. In the 1960s–1980s, the *KGB* came to rely on the practice of prophylaxis, which had first been employed in the late 1950s, to frighten and persecute free-thinking individuals, and which was carried out "by state and public in order to prevent state crimes, to avert politically harmful acts and other activities that impact the state security interests of the USSR organisations. (…) Prophylaxis is carried out before the start of criminal activities," with the goal, "to produce an educational impact on individuals who are wavering politically and morally"[111].

Prophylaxis could take several forms: receiving advice in discussions with an agent as an intermediary; discussions with a *KGB* operative at the work place of the person undergoing prophylaxis, or at the premises of the *KGB*; mobilising society to assist in this process; via the mass media; or by issuing an official warning. Driven by fear of possible repression, many persons subjected to prophylactic measures promised to desist from anti-state activities; for this reason, the numbers of incorrigibly disgruntled persons and those openly critical of the Soviet system increased quite slowly.[112] *KGB* operatives often sought to recruit individuals undergoing prophylaxis as agents, and given the stressful circumstances, some individuals agreed to become confidential informers for the *KGB*.

Prophylaxis was usually initiated on the basis of a report by an agent of the *KGB*, or as the result of other operational information, for example through monitoring telephone conversations, intercepting correspondence, or the use of other technical means.

The *KGB* had a telephone monitoring system manned by 40–50 employees and operators at its disposal. The system's technical capacity of 20 stations was shared between the Ministry for the Interior and the *KGB*. This technical capacity was insufficient to satisfy all priority requests to monitor conversations relevant to investigation of particularly serious criminal cases.[113] Control of international correspondence was carried out by a specialist operational technical unit, which until the 1970s was located in the Main Postal Office of the Latvian SSR. A dedicated letter sorting facility was later built adjacent to Riga Airport, and the *KGB* perlustration unit occupied one floor of this building. About 110 persons were employed in identifying suspicious (coded) correspondence and other undesirable content and confiscating such letters. Often information obtained through perlustration was used for foreign operations by the *KGB*. Interception of correspondence relating to political issues was forbidden in the USSR in late 1990, and all documentation relating to these activities was destroyed.[114]

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[111] *Контрразведывательный словарь*, с. 237.

[112] Синицин, И. Е. *Андропов вблизи. Воспоминания о временах "оттепели" и "застоя"*. Москва: ИИК "Российская газета", 2004, с. 319–320.

[113] Interviews by I. Zālīte with Pāvels Bitenieks, a former employee of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (14.08.1993), and with Edmunds Johansons (10.03.1994).

[114] Interview (14.08.1994) by I. Zālīte with Pāvels Bitenieks, a former employee of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

Table 4

The structure and tasks of the 5th Department of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (department to combat hostile foreign ideological subversion) in the 1980s [115]

UNIT IDENTIFIER	TASKS AND TARGET GROUPS	REMARKS
1st Unit	Foreign counterintelligence	Dealt with Latvian émigré centres and foreign anti-Soviet radio broadcasts
2nd Unit	Creative intelligentsia	During the period of the Awakening – the Popular Front of Latvia
3rd Unit	Nationalist individuals and groups	During the period of the Awakening – the Environmental Protection Club, "Helsinki-86", the Latvian National Independence Movement (*LNNK*), etc.
4th Unit	Religious ministers, religious communities, the German Diaspora, the so-called Soviet Germans who wished to repatriate to Germany	
5th Unit	Handwriting and weapons experts. Until 1990, also provided security for the highest ranks of Latvian SSR nomenklatura	To identify authors of anonymous tracts (anti-Soviet leaflets, graffiti, etc), search for illegal weapons.
6th Unit	Zionism, the Jewish Community, in particular individuals wanting to emigrate from the USSR to Israel	
7th Unit	Students and academic intelligentsia	
8th Unit	Public communications dept.	
9th Group	Security guards for the highest ranks of the Latvian SSR nomenklatura	From 1990 onwards
5th Group	Information analysis	

During the 1970s, there were two dominant types of relations between the intelligentsia and the nomenklatura: conformists sought to become part of the power structure to obtain tangible privileges, while a few prominent members of the intelligentsia,

[115] Interviews by I. Zālīte with P. Bitenieks, a former employee of the Latvian SSR *KGB* 17.05.1993), and with E. Johansons, the last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (10.03.1994). From 1954 to 1959, it was the responsibility of the 4th Department of the Committee for State Security to detect and to deal operationally with anti-Soviet and nationalist manifestations, while from 1960–1967 it was the responsibility of the 2nd Department (counter-intelligence), and in 1967 the 5th Chief Directorate of the *KGB* was created for this task, with the 5th Department of the *KGB* branch in the Latvian SSR set up in 1967 (to counteract ideological subversion by opponents). *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–NKGB–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 227–228.

critics by nature, formed the spiritual opposition.[116] During this time, writers and artists urged the use of communist party membership to defend national interests. For example, the writers Ojārs Vācietis and Gunārs Priede, both well-known figures with nationalist sympathies, encouraged members of the Latvian Writers' Union to join the Communist Party and to take control of their Party cell.[117]Although control of the creative intelligentsia and censorship were more stringent in Riga compared with the RSFSR, the Latvian SSR *KGB* was somewhat subtle in dealing with well-known individuals who expressed "politically questionable sentiments".[118] The Communist Party influenced the behaviour of members of the creative professions by forbidding publication of work by certain authors, museums refusing to purchase works of art, or not allowing public screening of films. On the other hand, authors who complied with ideological demands, and avoided criticising Soviet power received substantial financial rewards, public acclaim, trips abroad, etc., giving these members of the creative professions a privileged status in comparison with the rest of society.[119] Several literary figures who came into conflict with the CC CPL published their works in Moscow or in Leningrad, where editors and censors were not swayed by the "compromising information" sent to them from Latvia. Once a literary work was published in Russia, it was often "rehabilitated" in Latvia.[120]

Despite the fact that part of the intelligentsia worked diligently to spread Communist ideas and influencing the masses, the Communist Party was justifiably afraid of its intrinsically critical nature, its tendency to be in opposition and to engage in free thinking.[121] For example, in 1983, Bērtulis Pizičs, an actor and member of the troupe of the Dailes Theatre in Riga, arranged and presented a programme dedicated to the Latvian Red Riflemen. An agent who attended the first performance reported that "several songs called for fighting for "free Latvia" without reference to what kind of freedom was being sought".[122] Young people tended to get involved in political activities more often than the older generation. The organisational sophistication of anti-Soviet youth groups varied. Information retrieved from the Latvian SSR *KGB* counter-intelligence automated database "Delta Latvija" leads to the conclusion that during the 1970s and 1980s between five and 12 underground anti-Soviet or nationalist groups were identified and liquidated every year; often these were groups of like-minded youth sharing patriotic sentiments. Many of the reports by agents found in the

[116] Бузгалин, А. В. *Апогей "реального социализма": диалектика стагнаций. Сборник: "Застой". Дисконтенты СССР.* Под общей редакцией Л. Булавки и Р. Крумма. Москва: ТЕИС, Культурная революция (18–41), 2010, с. 26.

[117] Interview (21.11.2015) by I. Zālīte with the poet Jānis Peters.

[118] Interview (11.02.2015) by A. Weiner and I. Zālīte with E. Johansons, the last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

[119] Interviews by I. Zālīte with E. Johansons, the last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (14.08.1994), and with Fridrihs Straube, a former employee of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (19.07.1995).

[120] Блюм, А. В. *Как это делалось в Ленинграде: цензура в годы оттепели, застоя и перестройки, 1953–1991*. Санкт-Петербург: Академический проект, 2005, с. 219.

[121] Bergmanis, A., Zālīte, I. Latvijas PSR VDK un sabiedrības ideoloģiskā kontrole (1965–1990). *Okupētā Latvija, 1940–1990. LVK raksti*, 19. sējums. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 461. lpp.

[122] Latvijas PSR VDK pretizlūkošanas automatizētā informācijas sistēma ASIO "Delta Latvija", ДС## NS = 0300601. TSDC arhīvs.

automated information system are dominated by attention paid to Latvian nationalism, and only rarely is there mention of Russian chauvinism, with numerous references to conflicts of an ethnic nature between Latvians and Russian speakers.[123] The spontaneous appearance of a number of informal youth groups, e.g., followers of Hare Krishna, punks and rockers, led to the creation in 1982 of a specialised unit, the 13th unit, within the 5th Chief Directorate of the *KGB*.[124] However, until the mid-1980s, there were few serious problems in Latvia with such youth groups, since the system of control was far more ubiquitous and strict in Latvia compared with elsewhere in the USSR. During this time, the "intelligentsia was treated with significantly greater indulgence" in the Latvian SSR.[125] A new generation appeared on the political scene during the 1980s, unafraid to express their opinions publicly and not fearful of the *KGB*.[126] One example of this attitude was a demonstration by punks in Riga on 15 May 1985. Surviving documents indicate that schoolchildren and pupils were more apt to engage in these political acts than were university students. Although traditionally students have been more open to new ideas and free thinking, Soviet institutions of higher education were places where the future members of the Soviet and Party nomenklatura were shaped, consequently the Communist Party and the security organs paid greater attention to this youth group and exerted greater control. Trouble making whilst studying could lead to expulsion and ruin one's future career.

Most residents of Latvia believed for a long time that the *KGB* worked outside the constraints of Soviet law, therefore they were afraid to protest even in cases where their basic human rights were abused.[127] The *KGB* found it useful to retain its past negative image, as this encouraged citizens to censor themselves, discouraging them from exchanging opinions with fellow citizens and limiting the extent to which views could safely be stated publicly. Circumstances changed during the 1980s, when dissidents began to disseminate articles via samizdat on how to respond when questioned. Once this became widely known, previous *KGB* methods of interrogation were no longer effective, since anti-Soviet activists under arrest knew how to behave themselves and were aware of their legal rights.[128]

Dissident activities in Latvia were modest in comparison with those in Moscow, Lithuania, and Ukraine, but this changed at the end of the 1970s, when several prominent dissidents were released from prison after completing their terms of incarceration, and returned to the Baltic republics. It is necessary here to recall that dissidents sought to improve the Communist regime, calling for reforms without violence by taking advantage of Soviet laws and the exercise of constitutional rights.

The repression of dissidents increased in severity in 1983, and this crackdown had both domestic and international political goals. Several of the most active individuals

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[123] Zālīte, I. Galvenās nevardarbīgās pretošanās formas un slēptais nacionālisms kā iekšējā nepakļaušanās padomju režīmam Latvijā (70. un 80. gadi). *Latvijas Vēsture*, 1997, Nr. 4, 88. lpp.

[124] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–NKGB–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 167.

[125] Interview (11.02.2015) by A. Weiner and I. Zālīte with E. Johansons, last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

[126] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–NKGB–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 167.

[127] Interview (07.09.2005) by I. Zālīte with A. Jumītis, a former employee of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

[128] Cf. Latvijas PSR VDK pretizlūkošanas automatizētā informācijas sistēma ASIO "Delta Latvija", ДС## NS = 0309846. TSDC arhīvs.

were arrested and imprisoned in order to teach the public a lesson, as well as to demonstrate to foreign countries "who really rules the USSR".

The *KGB* sought to isolate citizens of the USSR from "harmful Western influence", and it identified specific international channels through which imperialist countries were causing ideological subversion, namely foreign visitors to the Soviet Union, radio and television broadcasts, and foreign correspondence.[129] Under conditions whereby East-West contacts were intensifying, the 5th Chief Directorate of the *KGB* exerted particular efforts to identify "emissaries of foreign anti-Soviet organisations" who "arrived in the Soviet Union posing as tourists".[130]

The *KGB* was invested considerable resources in monitoring the increasing influx of foreign tourists into Latvia, particularly ethnic Latvians. In 1985, S. Zukulis, Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*, informed the CC CPL that: "During the 1970s and 1980s, we have recorded 15 000 contacts between inhabitants of the Latvian SSR and foreigners. More than 1000 new contacts with foreigners are recorded each year in the Republic. Ethnic tourists who make up 10% of the total number of foreign tourists are responsible for 85% of contacts established by foreigners with Soviet citizens. (…) The situation that has developed in the ethnic tourism channel objectively renders more difficult organisation of secure operational monitoring of this group of foreigners, reduces the ability of detecting cases of espionage in an efficient and timely manner, as well as other subversive activities to the benefit of foreign intelligence services who have engaged members of ethnic tourist groups, as well as actively combating ideological subversion."[131] Starting in the 1960s, the *KGB* registered all printing and copying devices in Latvia in order to eliminate the possibilities of producing unofficial literature, and strictly controlled their use.[132] For this reason, illegal publications were only popular amongst a relatively small segment of the population in Latvia in comparison with Russia. Literary works that were banned in the Latvian SSR largely consisted of books and press publications from the Latvian independence period; however, with the increase in numbers of foreign tourists this list was expanded to include other literary works banned in the USSR. Sailors and foreign tourists were occasionally able to bring in anti-Soviet literature published in the West. While some of these publications evoked minimal public interest, others, such as the *Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, were explosive. The *KGB* strengthened border controls to limit the ease with which publications that proposed alternatives to Soviet ideology could be brought in, and provided greater accountability for those who disseminated "anti-State" literature, relying on several methods of repression.[133]

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[129] *Советская контрразведка*, с. 183–184.

[130] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–НКГБ–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 727.

[131] Председатель КГБ Латвийской ССР С. В. Зукул 22 июля 1985 года. Справка по этническому туризму. LVA, PA-101. f., 55. apr., 137. l., 65. lp.

[132] Блюм, А. В. *Как это делалось в Ленинграде: цензура в годы оттепели, застоя и перестройки, 1953–1991*, с. 49.

[133] Записка руководителя бригады начальника II отдела 2 гл. управления комитета госбезопастности при СМ СССР полковника Хамазюка 1 июля 1961 года Комитет госбезопастности при Совете министров СССР. LVA, PA-101. f., 24. apr., 728. l., 468.–469. lp.

Notwithstanding the efforts by the *KGB* and the Ministry of Communications to limit the spread of foreign radio broadcasts throughout society, i.e. through jamming of radio reception and repressive measures, during the 1970s and 1980s, these broadcasts were deemed to pose a serious threat to state security. In 1973, Y. Andropov, Chairman of the USSR *KGB*, informed the CC CPSU Plenum that radio broadcasts were particularly harmful to the security of the USSR, referring in his presentation that a conversation between a *KGB* source and a leader of Radio *Svoboda* (Liberty) went as follows: "We may not be able to take the Kremlin, but we can raise individuals who can do it, and to prepare the conditions under which it will be possible." [134]

At that time, radio broadcasts were the most effective and widespread form of mass media in the USSR; radio programmes were emotionally charged and they did not rely upon the listeners being literate to produce an effect.[135] After the death of Stalin, the radio programmes broadcast by *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Europe*, as well as analysis programmes by Radio *Svoboda* and the BBC, had a greater influence on the people of Latvia than activities by dissidents or anti-Soviet activists.

Agents were recruited and activated by the 1st Department (intelligence) and the 1st Unit of the 5th Department of the *KGB* of the Latvian SSR for the purpose of influencing and neutralising the content of radio broadcasts at source, as well as to obtain information about the Latvian staff working for *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Europe*. None of the measures undertaken in this respect by the *KGB* of the Latvian SSR were successful, although some valuable information was provided by their colleagues in Lithuania.[136]

The *KGB* intensified its active measures in foreign countries. The goals of these actions were to achieve international legitimisation of the occupation of Latvia, and to discredit the conservative wing of the emigre community together with its anti-communist organisations. A *KGB* front organisation called the Committee for Cultural Contacts with Compatriots Abroad was created in 1964 and became well-known to the émigré community. This committee successfully tapped into the growing tourism trend and used the "culture" channel to attain goals set by the security organs. In 1969, broadcasting of the radio programme *Dzintarkrasts* (The Amber Coast) began, targeting an émigré audience (the programme could not be heard (except by short-wave amateurs) outside of Western Europe, thus missing 80% of the Latvian émigré community), and during the 1970s, groups of recognised cultural figures from the Latvian SSR — controlled by the *KGB* — made foreign trips via the cultural contacts channel. The *KGB* facilitated the publication in 1986 of a book titled *Bankrots* (Bankrupt)[137] blackening the reputation of the Foreign Committee of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party (LSDWP) which was active in Sweden. Documents revealing the true

[134] Речь Ю. В. Андропова на апрельском (1973) пленуме ЦК КПСС, 27 апреля 1973 г. *Лубянка: органы ВЧК-ОГПУ-НКВД-НКГБ-МГБ-МВД-КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 727.

[135] Jērāns, P. *Uzmanību! Ēterā antikomunisms*. Rīga: Liesma, 1972, 70. lpp.

[136] Interviews by A. Bergmanis with former employees of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (18.04.2011).

[137] Dzilna, P. *Bankrots*. Rīga: Avots, 1986, 280, [3] lpp.

face of the Soviet regime did reach foreign countries, notwithstanding monitoring of the flow of information across the border. A "Letter by 17 Latvian Communists" addressing Western Communist parties was widely noted after it reached Sweden in 1972. In it, an anonymous group of Latvian National Communists described in detail the situation in occupied Latvia and denounced the Russification policy being implemented in Latvia by the CPSU. This letter was first published by the LSDWP in its monthly newsletter, *Brīvība*, and later in more than 100 newspapers in 14 countries.[138] The Latvian SSR *KGB* engaged in refuting the facts contained in this letter and limiting its dissemination. *KGB* agents in the West helped spread the assessment that the contents of the letter were not true, and that the letter had been falsified as a provocation.[139] The *KGB* hoped that Bruno Kalniņš, head of the LSDWP Foreign Committee, would be personally discredited for "having spread facts that were not true", but these hopes were not fulfilled.

Imants Lešinskis, a former Chairman of the Committee for Cultural Contacts with Compatriots Abroad, defected to the USA in 1978 whilst he was employed at the UN; the following year his autobiographical work *Kalpības gadi* (Years of Servitude) appeared. The work revealed in detail the methods employed by the *KGB* in its dealings with the creative intelligentsia and Latvian émigrés. Persons whom the author knew to have collaborated with the security services were named.[140]

In the mid-1970s, Pastor Paulis Kļaviņš, who lived at that time in the Federal Republic of Germany, established a secret communications channel through which individuals living in Latvia sent news to Germany about human rights violations in Latvia. This information was widely disseminated by the Western mass media. However, with the help of its agents the *KGB* was able to identify many persons in Latvia involved in this activity, leading to their arrest and conviction.[141]

Information about the situation in Latvia gathered by dissidents often reached the West via like-minded persons in Russia acting as intermediaries; the latter had forged links with diplomats and accredited Western reporters living in Moscow, although many of these channels were controlled by the *KGB*.[142]

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[138] Ekmanis, R. Starptautiskie raidījumi latviešu valodā 20. gs. otrā pusē. *Jaunā Gaita*, Nr. 268, pavasaris, 2012, 16. lpp.

[139] LPSR VDK pretizlūkošanas automatizētā informācijas sistēma ASIO "Delta Latvija", ##NS=0053932, ##NS=0053935. TSDC arhīvs.

[140] Ekmanis, R. Kur ir tā patiesība plikā? Imants Lešinskis un Jānis Liepiņš. Accessible at: http://jaunagaita.net/jg241/JG241_ Ekmanis.htm (site last visited 12.02.2016).

[141] Kļaviņš, P. *Gaismas akcija: liecības un dokumenti par Gaismas akcijas slepeno un atklāto darbību dzelzs priekškara abās pusēs: 1969–1989*. Mārupe: Drukātava, 2012, 465. lpp.

[142] See the unpublished manuscript by Ivars Seleckis about Ints Cālītis, held in the personal archive of Ints Cālītis, interview by I. Zālīte and A. Bergmanis with Ints Cālītis (24.11.2005); LPSR VDK pretizlūkošanas automatizētā informācijas sistēma ASIO "Delta Latvija", ziņojumu referāts ##NS=0042851.

The Awakening. The 1980s

The human rights' defence group "Helsinki-86" was founded in Latvia in 1986 (similar groups had existed in Lithuania and Estonia since the 1970s).[143] During the late 1980s, the dissident role in Latvia was taken over by less radical "political clubs", and then the Popular Front of Latvia (PFL). Dissidents and the informal movements were kept in check by the *KGB*, which was able when required to take decisive steps for neutralising their work, for example, by arranging for the most radical group to splinter. Several dissidents who had survived terms of imprisonment, as well as some individuals who were active free-thinking opponents of Communist ideology, went to live in Western countries, either following pressure by the *KGB* to do so or for other reasons[144], and were subsequently excluded from the period of the Awakening. The decisive role in the latter was played by the creative intelligentsia, as well as by individuals from other levels of society. Dissidents made their important historical contribution at a time when most members of the public were afraid openly to oppose the Soviet regime.

The leadership of the Communist Party also noted the rapidly changing mood of society. Boriss Pugo, First Secretary of the CC CPL (1984–1988), who had previously been Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (1980–1984), demanded that the Latvian SSR *KGB* report twice every month on the mood of society and on the likely public reaction to decisions that would impact a broad segment of society; these reports were then studied in detail. The previous leadership of the CPL had not paid great attention to the regular analytic reports that it had received from the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

Liberal reforms of the USSR, initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev during the second half of the 1980s, brought changes in the work of the *KGB*. The security organs were prohibited from persecuting individuals for ideological reasons or for their religious beliefs. The Latvian SSR *KGB* was no longer allowed to act against persons who publically demonstrated the symbols of independent Latvia.

On 14 June 1987, "Helsinki-86" organised a public laying of flowers at the Freedom Monument, recalling the mass deportations of 1941 that occurred on that date. Approximately 5000 persons took part in this event, having come to Riga from all parts of Latvia after hearing about the planned event on broadcasts by *Voice of America*.[145] It is important to note that jamming of reception of *Voice of America* was lifted in May 1987.[146] Opposition groups were quick to use these broadcasts to mobilise the public to take part in various political activities.[147]

The successful event organised on 14 June by "Helsinki-86" was a long-awaited signal encouraging larger groups within society to openly declare their views. Similar

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[143] *Latvijas vēsture. 20. gadsimts*. 2., papild. izd. Rīga: Jumava, 2005, 321. lpp.

[144] Вдовин, А. *И. История СССР от Ленина до Горбачева*, с. 457.

[145] See the summary reports: Latvijas PSR Valsts televīzijas un radioraidījumu komiteja. Ārzemju radioinformācija 07.07.87. Radiostaciju "Amerikas balss", "Brīvā Eiropa" un "Vatikāns" 1987. gada jūnija materiālu apskats. LVA, PA-101. f., 59. apr., 206. l., 16.–20. lp.

[146] Овсянников, А. *История двух тысячалетий в датах*. Справочное пособие для средних школ и вузов. Тула: Автограф, 1996, с. 155.

[147] See the reports: Latvijas PSR Valsts televīzijas un radioraidījumu komiteja. Ārzemju radioinformācija 07.07.87. Radiostaciju "Amerikas balss", "Brīvā Eiropa" un "Vatikāns" 1987. gada augusta materiālu apskats. LVA, PA-101. f., 59. apr., 206. l., 28.–35. lp.

events took place on 23 August and 18 November of that same year, at which several participants were detained, but later all were released.[148]

Circumstances changed substantially during 1988, when a popular front was established first in Estonia, and later that year in the other Baltic republics (Popular Front of Latvia (PFL), "Sajūdis" in Lithuania).[149] In his memoirs E. Johansons, the last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*, asserts that, although the idea of creating an organisation that would consolidate society was the work of the creative intelligentsia, it was subsequently accepted by Communist Party officials. The CPL was obliged to support the founding of the PFL to prevent public organising from descending into anarchy.[150] Archived documents confirm this view, for example, a decision adopted on 5 July 1988 by the Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPL called for establishing a patriotic movement "in support of *perestroika*".[151] Vadim Medvedev, Secretary of the CC CPSU, visited Latvia in November, at which time he encouraged Communists to be more actively engaged in the process of democratisation, and to take advantage of the new possibilities open to them. Support by members of the Communist Party helped the PFL to become a mass organisation.

The first Latvian National Communist to fill a leading position was Edmunds Johansons, confirmed in 1990 as Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*. He proved able to steady the ranks of the Latvian SSR *KGB* by not favouring one or another extreme position, i.e. that held by supporters of *perestroika* launched by M. Gorbachev, and that espoused by radical conservatives. The leadership of the CC CPSU in Moscow was informed about the situation in Latvia during the period of the Awakening both by the Latvian SSR *KGB* and by the Soviet Army intelligence service stationed in Latvia, the *GRU* (*Главное разведывательное управление*), as the latter was considered to be a more reliable ally of the CPSU than the Latvian SSR *KGB*. The positions taken by senior staff within the Latvian SSR *KGB* differed substantially. For example, the 2nd Department (counter-intelligence) often sent its reports directly to Moscow, or with the help of Jurii Chervinski, 1st Deputy Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB* acting as intermediary, bypassing the hierarchical prerogatives of Chairman E. Johansons since they considered the latter to be too liberal in supporting Latvian nationalists. These alternative sources of information largely misinformed the leaders of the USSR, with the aim of convincing the latter to introduce a special form of rule in Latvia and to transfer leadership of the republic to militarists. To normalise matters, E. Johansons took personal control of the work of all operational units, including those that had previously been subordinate to his deputies.

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[148] Latvijas PSR VDK pretizlūkošanas nodrošināšanas sistēma ASIO "Delta Latvija", ## NS= 0310019. TSDC arhīvs. 19 ноября 1987. Централъный Комитет КПСС. Информация о работе ЦК Компартий Латвии по предотвращению провоцируемых западной буржуазной пропагандой и средствами массовой информации антиобщественных националистических проявлений 18 ноября 1987 г. Секретаръ ЦК Компартий Латвии Пуго. LVA, PA-101. f., 59. apr., 108. l., 93. lp.

[149] *Хронология российской историй*. Энциклопедический справочник. Под руководством Франсиса Конта. Москва: Международные отношения, 1994, с. 281.

[150] Johansons, E. *Čekas ģenerāļa piezīmes*, 79.–80. lpp.

[151] Заседание бюро ЦК Компартий Латвий 5 июля 1988 года. LVA, PA-101. f., 61. apr., 31. l., 11a. lp.

The activities of informal movements and organisations such as the Environmental Protection Club, the Latvian National Independence Movement, the human rights defence group, "Helsinki-86", the International Front of the Working People of Latvia, etc. were monitored by the Latvian SSR *KGB*, in order that, according to former leading members of the *KGB*, no spontaneous radical or violent events would transpire that could have uncontrollable consequences, including bloody conflicts.[152] The *KGB* did use its agents to manipulate processes, skilfully playing on the ambitions and character traits of leading personalities, or helping to set up parallel organisations which caused internal splits, for example by setting up the Riga unit of "Helsinki-86", or identifying in a timely manner and then neutralising planned radical or violent acts, for example, averting a deliberate fire in the Cellulose Plant in Sloka, and ensuring separation between events planned as confrontations between organisations; additionally, "appropriate" information could be made available to organisations and well-known activists could be induced to emigrate from the USSR.[153] During the *perestroika* period, elements of a free market economy appeared in the USSR, and the *KGB* sought to recruit or to infiltrate its representatives into new joint ventures between the USSR and foreign countries, using these as front organisations for carrying out its operational tasks. The decision adopted in January 1987 by the CC CPSU on lifting restrictions on certain forms of enterprise stimulated the growth of foreign trade and members of the Soviet security organs became economic actors.[154] These individuals were no longer concerned with saving and preserving the USSR, since a weak central government opened up greater opportunities for business, thus facilitating a gradual and easier removal of the Soviet regime from Latvia.

The operational situation in the Soviet Union changed rapidly as a result of democratisation, and this impacted on the *modus operandi* of ideological counter-intelligence, since individuals could no longer be persecuted or punished for their religious beliefs or for publicly expressing political views, unless these were calls for violence or extremism. The 5th Department (ideological counter-intelligence) of the Latvian SSR *KGB* was abolished in August 1989 in line with the new situation, and a new entity, the Z Department, was formed in its place; its principal remit was to avert mass disturbances, reign in activities that could lead to the violent overthrow of Soviet power, and anti-terrorism measures. The new department continued to work until the collapse of the USSR in August 1991.[155] Given the nature of the times, increasing amounts of historical information about the role played by the *KGB* in repression became public knowledge, and many agents refused to continue to collaborate and it proved difficult to recruit new agents. On the other hand, the help of many agents became superfluous since during the *perestroika* period significant amounts of

[152] Interviews by I. Zālīte with E. Johansons (12.04.2012), last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*, and with J. Trubiņš, Deputy Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB* (06.04.1994).

[153] Interviews (03.08.1993 and 09.04.1996) by I. Zālīte with several former employees of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

[154] Лекарев, С. КГБ — тайный мотор перестройки. Accessible at: http://argumenti.ru/print/espionage/n130/37547 (site last visited 12.02.2012).

[155] *Лубянка: органы ВЧК–ОГПУ–НКВД–НКГБ–МГБ–МВД–КГБ. 1917–1991*, с. 730–731.



Fig. 7. Senior members of the *KGB* branch in the Latvian SSR together with Kim Philby, a former Soviet spy in Great Britain and a high-ranking member of the British security services, during his visit to Riga in 1987. First row, third from the left, Major General Staņislavs Zukulis, Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB* , fourth — Kim Philby. Photograph from the *TSDC* archive

information were accessible that had previously been only obtainable with the help of agents.

The agents recruited by the *KGB* for counter-intelligence work on the territory of the USSR were mostly not paid for the information that they gathered. Occasionally the operative would give them a gift or pick up the tab for a meal at a restaurant. Particularly valuable agents received a regular income, but there were few such cases in the Latvian SSR. More commonly, the *KGB* helped improve living conditions, i.e. to acquire an apartment, get a telephone installed at the agent's home ahead of the queue for such services, or to take a foreign trip.[156]

The number of agents reporting to the *KGB* was never static but was revised continuously based on tasks set by the centre and the operational situation; superfluous agents were excluded from the organisation.[157] *KGB* Chairman E. Johansons is of the opinion that, despite regular downsizing, approximately 30% of agents on the books with the Latvian SSR *KGB* consisted of an inactive "ballast" superfluous to requirements and who only appeared on paper to improve job performance indicators[158]; Māris Dreijers, Deputy Director of the 5th Department of the *KGB*, admitted that only one-third of all agents on record with the 5th Department charged with ideological counter-intelligence provided useful information, and that 2/3 were "ballast".[159] As seen from the data presented in Diagram 3, purging of "ballast" agents was carried out by the *KGB* on several occasions, including in the late 1980s. During this last period, a significant amount of the infor-

[156] Млечин, Л. *Председатели КГБ рассекреченные судьбы*. Москва: Центрполиграф, 1991, с. 502.
[157] Johansons E. *Čekas ģenerāļa piezīmes*, 42. lpp.
[158] Interview (11.02.2015) by A. Weiner and I. Zālīte with E. Johansons, the last Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.
[159] Interview (04.11.1996) by I. Zālīte with Māris Dreijers, a former employee of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

mation which the *KGB* sought was freely available and there were few new agents recruited, with emphasis placed on reliable individuals and operational contacts.[160] If necessary, an individual who had been met in an operational contact situation could be entered into the list of *KGB* agents without his knowledge. Although the discussions during such contacts were informal, the operative might secretly record them and later present this as operational information.[161] Throughout the 1980s, the *KGB* rapidly lost its ability to influence the processes under way in the state. The Communist Party proved unable to control "thawed" public, social and economic processes, and the old *KGB* instruments were no longer useful under the new conditions. The ideological counter-intelligence direction of work was progressively abandoned, as the introduction of the free market posed limits on the use of technical means by the *KGB*. The *KGB* was not prepared for the new task set for it, i.e. combating organised criminality, since it lacked the requisite specialists.

Closing remarks

The Central Committee of the CPSU played a leading role in the activities of the Soviet security organs up until 1990; following guidelines for national development, it formulated tasks to be carried out by the security organs throughout the whole of the USSR basing these instructions on analyses of threats to the Soviet system and the overall political situation. The competences of the security organs included information gathering and repressive functions.

NKVD residents in Latvia played an essential role in preparing the Soviet occupation of Latvia in 1940, implementation of this occupation and in setting up the security organs of the Latvian SSR. These security organs organised and took part in the mass deportation of residents of Latvia in 1941.

Armed national groups were active during the post-war years. The Latvian SSR *NKGB* (*MGB*), created fictitious groups of partisans; it was also able to infiltrate its agents into armed groups, and through military combat operations these groups were destroyed ceased by 1956. At the same time, an effort was made to identify and liquidate illegal anti-Soviet groups. Western radio broadcasts directed towards an audience in USSR were part of the Cold War; the *KGB* in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications took steps to limit the influence of these radio programmes, for

[160] Interview (10.11.2015) by A. Weiner and I. Zālīte with J. Trubiņš, Deputy Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*. An operational contact is an event whereby an operative informs an individual with whom the state security organs have established a working relationship of his intelligence or counter-intelligence tasks. An operational contact may by its nature be official wherein an employee of the state security organs informs the person contacted of his status as representing the Soviet State or one of its public organisations, exceptionally identifying himself as representing the state security organs. In most cases an operational contact takes an unofficial form when the operative presents himself as a private individual concealing his membership of the state security organs. *Контрразведывательный словарь*, с. 138.

[161] LPSR VDK labā strādājusi tikai trešdaļa aģentu, 5. lpp.; interview (10.11.2015) by A. Weiner and I. Zālīte with J. Trubiņš, Deputy Chairman of the Latvian SSR *KGB*.

example, by building radio-jamming facilities. Mass repression neutralised many residents who could potentially pose a threat to Soviet power in Latvia.

During the period when the USSR was returning to peacetime conditions, the tasks assigned to the state security organs also underwent change. A substantial structural and functional reorganisation of state security organs took place over the period 1952–1959. As part of the reorganisation of the Ministry for Internal Affairs of the Latvian SSR, the Committee for State Security of the Latvian SSR was established, in essentially the form that it retained until collapse of the USSR in 1991. The state security organs undertook preventive prophylactic measures against individuals to preserve the desired ideological climate in Latvia. The *KGB* organised active measures in foreign countries in the form of disinformation spread by press articles and books that sought to legitimise the occupation of Latvia in the eyes of the world community, as well as to discredit Latvian émigré organisations and activists.

Social problems and inter-ethnic relations worsened once it became apparent that the CPSU programme adopted in 1961 to improve living standards was not going to succeed, aided by the intensification of the Western information war against the USSR. Therefore, the Communist Party decided to prevent access by residents of the USSR to information that did not conform to CPSU ideology and political control. The 5th Department of the branch of the Latvian SSR *KGB* was created in 1967 for "the struggle against ideological subversion by imperialist countries". Control of the channels of contacts with foreign countries, i.e. — tourism, broadcasts by Western radio stations and the postal system, was stepped up. The Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries of the Latvian SSR was founded in 1964 to neutralise efforts by émigrés to raise international awareness of the issue of the illegal occupation of Latvia. Broadcasts to foreign audiences of the radio propaganda programme *Dzintarkrasts* were started in 1969.

During the period of *perestroika* (reconstruction) and *glasnost* (transparency) initiated by M. Gorbachev, it was forbidden to persecute individuals for their religious or political beliefs, and the *KGB* was forced to abandon control of the creative intelligentsia and ministers of religious, as well as to cease prophylactic efforts, perlustration of foreign correspondence and the jamming of foreign radio broadcasts. A crisis set in among the leadership of the *KGB* after the USSR renounced the one-party system in 1990.

During the *perestroika* period, the *KGB* continued to monitor the activities of informal political organisations such as the Environmental Protection Club, the Latvian National Independence Movement, the Informal Popular Front, the "Helsinki-86" group defending human rights, etc., and in specific cases guiding the direction of their political activities.

Despite their having been reorganised several times during the preceding decades and proving effective in controlling the politically active strata of society through a network of secret informers, the Soviet security organs were incapable of preventing the collapse of the Soviet regime and restoration of the Latvian state.

The intimate relationship that the security organs enjoyed with the CPSU turned out to be fateful. Once the CPSU leaders lost their ability to influence events in the state, their catastrophic loss of authority led to the collapse of the USSR and the demise of the *KGB*.

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Tālavs Jundzis, Ilgonis Upmalis

LATVIA — A MILITARY BASE OF THE USSR AND PART OF THE SOVIET MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Tsar Peter I of Russia was not alone in appreciating the geopolitical significance of Latvia, with its territory located on the shores of the Baltic Sea coast and having ports that remain ice-free in winter. This was evident when Latvia experienced its first Soviet occupation during 1918–1919. After the Republic of Latvia was established and internationally recognised as an independent state, Russia and the Soviet Union continued to be interested in this geopolitically significant region. The Soviet Union, in the 1930s, considered the territory of Latvia and that of the other Baltic States (Estonia and Lithuania), to be an important military staging area and security buffer zone in case of war with Germany or Great Britain. Russian politicians have stated these security interests to justify occupation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union and their subsequent illegal annexation. After the Second World War and during the Cold War, the territory of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia continued to be a buffer zone for the Soviet Union against an imagined threat of an attack by NATO, and significant military forces and nuclear weapons were deployed in this region. The Latvian economy was transformed into an integral part of the USSR Military-Industrial Complex.

Keywords: Baltic Military District, Baltic Fleet, air power, withdrawal of armed forces, nuclear weapons, military-industrial complex, Soviet military bases, air defences, border guards, land forces, strategic facilities

Military forces of the Soviet Union deployed in Latvia, 1939–1941

With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, following the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939, the Soviet Union immediately intended to establish military bases in all three Baltic States. This action was justified less by the security needs of the Soviet Union, but rather by the secret provisions of the Pact with National-Socialist Germany. None of the Baltic States wanted or requested any help, yet the Soviet Union coerced them to sign bilateral mutual assistance pacts, with provisions for Soviet military bases to be established in the Baltic States with up to 25 000

Soviet soldiers being stationed in Latvia[1], 20 000 in Lithuania[2], and 25 000 in Estonia.[3] Imposition of these pacts on the Baltic States were based on the "Secret Additional Protocols" of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939 by which Hitler (Germany) essentially gave the Baltic States to Stalin (Soviet Union). The German–Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Demarcation of 28 September 1939 further defined the division (occupation) of Poland by Germany and essentially gave the "green light" to the Soviet Union to occupy the Baltic States.

The Soviet Union was prepared, in case the mutual assistance pacts were not signed, to begin an immediate and armed intervention in the Baltic States. To this end, substantial Soviet military forces were concentrated near the borders of the Baltic States — 553 381 soldiers, 4706 tanks and armoured vehicles, 1806 aircraft, and thousands of pieces of other military hardware.[4] Finland was attacked and forced to wage war with the Soviet Union, after it had refused to accept Soviet demands to establish military bases in Finland.

After two days of negotiations in Moscow, in which J. Stalin and V. Molotov took part, Latvia was forced to sign a mutual assistance pact on 5 October 1939. On the first day of these negotiations, Stalin reminded the Latvian delegation that Peter the Great had ensured that Russia had access to the Baltic Sea; also, that Russia no longer had this access, and that this situation could not go on.[5] Stalin also admitted that spheres of interest had been established and stated, "if we do not do it, the Germans are likely to occupy you".[6] The Latvian delegation was able to negotiate down the size of the Soviet forces: initially, 50 000 Soviet soldiers were to be stationed in Latvia, but this number was reduced to 25 000.[7] Russia also agreed not to establish a military base in Riga as it had initially demanded, after a strong opposition from the Latvian delegation.[8]

The Mutual Assistance Pact concluded between the USSR and the Republic of Latvia did not at all reflect the position taken by Stalin, who, during negotiations, stated that the situation in the Baltic region needed to change to be compatible with

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1 Конфиденциальный протокол Пакта о взаимопомощи между Союзом Советских Социалистических Республик и Латвийской Республикой от 5 октября 1939 года. *Полпреды сообщают… Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. – август 1940 г.* Москва: Международные отношения, 1990, с. 86.

2 Конфиденциальный протокол Договора о передаче Литовской Республике города Вильно и Виленской области и о взаимопомощи между Советским Союзом и Литвой от 10 апреля 1939 года (10 октября 1939 г.). *Полпреды сообщают… Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. – август 1940 г.*, с. 94.

3 Конфиденциальный протокол Пакта о взаимопомощи между СССР и Эстонской Республикой от 28 сентября 1939 года. *Полпреды сообщают… Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. – август 1940 г.*, с. 63.

4 Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря.* Москва: Алгоритм, 2014, с. 48, 62, 72.

5 Запись беседы И. В. Сталина и В. М. Молотова с Латвийской делегацией 2 октября 1939 г. 21 час. 30 мин. – 24 час. 00 мин. *Полпреды сообщают… Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. – август 1940 г.*, с. 76.

6 Ibid, с. 77. [... если не мы, то немцы могут вас оккупировать].

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

the USSR interests; Stalin had recalled the Treaty of 11 August 1920 between Russia and Latvia which forever recognised Latvia's independence. Article III of the Mutual Assistance Pact stated that the Republic of Latvia, in the interests of security of the USSR, and in order to safeguard its own independence, granted the USSR permission to establish naval bases at Liepāja and Ventspils; and, it also allowed the construction of several airfields and the creation of a coastal artillery base at the Irbe Strait for the interdiction of enemy warships in the Gulf of Riga. The Soviet Union was allowed a certain number of soldiers to guard naval bases, airfields, and coastal defences. The Pact also specified that its implementation was without prejudice to the sovereignty of both Parties, including the social model and military activities of both. The Pact was to be in force for 10 years, with the option to renew it for an additional 10 years.[9]

The Soviet Union immediately began to exercise its rights under the Pact. First, shipments of military equipment arrived on 15 October 1939. Between 15 and 23 October, the Soviet Navy took over the existing bases at Liepāja and Ventspils. The 13th Naval Flotilla, together with a floating base ship, "Smolny", arrived in Ventspils. A flotilla from the 1st Mine-laying Squadron, as well as the 11th Submarine Flotilla, was stationed at Liepāja, which was the best furnished port in Latvia.[10]

The first contingent of Soviet ground forces arrived in Latvia on 29 October 1940. Rail transport capacity between Latvia and Russia was overloaded and USSR merchant ships were pressed into service. Using 83 vessels of different sizes and classes, a total of 45 658 tons of materiel and 41 046 individuals arrived in Latvia and Estonia between October 1939 and March 1940.[11] The amount of materiel and personnel numbers far exceeded what was agreed to under the Pact, and the question was raised at a mixed USSR–Latvia Commission meeting. The number of Soviet marines and military construction workers had not been explicitly specified in the text of the Pact. Arguments also ensued over the arrival in Latvia of family members of Soviet military personnel in ever increasing numbers.[12]

Soviet bases for land forces and military airfields were located, as per the Pact, in the western province of Latvia — Kurzeme. By the autumn of 1939, the Soviet Command Centre of the 2nd Rifle Corps was located there, as were the 10th special communications battalion, the 86th anti-aircraft unit of this Corps, the 67th Rifle Division, the 6th Light Tank Brigade, the 10th Tank Regiment and the 21st Interceptor Air Regiment. On 2 June 1940, they were joined by the 31st Rapid Bomber Air-Regiment. As of 10 May 1940, the Soviet 2nd Corps stationed in Latvia numbered 21 289 personnel. The

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[9] Конфиденциальный протокол Пакта о взаимопомощи между Союзом Советских Социалистических Республик и Латвийской Республикой от 5 октября 1939 года. *Полпреды сообщают… Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. – август 1940 г.*, с. 84–86.

[10] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря,* с. 104, 105.

[11] Петров, П. В. Организация базирования сил Краснознамённого Балтийского флота в октябре 1939 – феврале 1940 года. Accessible at: http://history.milportal.ru/2014/11/organizaciya-bazirovaniya-sil-krasnoznamyonnogo-baltijskogo-flota-v-oktyabre-1939-fevrale-1940-goda/ (site last visited 04.02.2016).

[12] Andersons, E. *Latvijas vēsture 1920–1940. Ārpolitika. II daļa.* Stokholma: Daugava, 1984, 252. lpp.

Corps also comprised 369 tanks, 57 armoured vehicles, and 198 military aircraft.[13] Tank battalions were stationed alongside rifle and artillery regiments; the Latvian side protested this fact, insisting that tanks were offensive, rather than defensive weapons.[14] Airfields at Ventspils, Liepāja, and Vaiņode were hurriedly adapted for military aviation needs.

Under the terms of the Mutual Assistance Pact it was the responsibility of Latvia to make the territory available for the Soviet military bases. Farms had to be liquidated and buildings cleared. In total, land to the tune of 14 500 ha was taken over by the Soviets for military bases.[15] The USSR–Latvia Commission was unable to agree, for some considerable time, on the fees to be paid for the use of land and buildings that were requisitioned.[16] In the end, Latvia received nothing, since the start of Soviet occupation of Latvia terminated all negotiations.

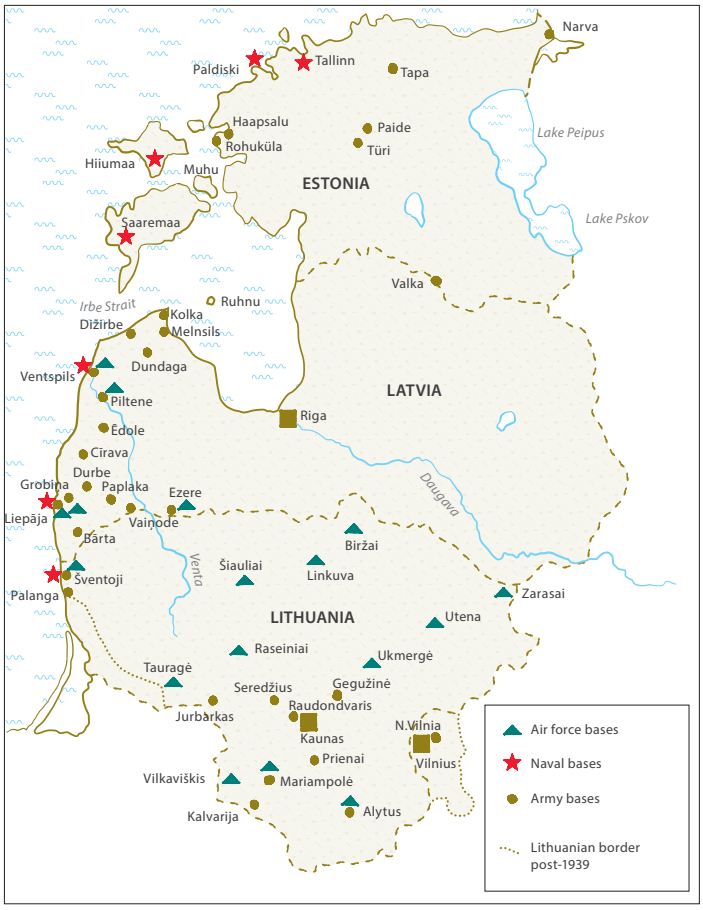


Fig. 1. (Map) Military bases of the USSR in the Baltic States, 1939. Copied from Andersons, E. *Latvijas vēsture. 1920.–1940. Ārpolitika.* 2. sējums. Stokholma: Daugava, 1984, 251. lpp.

The Soviet military bases located in western Latvia provided the Soviet Union with considerable military strategic advantages in the Baltic Sea region, i.e. effective control over ships entering the Gulf of Riga and the Gulf of Finland. Soviet land forces and military aviation were allowed to move about freely over a large part of western Latvia.

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[13] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря,* с. 242, 243.

[14] Запись беседы И. В. Сталина и В. М. Молотова с Латвийской делегацией 3 октября 1939 г. 18 час. 00 мин. – 20 час. 00 мин. *Полпреды сообщают… Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. – август 1940 г.,* с. 82.

[15] Andersons, E. *Latvijas bruņotie spēki un to priekšvēsture.* Toronto: Daugavas Vanagu apgāds, 1983, 751. lpp.

[16] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря,* с. 146.

The Soviet military units stationed there were roughly equal in total numbers to the Latvian army, thereby rendering Latvia's defence plans obsolete against any possible Soviet attack. Soviet naval forces stationed in Latvia and military aviation units in Estonia took part in the 1939–1940 war against Finland.

The rapid advance by the armies of Nazi Germany into new territory in Southern Europe, and, in particular, the capture of Paris caused the Soviet Union to strengthen further its military and geopolitical positions. The territory of the Baltic States was intended to form, in case of a German attack, a reinforced and hardened buffer zone for the USSR, as well as to be the theatre for military operations. Bases positioned in the Baltic States were insufficient for this role. Quick deployment of much larger additional military forces was necessary; and, there was also a need to induce the Baltic States to abandon their declared policy of neutrality, which did not serve the interests of the Soviet Union. Also, it was possible that the Baltic States might resist such Soviet ambitions; therefore, in June 1940, the Soviet Union concentrated 35 divisions with no less than 541 722 men, 4568 tanks and armoured vehicles, 2516 aircraft, and 6563 artillery pieces along the Baltic States-Soviet border.[17]

By 6 June 1940, the General Staff of the Red Army had prepared a strategic plan for the occupation of the Baltic States.[18] Following discussions of this plan with members of the Soviet government and the Politburo of the Central Committee (CC) of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in the office of J. Stalin, a top secret directive was sent on 9 June 1940 to the Baltic Red Flag Fleet and commanders of three Military Districts ordering the Soviet Army to be massed immediately at the borders of the Baltic States and to be ready for a decisive attack.[19] The directive, addressed to Army General K. Meretskov, the acting Commander of the Leningrad Military District, also contained instructions for action to be taken by the 21 289 Soviet troops stationed at military bases in Latvia as follows:

> … to be on permanent alert ready for battle, and, after the army from the Leningrad Military District attacks, to disarm Latvian army units in Liepāja, to disrupt Latvian army communications and command; that the tank brigade together with foot soldiers from the 67th Rifle Division, with close support by the aviation corps, then take and hold the river crossing of the Vindova (Venta) River, in the neighbourhood of Shrunden (Skrunda), to secure the airfield at Vaiņode; and to hold these regions until contact is made with the attacking forces of the Belorussian Special Military District, to clear these regions of enemy army units and groups, to disarm all local residents. … Afterwards, together with units from the Belorussian Special Military District, to attack in the direction of Riga, clearing from the western region all Latvian Army units and groups.[20]

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[17] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря*, с. 353.

[18] Ibid., с. 291.

[19] Ibid., с. 292.

[20] Ibid., с. 299, 300.

A border incident, on 15 June 1940, instigated by the Soviet Union,[21] failed to provoke a military response from Latvia; thereupon, on 16 June, the Soviet government falsely accused Latvia to have violated the Mutual Assistance Pact and issued an ultimatum demanding the replacement of the Latvian government and allowing of unlimited number of Soviet troops to enter Latvia. Similar accusations and ultimatums were sent to Lithuania on 14 June and to Estonia on 16 June. These ultimatums were implicitly backed by a threat of overwhelming hostile military force that persuaded the Baltic governments to accept these ultimatums; all three of the Baltic States were occupied during 15–17 June 1940. In Latvia, the Red Army occupied 64 cities and other populated areas, including the occupation of more than 636 buildings.[22]

Already during the first days of occupation, the true plans of the Soviet Union for the Baltic States were described in detail by S. Timoshenko, People's Defence Commissar of the USSR, in a top secret report, No. 390 s/s, addressed to J. Stalin and V. Molotov. The report states the following:

I consider that the following measures need to be taken to facilitate the rapid development of the Baltic area for military activities:

1. Our border guard army units must immediately take over the border with East Prussia and along the coast of the Baltic Sea, to prevent spying and subversion by our western neighbours;
2. To deploy (initially) one regiment of troops of the People's Commissariat of the Interior to each occupied republic, to maintain internal order;
3. To resolve as soon as possible the question of "governments" in each occupied republic;
4. To begin disarming and disbanding of the armed forces of each occupied republic. To disarm the public, police, and all militarised organisations;
5. To entrust guarding installations to our soldiers, including the maintenance of garrisons;
6. To begin decisively to Sovietise the occupied republics;
7. To establish a Baltic Military District in the territory of the occupied republics, with headquarters in Riga. To appoint as its commander Col.-Gen. Comrade Apanasenko (presently Commander of the Central Asian Military District). Staff of the District is to be drawn from the staff of the 8th Army;
8. To undertake work in the territory of the military district and to ready it for war (construct fortifications, reorganise railroads, build roads and highways, warehouses, set aside reserves, etc.).[23]

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[21] At dawn on 15 June 1940, a group of Soviet soldiers attacked border posts in Lithuania and Latvia. One border guard was killed in Lithuania, one civilian and three border guards were killed in Latvia.

[22] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Stankevičs, E. *Latvija padomju militāristu varā. 1939.–1999.* Rīga: Latvijas okupācijas izpētes biedrība, 2011, 46. lpp.

[23] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря,* с. 587.



Fig. 2. Red Army soldiers taking part in a demonstration on 5 July 1940 in Riga. Photograph by Eduards Kraucis (LVKFFDA, No. 132524N)

The reaction of J. Stalin to this report is not known; however, future developments in the Baltic States proceeded along the lines of this report. Promises made in Moscow by Molotov to the Baltic ambassadors, that the sovereignty of the Baltic States would be respected after entry of the additional military contingents, were not honoured, in fact, they were broken. The Soviet Union selected the new Latvian government and other government officials; and, in the presence of the Soviet Army, organised elections for the Saeima (Parliament) that were likened to a farce. The new puppet government was able, already on 5 August 1940, to accomplish the incorporation of Latvia into the USSR. Meanwhile, the troops of the USSR People's Commissariat of the Interior, as of 26 July 1940, had already started to secure the "new Soviet border" along the coast line of the Baltic Sea, including the stationing of warships at sea. The independence of Lithuania and Estonia was abolished in the same manner more or less simultaneously. Soviet propaganda described these events as "a socialist revolution" that took place in the Baltic States.

Political processes in Latvia, as in the other Baltic States, were actively organised, executed, and safeguarded by the presence of the Red Army and troops of the USSR People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. Soviet soldiers took part in meetings and demonstrations in support of Soviet government; they also took an active part in organising elections to the Saeima, arranging transportation of voters to polling stations and guarding these stations. Soviet (Russian) soldiers participated in the wide-ranging arrests and mass deportations that took place on 14 June 1941.

The Baltic Military District, with headquarters in Riga, was formed on the basis of a decision taken on 11 July 1940 by the USSR People's Commissariat for Defence, i.e. without waiting for the incorporation of Latvia into the USSR. The Baltic Military District was comprised of units stationed in Latvia, Lithuania, and the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast) in Russia.

On 17 August 1940, the area of the Baltic Military District was enlarged to include the Soviet units stationed in Estonia, subtracting at the same time those deployed in the western part of the Kaliningrad Region; the name was also changed to the 'Special Baltic Military District'.[24] The combat forces stationed in the Special Baltic Military District were continually increased (Table 1) in the run up to the outbreak of hostilities between the Germany and the USSR.

[24] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря*, с. 595.

Table 1

Increase in military forces stationed in the Special Baltic Military District, 1940–1941[25]

	1 August 1940	20 October 1940	22 June 1941
Corps	5	9	10
Divisions	15	23	25
Brigades	3	4	4
Manpower	173 014	295 907	369 702
Tanks	1025	1558	1549
Armoured vehicles	257	434	394
Aircraft	675	1316	1344

An extensive programme of military construction was implemented, with some local residents forced to take part. Fourteen new airfields were built in Latvia for which the Soviet Latvian government allocated 2027.6 ha.[26] Artillery firing ranges were created in the districts of Riga, Daugavpils, and Madona for which the Latvian government, on 13 February 1941, allocated land and 233 000 roubles.[27] Three large fuel storage facilities were established in Latvia for the benefit of the Baltic Fleet; due to the outbreak of hostilities with Germany, the construction of these facilities was not completed.

The process of liquidation of the national armies of Latvia, and those of the other Baltic States, began from the first days of occupation. The first group of Latvian soldiers and army officers were sent to a filtration camp at Jukhnov (in Russia) at the end of June 1940. In all approximately 800 Latvian army officers and non-commissioned officers were politically repressed, out of whom many were shot.[28]

The remnants of the Latvian army were renamed the 24th Rifle Corps and integrated into the Red Army. The Red Army took over all military equipment and ammunition belonging to the Latvian Army, as well as army warehouses, workshops, airfields, camps, coastal defence equipment and hydroplanes, test ranges, hospitals, barracks and living quarters. Coastal defence equipment, hydroplanes, and weapons belonging to the Latvian Navy were handed over to the Baltic Fleet. The cabinet post of a Latvian Minister for War was abolished on 27 September 1940, and the ministry itself ceased to function on 15 March 1941.

From the autumn of 1940 onwards, the residents of Latvia were subject to compulsory military service in the Red Army. Existing local offices of the Latvian War

[25] Мельтюхов, М. Прибалтийский плацдарм (1939–1940). *Возвращение Советского Союза на Берега Балтийского моря*, с. 595.

[26] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Stankevičs, E. *Latvija padomju militāristu varā. 1939.–1999.*, 46. lpp.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Strods, H. Padomju okupācijas otrais posms Latvijā (1940. gada sākums – 1941. gads). *Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti. 13. sējums. Totalitārie okupācijas režīmi Latvijā 1940.–1964. gadā. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas 2003. gada pētījumi.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 86. lpp.

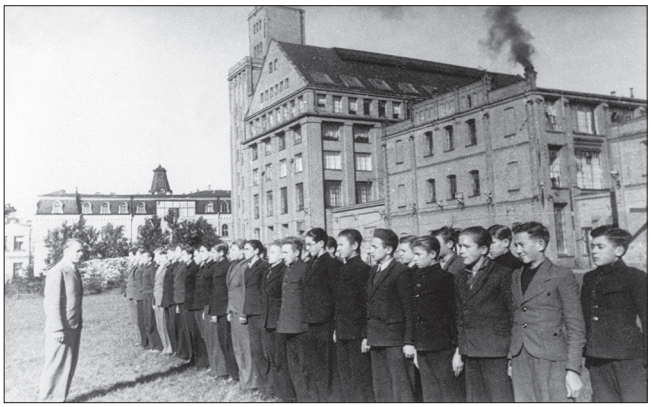


Fig. 3. Workers from the factory *VEF* undergoing military training in the summer of 1940. (LVKFFDA, No. 27981N)

Administration were transformed into War Commissions for the purposes of identifying individuals subject to military service; these commissions were part of the Special Baltic Military District.

The Soviet Union immediately began to reorganise industry in the occupied and annexed territories. Not only privately-owned companies and factories were nationalised, their production was reoriented toward Soviet military needs, and they became part of a unified military industrial complex. This complex was created in the Soviet Union just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, assigning priority to military production; and, it was subject to control by the Communist Party and the Soviet central authorities.

The first Soviet military manufacturing orders in Latvia were placed with the nationalised factories in August 1940. The State Electrotechnical Factory (*VEF*) was immediately subordinated to the USSR People's Commissariat for the Electrical Industry, and began to produce autopilot equipment and automatic course indicators for military aircraft. The Liepāja Wire Factory began to manufacture spades and axes for field engineers, while the Tosmare facilities at Liepāja Naval Port were transferred to the Red Flag Baltic Fleet to repair warships and submarines.

The attack by Nazi Germany against the USSR on 22 June 1941 interrupted the second Soviet occupation of Latvia.[29] Neither the emplacement of military bases in Latvia in 1939 nor the deployment of additional Soviet military contingents in 1940 was sufficient to defend Latvia against a German occupation. The armies of Nazi Germany needed only 18 days to capture the entire territory of Latvia. The Red Army retreated chaotically, blowing up some of the new military installations, abandoning others intact, including weapons. The government of Soviet Latvia fled together with the Soviet army, as did its most active supporters.

Soviet military forces in Latvia, 1945–1991

There were approximately one million Red Army soldiers in the Baltic States at the end of the Second World War. The third Soviet occupation displaced the Nazi occupation of Latvia. As one of the victors of the Second World War, the Soviet Union had no intention of withdrawing its armed forces from the Baltic States or renouncing their annexation.

[29] The first Soviet occupation took place in 1918–1919, during Latvia's War for Independence.

Reorganisation of the Red Army in the Baltic States was started after the Second World War, just as it did all over the Soviet Union, orienting it towards meeting peacetime needs. The Red Army was substantially reorganised and renamed the Soviet Army in February 1946. The concept of "Army fronts" was abolished, and, over the period 1960–1990, the Soviet Union was divided into 16 military districts.[30] The Baltic Military District, established on 9 July, originally comprised the territories of Latvia and Lithuania, but in 1946 it was enlarged to include the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation (formerly part of Prussia including the city of Königsberg). Estonia was included from January 1956 onwards — previously it had been part of the Leningrad Military District. Latvian national military units formed during the Second World War within the Red Army (the 201st Latvian Rifle Division, later the 43rd Latvian Guards Rifle Division, the 308th Latvian Rifle Division, the 130th Latvian Rifle Corps) were either reorganised or disbanded, so that by 1956 they no longer existed. National army units might not display loyalty to a unitary Soviet Homeland and their existence could stir up anti-Soviet sentiments, in particular, in the Baltic States.

The overall size of army units was substantially decreased in the Baltic States as elsewhere. In Riga alone a total of 27 281 members of the military were demobilised by the end of 1947.[31] A large fraction of these demobilised personnel opted to live in Latvia, although they had been born in other Soviet republics. They were allocated living quarters in Riga and in other large cities in Latvia; good jobs were found for them. In the autumn of 1945, military personnel occupied more than 20% of the available housing stock.[32] So as to lessen Latvian nationalism, demobilised individuals, who previously had never lived in Latvia, were given positions of responsibility. The Russian language increasingly displaced use of the Latvian language in the army, as well as in civilian administrative offices.

Prisoners of war were extensively employed during the post-war period as a workforce to repair war damage to the civilian economy, as well as in rebuilding military infrastructure. There were 89 000 prisoners of war in Latvia in 1945, out of which 60 000 were assigned to reconstruction work.[33] By the second half of the 1950s, the military infrastructure in Latvia was fully renewed and adapted to military needs of the period; at that time, the Baltic Military District consisted of approximately half a million personnel.

After the end of the Second World War, the Baltic Fleet was rapidly refurbished and strengthened; the fleet was not part of the Baltic Military District, but was commanded directly from Moscow. After undergoing a series of reorganisations, it regained its official designation as the Red Flag Baltic Fleet in 1956. The naval port at Liepāja was fully renewed between 1945 and 1956; and, a new naval base was built in Riga. The Baltic Fleet refurbished older ships and took delivery of new conventional warships and submarines, which were built at shipyards in Leningrad and Kaliningrad.

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[30] Феськов, В. И., Калашников, К. А., Голиков, В. И. *Советская Армия в годы «холодной войны» (1945–1991)*. Томск: Издательство Томского университета, 2004, с. 6.

[31] Отчет о трудоустройстве на 1 декабря 1947 года. LVA, 270. f., 1c. apr., 304. l., 167. lp.

[32] *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991.* Dokumentu krājums. Rīga: LVA, 1999, 297. lpp.

[33] Письмо СНК ЛССР от 29 августа 1945 года. LVA, 270. f., 1s. apr., 205. l., 59. lp.

The Red Flag Baltic Fleet was supported by naval aviation consisting of several tens of aircraft located at airfields close to the Baltic Sea coast. Fortifications were built at or near the coast, backed by coastal artillery and equipped with radar.

The stationing militarised border guards at the western borders of Latvia and those of the other Baltic States was one of the first acts taken after the end of the Second World War to seal these borders. During 1944/1945, 30 000 civilian refugees, the majority being Estonians fleeing Nazi as well as Soviet occupation, crossed the Baltic Sea in small fishing boats to reach Sweden.[34] This flood of refugees was one of the reasons why the western border of the Baltic States urgently needed to be secured by the Soviets. The Baltic Border Guards District, with headquarters in Riga, supplied troops stationed along the border. This district was neither part of the Baltic Military District of the USSR Ministry of Defence nor of the Red Flag Baltic Fleet, but from 1956 onwards, it reported to the Committee for State Security (*KGB*). Armed border guards were stationed at sea as well as on land, and they had at their disposal observation posts, radar systems, patrol boats, submarines, helicopters, light aircraft, and other equipment.

Another militarised force, established in Latvia immediately after the war, consisted of units from the Army of the Ministry of the Interior. This force supported the Soviet militia to quell disturbances and rebellions; and, during peaceful times, it also conveyed prisoners and served as guards at prisons and corrective labour camps. From 1944 to 1953, these troops carried out mass arrests and military clearing operations against national partisans; they were involved in the March 1949 deportation of tens of thousands of civilian residents of Latvia to Siberia.

The presence and actions of all of the various military personnel of the Soviet military units, the majority of them being citizens of Russia and the other Soviet republics, that used using Russian as the sole language of communication, did not provide security for the native residents of Latvia; instead, they instilled fear. The situation was exacerbated by deportations and arrests during the time of Stalin; many crimes were being committed by military persons, i.e. their brutal actions. All of Latvia had seemingly become a large military base; the presence of Soviet uniformed personnel, whose behaviour was often cynical, was commonplace in cities and other populated locations.

New important developments, those that took place in the Soviet Armed Forces during the late 1950s, had consequences for Latvia and the other Baltic States. With the advent of nuclear weapons and missiles, the role of foot soldiers in any possible conflict was greatly diminished and many thousands were demobilised. Anti-aircraft artillery units progressively were disbanded and replaced by antiaircraft missile units; these units were supported by specialised engineering brigades. In 1959, the first nuclear-tipped intermediate range ballistic missiles were installed in Latvia at Bārta; a number of other modern missiles were deployed at the same time. The Soviet Union created the Strategic Missile Forces on 17 December 1959; under their command were placed the relevant units stationed in Latvia, the number of which increased over time.

[34] Trapans, A. *Soviet Military Power in the Baltic Area.* Stockholm: Lettiska Nationella Fonden, 1986, p. 50.

These units were no longer part of the Baltic Military District and were under the command of the 1st Strategic Rocket Army with headquarters in Smolensk.

New weapons and a new geopolitical situation in Europe, including formation of the Warsaw Pact bloc, were reflected in a new military doctrine adopted by the Soviet Union that provided the basis for a new Soviet military strategy. Based on the Soviet experience during the Second World War, a number of military districts were combined to form strategic "directions and theatres" for the conduct of military operations. The most important of these was the "Western Theatre", alongside the "North-West Theatre" and the "South-West Theatre". The Baltic Fleet was also included in the Western Theatre, together with the Belorussian Military District and the Carpathian Military District; after June 1991, it also included the Baltic Military District. All of these military districts were to form a single front in any conflict with NATO. The leading edge of this front would consist of the Western Group of Forces in East Germany, the Northern Group in Poland, the Central Group in Czechoslovakia, as well as the national armies of East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.[35] The wartime role assigned to the military districts, those adjacent to the Western Combat Theatre, was to reinforce attacks by the first echelons, but not to carry out separate military offensives. The task of the Baltic Military District, supported by the Baltic Fleet, was to capture Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, Southern Norway, and, if required, the occupation of Sweden.[36] The importance of the military districts in the Western Combat Theatre was confirmed by the creation of a unified command in 1984 for the entire theatre of military operations, including all military units in the territory.[37]

Internal political developments in Czechoslovakia in 1969, and even more so after those in Poland in 1980, were sufficient grounds for the Baltic Military District to be placed on a higher state of combat readiness, including the calling up reservists for three months of training. One of the largest military exercises, "Zapad-81", was held near the borders of Poland, wherein a decisive role was assigned to units of the Baltic Military District.

After the Second World War, Soviet military doctrine provided for defence against any attack; however, from 1956 to 1987, its doctrine was oriented towards a sudden, rapid, and massive attack against NATO countries, using conventional and nuclear weapons.[38] It was envisioned that enemy armies would be defeated, taking prisoners and their territory occupied to prevent enemy aggression against the socialist countries. During the 1970s, the Soviet Union relied upon the carrying out a lightning-war concept in Europe, with envisioned success in the first days of any conflict to prevent

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[35] *NATO – Warsaw Pact Force Mobilization.* Simon, J. (Ed.). Washington: The National Defense University Press, 1988, p. 82.

[36] Trapans, A. Soviet Military Power in the Baltic Area, p. 40.

[37] *NATO – Warsaw Pact Force Mobilization,* p. 84.

[38] Sokolovski, V. D. *Soviet Military Strategy.* A Translation from the Russian with analysis and annotation by H. Dinerstein, L. Goure, T. Wolfe. Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1963, pp. 404, 405; *War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War Threat Perceptions in the East and West.* Mastny, V., Holtsmark, S. g., Wegner, A. (eds.). London, New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 15–117; Гриневский, О. *Перелом. От Брежнева к Горбачеву.* Москва: Олма-Пресс, 2004.



Fig. 4. (Map) USSR regional theatres for military operations in Europe and the military districts. Information taken from: *The Military Balance 1991–1992.* London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1991, p. 41

NATO the use of its strategic nuclear weapons. Western experts have cast doubt on how realistic these plans were, including the soundness of Soviet military doctrine and its poor appreciation of the situation in Europe.[39]

The Armed Forces of the Soviet Union reached their peak, in terms of modernisation and combat capabilities, at the end of the 1970s. The Soviet Armed Forces had grown both, quantitatively and qualitatively throughout the 1960s and 1970s. They had, in terms of military potential, come very close to NATO conventional forces and had achieved parity in strategic nuclear capabilities.[40] The Soviet forces deployed in Latvia as part of the Baltic Military District, those of the Red Flag Baltic Fleet and the

[39] *A Soviet Strategy and New Military Thinking.* Leebaert, D., Dickinson, T. (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 7–24.

[40] Scott, H. F., Scot, W. F. *The Armed Forces of the USSR.* Third edition, revised and updated. Boulder: Westview Press; London: Arms and Armour Press, 1984, p. 404; Золотарев, В. А., Путилин, Б. Г. *Месть за победу: Советский Союз и холодная война.* Москва: Военная книга, 2014, с. 442–443.

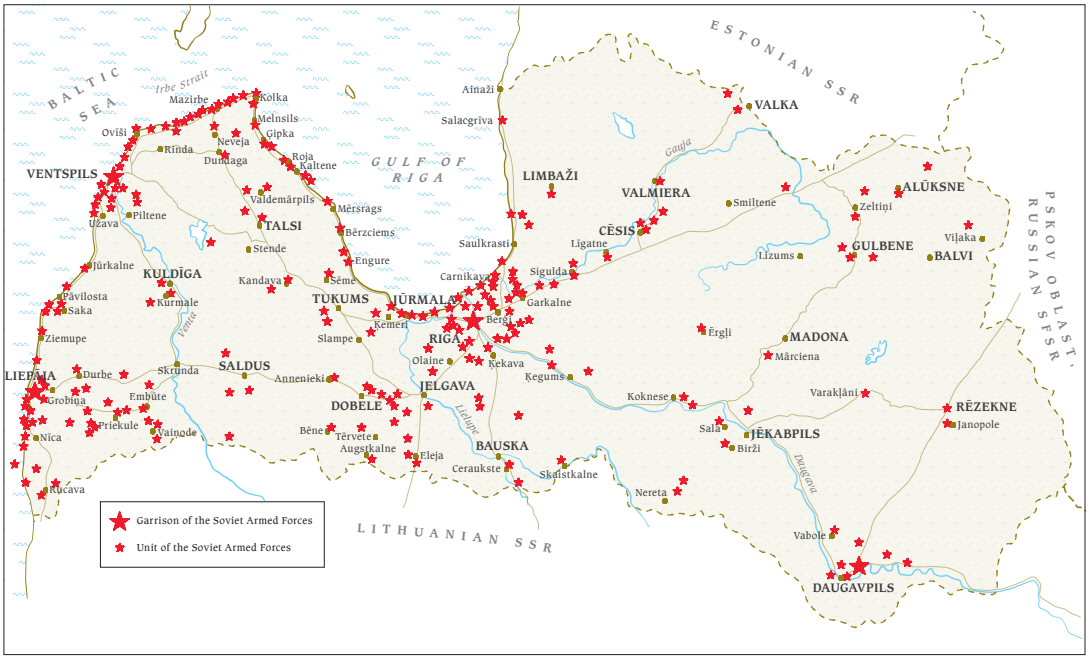


Fig. 5. (Map) Disposition of USSR military units in Latvia in 1980. Data collected by Ilgonis Upmalis

Baltic Border Guards District, were not an exception; however, given their geopolitical significance, they were preferentially developed and modernised. The territory of the Baltic States became less important with regard to ballistic missiles. Strategic missiles were able to achieve a greater range thanks to technological advances; and, they also could be mobile so that stationing them closer to NATO territory was no longer necessary. Locations deep within the USSR were more secure.

During the last decade of the existence of the USSR and before its actual and legal demise, Latvia had become an area with the greatest concentration of Soviet military forces. At various times during the period of occupation, 3009 military units were sited at more than 700 locations in Latvia (missile sites, airfields, training areas, tank units, infantry units, warehouses, radio detector sites, barracks, etc.).[41] Military installations were found in 24 out of the then 26 territorial districts of Latvia.

During the period of 1945 to 1990, the Soviet Army was granted in Latvia 100 060 ha of cleared and well-kept land for its use,[42] with destruction of more than 5000 farms.[43] The largest individual plots of land were turned over for military

[41] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Stankevičs, E. *Latvija padomju militāristu varā. 1939.–1999.* Rīga: Latvijas okupācijas izpētes biedrība, 2011, 176. lpp.

[42] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Dinevičs, J., Gorbunovs, A. *Latvia – USSR Military Base. 1939–1998: materials and documents on the Soviet army's presence in and withdrawal from Latvia.* Riga: Zelta grauds, 2012, p. 70.

[43] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Stankevičs, E. *Latvija padomju militāristu varā. 1939.–1999.,* 105. lpp.

training, airfields, warehouses for weapons and ammunition, and installations to observe objects in space.

There were 170 000 military personnel stationed in the Baltic Military District before its transformation in 1991 to the North-Western Army Group,[44] with approximately 45 000 individuals stationed in Latvia,[45] not counting members of the Baltic Fleet and border guard troops. During the 1980s, one multi-service army (11th Army) was present in the Baltic Military District, deployed in the Kaliningrad Region, one air army, an anti-aircraft corps, altogether 16 divisions. These included three tank divisions, seven motor-rifle divisions, four aviation divisions, one anti-aircraft division, and one artillery division. There were also numerous brigades of various types (a heavy large-calibre artillery brigade, communications and rear support brigades).[46] District headquarters was located in Latvia, together with the air army headquarters, several air force units, and headquarters of the anti-aircraft corps and the anti-aircraft missile and radio-technical brigades, a tank training division, a heavy large calibre artillery brigades, communications, rear support and various other units.[47]

Only the A category divisions of the Soviet Army were maintained at nearly 100% strength and at full readiness during peacetime. In case of war, the B and V category divisions would be brought up to full strength within 1–10 days by calling up reservists, while otherwise they were at kept 25–80% strength. The G category divisions were normally lightly filled, and it was foreseen that they would be brought up to full strength through mobilisation on a time scale of 10–30 days.[48] Call-up of reservists would also allow creation of new divisions for which equipment and weapons were stored in anticipation of need.

Compulsory military service was the mechanism instituted to create reservists in the Soviet Union. Military service comprised an active phase that lasted 2–3 years, followed by short training periods and was obligatory for all males. There were approximately 360 000 individuals in Latvia subject to military service.[49] Registration of reservists and those subject to military service was carried out by the War Commissariat of the Latvian SSR, whose offices were located in all district centres. Youth from Latvia were sent for their military service to Russia or to the Central Asian republics, this as part of the nationalities policy implemented by the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in pursuit of creating a united Soviet

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[44] Феськов, В. И., Калашников, К. А., Голиков, В. И. *Советская Армия в годы «холодной войны» (1945–1991)*. Томск: Издательство Томского университета, 2004, с. 8.

[45] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Dinevičs, J., Gorbunovs, A. *Latvia – USSR Military Base. 1939–1998: materials and documents on the Soviet army's presence in and withdrawal from Latvia,* p. 116. Different numbers of military personnel are given in various sources. This may be understood in the light of not all units forming part of the Baltic Military District or the Baltic Fleet. A number of units in Latvia reported to other parts of the military hierarchy located outside of Latvia.

[46] Постников, С. И. В далеких гарнизонах. Москва: Полигон-пресс, 2004. Accessible at: http://militera.lib.ru/memo/russian/postnikov_si/index.html (site last visited 05.02.2016).

[47] Ibid.

[48] Феськов, В. И., Калашников, К. А., Голиков, В. И. *Советская Армия в годы «холодной войны» (1945–1991)*, с. 34.

[49] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Stankevičs, E. *Latvija padomju militāristu varā. 1939.–1999*, 207. lpp.

nation or peoples; likewise, youths from other Soviet republics were sent to serve in the Baltic Military District and the Baltic Fleet.

The military had at their disposal a large number of different training and education centres scattered across Latvia. The most important part of this system in Latvia comprised three large institutions of higher military education, where military officers and specialists for deployment all over the Soviet Union were trained. The J. Alksnis Higher Military Aviation Engineering School was located in Riga, as was the S. Biryuzov Higher Military-Political School; the Higher Military Aviation Engineering School was located in Daugavpils.

One of the tasks of the Soviet military was to ensure order all over the Soviet Union. This task was particularly important in the nationally oriented Baltic republics where part of the native populations had lived in the independent Baltic States. Pavel Batov, Commander of the Baltic Military District, had reported to Moscow, well before a number of leading members of the CC of the Communist Party of Latvia (CPL) were accused of nationalism and removed from office, that an anti-Russian "fifth column" was forming in Latvia and that it posed a threat to security in the military district under his command.[50] Relations between members of the Baltic Military District normalised during the 1960s and remained that way until the National Awakening during the second half of the 1980s, at which time public demands were made with increasing frequency that the Soviet Army be withdrawn from Latvia. After the declaration of independence by the Republic of Latvia on 4 May 1990, the members of the Soviet Armed Forces and Soviet students from military schools repeatedly intervened in the internal political life of Latvia and even resorted to a number of violent acts. During the radical communist putsch of August 1991 in Moscow, Col. Gen. Fyodor Kuzmin, Commander of the Baltic Military District, representing the State Emergency Committee in Latvia, organised the armed seizure of all major government buildings in Latvia, the cessation of all Latvian media functions and threatened to arrest Anatolijs Gorbunovs, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia.

The Baltic Military District was neither legally nor politically subordinated to the Soviet Government of Latvia, although it collaborated with it concerning issues related to army supplies and social-military matters. Demands issued by the Soviet Army were not discussed, usually simply accepted without question. This also applied to relations with local authorities and executive committees.

The Soviet military units stationed in Latvia were almost completely independent of the local authorities since they possessed their own infrastructure necessary for military matters and for daily life. The military personnel and their families had their own quarters, kindergartens, schools, health clinics, sanatoriums, clubs, cultural centres, shops, services, and sports facilities. The army managed their own forests in which they had installed hunting lodges. Military personnel and their families also benefitted from access to urban housing and infrastructure.

The CPSU allowed the Soviet military personnel to have privileged status in Latvia and in the other Soviet republics. In order to implement these policies, the supreme

[50] Trapans, A. *Soviet Military Power in the Baltic Area*. Stockholm: Lettiska Nationella Fonden, 1986, p. 44.



Fig. 6. Stanislav Postnikov, Commander of the Baltic Military District, bids farewell at Riga Airport to Republican Party and Government leaders, and senior military personnel, on the occasion of being transferred to another military district. 1983. Photo from the personal archive of Ilmārs Bruņinieks

political institution in Latvia, the Bureau of the CC of the CPL, included the Russian Commander of the Baltic Military District and several other high ranking officers as members. On the other hand, the First Secretary of the CC of the CPL was a member of the Military Council of the Baltic Military District, the highest institution of the military district.

A carefully conceived and extensive system of militarisation of society was introduced in Latvia to ensure popular support for the Soviet Armed Forces and to improve their ability to carry out missions; it also provided the necessary manpower reserves. At the core of this system was compulsory military service for young men and the training of reservists. Militarisation began even prior to the start of school and studies at institutions of higher learning by engaging children and youth in military sports and military studies, readying them to receive certification of their readiness for work and defence. Militarisation of society was enhanced by the adoption and use of an extensive military related terminology during everyday activities: "work front", "shock-work", participation in "gathering the harvest", etc. Military education and preparedness for war continued at the workplace and with the help of an extensive civil defence system, participation in which was compulsory for all employees.

Several civic organisations were established to provide support for the Soviet Armed Forces, of which the largest and most important one was the Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Fleet (*DOSAAF*), that was created in 1951 in Latvia by combining two similar organisations. The goal of this Soviet organisation was to enhance the strengthening of the Soviet defence capabilities and to ready workers to defend the Socialist Homeland. Their chief tasks were to popularise military knowledge, to instil in individuals the combat traditions of the Soviet people and those of the Soviet Armed Forces, to prepare youth for military service, to ensure implementation of civil defence measures, to take part in training of various defence specialists and to encourage the development of military sports. Various study centres and sports clubs were part of the *DOSAAF* system. The Central Committee of *DOSAAF* of the Latvian SSR was headed by Soviet generals on active duty with the Armed Forces, and included other high ranking Soviet military officers. *DOSAAF* committees and primary organisations were present in cities, the various regions of Latvia and at public undertakings and offices. *DOSAAF* activity in Latvia was terminated after restoration of independence.

Militarised border guards at the Western external border of the Soviet Union along the coastline of Latvia



Fig. 7. Soviet border guards at the coast of the Baltic Sea. 21 May 1980. Photograph by Viktors Ļisicins (LVKFFDA, No. 98540N)

The Soviet Union began setting up an "Iron Curtain" immediately after the end of the Second World War, to "defend itself from Western imperialists". The border of Latvia along the Baltic Sea formed an important segment of this Iron Curtain both geopolitically and in military-technical terms.

The guarding of the external border of Latvia, and those throughout the USSR, was entrusted to the *KGB*. The *KGB* established a Border Guards Army that had a professional military structure; its activities were complemented by secret operational features, including an extensive group of informers among the local residents. These troops, with headquarters in Ventspils, guarded the Latvian border with posts scattered along the entire length of the Baltic Sea coastline of Latvia.

Starting in 1946, several secret decisions were taken by the USSR Council of Ministers and the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR: to simplify and to raise the effectiveness of guarding the borders, a "forbidden zone", 2 km inland of the Baltic Sea coast, was established in which transgressions were subject to possible administrative and criminal penalties. Local residents could continue to live in their homes, but visitors required special permission.

A forbidden zone extending inland by 6 m from the high-water line was ploughed every evening; this zone stretched for several hundred kilometres and was "a zone meant to record footprints". The area was examined every morning by border guards accompanied by specially trained dogs, to determine whether anyone had arrived in Latvia illegally, or, perhaps, had attempted to flee.

Soviet border guard units were stationed in every village along the coast stretching nearly as far as Jūrmala, and also in Riga. Their task was to stand watch night and day along the coast using modern technical equipment, including powerful light projectors and detectors. Border guards also possessed speedy boats and helicopters. Soviet marines and border guard troops would arrest offenders.

Liepāja, one of the largest cities in Latvia on the coast of the Baltic Sea, was decreed in 1950 to be within the forbidden zone. Residents were subject to a number of restrictions, and outside visitors could come to the city only with special passes. The commercial (civilian) port at Liepāja, which was the second largest in Latvia, was closed. The special status of Liepāja was rescinded in 1960 when it started to hinder

the development of the city; also, the effectiveness of restrictions was questioned. The remainder of the coastal zone remained closed up until the restoration of Latvia's independence.

Soviet Land Forces

Land forces had played an important and decisive role in all previous global conflicts. The situation changed from the 1960s onwards due to the advent of strategic nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, including the development of anti-missile defence systems. Nevertheless, from the 1960s through to the 1980s, land forces, in terms of manpower, continued to be the largest contingent within the Armed Forces of the USSR and within the Baltic Military District.

The Soviet Land Forces were comprised of motor-rifle armies, tank armies, the missile forces and artillery, army aviation, paratroopers, communications units, engineering units, and anti-missile units, including radio technical units, radiation, chemical and biological warfare protection units, support units in the rear. All of the different types of land forces listed above were located in Latvia at division, brigade, or regimental levels, with the exception of airborne paratrooper units. However, two paratrooper divisions were stationed in Lithuania, next to Latvia.

Land force numbers were substantially reduced after the Second World War. Other changes followed throughout the 1960s, but subsequently, there were no further essential changes.

The 24th Tank Training Division was one of the most important land force units deployed in Latvia; its headquarters was situated in Dobele, with two tank regiments stationed there (the 177th and 193rd), and one regiment (the 203rd), in Ventspils. This tank division, which was transformed into the 54th District Training Centre, was adequate to turn out well-prepared new tank commanders and specialists to meet all of the needs of the Baltic Military District. There were 138 tanks, 80 armoured personnel carriers (БМЛ), and 20 armoured transporters (БТР) stationed in Latvia.



Fig. 8. Tanks manoeuvring at the Ādaži training ground. 9 September 1986. Photograph by Boriss Koļesņikovs (LVKFFDA, No. 133030N)

The 13th Guard Motor Rifle Regiment was stationed at Ādaži, close to Riga; this regiment bore the name of the Latvian Red Riflemen. It benefitted from a very good training base and good living conditions; various delegations, including foreign ones were frequent visitors. The 1261st Artillery Training Regiment was located at Ādaži and the 901st Separate Shock Battalion at Alūksne. The 489th Helicopter Regiment, stationed at Paplaka, near Liepāja, in-

cluded 23 MI-24 (Hind)[51] attack helicopters and 8 MI-8 (Hip) transport helicopters.

The 230th Rear Services Division provided material technical support in Latvia; it included a communications brigade, vehicles, chemical defence units, and even a pipe brigade.[52] Supply of the enormous amounts of fuel needed for the extensive collection of military hardware, especially under wartime conditions, meant that road and rail transport had to be supplanted by pipelines. Soldiers also managed enormous warehouses at Cekule, Garkalne, Inčukalns, and Mangaļsala containing thousands of mines, reactive rounds and other ordnance including the strategic fuel depot at Borovka near Krāslava with a storage capacity of 600 000 tons of petroleum products.



Fig. 9. Augusts Voss, Member of the CC of the CPSU, First Secretary of the CC of the Latvian CP, presents the travelling Red Banner to a leading military unit at Adaži on 5 April 1979. Photograph by Boriss Koļesņikovs, Jevgeņijs Fadejevs (LVKFFDA, No. 95652N)

Several training areas were set aside in Latvia for use by Soviet Land Force units. The largest training area was located at Ādaži, close to Riga. It was developed from 1946 onwards, on the basis of a similar Latvian National Army facility, and in 1967, this area occupied 17 626 ha.[53] Similarly, a tank training area at Lilaste (in the district of Riga), three training areas in the district of Dobele, one at Užava in the district of Ventspils, and a firing range in the district of Daugavpils, all occupied substantial land areas. A training facility for a civilian defence regiment was created at Suži.

Anti-aircraft defences

At the beginning of the 1950s, a Soviet anti-aircraft defence system was installed in Latvia to interdict any eventual enemy attack. Its purpose was to defend the western borders of Latvia and of the Soviet Union, with special emphasis placed on strategic military facilities, military airfields, and naval ports, as well as the larger coastal cities (Liepāja, Ventspils) where command centres and certain military units were located. Riga, the capital of Latvia, also had an air-defence system, given that it was the site of the Headquarters of the Baltic Military District, various military headquarters and command centres, hundreds of military installations and military factories.

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[51] NATO reporting names are given in parentheses.

[52] Феськов, В. И., Калашников, К. А., Голиков, В. И. *Советская Армия в годы «холодной войны» (1945–1991)*, с. 59.

[53] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Dinevičs, J., Gorbunovs, A. *Latvia – USSR Military Base. 1939–1998: materials and documents on the Soviet army's presence in and withdrawal from Latvia*, p. 54.



Fig. 10. Anti-aircraft defence unit at the training exercise "Neman" of the Baltic Military District on 5 May 1979. Photograph by Viktors Ļisicins (LVKFFDA, No. 95541N)

The air-defence system in Latvia consisted of three anti-aircraft brigades of the 27th Corps of the 6th Leningrad Special Army of Air and Air-defences with their headquarters located at Cimdinieki near Liepāja. From 1980 to 1986, all air-defence forces and aviation deployed in the region reported directly to the commander of the military district. The Corps command centre for these forces was located at Mucenieki not far from Riga. A new modern command centre adjacent to this operating centre was under construction for many years and was not completed by the time that the army was withdrawn from Latvia. Each anti-aircraft brigade included missile and technical units and in order to attain the goals and perform the tasks assigned to the air-defence system; these units were located at more than 50 sites throughout Latvia. Each unit was equipped with radar, to identify enemy aerial targets, and with ground-to-air missile launchers to destroy such enemy air targets. The 54th Interceptor Regiment was stationed at Vaiņode to strengthen the defence of the Western air border; as of 1986, this unit made part of the 27th Air Defence Corps, which in turn reported to the 6th Air Army. Modern interceptor aircraft were permanently on alert; as of 1987, the most modern Soviet interceptor aircraft, the "SU-27" (Flanker), was used to make intercepts against unidentified flying objects approaching the Soviet air space. The 27th Corps also included a radio-technical brigade with headquarters at Tukums. This brigade consisted of three radio technical centres and two radio technical battalions.

The following modern surface-to-air missile systems were deployed in Latvia for air-defence purposes: S-75 (SA-2 Guideline), S-125 (SA-3 Goa), S-200 (SA-5 Gammon) and S-300 (SA-10 Grumble). Many of these missiles had a range that far exceeded mere air-defence needs. In 1974, missiles in the anti-aircraft system S-200 M "Vega M" (SA-5 Gammon) had a range of 250–300 km, while missiles of the S-200 D "Dubna" system were even more effective and had a range of 300 km with an operational ceiling of 40 km.

Missiles that constituted the "Vega" and "Dubna" anti-aircraft systems were 11 m long, weighed 7–8 tons and had warheads that contained at least 80 kg of explosives and ten thousand 6–8 mm fragmentation pellets to maximise destruction of a target. Four solid-fuel rocket boosters were used to launch a missile, but its flight to a target was sustained by a liquid-fuelled rocket engine that burned several tons of highly toxic

fuel. The first computers assembled in the Soviet Union, "Plamya", were used for on-board guidance; but, they were unable to ensure precise delivery of a warhead to the target. From 1979 onwards, these systems were replaced by a more modern anti-aircraft system, the S-300 (SA-10, Grumble). Such systems were deployed first in the Baltic Military District and in Latvia, which highlights the strategic importance of this region.[54]



Fig. 11. Storage bunker for nuclear-tipped anti-aircraft missiles "Granit" located at "Birznieki", Olaine civil parish, Riga District. 1993. Photograph by Ilgonis Upmalis

Missiles comprising the S-75, S-200, and S-300 air-defence systems could carry nuclear warheads. Systems with nuclear warheads were deployed at several sites in Latvia, including those at "Birznieki" near Riga, at Skulte and at "Lūžņa" in the district of Ventspils. These systems were intended to be used to destroy large groups of enemy aircraft and were part of a nuclear defensive shield.

The capabilities of the Soviet anti-aircraft defence systems did not always live up to expectations, even in Latvia. When in 1955 the US spy plane, the U-2, overflew the Baltic region, the 15th Air Army interceptor regiment stationed at Rumbula, Riga, was unable either to intercept it, or to shoot it down. A single-seat "Cesna 172" civilian airplane, piloted by Mathias Rust, penetrated Soviet air space undetected from Finland, and its demonstrative landing in the Red Square on 28 May 1987 pointed to real weaknesses in the Soviet air-defence system.

Soviet Air Force units

The Soviet Union not only kept its air force units in Latvia after the end of the Second World War, but continued to develop and reinforce them. This is understandable first, by the threat posed by nuclear weapons delivered by air, as those delivered to the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945; second, defence of the Soviet Union, or in case of it attacking another country, its land forces would require adequate air support. The proximity of the territory of Latvia to NATO and the Scandinavian countries was strategically significant from the perspective of the military interests of the Soviet Union.

Renovation of the existing airfields of Latvia and the building of new ones for the Soviet Air Force began immediately after the end of the Second World War and continued until 1987. Prisoners of war were used for such work immediately after the

[54] Постников, С. И. В далеких гарнизонах.

Second World War and specialist airfield construction units were also formed by the Soviet Air Force. Longer and smoother runways were needed to accommodate new aircraft types as well as more modern support equipment. At the end of the 1980s, there were 11 well-equipped airfields with concrete runways in the relatively small territory of Latvia. At the same time, several tens of airfields with gravel runways were kept in reserve; although they were not in active use, they nevertheless occupied thousands of hectares of land. Creation of these airfields had meant the liquidation of several hundred farms during the post-war period.

All types of aircraft for various military uses were stationed in Latvia: interceptors, attack aircraft, fighter-bombers, transports and reconnaissance aircraft. A large portion of the military aviation units in Latvia were part of the 15th Air Army with headquarters in Riga. A number of military aviation units also belonged to other groupings of the armed forces, i.e. the Red Flag Baltic Fleet and the Air Defence Forces. The Air Force units stationed in Latvia had the newest kinds of military aircraft and helicopters.

Various types of the Soviet Air Force units were located all across Latvia. The 372nd Fighter-Bomber Aviation Regiment was deployed at the airfield near Daugavpils and included the modern MIG-27 (Flogger D)[55] and SU-27 UB (Flanker) jets, as well as military transport aircraft. The 899th Aviation Regiment was stationed at a new airfield at Lielvārde (completed in 1973) and, as of 1980, it included the MIG-27 attack aircraft. The 886th Special Aviation Reconnaissance Regiment, based at Jēkabpils, consisted of SU-17 (Fitter), SU-24 (Fencer) and various other fighters and training aircraft. Military transport helicopters MI-6 (Hook) and MI-8 (Hip) were based at Jelgava airfield. In Riga, a special squadron of the Baltic Military District, with aircraft and helicopters, was stationed adjacent to the civilian airfield. The special Anti-submarine Squadron of the Red Flag Baltic Fleet, consisting of the IL-38 aircraft, was also stationed there. From 1944 onwards, the Red Flag Baltic Fleet Regiment of Naval Fighter-bombers was based at Tukums. This regiment had fighter-bombers, SU-17 and SU-24, the latter configured to deliver nuclear weapons and air-to-ground nuclear tipped missiles. The 14th Special Reconnaissance Squadron, equipped with Tu-141 "Strizh" drones, was based at Mārciena in the district of Madona, including the 275th Special Drone Training Squadron. An air regiment of fighter-interceptors was based at Vaiņode.

The Soviet Air Force set aside a number of training areas in Latvia that created many problems for the local residents until the restoration of Latvian independence and before the use of these areas was halted. The Target Range at Pape, near Liepāja, used by naval aviation, occupied 4449 ha. Reclamation of this seriously polluted territory is yet to be completed 25 years after restoration of independence. The Aviation Target Range at Zvārde near Saldus occupied 24 419 ha, and included a number of cemeteries. Aerial bombs and rockets fired from aircraft struck inhabited areas outside of the bombing range in 1955, 1967, 1979, 1986, and 1989; in 1967, three bombs fell in

[55] Aircraft and helicopters are given their NATO reporting names.

the town of Saldus itself. One person was killed and five were injured in an incident in 1955.[56] In case of need, training took place in areas designated in the Baltic Sea and in the Gulf of Riga, with these zones being temporarily declared off-limits.

Nuclear weapons and strategic installations

The first nuclear-capable intermediate range ballistic missiles were installed in Latvia very soon after they were successfully tested in the Soviet Union. In 1960, two missile units were stationed in great secrecy at Bārta, a marshy area not far from Liepāja, but far from prying eyes. Each unit consisted of four intermediate range missiles, R-5M (SS-3 Shyster), whose range was up to 1200 km, each missile had a nuclear warhead of 0.3–1.0 megatons.

Utmost attention was paid to ensuring secrecy in regard to strategic missile sites. This is demonstrated by the attempt to establish a strategic missile base in eastern Latvia, in Mārciena (district of Madona); the construction of this site began in 1957. Once this site was discovered by US intelligence services, all construction ceased at the beginning of 1960. Today we can still see traces of this construction.

Already in 1958, following advances in missile technology, the Soviet Union developed the R-12 (SS-4 Sandal) missile that had twice the range (2100 km) and carried a nuclear warhead with a yield of 2.3 megatons. The Soviet Strategic Missile Force began to deploy missile regiments *en masse* from early 1960 onwards in the vicinity of their western borders that included Latvia. The new R-12 missiles could, if launched from the territory of the Baltic Military District, reach NATO military targets, the potential enemy in all of Western Europe. A few years later, the Soviet Union introduced another new missile, the R-14 (SS-5 Skean) that had a range of 4500 km.

During the early 1960s, there were five intermediate range strategic missile regiments in Latvia: the 115th Missile Regiment stationed at Paplaka (Bārta), the 307th at Jelgava, the 867th at Dobele, the 344th at Priekule, and the 30th at Alūksne. A regiment usually comprised three units, two of which had surface launched missiles and one with silo-based missiles usually consisting of either four R-12 and R-12U missiles (the latter in silos), or only just three R-14U missiles. Missiles placed in underground silos were more difficult to detect from space, but they did not essentially differ from surface-launched missiles. These missiles used liquid fuel that had highly corrosive properties. Fully loaded with fuel, an R-12 missile weighed 42 tons; it was 22 m long and had a diameter of 1.65 m. The dimensions of R-14 missiles were similar, except that they weighed twice as much or 86 tons.[57]

Concrete launch pads, with central metallic missile positioners, were used for surface launches. Many military specialists were needed to insert missile targeting information and to prepare it for launch; additionally, special equipment was used, all of which was difficult to hide. Preparations for launch took approximately three hours.

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[56] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Dinevičs, J., Gorbunovs, A. *Latvija – PSRS karabāze. 1939–1998: materiāli un dokumenti par padomju armijas atrašanos Latvijā un tās izvešanu,* 99. lpp.

[57] Феськов, В. И., Калашников, К. А., Голиков, В. И. *Советская Армия в годы «холодной войны» (1945–1991)*, с. 134.



Fig. 12. Removable silo cover for an Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile of type R12U, site located in Tirza civil parish, near Gulbene, 25 years after departure of the Soviet army. August 2014. Photograph by Tālavs Jundzis

Missiles placed in silos could be readied for launch much more quickly, since many processes were automated. A silo was 24 m deep with a width of up to 7.5 m. The missile was placed in a cylindrical metal shell. Tubes and cables from the silo were connected to an underground control centre. Above ground a massive 80 ton cover would be moved sideways by special equipment just prior to launch. A missile, connected electrically and otherwise to the silo, but without the nuclear warhead, and empty of fuel, would be changed every six months for preventative maintenance.

Four strategic missiles, either of the R-12 or the R-12U type, were located physically close together (60–70 m separation). Site security was at the highest imaginable level; it was ensured by soldiers posted as sentries, by multiple rows of barbed wire, electrical fences, minefields, and the most modern alarm systems. An additional specialised military unit was located within this perimeter, with its own additional security system. This unit was called the Technical Repair Brigade, but they were in fact responsible for maintaining the nuclear warheads. This unit did not report to the regimental commander, but instead to the 12th Main Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defence, and, in operational matters, to the 6th Directorate of the Strategic Missile Force. From 1960 onwards, the launch of any intermediate range strategic missile was fully centralized and could only take place after a decision was taken by the Supreme Command.

The Soviet Union was able to develop better intermediate range missiles only in the mid and late 1970s, whereupon the "Pioneer" mobile launchers for the RSD-19 missile (SS-20 Saber) appeared in place of missiles at fixed sites. These missiles were considerably more precise and had solid-fuel propellants replacing the highly toxic liquid fuel. Solid fuel presented no danger to the crew. All R-14 and R12U missiles were deactivated, including those stationed in Latvia. The last fixed missiles were removed from Latvia in 1982–1983. During the 30 years that they were stationed in Latvia, not a single strategic missile was launched. The missiles had been placed on higher alert in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and also in 1968 during the events in Czechoslovakia. The newer missiles had a range of up to 5000 km, and it was decided to deploy these deeper within the Soviet Union. Inter-continental ballistic missiles have never been stationed in Latvia.

The Baltic Fleet was also equipped with ballistic missiles. Six Project 629A submarines (Golf II) were part of the 16th Division of the 14th Baltic Fleet Squadron based in Liepāja. They carried ballistic missiles R-21 (SS-N-5 Serb) with a 1 megaton nuclear

warhead. Each submarine had three such missiles. These intermediate range missiles could reach targets up to 1400 km distant and could be fired from a moving submerged submarine. Submarines carrying ballistic missiles were stationed in Latvia between 1976 and 1989. Nuclear-powered submarines were not stationed in the Baltic region as the Baltic Sea was too shallow. However, in addition to ballistic missiles, the Baltic Fleet had at its disposal a variety of delivery systems for nuclear warheads.



Fig. 13. A Project 629A submarine carrying three nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles at the naval port in Liepāja. 31 October 1989. Photograph by Andris Gertsons (LVKFFDA, No. 150269N)

Nuclear weapons held in Latvia were not solely meant for delivery by ballistic missiles. A few nuclear-tipped missiles, ready for use, were available to air-defence units and intended for use to destroy large groups of enemy aircraft. The Baltic Fleet also possessed nuclear torpedoes and depth charges. Some air force units in Latvia possessed tactical nuclear weapons. In 1989, there were 185 tactical nuclear weapons in Latvia, 325 in Lithuania, and 270 in Estonia.[58] Some were meant to be used as free fall bombs or to be delivered by cruise missiles; in addition, there were tactical missiles, artillery and mortar ammunition, shipboard missiles, anti-shipping and anti-submarine torpedoes, mines, depth charges and stationary and portable land mines. In Latvia, a number of robust warehouses were built to store nuclear weapons; these were under strict guard and located in Tukums, Liepāja, Bārta, and elsewhere. Information about the presence of nuclear weapons in Latvia was kept from the public; and, it is not



Fig. 14. Nuclear storage bunker of the Baltic Fleet at Tukums airfield. 1994. Photograph by Ilgonis Upmalis

[58] Шевцов, А. И., Ижак, А. И., Гавриш, А. В., Чумаков, А. Н. *Тактическое ядерное оружие в Европе: перспективы обеспечения стабильности.* Днепропетровск: Национальный институт стратегических исследований, Днепропетровский филиал, 1999, с. 8.



Fig. 15. New construction at Skrunda of the early warning system of type "Darjal UM" to detect ballistic missiles. Centre foreground, Valdis Birkavs, Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia. 4 May 1994. Photograph by Uldis Briedis.

known whether the then leaders of Latvia at that time were informed at all.

Detailed information about the nuclear weapons warehouse at Tukums and its contents became available only after withdrawal of the Soviet Army in 1994. This facility had held 24 nuclear weapons. These included bombs for surface and undersea use; and, they could be delivered either by aircraft or helicopters. Warheads were also stored at this facility for air-to-surface missiles Kh-28 (AS-9 Kyle). These were for use against enemy radar stations. A missile fired from an aircraft up to 75 km distant from its target would then lock on to emitted signals and fly at low altitude to the target, hugging the ground.

The use of tactical nuclear weapons in Latvia would have to have been authorised by Moscow, as no nuclear missile could be launched without such permission. The situation was different in the case of nuclear mines and similar weapons where use of them would be at the discretion of the commander of the military region. The possibility of weapon use, not sanctioned by Moscow, became more likely as instability grew within the USSR, and dissatisfaction spread throughout the army. In the autumn of 1991, this caused grave concern within the Soviet Government.[59] It is for this reason that all nuclear weapons were removed from Latvia before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union, as did the USA, sought to defend against their opponent's intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Soviets also developed technical capabilities to gain intelligence by eavesdropping on satellites and communications. Two super-secret facilities, both significant elements of the Soviet Strategic Space Force, were located in Latvia.

One of the first long-range (early warning) radar stations in the Soviet Union, the "Dnestr-M", was built in great secrecy at Skrunda in Latvia; it was equipped between 1963 and 1969. The Skrunda Early Warning Station, together with other similar installations, would provide early warning of an attack by inter-continental ballistic missiles against any part of the Soviet Union. The Skrunda facility was able to detect and identify the trajectory of enemy ballistic missiles at a distance of 3–4 thousand kilometres in the sector stretching from the south of Spain to Murmansk on Kola Peninsula. Rapid advances in technology required that the Skrunda facility be constantly modernised. The "Dnestr M" radar station, only recently having been brought into service,

[59] Gaidar, E. T. *Collapse of an Empire: Lessons for Modern Russia.* Washington: The Brookings Institution, 2007, pp. 245, 247.

already had to be modernised in 1972, and a new "Dnepr-M" facility (both stations had the same NATO reporting name, Hen House) was built alongside. The construction at Skrunda of an even more modern facility of the "Darjal – UM" type (Pechora) started in 1985; this radar had over-the-horizon detection capabilities. Construction was never completed and the empty building was demolished on 4 May 1995.

The electronic eavesdropping facility located at Irbene, in the district of Ventspils, was considered to be another, no less important Soviet strategic installation in Latvia. Officially it was the 649th Separate Cosmic Radio Signal Detection Post. It was part of a super-secret Soviet system, "*Звезда*" (A Star), to monitor activities in outer space, with four of the constituent installations located abroad in Cuba, Burma, Vietnam, and Mongolia. The task of this system was to detect and intercept US telemetry and communications sent via satellite. The facility in the district of Ventspils was one of the first of its kind to be built in the USSR; constructed in 1967–1969, it was also one of the largest (the facility consisted of three antennae-receivers).[60] Presently, a single antenna-receiver at this facility is used for peaceful civilian research.

The presence of all of these important strategic installations on the territory of Latvia implied increased threat to the residents of Latvia in time of war. Any enemy would seek to destroy the ballistic missile launch sites first, followed by the other strategic anti-missile installations.[61]

The Baltic Fleet

The Soviet Baltic Fleet returned to Latvia after the surrender of Germany in 1945, to the bases it had occupied before the war; in addition, new bases were established. During the first ten years after the end of the Second World War, naval forces stationed on the territory of Latvia were part of the Southern Baltic Fleet (the 4th Fleet), but from 1955 onwards, it was part of the Baltic Fleet with its principal base of operations at Baltiysk in the Kaliningrad Region (Russia). The naval bases of the Baltic Fleet in Latvia were located at Liepāja and at the estuary of the Daugava (Daugavgrīva, vicinity of Rīga), whereas land-based naval detachments and small naval facilities were located at many places along the coastline of the Baltic Sea. Given that the Baltic Fleet had aviation capabilities, and that it relied upon air-defence units and other land-based forces, considerable territory was provided to the Baltic Fleet for airfields and training areas. There were four repair facilities for fleet use, one of which was located at Liepāja and another one at Daugavgrīva.

In military terms, the Baltic Fleet was the weakest of the four naval fleets maintained by the Soviet Union.[62] In 1991, the Baltic Fleet comprised 232 warships, 32 diesel submarines, 328 aircraft and 70 helicopters, 16 coastal missile launch systems, coastal border guard units, and naval infantry units, various operational and tactical

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[60] Станция космической разведки «Звезда» Вентспилс-8 (MS/11965). Accessible at: www.geocaching.su/?pn=101&cid=11965 (site last visited 05.02.2016).

[61] Золотарев, В. А., Путилин, Б. Г. *Месть за победу. Советский Союз и холодная война,* с. 745.

[62] Феськов, В. И., Калашников, К. А., Голиков, В. И. *Советская Армия в годы «холодной войны» (1945–1991)*, с. 206.



Fig. 16. Meeting in Riga of sailors from the Baltic Fleet and from the German Democratic Republic Navy, 8 August 1970. Photograph by Jevgeņijs Fadejevs (LVKFFDA, No. 49599N)

units, and supply units in the rear.[63] The capabilities of this fleet were modest in comparison to those of the Northern Fleet or the Pacific Fleet. This may be understood by looking at the geographic location of the Baltic Sea, since there was no avenue open for retreat by the fleet in case of war; the shallow depth of the sea precluded the stationing of nuclear submarines. The Baltic Fleet had, therefore, limited importance in terms of defending territory and supporting land forces, although its warships and submarines on occasion participated in military operations in the North Sea, the Mediterranean, and even in the Indian and Atlantic oceans.

Besides having rather small and outdated vessels, the Baltic Fleet also had modern submarines and warships armed with missiles. Missiles and torpedoes could also deliver nuclear warheads. Warehouses that were used to store nuclear warheads, missiles and torpedoes were located on the territory of the naval port at Liepāja; these were guarded by air-defence units having ground-to-air missiles that could carry nuclear warheads. In the 1970s, a new warehouse for nuclear weapons for the Baltic Fleet was built in the woods at Bārta near Liepāja, at the site where previously the very first ground-based nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles had been stationed in Latvia.

The Baltic Fleet left a legacy, as did other military units withdrawn from Latvia, of polluted territories, contaminated with petroleum products and dotted with containers filled with toxic missile fuel. For example, today 29 underground 60-ton storage reservoirs filled with such fuel remain in Latvia at the firing range at Pape, formerly used by Soviet naval aircraft. In 1988, the Baltic Fleet destroyed 440 free fall bombs filled with phosphorus. Disposal was carried out in the face of elementary rules of common sense, resulting in a large amount of phosphorus being dispersed into the sea once the bombs were blown up. Pieces of phosphorus, long immersed in water, when washed ashore appeared to be amber, and were collected by residents. The amber-like pieces of phosphorous, held in a hand or placed in pockets, would dry out and spontaneously ignite, producing deep flesh burns. Even today, such pieces of phosphorous are occasionally washed ashore, and, through their similarity in appearance to amber, pose a threat to people.

[63] Егоров, В. Г., Сопин, Ю. Г. *Передислокация сил Балтийского флота в ходе его реформирования (1991–1994).* Тайфун: Военно-технический альманах, № 4, 2002 (44), с. 27.

Withdrawal of the military forces of the former USSR from Latvia, 1992–1994

On 29 August 1991, once the August putsch in Moscow had failed, and international recognition began to be accorded of the independence of the Baltic States, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia formally requested that the USSR fully withdraw its military forces from Latvia in a manner and on a schedule agreed with the Republic of Latvia. The decision taken that day by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia emphasised the fact that "the presence of Soviet Armed Forces in Latvia is one of the last vestiges in Europe as a consequence of the criminal Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact".[64] The Council of the Baltic States, in a statement adopted on 5 October 1991, reiterated the need to eradicate the last consequences of the Second World War, and called upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its military forces from the Baltic States by 1 December 1991.[65]

On 27 January 1992, the Russian Federation announced that subsequent to collapse of the Soviet Union, it was assuming jurisdiction over the Soviet Armed Forces and the Baltic Fleet.[66]

Negotiations began in Latvia, on 1 February 1992, concerning the manner and timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet military units from Latvia. It was agreed, during this first round of discussions, that the presence of the Armed Forces of the former USSR in Latvia was foreign armed forces and that they were to be withdrawn from the sovereign territory of Latvia.[67] The Latvian delegation did not raise the point that these military units were present in Latvia as the consequence of the occupation and annexation of Latvia by the USSR, with their attendant legal status under international law. This omission rendered the Latvian position considerably more difficult during the subsequent negotiations and made resolution of various related problems more difficult. The negotiations lasted for 26 weeks.

A number of legal arguments supported the Latvian demands that the armed forces of the former USSR, now under Russian jurisdiction, be unconditionally withdrawn. Latvia was not a legal successor to the USSR and after regaining its independence Latvia neither benefitted from any rights accrued by the USSR, nor was it prepared to assume any responsibilities of the USSR. The Russian Federation and the

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[64] Par PSRS Bruņoto Spēku pilnīgu izvešanu no Latvijas Republikas. Latvijas Republikas Augstākā Padomes 1991. gada 29. augusta lēmums. Accessible at: likumi.lv/doc.php?id=68780 (site last visited 05.02.2016).

[65] Statement on the Immediate Withdrawal of the USSR Army from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Vilnius, October 5, 1991. *Together. Council of the Baltic States. 1990–1992. Documents.* Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of International Political and Economic Relations, 1996, p. 73.

[66] Указ Президента Российской Федерации от 27.01.92 № 52 о переходе Северо-Западной группы войск и Балтийского флота под юрисдикцией Российской Федерации. Accessible at: http://bestpravo.com/rossijskoje/jm-dokumenty/f4n.htm (site last visited 05.02.2016).

[67] Komunikē par Krievijas Federācijas valsts delegācijas un Latvijas Republikas valsts delegācijas sarunām Rīgā 1992. gada 1. februārī. LVA, 270. f., 8. apr., 35. l., 83. lp. Communique About Negotiations between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation State Delegation in Riga on February 1 1992. LVA, 270. f., 8. apr., 35. l., 121.–122. lp.



Fig. 17. Negotiations between Latvia and Russia concerning withdrawal from Latvia of military forces of the former USSR. Meeting at Jūrmala on 28 September 1993. The delegation from Latvia is seated along the left side of the table. Photograph by Uldis Pāže.

international community recognised such a legal status for Latvia. Therefore, Latvia was under no obligation to share responsibility with Russia, neither for withdrawal of the armed forces of the former Soviet Union, nor for reimbursement for the damages caused by these forces.

Within a few months after the start of negotiations, a set of demands was presented to the Latvian negotiators, on 6 August 1992, by A. Kozyrev, the Foreign Minister of Russia. Russia was prepared to withdraw its military forces by the end of 1994, if the Baltic States would agree to nine points, of which the salient ones were:

- To allow retention of a number of Russian strategic installations in the Baltic States for a limited period of time;[68]
- To refrain from demanding compensation from the Soviet Union (Russia) for damages caused during the time period 1940–1991;
- To participate in the construction of living quarters for Russian military personnel after repatriation taking advantage of international resources and agreeing to specific numbers and completion times;
- To resolve compensation issues for property left behind by departing Russian military units;
- To guarantee social benefits and personal rights for Russian soldiers and retired military personnel, and their family members who would stay on after completion of withdrawal.[69]

Russia was particularly interested in continued operation of the Skrunda Early Warning Radar (phased array) facility in Latvia. The position of the Russian delegation was that the strategic interests of Russia in this installation could not be ignored.

Following the complex, difficult, and lengthy negotiations, it was agreed that the operation of the old Skrunda facility would continue in Latvia until August 1998, but

[68] Latvijā Krievijas delegācijas sarunās pieprasīja atstāt trīs karabāzes: Skrundas radiolokācijas staciju ballistisko raķešu identificēšanai; kosmiskās telpas kontroles sistēmas staciju "Zvaigznīte" pie Ventspils un Liepājas kara ostu.

[69] See Statement by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev to Baltic Foreign Affairs Ministers in Moscow, August 6, 1992. *Negotiations with the Russian Federation Concerning the Withdrawal of Russian Military Forces from the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania. July 29, 1991 – September 8, 1992.* (Chronology and Collection of Documents). Vilnius: Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992, pp. 149–151.

that the new 18-storey building under construction at Skrunda to house the "Darjal-UM" unit would be demolished by explosives, with this task financed by the USA; the demolition occurred on 4 May 1995.[70] After the operation of the old facility ceased, Russia was able to live without a replacement for 3 years and 8 months until a new facility became operational at Baranovichi in Belorussia.

The issue of retired military personnel turned out to be no less contentious than the continued operation of the existing Skrunda facility. In fact, these retired individuals were part of the Soviet occupation army and were attired in civilian clothes. In fact, they had sworn allegiance to the Soviet Union and the Soviet Army. Their numbers included former army intelligence and counterintelligence specialists, members of the political ideology units, also members of Special Forces units and paratroopers, and, of course, officers of the Committee for State Security (*KGB*).

The ethnic Latvians felt threatened during the negotiation period for the simple reason that the number of non-Latvian (Soviet migrant) residents approached one-half (48%) of the total population. Also, the number of retired military personnel in Latvia was at least 25 000, of which 22 320 were legalised by the Latvia–Russia Agreement.[71] When the number of family dependents is taken into account, the number staying behind in Latvia was in the range 75 000–100 000.

The resolution of the question concerning compensation for damages caused by the presence of the Armed Forces of the USSR and the disposition of physical property became a fundamental issue of whether the Soviet military was stationed in Latvia as a consequence of occupation and illegal annexation, or whether the people and government of Latvia had accepted the Soviet military in compliance with international legal norms. The positions adopted on compensation for damages caused by the Soviet Armed Forces and rights to property that had been administered by these armed forces were diametrically opposed, which was understandable in the light of the opposing views on the question of occupation and annexation of Latvia by the Soviets.

The Latvian negotiators did not have information available to them during these talks about the nature and extent of the environmental damage caused by the presence of Soviet military units on the territory of Latvia. It was only later that the situation was clarified when previously secret documents could be accessed; it was discovered only then that approximately 5000 tons of chemical weapons and other weapons containing chemicals had been dumped into the Baltic Sea close to the Latvian shore.[72]

The departing Russian military units left behind hundreds of hectares of military training areas at Daze, Pape, and Aldus that were cluttered with explosives and bomb fragments, including sub-soil contaminated with rocket fuel and other toxic materials. Hundreds of buildings and other structures were left behind which could not readily

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[70] Beyrle, J. R. *Case study: The Withdrawal of Russian Military Forces from the Baltic States.* National Defense University, National War College, 1996, p. 18.

[71] Protokols pie Latvijas Republikas Valdības un Krievijas Federācijas Valdības vienošanās par Latvijas Republikas teritorijā dzīvojošo Krievijas Federācijas militāro pensionāru un viņu ģimenes locekļu sociālo aizsardzību. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 144 (275), 10.12.1994, 5. lpp.

[72] Dažas ziņas par 1998. gada 28. septembrī nogremdētajiem lādiņiem, t.sk. to koordinātes atrodamas arhīvā. LVA 270 1s. f., 373. l., 219. lp.

be adapted for further use: underground missile silos, weapons depots, underground bunkers, etc. These installations, including nuclear missile bases that were located on such land, were returned to the rightful owners as a result of denationalisation; however, they had no idea what to do with this legacy.

More than twenty years after departure of the last Russian Armed Forces, by investing considerable amounts of its own financial resources, Latvia has been able to clean up only a small fraction of the contaminated territories that it has inherited from Russia; Latvia has not received any assistance or compensation from Russia.[73] Environmental and other damage caused by the Soviet Army, Navy and Air Force have been assessed at billions of euros to decontaminate and to restore such sites to their former pre-Soviet occupation era condition.

International support was important at several junctures to resolve problems that arose during withdrawal from Latvia of the Armed Forces of the former USSR. The OSCE was the first international organisation that, in a declaration adopted in July 1992, clearly and unequivocally stated that foreign army withdrawal from the Baltic region was imperative.[74] The General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) adopted two resolutions, one on 25 November 1992, the other on 15 November 1993, calling for the urgent need for Russian Armed Forces to be withdrawn from the Baltic States. The second UN resolution also set up a mission to observe the process of withdrawal of the Russian Armed Forces. Support by international organisations and Western states facilitated a successful end to the negotiations and the signing of the accords.

Negotiations for the withdrawal of the Armed Forces of Russia from Latvia continued up until 30 April 1994. On this date the inter-governmental agreements on withdrawal of armed forces under the jurisdiction of Russia were signed in Moscow by: Guntis Ulmanis, President of Latvia; Valdis Birkavs, Prime Minister of Latvia; Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation; and Oleg Soskovets, First Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation. Four separate agreements were signed, the most important of which defined the manner in which the Russian armed forces would be withdrawn from Latvia; and, a second agreement defined the continued temporary operation of the old Skrunda Early Warning Radar Station; the third and fourth agreements concerned the status and social guarantees for retired Russian military personnel and their family members.[75]

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[73] International donors from Norway, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, as well as Canada and the USA have provided technical assistance to assess the extent of the clean-up problem and measures that are necessary.

[74] Helsinki Summit Declaration. Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe. 1992 Summit. Helsinki 9–10 July 1992. Accessible at: www.osce.org/mc/39530?download=true (site last visited 05.02.2016).

[75] Latvijas Republikas un Krievijas Federācijas līgums par Krievijas Federācijas Bruņoto spēku pilnīgas izvešanas no Latvijas Republikas teritorijas nosacījumiem, termiņiem un kārtību un to tiesisko stāvokli izvešanas laikā; Latvijas Republikas un Krievijas Federācijas vienošanās par Skrundas radiolokācijas stacijas tiesisko statusu tās pagaidu funkcionēšanas un demontāžas laikā; Latvijas Republikas valdības un Krievijas Federācijas valdības vienošanās par Latvijas Republikas teritorijā dzīvojošo Krievijas Federācijas militāro pensionāru un viņu ģimenes locekļu sociālo aizsardzību; Protokols pie Latvijas Republikas valdības un Krievijas Federācijas valdības vienošanās par Latvijas Republikas teritorijā dzīvojošo Krievijas Federācijas militāro pensionāru un viņu ģimenes locekļu sociālo aizsardzību. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 144 (275), 10.12.1994, 3. lpp.



Fig. 18. Signing of the agreements between Latvia and Russia about withdrawal of former USSR military units from Latvia. Moscow, 30 April 1994. Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation (left), Guntis Ulmanis; President of Latvia (centre) and Valdis Birkavs. Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia (right). Photograph by Arturs Dubrovskis

The agreement on withdrawal of the Armed Forces foresaw that the process would terminate no later than on 31 August 1994, with the exception of the Skrunda Early Warning Radar Station, whose continued operation was accepted by Latvia to end no later than on 31 August 1998 and its dismantling by 29 February 2000. This Agreement legalised dismantling of all military facilities and the retirement of all military persons that had happened previous to 28 January 1992, when the Russian Federation assumed jurisdiction over the Soviet Armed Forces, although Russia ought to have assumed liability for the consequences arising during the entire period that these forces were present in Latvia. Latvia assumed sole responsibility for the demolition of buildings left behind by the Russian Armed Forces, and the reclamation of littered and contaminated land that was of no use to anyone. The Agreement even refers to "justified compensation" for property left behind.

The Russian Federation, as the successor state to the USSR, has only partially accepted its international legal liabilities in regard to Latvia. I. Ziemele has noted that, "Russia has always scrupulously assessed the degree to which this succession is in its interests and this is particularly the case for bilateral relations and debts."[76] The position taken by Russia, seeking to obtain all possible benefits for itself based on the principle of state continuity, shirks from her responsibilities under this same doctrine, when she fails to follow customary international law.[77] The Baltic States were unable to persuade Russia to accept liability for damages caused by the presence of the Soviet Armed Forces and other related consequences in the Baltic region; their efforts were not enough during these negotiations to have it included in the final agreements.

The treaties that were concluded are still evaluated rather differently in Latvia and in Russia. Some see these as an example of diplomatic success, others as a politically-motivated compromise. Still others regard these as unwarranted concessions granted

[76] Ziemele, I. *State Continuity and Nationality: the Baltic States and Russia. Past, Present and Future as Defined by International Law.* Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2005, p. 93.

[77] Mälksoo, L. *Illegal Annexation and State Continuity: the case of the Incorporation of the Baltic States by the USSR. A Study of the Tension between Normativity and Power in International Law.* Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2003, p. 258.

to Russia. If we examine these treaties in the light of the present relations of Russia with Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and other states, it appears more and more that the achieved compromise was to the advantage of Latvia.

The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex in Latvia

The needs of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, in terms of equipment and weaponry and what was needed to equip mobilised reservists in time of war, were almost entirely met by individual state national industries of the Soviet Union. This was not an easy task under the conditions of an arms race. During the Cold War, until the mid-1970s, the Soviet Union lagged behind in weapons development by about 4–5 years with respect to the USA, except for the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles.[78]

It was necessary to make the already militarised Soviet economy more effective and competitive, turning out better quality products, given ever increasing military requirements and the need to increase Soviet military assistance to countries of the Warsaw Pact and to the satellite countries. A new system was introduced in 1965 for the Military-Industrial Complex (MIC) of the entire Soviet Union. The MIC subordinated the national economy of each state of the Soviet Union to meet the needs of the military by assigning these needs a special priority. The MIC consisted not only of the defence industry, but also included all of Soviet science. The MIC, under the leadership and control of the Communist Party, combined industries, military personnel, state bureaucracy, and the scientific and technical elite to meet military production orders, from the highest political level to those engaged in production.

Political control of the new Military Industrial Complex was achieved through the USSR Defence Council, chaired by the General Secretary of the CPSU. The highest executive body was the Military Industrial Committee of the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers. The MIC consisted of 9 ministries that were solely devoted to military matters, 10 ministries that were only partially related to defence matters, and the USSR Academy of Sciences.[79] Almost all of the ministries of the Latvian SSR, and the majority of enterprises reporting to them, including the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR and many of its institutes, were involved in carrying out production orders placed by the MIC.

In Latvia there were 12 large factories, each employing 500 or more workers, which reported directly to the USSR Ministry of Defence; it also included 8 smaller factories or specialised military workshops, each employing 200–300 persons.[80] The director and administrative personnel at these facilities were military persons, whereas the others were employees on contract who had agreed to non-disclosure of military

[78] Bystrova, I. Russian Military-Industrial Complex. *Papers Aleksanteri*, 2011, No. 2, p. 6; Золотарев, В. А., Путилин, Б. Г. *Месть за победу. Советский Союз и холодная война,* с. 442, 461.

[79] Bystrova I. Russian Military-Industrial Complex, p. 7.

[80] Upmalis, I., Tilgass, Ē., Dinevičs, J., Gorbunovs, A. *Latvia – USSR Military Base. 1939–1998: materials and documents on the Soviet army's presence in and withdrawal from Latvia*, p. 162.



Fig. 19. Aleksei Gubarev, Deputy Director of the 30th Central Scientific Research Institute for Military Aviation and Space Technology of the USSR Ministry of Defence at the Olaine production facility "*Biohim reaktiv*". 1980

secrets. The military factories in Latvia benefitted from the most modern technologies and equipment; however, they were modest in size and rather insignificant in application. These factories did not produce complete military equipment or weapons, but produced only selected components. Most of the military factories in Latvia repaired military equipment, starting with tanks and armoured personal carriers to engines for submarines, ships, and aircraft. During times of peace, they received equipment for repair that had been damaged in international conflicts in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Egypt, and elsewhere. In case of a war with NATO, the military factories in Latvia would have had to repair military equipment damaged during engagements by the Western Group of Forces in Germany and the Northern Group of Forces in Poland. These factories, their equipment and inventory, including raw materials and items that had been produced, were taken over by the Russian Federation.

Civilian factories in Latvia produced most items for the military by following the directives issued by the Military Industrial Committee of the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers, and in accordance with specifications provided for the orders placed by the relevant ministry and department. The flagships of Latvia's industry included the State Electrotechnical Factory (*VEF*), "*Alfa*" (factory number 390), "*Komutators*" (factory number 916), Riga Radio Factory (named after A. S. Popov), Riga Diesel Building Plant, and others; in addition to the production of civilian consumer products, these factories and enterprises were engaged in much larger production to fill military orders. The factory "*Alfa*" in Riga, that had produced appliances, was modernised and reorganised to such an extent that it produced almost exclusively military items, such as semi-conductors, microcircuits for ballistic missiles and cruise missiles and devices for space applications.[81] The factory "*Biohim reaktiv*" that was situated close to the town of Olaine near Riga, in addition to civilian products, also manufactured rocket fuel, and in its department "*Reagent*", at the end of the 1970s, assembled and manufactured microbiological pigments used to identify the presence of bacteriological weapons[82]. In 1972, the USSR had signed the "Convention on the

[81] О плане производства военной техники на 1959 год. LVA, 270. f., 1c. apr., 1252. l., 22.–23. lp.

[82] See Приказ Всесоюзного обьединения промышленности химических реактивов и особо чистых веществ (Союзреактив) № 5с (секретно) от 3 марта 1977 года «Об организации производства микробиологических красителей». LVA, 1310. f., 1a. apr., 7. l., 1.–2. lp.



Fig. 20. Visit to *VEF* by Lajos Czinege, Defence Minister of the Hungarian People's Republic. Riga, 1971 (LVKFFDA, No. 47815N)

Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction".

There were few industries in Latvia that produced nothing for the Soviet Military-Industrial Complex. Military items, or those intended for military use, were produced at knitting factories, garment factories, shoe factories, even food factories. In 1967, the textile factory, "*Rīgas audums*", set up a secret production facility to produce metal-covered fabric for electromagnetic radiation shielding purposes. The Liepāja Bread Factory not only produced bread for the residents of Liepāja and for military units stationed there, but each day produced 8 tons of dried bread that was set aside as reserve for use during wartime.[83] Each factory had a plan for wartime production.

Representatives of the Soviet Military-Industrial Complex worked at all civilian factories which produced items for military use; these representatives were typically military officers with assigned task to oversee and control the production of military goods, control their quality and to take delivery of such items that conformed to set standards. Given the secrecy at these facilities, few workers were aware of the purpose for the produced items and their application. Many of these factories bore no name but were identified by post office box number, with only a select few persons able to decipher this identification.

Science was allocated an important role by the Soviet MIC. Mikhail Gorbachev in his memoirs recounts that he was surprised by the fact that out of the 25 billion roubles allocated for science, some 20 billion were used to finance military research and technical development.[84] Science in Soviet Latvia was not militarised to any great extent, because of the politically uncertain situation in the Baltic States; it was not the proper place to conduct strategic research for military use.

The research conducted by scientists in Latvia, carried out for the benefit of the MIC, was focussed on: search for insulating materials for rockets and spacecraft; low-temperature plasma chemistry; improvements in optical materials; and on search for rocket fuel additives to reduce corrosion at missile sites. A number of calculation methods were developed for military applications. The successful insulating material "Ripor" was developed by scientists in Latvia, as were rocket launcher shells made

[83] Служебное письмо. 8 апреля 1963 года. LVA, 851. f., 1a. apr., 89. l., 24. lp.
[84] Горбачев, М. *Жизнь и реформы. Книга 1.* Москва: Новости, 1995, с. 334.

out of composite materials. These investigations were carried out at the Institute of Polymer Mechanics, the Institute of Wood Chemistry, the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry, the Institute of Organic Synthesis, the Institute of Electronics and Computer Science, and partly at the Institute of Biology and the Institute of Microbiology.[85]

In the 1980s, the MIC was responsible for 25 per cent of the national product, and three quarters of all research addressed the needs of this complex.[86] The MIC was the central and leading component of the national economy that allowed the USSR to reach parity with the USA in terms of armaments. However, this occurred at the expense of civilian good production, since such national production remained constant over the last twenty years of the existence of the USSR.[87]

The Soviet MIC worked in great secrecy. M. Gorbachev recounts in his memoirs that only 2–3 persons had access to information about the MIC.[88] The Soviet Union denied the existence of this complex, asserting that the military industrial complex and such policies were the features of the economies of the aggressive imperialist states.[89] Relevant publications are only now appearing; and, despite limited access to archive documents, a picture can be formed of the extent of the MIC in the Soviet Union and in Latvia during the Soviet occupation period.

The MIC in Latvia ceased to function with the collapse of the Soviet Union. With the restoration of independence, the civilian factories in Latvia, those that previously had produced military goods, were reconfigured to produce different items; this process, however, was not easy, and many factories had to close. The military factories in Latvia, directly responsible to the USSR Ministry of Defence, were closed during the withdrawal of ex-Soviet military forces; their equipment, stocks, raw products and other materials were taken over by the Russian Federation and transported to Russia.

Conclusions

All throughout its existence, the Soviet Union unceasingly sought to increase its control over the territory of Latvia and the other Baltic States, since these were geopolitically and strategically important to the Soviets. This also demonstrated their power and was perceived to be vital to their security. Military force has been important although not decisive in these processes.

The Soviet Union, in accordance with the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, integrated the territory of the Baltic States into its geopolitical sphere of interest, with the intention of transforming this territory into a military bridgehead to defend the central regions of Russia in case of a military attack. As a first step towards implementing this

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[85] Stradiņš, J. *Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija: izcelsme, vēsture, pārvērtības.* Rīga: Zinātne, 1998, p. 301.

[86] Bystrova, I. Russian Military-Industrial Complex, p. 7.

[87] Золотарев, В. А., Путилин Б. Г. *Месть за победу. Советский Союз и холодная война*, с. 465.

[88] Горбачев, М. *Жизнь и реформы. Книга 1,* с. 334.

[89] Военно промышленный комплекс (ВПК). *Военный энциклопедический словарь*. Москва: Военное издательство, 1984, с. 144.

plan, the Soviet Union compelled the Baltic States to allow stationing of Soviet troops and military bases on their territory; subsequently, the Soviets occupied these countries and illegally annexed them. The national armies of Latvia and the other Baltic States were liquidated, with military personnel discharged or killed, and some integrated into the Red Army.

The Soviet Union held on to the Baltic States after the Second World War and repressed any armed resistance by the national partisans and freedom fighters of Latvia and the other Baltic States. The territory of Latvia gained new strategic importance during the Cold War confrontations that included the potential for a military conflict between the Soviet Union, Warsaw Pact States and NATO. The Baltic States became a strategic forward staging area or territory that was readied for possible military operations as part of the Baltic Military District that also included the Soviet Baltic Fleet. The Soviet military system in Latvia, conforming to Soviet military doctrine, was less oriented towards defence, but more towards an offensive plan against the Western countries, using nuclear weapons and conventional forces.

The strategic geopolitical importance of the territory of Latvia determined the high degree of its militarisation and the stationing of modern weapons on its territory. All categories and types of military equipment were found in Latvia that were used by the Soviet Land Forces, Soviet Air Force, Soviet Navy, including military hardware of the anti-aircraft defence forces, missile forces, and other units stationed there; that included a considerable number of intermediate range ballistic missiles deployed on submarines or located at various sites in Latvia and various tactical and defensive armaments. All major military units were equipped with nuclear weapons, which were, however, withdrawn from Latvia very shortly before collapse of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Army and Fleet had exclusive rights in Latvia — their demands were not subject to discussion but had to be satisfied.

A carefully conceived and extensive system for the militarisation of the civilian population was in place in Latvia to ensure popular support for the Soviet Armed Forces. Compulsory military service for young men and the training of reservists was at the core of this system. Militarisation began at schools and continued at all the workplaces; this was carried out with the help of several Soviet civic organisations. The Soviet MIC was another aspect of the militarisation of the civilian population and the economy of Latvia, including a portion of its science: enterprises were subordinated to this complex.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation assumed jurisdiction over the Soviet Military Forces in Latvia. For two years, Latvia conducted difficult negotiations with the Russian Federation concerning the conditions for the removal of these military units from Latvia. As a result, Latvia had to assume full responsibility for the reclamation and decontamination of territories polluted by the Soviet military units, including the disposal of the military equipment litter left behind by the Russians. Additionally, Latvia had to provide social guarantees for the retired or discharged Russian military personnel and their family members who remained in Latvia.

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Ilgonis Upmalis (b. 1937), engineer, head of the Bureau established by the Government of Latvia to oversee evacuation of the armed forces under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation (1992–1995). Head of the High-voltage Laboratory of the USSR Army Military Construction Unit of the Baltic Military District (1960–1989); Deputy, Kurzeme City District Council in Riga (1989–1993); Principal Expert, Diplomatic Service of the Latvian Ministry for Foreign Affairs (1996–1999). From 2006 onwards, has made research into the presence and activities of USSR military personnel in Latvia. Has investigated places where military units were stationed, compiled a database of these sites and produced the first geographical map of Latvia showing their locations. Author of several publications about the USSR Army and the Military Industrial Complex in Latvia, including three monographs on this subject (with co-authors).

The article has been prepared based on consultations with Jānis Aivars Baškers and Andrejs Mežmalis, specialists in military matters.

Tālavs Jundzis, Zigmārs Turčinskis

RESISTANCE TO THE SOVIET AND NAZI REGIMES IN LATVIA, 1940–1985

The people of Latvia acted to defend their state by resisting Soviet occupation and illegal annexation, as well as occupation by Nazi Germany. This paper deals with continuing resistance offered to occupying powers over the time period from 1940 to 1985. National partisans (the Forest Brothers) offered armed resistance to the Soviet regime for more than a decade hoping for eventual support by Western countries. Non-military resistance was offered by members of the general public both to the Nazi regime, as well as to the Soviet regime, resorting to a variety of non-violent opposition. Although none of these forms of resistance led to their intended outcome, this opposition demonstrated the will of the people to renew their lost independent state and ensured applicability of the doctrine of state continuity to restoration of Latvian independence in 1990–1991. This article will describe the manner whereby the people of Latvia sought to defend the idea of Latvia as an independent state, and their struggle to regain independence under circumstances of an extended period of hostile occupation.

Keywords: armed resistance, dissidents, Forest Brothers (national partisans), recovery of independence, illegal publications, illegal (anti-Soviet) organisations, non-violent resistance, anti-Soviet activities, resistance movement

The initial period of an independent Republic of Latvia was brief on a historical time-scale and lasted 22 years from 1918 to 1940. Independence was interrupted by Soviet occupation followed by annexation, the legality of which was never recognised by the USA, Great Britain, France, and many other Western countries. In 1940–1941, the Soviet power introduced by force a repressive totalitarian regime in Latvia. A short time later, Latvia was invaded in 1941 by the armed forces of Nazi Germany. There followed a period of four years of Latvia ruled by a Nazi occupation regime that with equal force suppressed all efforts to renew the independent state. The hopes of men who were mobilised into the Latvian Legion, as well as volunteers, that the Nazi regime might allow eventual rebirth of an independent Latvia proved to be illusory. In driving out the Hitlerites from Latvia in 1944–1945 the Red Army ensured the return of Soviet power to Latvia. J. Stalin took advantage of inconsistent policies pursued by Western countries, and after the end of the Second World War, Latvia and the other Baltic States remained under Soviet occupation as constituent republics of the USSR. Western

countries applied the "non-recognition" policy solely as regards the illegal nature of the annexation of the Baltic States.

Between 1940 and 1953, thousands of innocent civilians were killed by the Nazi and Soviet regimes in Latvia and in the other Baltic States; repressions were carried out through mass deportations justified by class conflict precepts. It is for this reason that Professor Timothy D. Snyder (Yale) has labelled the Baltic States as "bloodlands", alongside regions that today are located in Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and part of Russia.[1] The bloody nature of the regime rendered difficult any form of non-violent resistance and civil disobedience, and provoked many illegal resistance groups to prepare for armed struggle, or to take up arms.

Armed resistance and non-violent resistance

Resistance by the people of Latvia was manifested over the period of 1940 to 1985 at which time the totalitarian nature of the regime had been modified by democratisation processes set in train by M. Gorbachev, and the regime took on various forms opposing one or the other of the occupation regimes. A number of armed incidents took place during the first period of Soviet occupation, and these occurred to a larger extent during the Nazi occupation period, when armed resistance was put up by units associated with their leader Gen. Jānis Kurelis, and also by a battalion led by Roberts Rubenis. However, the most extensive armed resistance in Latvia took place immediately following the end of the Second World War, at which time more than 12 000 Forest Brothers (national partisans) took up arms against the Soviet regime. Their groups organised cases of sabotage, blew up bridges and warehouses, attacked Soviet activists, fought representatives of Soviet power and repressive agencies, and also attacked regular Soviet army units.

The armed struggle did not lead to the desired outcome, in particular, since the size of opposing forces was highly asymmetric. Resistance fighters were few in number, their weapons poor, and their supplies irregular and difficult to obtain. Soviet authorities for their part were able to call upon the militia, their security services and associated fighting units, special irregular units (the destroyers), and regular army units in their struggle with the Forest Brothers. Already in the first year of armed struggle (1945) 1089 Forest Brothers were killed, and a further 1355 were arrested, sentenced, and either executed or deported to Siberia.[2] Once it became obvious that the Forest Brothers could not hope for military support from the West, and with their casualties continuing to mount, the impotence of the Forest Brothers became evident and their activities in Latvia came to an end in 1952–1953.

On the other hand, non-violent and non-military civil resistance did not let up during either the Nazi or Soviet occupation periods, although this resistance was

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1 Snyder, T. D. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin.* New York: Basic Books, 2010.

2 Izziņa par NKVD IB operatīvo kaujas un dienesta darbību Latvijas PSR un gūtajiem rezultātiem 1945. gadā. LVA 101. f., 9. apr., 69. l., 29. lp.

neither a mass phenomenon, nor was it adequately organised or led. Other possible forms of this kind of resistance were excluded under conditions of a totalitarian and bloody regime in place. While it was the case that up until the second half of the 1980s civil resistance mounted in Latvia, akin to the armed struggle, did not lead to the hoped-for outcome, it did help to sustain in people the idea of national independence, and facilitated National Awakening, which allowed the recovery of freedom during the early 1990s. New resistance possibilities were opened up after the accession of M. Gorbachev to supreme power in 1985, with the attendant processes of restructuring, democratisation, transparency, and openness. The form and manner in which this resistance to Soviet authority was manifested is described elsewhere in this collection of articles.

Non-violent civil resistance, or non-military resistance, is a struggle for freedom, justice, and legal rights waged by individuals, groups, even whole nations, employing psychological, social, economic, and political methods, as well as other non-military means. Oppressed peoples throughout history have often employed such methods, and many continue to do so today, in their struggle against totalitarian and undemocratic regimes, also to defend themselves against aggressors and occupying powers.[3]

Non-violent resistance is the best approach in cases of conflicts wherein the strength of opposing forces is unequal, and when it is not possible physically to vanquish an enemy. The diversity of means, forms, and methods thus employed, and their non-traditional character are an advantage when engaged in non-violent struggle.[4]

Both active and passive forms of resistance to an occupying regime are possible. Armed resistance is always an active form, but non-violent resistance may be either active or passive in nature. Active non-violent resistance takes the form of deliberate and conscious activities opposing a regime, whereas passive non-violent resistance consists of a hidden agenda of ignoring the demands and orders of a regime. This article presents an analysis of examples of active resistance.

National opposition in various forms to occupation regimes in Latvia continued uninterrupted over the entire period of 45 years studied here. This is one of the key arguments to substantiate the continued legal existence of Latvia as an independent state, its status as continuing without interruption even under the condition of being under occupation. This fact has been used by the US government in support of its policy of non-recognition policy as regards the illegal annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union.[5]

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[3] *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: the Experience of Non–violent Action from Gandhi to the Present.* Roberts, A., Ash, T. G. (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 1–8.

[4] Sharp, G. *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential.* Boston: Porter Sargent, Extending Horizons Books, 2005, pp. 49–54.

[5] See: The announcement made by the President of the United States to the UN General Assembly on 27 July 1983, Doc/38/318, 28 July 1983. Thirty–eighth session, in connection with item 86 of the provisional agenda, A/38/150/. Cited in: Grant, T. D. United States Practice Relating to the Baltic States, 1940–2000. *Baltic Yearbook of International Law.* Ziemele, I. (Ed.). Vol. 1, 2001. The Hague, London, New York: Kluwer Law International, 2002, pp. 59–61.

An investigation of the phenomenon of national resistance is warranted as this topic has received some attention in Latvia up to now,[6] but the nature and extent of this resistance during several periods has been treated only superficially. This is particularly true of the period from 1953 to 1985. The lack of documents and other evidence has meant that minimum attention has been paid to these issues by foreign investigators. A number of studies were carried out by Baltic exiles whose works suffered from their having no access to archives during the Soviet period.[7] It is possible to read several accounts of how Stalinists and Soviet authorities suppressed national resistance groups, including in the Baltic States.[8]

Denial of the ideological basis for the Nazi and Stalinist Communist regimes was a key motive for opposition, as was unwarranted repression of specific groups of people and simple refusal to accept the attendant social and economic changes. Nationalism often became a common platform for patriots and opponents of the regime, the latter often hating the regime for different reasons.[9] This article examines both armed and non-violent opposition to occupation regimes with explicit or implicit aims of renewing Latvian state independence, who sought to condemn the fact of occupation and not to accommodate it, reminding the fact of illegal annexation of Latvia and of the right to be independent. A wide variety of acts by individuals, by formal and informal groups during the occupation period to achieve their goals is defined here to constitute the resistance movement.

This article will not deal with the wide spectrum of resistance activities, including those of the Jewish, Polish and other minority groups, which were carried out in Latvia during the Nazi and Soviet regimes which did not focus on the restoration of independent Latvia. The activities of Soviet partisans opposing the Nazi regime in Latvia are also left outside this article given that these were organised by the Soviet Union to achieve its aims. Furthermore, the valiant episodes of Jews being saved in Latvia, in a number of which ethnic Latvian took part, and which were remarkably brave acts of resistance to the Nazi regime, are not described in this article either, since these as well were unrelated to realising the idea of restoring Latvian independence. It is for the same reason that the campaign during the late 1950s by National Communists is excluded from this article as these individuals sought merely to improve the existing regime, but not to restore an independent state of Latvia.

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[6] See: Ivanovs A. Nacionālā pretošanās Latvijā 20. gadsimta 40.–80. gados Latvijas historiogrāfijā. *Okupētā Latvija 1940–1990. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas 2005. gada pētījumi = Occupied Latvia, 1940–1990: research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, 2005.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 27.–70. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 19. sēj.).

[7] See, for example: Šilde, Ā. *Pretestības kustība Latvijā: veltījums latviešu jaunatnei.* Stokholma: Latviešu Nacionālais fonds, 1972; Misiunas, R. J., Taagepera, R. *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990.* Expanded and updated ed. London: Hurst, 2006.

[8] See, for example: Statiev, A. *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

[9] Ibid., p. 311.

Resistance to the occupation regime and annexation, 1940–1941

There was no military resistance offered to the occupation of Latvia in 1940, thanks in large part to an effort by the authoritarian regime of Kārlis Ulmanis to avoid senseless bloodshed in the face of a Soviet military advantage of ten-fold over the Latvian army. However, cruel acts of repression carried out by the new regime and implementation of a policy of Red Terror led to deep dissatisfaction and resistance on the part of the general public.

Resistance offered by society was spontaneous and lacked any organisation. Individuals expressed their protest against the occupying power and the collaborationist government in many different ways. Several high-ranking officials chose not to collaborate with the new illegal regime and committed suicide. One of these was the head of the Latvian Border Guard Service, Gen. Ludvigs Bolšteins who shot himself on 21 June 1940 in his office leaving behind a letter explaining his act: "To my superiors. We Latvians have erected a fine edifice for ourselves — our state. A foreign power wishes to compel us to demolish it by ourselves. I am unable to take part in this."[10]

Protest took the form of refusing to take part in the Saeima elections called by the Soviet regime, defacing voting slips with anti-Soviet and other slogans, etc. These acts were particularly numerous during elections on 12 January 1941 for the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Illegal flyers prepared by Latvian national patriots appeared in advance of these elections, containing a call for a public boycott of these unfair elections and to struggle for a free Latvia. For example, already in December 1940 the illegal organisation "*Viesturieši*", consisting of final year high-school students in Jēkabpils, led by their teacher, Osvalds Pūpols, prepared and distributed several hundred flyers addressing all Latvians, calling upon them not to vote for slavery and poverty.[11]

People sought to boycott propaganda meetings organised by Soviet authorities. Secretly they made fun of these meetings and told jokes about their proceedings. There were also rather a lot of instances wherein red Soviet flags were pulled down, with, occasionally, these replaced by the red-white-red flag of independent Latvia. Evil deeds committed by the occupation authorities were discussed privately among close friends and relatives, patriotic songs were sung discreetly from the period of Latvian independence.

Secret organisations began to be formed soon after the entry of the Red Army into Latvia and the hurriedly called illegal elections for the Saeima, but these had few members and were non-violent in their nature. These organisations usually formed at the work place or at educational establishments, and their members were known to one another and who trusted one another. Members of these groups not only secretly discussed political issues but also organised various political actions, including, secretly printing and distributing anti-Soviet flyers, newspapers, journals, and boycotted events organised by Soviet authorities.

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[10] A copy of the letter written by L. Bolšteins before his death, accessible at: http://www.e-okupacijasmuzejs.lv/#!/lv/eksponats/0328 (site last visited 15.03.2016).

[11] Aicinājums. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 25721. l., 1. sēj., 72. lp.


LATVIEŠI!
Izšķiraties par brīvību vai verdzību.
Nedrīkstiet nodot savu balsi 1941.gada 12 janv.
Verdzībai, nabadzībai, badam.
Latviesi krājiet spēkus cīņai par jaunu
brīvu LATVIJU Nost svešos varas!

Fig. 1. Copy of an appeal by "*Viesturieši*", an illegal organisation of final year high-school students in Jēkabpils, for a boycott of elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on 12 January 1941. (From the book: Vilciņš, T. *Skolu jaunatne nacionālajā cīņā.* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts arhīvs, 1997, at p. 53)

It is significant that members of active resistance groups came from schools, both pupils and teachers, and several illegal groups of this kind were created in 1940–1941. Members of the resistance group "*Latvijas Atbrīvotājs*" (Liberator of Latvia) at the Riga Vocational School even took a solemn oath and undertaking to dedicate all of their abilities, including risking their lives, to the liberation of Latvia. The resistance organisation "*Degsme*" (Fervour) at the 2nd State Gymnasium in Riga was established in November 1940 to produce and distribute an illegal journal *Degsme,* characterising this publication as "dedicated to a Latvian social education of society". Schoolchildren, including those at vocational schools, also joined the organisation "*Tēvijas sargi*" (Guardians of the Fatherland). One of the largest political events organised by schoolchildren took place on 13 May 1941 on which occasion 50 schoolchildren in the space of one hour distributed approximately 5000 copies of an anti-Soviet appeal in the cities of Riga, Jelgava, Cēsis, Bauska, Tukums, and elsewhere in Latvia.[12] Illegal resistance groups operated during the Soviet occupation period between 1940 and 1941 in at least 15 high schools, vocational schools and teachers institutes of Latvia. In four schools teachers together with their pupils were members of these groups.[13] Soviet authorities sought to eliminate the resistance movement in schools by dismissing approximately 1500 teachers in 1940–1941, arresting more than 400 teachers, out of which 33 were shot.[14]

A number of resistance groups consisting of adults were formed and were active: "*Jaunlatvieši*" (New Latvians), *Latvijas Nacionālais leģions* (National Legion of Latvia), "*Tēvijas sargi*" (Guardians of the Fatherland), *Latviešu nacionālā savienība* (Latvian National Union), *Jauno virsnieku apvienība* (Union of New Officers), *Latvijas Nacionālā karavīru apvienība* (National Union of Soldiers of Latvia), etc. Attempts were also made to organise armed resistance to the illegal regime in Latvia. A secret group, *Kaujas organizācija Latvijas atbrīvošanai* (Combat Organisation to Liberate Latvia), which was created towards the end of 1940, sought to gather weapons and ammunition for waging armed struggle. This organisation was liquidated and its members arrested before they were able to gather sufficient quantities to begin to act. Seven members of this group were shot, and two received prison sentences.[15]

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[12] Pretestības kustība. *Latvju enciklopēdija = Latvian encyclopaedia.* 3. sēj. Švābe, A. (red.). Stokholma: Trīs zvaigznes, 1953–1955, 2011. lpp.

[13] Vilciņš, T. *Skolu jaunatne nacionālajā cīņā (1940–1941).* Rīga: Latvijas Valsts arhīvs, 1997, 7.–73. lpp.

[14] Skolotāju vajāšana. *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991: dokumentu krājums.* Pelkaus, E. (red.). Rīga: Nordik, 1999, 132. lpp.; *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia 1939–1991: a collection of Documents.* Pelkaus, E. (Ed.). Riga: Nordik, 1999.

[15] See the court judgement of 4 November 1941. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 25782. l., 480.–481. lp.

The resistance movement in Latvia did not develop a single coordination centre and its members also lacked experience on how to act surreptitiously. At first they were careless and did not appreciate the merciless repressions that would follow even the slightest act of opposition, or even criticism of the Soviet regime. The death penalty became commonplace and Soviet policies in Latvia, during 1940 and 1941, ought not otherwise to be described as "Red Terror". Under the conditions of universal control of society by the totalitarian regime, including the work of the secret police agents and their network of informers, members of the resistance movement were quickly arrested, shot or otherwise punished, and organised groups were eliminated. Over the period from 17 June 1940 and July 1941, 7292 persons were arrested for anti-Soviet activities.[16] Practically speaking no illegal organised resistance groups remained in Latvia by the spring of 1941.

A brief but illuminating episode in the history of national resistance consisted of activities by national partisans in 1941. Notwithstanding the fact that organised resistance groups in Latvia had been eliminated, the start of hostilities between Germany and the USSR led to a spontaneous and unorganised uprising of the people against Soviet occupation. The first partisan groups formed immediately after the deportations of 14 June 1941 when 15 424 individuals were deported from Latvia to Siberia. Once Germany attacked the USSR, formation of these groups turned into an uprising, which, however, arose differently in the regions of Latvia, as due to the rapid advance of German armed forces the uprising did not have time to develop in parts of Latgale and Kurzeme. The most extensive developments took place in Riga and Vidzeme, partly due to the fact of the Red Army 24th Territorial Corps being stationed there; the core of this Corps included soldiers from the former Army of Latvia. The repressions of 14 June had strongly impacted this Corps when more than 400 Latvian officers were arrested. This provoked mass desertion by Latvian soldiers. Additionally, during the first days of the war with Germany, more than 2000 officers and men were summarily discharged from the Corps as politically unreliable,[17] and these individuals were at the core of national partisan units then formed in Riga and in Vidzeme.

The size of individual partisan units ranged from several individuals to several hundred persons. The total might have been between 6000 and 8000 partisans. Their principal activities were: acquiring weapons, attacks on retreating Red Army units, local communists and Soviet era activists. The most intense clashes took place in the cities of Limbaži, Alūksne, and Smiltene, and their surrounding areas. The result of this fighting was approximately 800 Red Army soldiers killed, and around 1500 taken prisoner. Partisans were able, in advance of the arrival of the German Army, to take power in five suburbs of Riga, in six regional centres and in 13 towns and civil parishes.[18] This was a mass popular uprising.

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[16] *No NKVD līdz KGB: politiskās prāvas Latvijā, 1940–1986: noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 971. lpp.

[17] Savčenko, V. 24. strēlnieku korpusa liktenis. *Padomju Latvijas Komunists*, Nr. 2, 1989, 63.–70. lpp.

[18] Biezais, H. Nacionālie partizāni. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 4, 1992, 137.–140. lpp.

Warfare ended on 5 July on the territory of Latvia. The German Army advanced into Estonia and deeper into Russia. Latvian partisan units welcomed the advancing Germany Army as allies in the fight against Soviet occupation; however, rather soon Latvians became disillusioned in their hopes. A military and civilian authority was established in Latvia behind the German Army units. The German occupiers issued, already on 8 July, an order disbanding all partisan units, forbade wearing the uniform of the Latvian Army, and Territorial Army. All weapons had to be handed in.[19] The Germans were unflinching in establishing control.

National resistance during the period of Nazi occupation, 1941–1945

Most members of the public in Latvia initially did not condemn the attack of Germany on Latvia in June 1941, the new occupation of Latvia, and setting up of a Nazi regime; instead, this was seen as deliverance from Bolshevism and Red Terror. Thus, at least in the initial period, collaboration with the Nazi regime in Latvia and in the other Baltic States was essentially different than collaboration in Western countries under Nazi-occupation. In Latvia this situation arose as one aggressive occupation regime was replaced by another no less dangerous regime. The true intentions of Germany were revealed within a few months, and these were diametrically opposed to the interests of the people of Latvia. The German wish was not to restore an independent Latvian state but to annex it to Greater Germany. All political activities were forbidden in Latvia. Soon compulsory labour service was introduced and recruiting started of a labour force to be sent to work in Germany. This was followed by forced mobilisation of residents of Latvia into the armed forces of Germany, which took on global nature in the spring of 1944.

Once initial illusory hopes concerning the plans of the Nazis evaporated, the first elements of the national resistance movement appeared in the autumn of 1941.[20] The term "resistance movement" here is taken to cover all forms of resistance that had as their goal restoration of the independent state of Latvia as proclaimed on 18 November 1918.[21] In this way the resistance movement consisted of individual acts of disobedience to the Nazi regime, as well as the activities of organised groups, providing that these had the aim of restoring Latvian state independence, or efforts in this direction.

Several national resistance groups were formed in Latvia. It is now known that the total number of these was around 30 in all during the period of the Nazi regime.[22] These groups typically comprised a few individuals, although several groups had a

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[19] Ezergailis, A. *Holokausts vācu okupētajā Latvijā, 1941–1944.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 59. lpp.

[20] Waite, R. G. Some Aspects of Anti-German Sentiment in Latvia (1941–1944). *Latvija nacistiskās Vācijas okupācijas varā 1941–1945: starptautiskās konferences referāti 2003. gada 12.–13. jūnijs, Rīga = Latvia under Nazi German occupation 1941–1945: Materials of an International Conference, 12–13 June 2003, Riga.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004, 156. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 11. sēj.).

[21] Neiburgs, U. Pretošanās kustība nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas okupētajā Latvijā (1941–1945): jēdzieniskā izpratne un teorētiskās nostādnes. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, Nr. 3, 2012, 84. lpp.

[22] Kangeris, K. Divas okupācijas: pretošanās. *Diena (SestDiena),* Nr. 194, 1999, 21. aug., 10. lpp.

membership of around 100 persons. In many groups membership was transitory and could change quite often. Most individuals who were involved lacked any experience in working surreptitiously and as a result the Nazi authorities were able to identify and eliminate them.

Several illegal groups which survived the first period of Soviet occupation of 1940–1941, restarted and enlarged their scope of activities against the Nazi regime. These included the National Council of Latvia, the Latvian National Union, and the Union of New Officers. These groups were also readily identified and eliminated, their members arrested at the end of 1942 and throughout 1943.

The membership of these national resistance groups was varied, both in terms of their social origin and public standing, also in terms of their age and profession. Members of the intelligentsia predominated in several groups, also students and former military persons, while other groups consisted of workers. The National Council of Latvia was revived by students of the Jelgava Teachers Training Institute. Several groups were largely composed of youth, starting with schoolchildren ("*Jaunpulki*") and including university students. A number of former officers of the Latvian army joined the Union of New Officers. Police from the 6th and 12th precincts in Riga joined the Latvian National Union. This group also had as members several distinguished professors at the University of Latvia: Jānis Endzelīns, Kārlis Kundziņš, and Pauls Stradiņš.[23] The underground group, "*Latviešu ceļš*" (The Latvian Way), consisted of personnel from the Electrical Apparatus Assembly Unit at *VEF*, the State Electrotechnical Factory. The groups formed largely in Riga and in other cities, which meant that they had rather few farmers as members. Membership consisted mostly of ethnic Latvians, but there were also a few members from national minority groups.

Another aspect of national resistance specific to Latvia and the other Baltic States was collaboration by individuals and groups with the Nazi regime. One of the most active collaborators was the legally sanctioned organisation "*Pērkonkrusts*" (Thundercross). From 1943 onwards, this group sought to use the German occupation authorities to advance Latvian national interests. Gustavs Celmiņš, leader of this group, arranged for publication of an illegal collection of articles, *Free Latvia. Latvian Articles*, which was distributed throughout all Latvia, including at Gustavs Celmiņš work place — the General Direction of the Interior. G. Celmiņš was arrested in March 1944 and sent to a concentration camp in Germany.[24]

Several other members of the resistance movement were officials in various sectors of the Nazi regime, i.e. in economic, military, and in other institutions. This was brought about in large measure by unlawful and repressive acts committed by the illegitimate Soviet occupation regime prior to invasion by Germany. It is possible that these circumstances resulted in the extent and intensity of action by the resistance movement in Latvia falling short of what happened in German-occupied France, Po-

[23] Neiburgs, U. Latviešu nacionālās pretošanās kustības preses izdevumi Latvijā vācu okupācijas laikā (1941–1945). *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa,* Nr. 1./2., 2000, 46.–47. lpp.

[24] Ērglis, Dz. Nacionālā pretošanās kustība vācu okupācijas periodā. *Latvieši un Latvija: akadēmiskie raksti.* 2 sēj.: Valstiskums Latvijā un Latvijas valsts – izcīnītā un zaudētā. Jundzis, T., Zemītis, G. (atb. red.). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 412. lpp.

land, or Yugoslavia. It gradually became evident that opposing Nazi occupation would inevitably help the return to Latvia of Soviet power and occupation.

Given their small membership most national resistance groups were simply organised. Usually they carried out their illegal acts at an undertaking or educational institution, or had members from the same city. Only the larger groups could act over a larger area by attracting members from several localities. For example, the National Council of Latvia established two centres of activity, in Riga and in Jelgava; and gradually attracted members in Limbaži, Cēsis, Rēzekne, Bauska, Tukums, and Ventspils.

The many and varied national resistance groups had similar political goals which took the form of resisting the Nazi regime, in condemning Communists and their acts of repression, in hopes that they would regain a free and independent Latvian state. Another aspect of activities common to these groups was reliance on achieving their goals in a non-violent and peaceful way. Certain differences in their goals and activities were determined by the make-up of various groups, their social and political awareness and ambitions, also the size and capabilities of different groups.

Opposition to the Nazi regime took various forms and followed different approaches. Many groups attached great importance to exposing the true aims of the Nazis in regard to the future of Latvians and Latvia, with the help of flyers distributed to the public and illegal newspapers articles disseminated to this effect, as well as BBC news reports, and even articles on some topics were translated into Latvian and taken from the German press. Illegal organisations appealed to the public to sabotage, as far as possible, implementation of orders given by the Nazi regime, in particular in regard to labour recruiting and then being dispatched to work in Germany.

Different resistance groups espoused different positions in respect to serving in the armed forces of Germany. The majority of resistance groups regarded such service as necessary to help Germany defeat the Bolsheviks. However, these groups did not wish to see Germany as their allies in the longer term, reminding everyone that Nazi policies also foresaw elimination of the Latvian nation. The illegal organisation "*Brīvā Latvija*" (Free Latvia) created by students at the University of Latvia supported service in the Latvian Legion, seeing this armed force to be the basis for a future Army of independent Latvia. At the same time, this organisation hoped for defeat of Germany, but did not support victory by the Soviet Union.[25] The Union of Young Officers continued to dissuade Latvians from joining the armed forces of Germany and was sharply critical of general mobilisation declared by the Germans.

In thinking about the governance of the future restored independent Latvia, opinions differed as to whether it would be preferable to restore the authoritarian regime which was instituted by Kārlis Ulmanis, or a democratic republic based on the 1992 Latvian Constitution (Satversme), or a revised version thereof. The Union of Latvian Nationalists insisted that the Latvian state had to be restored within its former borders, that power would belong to the people, and that a new Constitution would be worked out by representatives elected by the Latvian people.[26]

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[25] Ērglis, Dz. Nacionālā pretošanās kustība vācu okupācijas periodā. *Latvieši un Latvija: akadēmiskie raksti.* 2. sēj, 412. lpp.

[26] V. Samsona fonds. Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas arhīvs, 40. f., 5. apr., 1. l., 1. sēj., 175.–177. lp.



Fig. 2. Ciphers and secret codes of the illegal organisation "*Latvijas sargi*" (The Guardians of Latvia) (1942–1945) for use in written communication between its members (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 62. l., 2. sēj., 173. lp.)

The group "*Latvijas sargi*" (The Guardians of Latvia) called upon Latvians to think about renewing their state and not to leave, at the same time warning them of Soviet repressions to come were the Bolsheviks to return to Latvia.[27] Members of this group held the opinion that the war had demonstrated a need to establish a Union of the Baltic States.[28]

A special place in the national resistance movement was occupied by the Central Council of Latvia (CCL), which was formed on 13 August 1943. In the light of the fact that its founders included deputies elected to the 4th Saeima of the Republic of Latvia from the four largest political parties represented in the Saeima, and members of these parties, the CCL considered itself to be empowered to represent the people and Saeima of Republic of Latvia under occupation conditions during war time. The aim of the CCL was to employ political methods to struggle against the Nazi occupation regime, and Soviet occupation, were the latter to be repeated, and to help accomplish restoration of a democratic Republic of Latvia as it was prior to the coup of 15 May 1934. Konstantīns Čakste (code name J. Zirnis), son of the first State President of Latvia, Jānis Čakste, became chairman of the CCL.

The organisational structure of the CCL corresponded to the main aims of its activities, in the form of committees: foreign, military, information, legal, economics, resource gathering, and communications. Its main coordination centres were in Riga, Jelgava, and Ventspils. The CCL had its own press publication, *Jaunā Latvija* (New Latvia). The Council cooperated with members of the national resistance movements in Estonia and Lithuania, as well as with Latvian envoys in Stockholm, London, and Washington.[29] However, the CCL proved unable to unify the activities of various national resistance groups in Latvia, to create a centre to coordinate their activities.

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[27] Par Latviju. Illegal edition of *Latvijas Sargi*, LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 62. l., 9. sēj., 231.–248. lp

[28] *Lāčplēsis* (illegal edition). 1944. gada marts. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 62. l., 9. sēj., 207. lp.

[29] For more about external communications and international cooperation of the resistance movement, see: Neiburgs, U. Pretošanās kustība nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas okupētajā Latvijā (1941–1945): mazpētīti aspekti un to izpratne mūsdienās. *Baltijas reģiona vēsture 20. gadsimta 40.–80. gados: Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas 2007. gada pētījumi un starptautiskās konferences "Baltija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)" materiāli. 2007. gada 6.–7. novembris, Rīga = History of the Baltic Region of the 1940s–1980s: Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, 2007 and Proceedings of the International Conference "Baltic during the Second World War (1939–1945)", 6–7 November 2007, Riga.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2009, 107.–112. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 24. sēj.).

The political declaration adopted by the CCL at the beginning of 1944 was important in that it was signed by former ministers of the Republic of Latvia, deputies, scientists, writers, religious ministers of all confessions, and other individuals who were well known to the public; in all there were 188 signatories, and the declaration was dated 17 March 1944. It was asserted in the introduction to this Declaration that the sovereignty of Latvia continued to exist. The stand taken by Moscow that Latvia was a part of the Soviet Union had no legal basis and this stand was categorically rejected by the people of Latvia.[30]

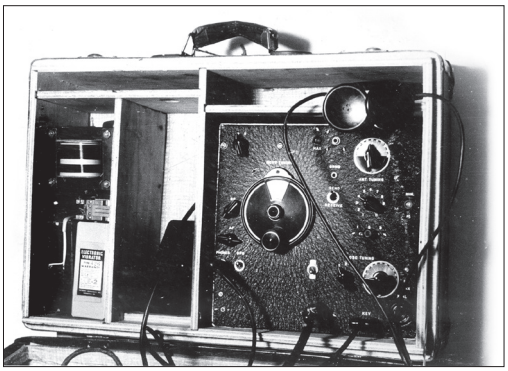


Fig. 3. The radio station used by the Central Council of Latvia to communicate in secret with Sweden during the period of Nazi occupation. Photograph in the file of criminal proceedings against Emils Vecmanis (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 99. l., 7. sēj., 78. lp.)

The Declaration stated the following in the name of the people of Latvia:

1. That a democratic and sovereign Republic of Latvia be renewed without delay;
2. That a coalition Government of Latvia be created on the basis of the 1922 Constitution of the Republic of Latvia which was still in force and which would act as leader of the people of Latvia;
3. That the immediate principal aims of the Government of Latvia must be: renewal of the state administrative structures and strengthening the security of Latvia, the defence of the territory of Latvia against threat of aggression by the Soviet Union and — as far as practical in war time — establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries, firstly, with those who would recognise this declaration as an expression of the will of the people and who would support the impending military challenge — to defend the Latvian state.

A crucial goal was expressed to be creation of a close union with Estonia and Lithuania which could in future lead to creation of a Baltic Federation.[31] This document was sent to Rūdolfs Bangerskis, Inspector-General of the Latvian Legion, and, in English translation, to several Western countries. Arrests followed of K. Čakste, and of other CCL activists, and incarceration in concentration camps. The Council was able to continue its activities in Latvia up until the end of 1945, when it was terminated by Soviet security services.

Despite the inability of the CCL to reach any of its stated political aims, it reminded the people of Latvia and the outside world that even under conditions of foreign occupation the idea of an independent Latvian state was still alive, and that its Constitution was still in force. From a practical stand point the greatest contribution

[30] Andersons, E., Siliņš, L. u.c. *Latvijas Centrālā padome, LCP: latviešu nacionālā pretestības kustība, 1943–1945*. Upsala: LCP, 1994, 415. lpp.

[31] Latvian War Museum, Inv. No. 5-22742/1437-DK; Political platform of the Latvian Underground Central Council. Riga, Latvia, February 1944; Andersons, E., Siliņš, L. u.c. *Latvijas Centrālā padome, LCP: latviešu nacionālā pretestības kustība, 1943–1945*, 469. lpp.

made by the CCL was organised evacuation of refugees to Sweden during 1944. It was thanks to these efforts that 2541 refugees reached Sweden, fleeing from the imminent Soviet occupation.[32]

For their part two members of the CCL Military Committee, General Jānis Kurelis and Captain Kristaps Upelnieks, began forming an armed unit during the summer of 1944. Unit headquarters was located in Vidzeme region, in the Skrīveri civil parish, Riga District. The unit comprised approximately 400–600 men. It was set up with formal permission granted by the Germans and remained under German command at a time when they sought to mobilise the last remaining Latvian manpower to stabilise the front. The unit was formed with remit to stay behind and to operate as saboteurs in the rear of the advancing Red Army. At the same time, several radio operators were present at the headquarters of Gen. Kurelis to maintain radio contact with the security services of Sweden and Great Britain.[33]

The group of 270 men led by J. Kurelis ignored, in September 1944, German orders to remain in the rear of the advancing Red Army and instead moved of its own accord to positions in Western Latvia, in Kurzeme, in Talsi District. Given the chaos that reigned during retreat by German forces, the group led by J. Kurelis lost contact with German command, and, in fact, operated independently for some time. Deserters from Latvian units joined this formation swelling numbers to 3000 men.[34] Captain K. Upelnieks, J. Kurelis' Chief of Staff, was most active and maintained contact with remnants of the CCL, i.e. with the so-called Ventspils group. A number of operational scenarios were considered, including seizing Ventspils, there to proclaim restoration of the Latvian state, or seizing a stretch of the coast to defend it against both German and Red Army attack, awaiting arrival of an Allied force.[35]

Once the situation at the front was stabilised, the Germans moved to secure the rear of their armed forces, as a result of which German units arrested the headquarters staff of J. Kurelis on 14 November 1944, after which most members of the unit surrendered. Following their court martial, eight headquarters staff officers were shot on 20 November 1944, while J. Kurelis was sent to Germany. Soldiers who had surrendered were sent to Stutthof concentration camp.[36]

One unit, numbering approximately 450 men, led by Lt. Roberts Rubenis refused to obey German orders and fought the punitive units sent against them. The unit manoeuvred taking advantage of the forested region and resisted until 8 December 1944, when survivors of the battalion broke out of encirclement and dispersed. Subsequently the Germans wreaked savage vengeance against the inhabitants of Zlēkas civil parish

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[32] Andersons, E., Siliņš, L. u.c. *Latvijas Centrālā padome, LCP: latviešu nacionālā pretestības kustība. 1943–1945*, 214. lpp.

[33] Ērglis, Dz. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes vēstures nezināmās lappuses.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2003, 61.–64. lpp.

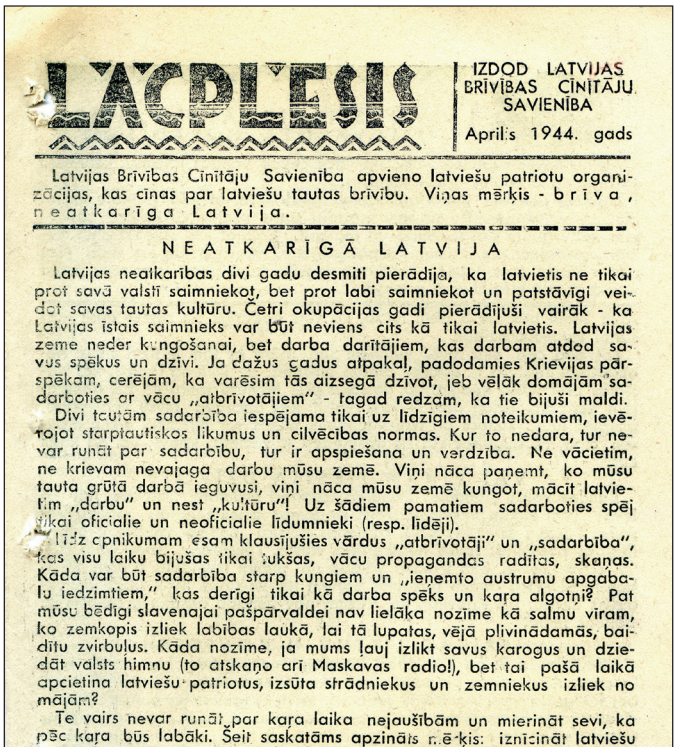
[34] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945).* Rīga: Jumava 2008, 322. lpp.

[35] Ērglis, Dz. *Latvijas Centrālās padomes vēstures nezināmās lappuses*, 66.–68. lpp.

[36] Bleiere, D., Butulis, I., Feldmanis, I., Stranga, A., Zunda, A. *Latvija Otrajā pasaules karā (1939–1945)*, 322. lpp.

whose houses had been used by members of the rebellious battalion: on 9 and 10 December, approximately 160 persons were shot and their houses burnt.

During the Nazi occupation regime, various national resistance groups issued illegal publications as an effective means of disseminating information throughout Latvia; these ranged from simple flyers to substantial newspapers with circulation in some cases of several thousand copies. Starting with 18 November 1941, the illegal newspaper *Latvija* was published by the group "*Patriotu organizācija*" (Patriots Organisation) with a circulation of 1600–6500 copies; the newspaper appeared throughout the entire Nazi occupation period.[37] The newspaper had a strong orientation towards Great Britain and the USA as states which could help Latvia regain its freedom. It assessed German policy as tending to exterminate the Latvian people, but nevertheless invited Latvians to give some support to Germany in the fight against Bolshevism, at the same time thinking about how to conserve their vital physical resources. Soviet security forces arrested the publishers Kārlis Drava and Jānis Liezeris in June 1946, who were then tried and sentenced to death.[38]



LĀČPLĒSIS

IZDOD LATVIJAS BRĪVĪBAS CĪNĪTĀJU SAVIENĪBA

Aprilis 1944. gads

Latvijas Brīvības Cīnītāju Savienība apvieno latviešu patriotu organizācijas, kas cinas par latviešu tautas brivību. Viņas mērķis - b r ī v a , n e a t k a r ī g a L a t v i j a.

N E A T K A R Ī G Ā L A T V I J A

Latvijas neatkarības divi gadu desmiti pierādija, ka latvietis ne tikai prot savā valstī saimniekot, bet prot labi saimniekot un patstāvīgi veidot savas tautas kultūru. Četri okupācijas gadi pierādījuši vairāk - ka Latvijas īstais saimnieks var būt neviens cits kā tikai latvietis. Latvijas zeme neder kungošanai, bet darba darītājiem, kas darbam atdod savus spēkus un dzīvi. Ja dažus gadus atpakaļ, padodamies Krievijas pārspēkam, cerējām, ka varēsim tās aizsegā dzīvot, jeb vēlāk domājām sadarboties ar vācu „atbrīvotājiem" - tagad redzam, ka tie bijuši maldi.

Divi tautām sadarbība iespējama tikai uz līdzīgiem noteikumiem, ievērojot starptautiskos likumus un cilvēcības normas. Kur to nedara, tur nevar runāt par sadarbību, tur ir apspiešana un verdzība. Ne vācietim, ne krievam nevajaga darbu mūsu zemē. Viņi nāca paņemt, ko mūsu tauta grūtā darbā ieguvusi, viņi nāca mūsu zemē kungot, mācīt latviešiem „darbu" un nest „kultūru"! Uz šādiem pamatiem sadarboties spēj tikai oficialie un neoficialie līdumnieki (resp. līdēji).

Līdz cpnikumam esam klausījušies vārdus „atbrīvotāji" un „sadarbība", kas visu laiku bijušas tikai tukšas, vācu propagandas radītas, skaņas. Kāda var būt sadarbība starp kungiem un „ienemto austrumu apgabalu iedzimtiem," kas derīgi tikai kā darba spēks un kara algotņi? Pat mūsu bēdīgi slavenajai pašpārvaldei nav lielāka nozīme kā salmu viram, ko zemkopis izliek labības laukā, lai tā lupatas, vējā plivinādamās, baidītu zvirbuļus. Kāda nozīme, ja mums ļauj izlikt savus karogus un dziedāt valsts himnu (to atskaņo ari Maskavas radio!), bet tai pašā laikā apcietina latviešu patriotus, izsūta strādniekus un zemniekus izliek no mājām?

Te vairs nevar runāt par kara laika nejaušībām un mierināt sevi, ka pēc kara būs labāki. Šeit saskatāms apzināts nē ķis: iznīcināt latviešu tautu. Ja vācietis to nekautrejas darīt jau tagad, ko gan viņš nedarītu Vācijas uzvaras gadījumā! Tieši šajā vietā mūsu domas ar vāciešiem šķiras. Mēs gribam dzīvot tāpat kā visas citas tautas un dabīgi nostājamies pret to, kas traucē tautas attīstību un veidošanos. Mēs prasām un cīnamies par tādiem apstākļiem, kādos mūsu tauta var augt, attīstīties un veidoties - tā ir n e a t k a r ī b a. Mēs neesam pret sadarbību ar jebkuru valsti, kas atzīst mūsu tautas tiesības un suverenitāti, bet mēs nevaram runāt par sadarbību tur, kur mūs apspiež un izmanto, kur neatzīst pat elementarākās tautu un cilvēku tiesības, kur latvietis pats

Fig. 4. Lāčplēsis, an illegal publication by the group "The Guardians of Latvia". The April 1944 issue has an introductory article, "*Neatkarīgā Latvija*" (Independent Latvia) (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 62. l., 9. sēj., 211. lp.)

The illegal organisation "The Guardians of Latvia" was particularly diligent in preparing, printing, and illegally distributing its productions all over Latvia. The newspaper *Lāčplēsis* (Bearslayer) was printed in 2000 copies. Several issues appeared of a publication *Par Latviju* (For Latvia), and many appeals in the form of illegal flyers.

[37] Neiburgs, U. Latviešu nacionālās pretošanās kustības preses izdevumi Latvijā vācu okupācijas laikā (1941–1945). *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis. A daļa*, Nr. 1./2., 2000, 44.–46. lpp.

[38] Ibid.

In all nearly twenty illegal underground publications appeared in Latvia during the period of Nazi occupation, all of which called for resisting the regime. The print runs of these publications ranged from several hundred to several thousand copies.

With the exception of rebellion by the battalion led by R. Rubenis, the national resistance groups did not engage in armed resistance; there were, however, groups that sought to collect weapons and ammunition. There were several reasons for this: groups were weak, their weapons insufficient, there was uncertainty about the future of Latvia, and fear of a return of the Communist regime.[39] Furthermore, the resistance movement in Latvia received no assistance from foreign countries.

The national resistance movement, which had a membership of only several thousand individuals and whose groups were disconnected from one another, was incapable of significantly influencing either the Nazi regime, or the titular population. However, to a certain degree these groups, and, in particular, their illegal publications were able to help keep alive the idea of an independent Latvian state and raised national consciousness in at least part of society.

Resistance during the Stalinist period, 1944–1953

The Stalin regime during the post-war years in Latvia took the form of mass terror culminating with the deportation on 25 March 1949 of more than 42 000 innocent people to distant regions of Siberia, there to remain in perpetuity. The regime sanctioned daily acts of repression accompanied by the perpetrators allowing themselves all manner of liberty. Agents of repressive agencies often personally took private property, detained completely innocent persons, falsified documents, and tortured those arrested, executed individuals without trial. Even the military prosecutor was forced to concede that 27 individuals had been shot during 1945 in Viļaka District without investigation and without a trial, and similar facts were reported from other districts.[40]

Resistance was the appropriate response of the people to acts of mass terror and unrelenting repression. Most members of the public were so cowed that they sought not to demonstrate openly their hatred of the regime. On the other hand, those who had stepped over this fear threshold, took up arms and fought in the ranks of the national partisans, or expressed their opposition by either organising or taking part in various activities. The resistance movement was inspired by the hope that the English or the Americans would liberate the Baltic States from subjection to the Soviet Union, either militarily or through political means. Furthermore, the titular population who

[39] This article does not examine the wartime activities of the Soviet resistance movement and the activities of groups of partisans and saboteurs who were sent across front lines from rear areas of the Soviet Union into the territory of Latvia. Up to now there is no clear picture available concerning the existence and activities of national armed groups, and this issue merits further research.

[40] See extracts from the report of 28 November 1945 by Smirnov, an assistant military prosecutor of the People's Commissariat for the Interior of the Latvian SSR about criminal acts committed by members of this Commissariat. *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā. 1939–1991: dokumentu krājums.* E. Pelkaus (red.). Rīga: Nordik, 1999, 271. lpp.

remained in Latvia after surviving the Second World War recalled the independence period, real freedom and prosperity, and this motivated them to recover their lost state and to renew its independence.

Armed resistance to the Stalinist regime, 1944–1953

Armed resistance to the Soviet regime after the end of the Second World War in the form of national partisan units was neither a local phenomenon, nor limited to Latvia alone. Similar clashes took place in Lithuania, Estonia, and in the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus, territories which the USSR had occupied and annexed. These countries had not been left with the illusion of being independent states, in contrast with the situation in other Eastern European countries. It can be said that the struggle by national partisans represented a desperate attempt on the part of these nations to extricate themselves from Soviet occupation which was politically and spiritually foreign to them.

The Second World War ended in most of Europe on 8 May 1945, but hostilities continued in the previously mentioned territories up until the early 1950s. During a time when world experienced the Cold War, a real war was being waged here: bloody battles, the slaughter of civilians, their arrest, deportations. These clashes with partisans started to diminish only around 1953, in the face of mass repressions and a sense of hopelessness.

The resistance movement in Latvia at the beginning of the second Soviet occupation had no bases, no communication network, nor even an inkling of the struggle to come. A Latvian state did not exist which could have initiated the struggle. There were no external forces which might have supported the armed struggle, either through organisational assistance or materially. During their final chaotic retreat the Germans had sought to organise Latvian groups of saboteurs to act following German commands, but their equipment was incomplete, and these groups dissolved within a few months.

One initiating factor was general mobilisation to serve in the Red Army as well as mass arrests which started in the autumn of 1944. Even in this case there certainly were several options open to individuals: to hide, not to tempt fate served up by the ruthless Soviet security service the Cheka,[41] or to begin active opposition. The choice was made by people themselves — to form organised groups, gather weapons and

[41] The Cheka is a collective appellation of the Soviet security service and its several units covering the period from 1917 to 1991; its principal remit was to ensure the security of the Communist regime. The term derives from the initials of the first Soviet security service, the All-Russia Extraordinary Committee, i.e. *VChK* (Всероссийская чрезвычайная комиссия). The official name of the Soviet security service changed several times up until the mid 1950s (*VChK*, *GPU*, *OGPU*, *GUGB*, *NKVD*, *NKGB*, *MVD*, *MGB*), both as a result of changes in function and as a result of power struggles within the Kremlin. Therefore, the terms "Cheka" and "chekist" are used, both in official documents and in daily speech. In 1954, the Soviet security service was renamed as the Committee for State Security, *KGB* (Комитет государственной безопасности), which continued to operate until collapse of the USSR in 1991.



Fig. 5. Partisans, members of the central Vidzemes regional group belonging to the Association of National Partisans of Latvia (*LNPA*) in the spring of 1950. This unit was eliminated between the summer of 1951 and the summer of 1953. (LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 21805. l., 141. lp.)

ammunition left over from the war, to develop contacts with other groups and to start combat operations.

Call up for service in the Red Army issued by the Soviet occupiers in August 1944 was resisted by 20% of those addressed, who either ignored papers served on them, or deserted at the first opportunity.[42] The first clashes took place when People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*NKVD*) army units sought to round up individuals who had avoided mobilisation. In Latvia fighting occurred between armed residents and the occupation army on 27 August 1944 when four *NKVD* soldiers disappeared during house to house searches in Baltinava civil parish, Abrene District.[43]

At first most partisan activities took place in the eastern regions of Latvia, in Latgale, where the organisation of partisan groups began during the winter of 1944–1945. The battle in Stompaku swamp engaged 350 partisans who had established a permanent base there. A force of 483 men from the *NKVD* army surrounded the swamp on 2 March 1945. The battle which had roughly equal numbers engaged on both sides continued all day. Partisans left their camp overnight and dispersed to hiding places that they had previously prepared throughout Abrene District. Soviet casualties in this battle were at least 32 killed, whereas 28 partisans died.[44]

The situation in the central region of Latvia was relatively calm. Partisan groups began to form in Vidzeme during May 1945. In many places these consisted of relatively small groups of 5–20 men, who assaulted and disarmed, as well as in some cases executed the most active local collaborators.

Armed resistance began in Western Latvia, in Kurzeme, after capitulation of all German forces in Kurzeme. Several thousand Latvian officers and men of the 19th Division did not surrender, but instead went to live in the forests and to continue their struggle as national partisans. Very lively clashes erupted during the first days after capitulation, when the Red Army systematically combed the forests and searched houses. A telling testimonial to these battles is to be found in Talsi, a small city located in

[42] Riekstiņš, J. Latvijas iedzīvotāju mobilizācija Sarkanajā armijā (1944–1945). *Okupētā Latvija 20. gadsimta 40. gados: Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas 2004. gada pētījumi = Occupied Latvia in 20th Century (1940-s): Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, 2004.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2005, 420. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 16. sēj.).

[43] Nacionālo partizānu uzskaites tematiskā kartotēka. Abrenes apriņķis. LVA 1825. f., 1. apr.; Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 14677. l., 1. sēj., 225.–230. lp.

[44] Turčinskis, Z. Latvijas nacionālo partizānu apvienības izveidošanās un darbība Stompaku periodā (1944. gada oktobris – 1945. gada marts). *Okupācijas režīmi Latvijā 1940.–1959. gadā: Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas 2002. gada pētījumi = Occupation Regimes in Latvia in 1940–1959: Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, 2002.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds 2004, 433.–482. lpp. (Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 10. sēj.)

Northern Kurzeme, where no Second World War battles had taken place. The city cemetery contains the graves of some 60 Red Army soldiers, the first of which was buried on 10 May 1945, and the last, in 1951.

Red Army units sought to suppress armed resistance in Latgale during the summer of 1945. An operation code-name "Vostok" took place in the eastern districts of Latgale between 31 May and 9 August 1945. Four Red Army divisions and three battalions of the *NKVD* army took part in this operation. These forces entered forests seeking to flush out any partisans there. In this way 21 partisans were killed and 7 injured losses which did not substantially diminish the partisan movement. In fact, the Soviet armed units directed their attention mostly to unarmed civilians rather than to partisans, arresting 3471 individuals living in villages or in farmsteads.[45]

Partisans attacked Soviet activists, party organisers, members of the *NKVD*, Communist youth organisers, chairmen of local executive committees. National partisans were able to inhibit or paralyse Soviet authorities from their work in rural areas. This even happened on the level of entire districts. "The Party committee is unable even to stick its head out of a window", was the complaint of a member of the Communist Party of Latvia (Bolshevik) in Ilūkste. Over a ten day period, during July 1945, 32 Soviet workers were shot and 10 injured in Ilūkste. In fact, Soviet power was in place only in the district centre in Ilūkste.[46]

Partisans in Abrene District were able completely to paralyse the work of village Soviets — 30% of these were eliminated, and a further 30% were unable to begin to function. Partisans also attacked well-defended civil parish centres. In 1945, in the night of 4/5 July, 50 men led by Heinrihs Vestmanis (code name "Bārda") took the centre of Tilža civil parish in Abrene District, burning down the house of the executive committee and five other buildings, Partisans also freed 11 individuals from an NKVD prison.[47]

Partisans formed several larger and smaller organisations during their armed struggle. The Organisation of Partisans in Northern Kurzeme (1945) comprised units in the forests of Dundaga and around Ventspils; the largest partisan organisation of Kurzeme — the National Partisan Organisation of Latvia (1945–1947) covered units around Kuldīga and Tukums in the central region of Kurzeme. The association "*Tēvijas vanagi*" (Hawks of the Fatherland) (1947) covered the area around Liepāja, while in Vidzeme units around Ērgļi were members of the organisation "*Latviešu pašaizsardzība*" (Latvian Self-defence) (1944–1945). The Association of Guardians (Partisans) of the Latvian Fatherland (1945–1946) consisted of groups operating in Southern Latgale, in Sēlija, and in part of Vidzeme. This organisation sought to reproduce the organisational structure of the Latvian army, identifying platoons, companies, battalions, regiments and even trying to identify a division.[48] The Association of National Partisans of Latvia (*LNPA*, 1944–1953) included groups operating in Northern Latgale, as well as

[45] PSRS MVD Iekšlietu karaspēka 5. strēlnieku divīzijas materiāli. LVA 1847. f., 1. apr., 6. l., ielīme vāka iekšpusē.

[46] Sarakste par cīņu pret bandītismu un istrebīķeļu bataljonu darbību. LVA 101. f., 8. apr., 1. l., 123. lp.

[47] Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 45123.l., 1. sēj., 34.–120. lp.

[48] Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 7016.l,. 3. sēj., 29.–31. lp.

in Northern and Central Vidzeme. The Northern Latgale Independence Unit (*ZLNV*, 1947–1951) oprated in the districts of Rēzekne and Viļaka. Partisan organisations typically were active for one to two years, while the oldest of these groupings, the *LNPA* continued operations over nine years, from 10 December 1944 to 15 January 1953.[49]

Each partisan organisation sought to publish illegal newspapers and various appeals; at first these were typewritten with copies made using carbon paper. Over the period of partisan struggle in Latvia, at least 14 different partisan newspapers were published with each issue in 10 to 100 copies. However, partisans wrote the last issue by hand in 1950 of their newspaper *Dzimtene*, as they no longer had any typewriters available.[50]

The constant organisation and reorganisation of partisans as well as their propaganda activities show that the struggle was not simply born of desperation to save their lives, but purposeful activities aimed at restoring Latvia through their struggle as well as reminding the people of this goal.

One approach followed by Soviet authorities to lessen the force of their armed opponents were offers made to partisans and their supporters to legalise themselves, to cease fighting and hand in their weapons in return for not repressing them. The most wide-ranging and visible invitation to partisans to legalise themselves was published on 12 September 1945 in the newspaper *Cīņa*. This offer was signed by A. Eglītis, People's Commissar of the Latvian SSR *NKVD*. This appeal was issued at a time when it was evident that Western countries were not about to start a war soon, and that partisans had to get ready to live in forests during the coming winter. A total of 1268 partisans and their supporters accepted the offer to legalise themselves in 1945. Such offers were periodically repeated. All district newspapers of 16 August 1946 declared the news that conditions for legalisation published on 12 September 1945 were still in force. During 1946, a total of 2567 individuals accepted this offer. The final appeal to partisans to legalise themselves was published on 11 January 1956.[51]

It is evident that there were two opposing processes under way in the autumn of 1945 — partisan groups coalesced into larger entities and there was intensification of the armed struggle, while fighters of uncertain disposition opted for legalisation. This resulted in one of the most unusual episodes of the partisan war, a truce between *LNPA* partisan groups and *NKVD* and *KKGB* units in Valka District. Eduards Grāvītis, the Lutheran pastor of Zeltiņu Parish in Valka District who had gone underground played a crucial role in these events. A truce was agreed between Lt-Col Korneyev, head of the Latvian SSR *NKVD OBB*,[52] and Antons Circāns (code name "Vārpa"), head

[49] Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 21637.l., 1. sēj., 25. lp.

[50] Ibid., 30641. l., 1. sēj., 28. lp.

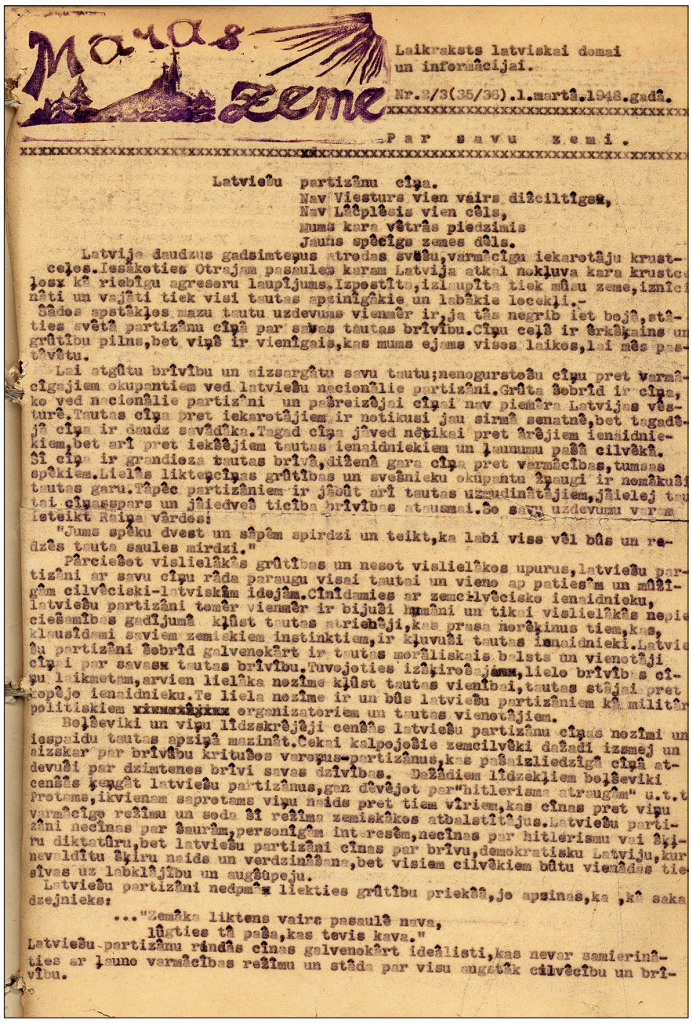
[51] Valsts drošības komitejas pie Latvijas PSR Ministru padomes paziņojums. *Cīņa,* Nr. 9, 11.01.1956.

[52] The *NKVD OBB* was a unit mandated to fight banditry (Отдел по борьбе с бандитизмом, *OBB*). A special unit was established in the USSR *NKVD* system at the level of districts and Soviet republics to fight "political bandits", and to lead special operations against armed resistance movements. In Moscow a Main Directorate was formed at the USSR *NKVD* to fight banditry (Главное управление по борьбе с бандитизмом, *GUBB*). The appropriate units, the *NKVD OBB* units in each district of the USSR and in each Soviet republic reported to this directorate.

of the communications unit at *LNPA* headquarters, at their meeting on the premises of the executive committee of Alsviķi civil parish, Valka District. This truce covered all of Valka District and remained in force between 28 September 1945 and 9 October 1945.

This was the only case during the post-war struggle by partisans in Latvia where the occupying power and leaders of the partisan movement agreed an official truce in a particular district on the basis of explicit negotiations.[53] In fact the truce was recognition of the strength of the partisan movement, and also the inability of the occupying security services to deal with it.

The senior leadership of the Cheka in Moscow was disappointed by poor results in combating partisans in Latvia. Lt Gen. A. Leontiev, head of the Main Directorate for combating banditry, the USSR *NKVD GUBB*[54], and Col. Gen. Kobulov, 1st Deputy Commissar of the USSR *NKGB*, arrived in Riga in August and September 1945 in order to criticise local leadership of the Cheka.



Māras Zeme

Laikraksts latviskai domai un informācijai.

Nr.3/3(35/36).1.martā.1948.gadā.

Par savu zemi.

Latviešu partizānu cīņa.

Nav Viesturs vien vairs dižciltīgais,
Nav Lāčplēsis vien cēls,
Mums kara vētrās piedzimis
Jauns spēcīgs zemes dēls.

Latvija daudzus gadsimtegus atrodas svešu,varmācīgu iekarotāju krustcelos.Iesāktoties Otrajam pasaules karam Latvija atkal nokļuva kara krustc[e]los kā riebīgu agresoru laupījums.Izpostīta,izlaupīta tiek mūsu zeme,iznīcināti un vajāti tiek visi tautas spēcīgākie un labākie ļaudis.

Šādos spaitākļos mazu tautu uzdevums vienmēr ir,ja tās negrib iet bojā,stāties svētā partizānu cīņā par savas tautas brīvību.Cīņu cenā ir ērkšķains un grūtību pilns,bet viņā ir vienīgais,kas mums ejams visos laikos,lai mēs pastāvētu.

Lai atgūtu brīvību un aizsargātu savu tautu;nenogurstošu cīņu pret varmācīgajiem okupantiem ved latviešu nacionālie partizāni.Grūts ceļš brīvībā ir cīņa, ko ved nacionālie partizāni un pašreizējai cīņai nav piemēra Latvijas vēsturē.Tautas cīņa pret iekarotājiem ir notikusi jau sirmā senatnē,bet tagadējā cīņa ir ģeniāla savādāka.Tagad cīņa jāved nētikai pret ārējiem ienaidniekiem,bet arī pret iekšējiem tautas ienaidniekiem un ļaunumu pašā cilvēkā.

Šī cīņa ir grandioza tautas brīvā,diženā gara cīņa pret varmācības,tumsas spēkiem.Lielās likteņcīņas grūtības un sveašnieku okupantu ļaunumi ir nomākuši tautas garu.Tāpēc partizāniem ir jāiet arī tautas uzmudinātājiem,jāielej tautai cīņasspars un jāiedvešticība brīvības atnesumā.Šo savu uzdevumu varam [illegible] izteikt Raiņa vārdos:

"Jums spēku dvest un sāpēm spirdzi un teikt,ka labi viss vēl būs un rīta tauta saules mirdzi."

Pārciešot vislielākās grūtības un nesot vislielākos upurus,latviešu partizāni ar savu cīņu rāda pārsaugu visai tautai un vienu ap patiesām un mūžīgām cilvēciski-latviskām idejām.Cīnīdamies ar zemcilvēcisko ienaidnieku, latviešu partizāni temēr vienmēr ir bijuši uzticīgi un tikai vislielākās nepiecieešamības gadījumā kļust tautas ienaidnieki,kas prasa nerēķinus tiem,kas, kļausīdami saviem zemiskiem instinktiem,ir kļuvuši tautas ienaidnieki.Latviešu partizāni ieņem galvenokārt ir tautas morāliskais balsts un vienotāji cīņai par savas tautas brīvību.Tuvojoties izšķirošajam,lielo brīvības cīņu laikmetam,arvien lielāka nozīme kļūst tautas vienībai,tautas stājai pret kopējo ienaidnieku.Te lielā nozīme ir un būs latviešu partizāniem kā militār politiskiem [illegible] organizatoriem un tautas vienotājiem.

Boļševiki un viņu līdzskrējēji cenās latviešu partizānu cīņas nozīmi un iespaidu tautas apziņā mazināt.Cekai kalpojošie zemcilvēki dažādi izsmej un aizskar par brīvību kritušos varoņus-partizānus,kas pašaizliedzīgā cīņā atdevuši par dzimtenes brīvi savas dzīvības. Dažādiem līdzekļiem boļševiki cenās ņemt latviešu partizānus,gan dāvājot par"hitlerisma atsaugām" u.t.t. Protams,ikvienam sapratnēs viņu ļaunās pret tiem vīriem,kas cīnas pret viņu varmācīgo režīmu un sodu šī režīma zemiskākos atbalstītājus.Latviešu partizāni necīnas par šaurām,personīgām interesēm,necīnas par hitlerismu vai šķinevaldītu šķiru naidu un vardzināšanu,bet visiem cilvēkiem būtu vienādas tiesības uz labklājību un sugāpeju.

Latviešu partizāni nedomā liekties grūtību priekšā,jo apzinas,ka ,kā saka dzejnieks:

..."Zemāka liktenis vairs pasaulē neva,
kā tēgties tā paša,kas tevis kava."

Latviešu partizānu rindās cīnas galvenokārt ideālisti,kas nevar samierināties ar ļaunu varmācības režīmu un stāda par visu augstāk cilvēcību un brīvību.

Fig. 6. The 1 March 1948 issue of the newspaper *Māras Zeme*, which was published by the *LNPA* in Northern Latgale. This newspaper appeared in 40–100 copies between 1946 and 1949. Vilis Toms (code name "Kārlēns") and Oļģerts Melderis (code name "Siliņš") were the editors. (LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 3964. l., 2. sēj., 41. lp.)

New tactics were devised to improve the work of the Cheka. The territory of Latvia was divided into three operational sectors — Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale. Activities in each sector were directed by a single *NKVD–NKGB* operational headquarters.

[53] Turčinskis, Z. Ziemeļvidzemes nacionālie partizāni: 1945.–1953. gads. *Okupācijas režīmi Latvijā 1940.–1956. gadā: Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas 2001. gada pētījumi = Occupation Regimes in Latvia in 1940-1956: Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, 2001.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2002, 285.–368. lpp. (Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 7. sēj.).

[54] USSR *NKVD GUBB* – see footnote 52 above.

Concentrating their forces allowed both organisations also to combine their network of agents so as better to use information gathered by the Cheka and deal the partisans more powerful blows. Two regiments from the *NKVD* army were assigned to each operational headquarters.[55] Soviet security forces already had resorted to these tactics in Lithuania whose territory was divided into ten *NKVD–NKGB* operational sectors.

Fierce battles ensued partly as a result of this concentration of forces, as well as the partisans' preparations for wintering meant creating their suitable fixed shelters with a loss in mobility. For example, a force of 300 soldiers attacked a partisan group numbering 25 men on 1 January 1946 in Kabile civil parish, Kuldīga District. The partisans held out until dusk. Some 50 soldiers were killed or wounded in this battle, while the partisans lost three men.[56] However, the Cheka slowly gained successes. Many partisan groups living in permanent shelters or in underground bunkers, were eliminated, or were badly injured in battles. One of the largest partisan organisations, the Association of Guardians (Partisans) of the Latvian Fatherland, was eliminated during the winter.

The speech at Fulton in the USA, on 5 March 1946, by then former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill briefly kindled optimism among partisans, particularly the words: "… an iron curtain has descended across the continent", which the Forest Brothers took as hope for the outbreak of war leading to the liberation of Latvia.[57] Armed resistance movements in other countries similarly understood these words: notably in Lithuania, Estonia, and in Western Ukraine. Nevertheless, clashes with partisans began to diminish in numbers throughout 1947. Only small armed groups of 3–10 men remained in the forests and these gradually lost contact with one another, and each adopted a strategy of hiding in order to survive. Only the *LNPA* remained as a partisan organisation, and it only operated in the North-western part of Latvia. Regional units of the *LNPA* continued to publish newspapers *Māras Zeme*, *Sudrabota Saule*, and *Tautas Sargs*. Thus, propaganda became the principal form of activity of the *LNPA*.

Two new partisan organisations were formed at this time. One of these was "*Tēvijas vanagi*" (Hawks of the Fatherland), whose activities developed in Western Latvia, near Liepāja in Kurzeme over the course of 1946. In 1947, the North Latgale Independence Unit (*ZLNV*), started its activities in Eastern Latvia, in Latgale. This organisation, led by Augusts Kudreņickis (code name "Grants") and Antons Gabrāns (code name "Zemitāns"), developed an extensive underground network. Partisan groups making up the *ZLNV* typically comprised around 15 members, but the organisation could call upon an additional 80 armed reserves, all of whom were legal residents, and who were prepared to join the struggle as needed.[58] At the same time, the *ZLNV* led an

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[55] Pavēle Latvijas PSR NKVD un NKGB par 1945. gadu. LVA 1822. f., 1. apr., 244. l., 187. lp.

[56] Jansons, R., Zālīte, I. LPSR valsts drošības dienesta izveidošana un tā galvenie represīvie uzdevumi 1944.–1956. gadā. *Totalitārie režīmi un to represijas Latvijā 1940.–1956. gadā: Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas 2000. gada pētījumi = Totalitarian Regimes and Their Repressions Carried out in Latvia in 1940–1956: Research of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, 2000.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 200., 373.–476. lpp. (Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 3. sēj.).

[57] Šmits, U. Aukstā kara sākums. *Lauku Avīze,* Nr. 26, 03.03.2001, 12. lpp.

[58] Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 21822.l., 1. sēj., 28. lp.

underground youth organisation, "*Latgales vanagi*" (Hawks of Latgale), with 27 armed members from Nautrēni High School in Rēzekne District. These youths distributed over a wide area anti-Soviet flyers containing some texts that they wrote themselves, and others which they copied from partisan publications.[59]

The Cheka took large numbers of hostages so as to force partisans to legalise themselves. Family members were imprisoned for as long as the partisan did not "voluntarily" come out of the forest and surrender. In some cases people were thus imprisoned for as long as one and a half year without ever being formally arrested. Terror drove entire families to seek refuge in forests. Subsequently women, as well as men, even children, became casualties in countless clashes in the forests. In the spring of 1946, the Upīts family, living in Liepna civil parish, Viļaka District, fled into the forest. The father, mother, and seven children all perished by 1952.[60] The Sprukuļi family, a married couple with six children, from Viļaka civil parish, sought refuge in the forest from 1948 onwards, but all were killed in 1950 when they found themselves surrounded.[61]



Fig. 7. The bodies of partisans on display at the wall of the Catholic Church in Preiļi so as to intimidate the townspeople. 10 February 1948. (LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 1552. l., 82. lp.)

One must recall yet another tactic of the Soviet occupation authorities designed to intimidate the population — the display of corpses. Naked bodies of fallen partisans were put on public display for viewing and for identification purposes by civil parish executive committees, as well as in city streets, for example Balvi, Cēsis, Madona, Viļaka, and elsewhere. These victims often remained on display for a week or even longer until they were replaced by the bodies of new victims.

During this time, activities by the resistance movement collapsed from quite powerful and wide-spread combat operations to surreptitiously smouldering dissatisfaction. A deceptive silence could be shattered suddenly by shots fired and thereafter the body of a "bandit" was put on public display in a rural centre, or a public funeral was arranged for a Soviet activist who had been shot. A few individuals could abruptly be arrested or simply disappeared, rumours circulated about people who had moved to the forest. Flyers appealing for being ready to fight appeared in several public places. Many people quietly hoped for some kind of change — for the appearance of English or American help. The public still followed instructions by the Soviet authorities without enthusiasm. The authorities met little success in establishing kolkhozes.

Faced with five years of armed and non-violent resistance to Soviet occupation which authorities were unable to stamp out, and the fact that collectivisation was proceeding unenthusiastically, and at a snail's pace, a decision was taken to destroy the

[59] Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 25476.l., 1. sēj., 80., 82. lp.
[60] Ibid., 7006.l., 1. sēj., 15.–49. lp.
[61] Ibid., 29482.l., 1. sēj., 12.–33. lp.

support base for partisans through mass deportation of residents. The operation, codename "Priboj", took place simultaneously in all three occupied Baltic States on the night of 24/25 March 1945.[62] A total of 94 779 persons were deported from the Baltic States, out of which there were 42 149 individuals from Latvia. Examination of the figures shows that 72.9% of those deported were women and children.[63] This implies that the deportations were revenge by the Communist regime for resistance to the occupiers, as well as a measure to neutralise resistance to collectivisation, which had already begun.

Rather than the hoped-for outcome of the deportations quelling the resistance movement in Latvia, these resulted in a massive influx of people joining existing partisan groups, and even in the creation of new groups. Individuals who had escaped being deported joined the partisans. Now women and even children were in their midst. In fact, in some partisan groups there were more women and children than fighting men, which threatened a bloody catastrophe.[64]

Some of the most active partisan groups engaged in revenge attacks against those Soviet activists who had been the most diligent participants in the deportations. At the same time, foolhardy attacks were launched on the security services of the occupiers. For example, a group in Jēkapils District led by Mārtiņš Poklevinskis ambushed four *MVD* officers on 28 July 1948, and eliminated *MVD* leadership in the district, including the head, Major Sokolov.[65]

Wide-ranging anti-partisan operations were put in hand during the second half of 1949. These continued through to the spring of 1950. Often the majority of those killed in these operations were women and even children. For example, the Eiklons group was eliminated on 2 August 1949 in Sinole civil parish, Alūksne District. During the battle, ten partisans were killed, among them five women and two children.[66]

Some battles were desperately hard fought. On 25 February 1950, 550 *MGB* soldiers in Aknīste District surrounded the united J. Grāversons and J. Indāns group comprising 13 individuals. During a battle that lasted five hours, 12 partisans were killed, and one, a heavily wounded woman, was captured. *MGB* losses in this fight were seven soldiers killed, and seven wounded.[67] Often partisans committed collective suicide rather than be captured. Thus, on 16 April 1952, on the territory of Rauna village in the region of Cēsis the six members of the Dailonis Breikšs group committed suicide rather than face capture. Two women were among those who died.[68]

The year 1953 saw the last bloody conflicts in Latvia involving armed resistance groups in the course of which 100 Latvian Forest Brothers lost their lives.[69] Small-scale anti-partisan operations were mounted by the Cheka in later years. Over the time

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[62] Strods, H. PSRS Valsts Drošības ministrijas pilnīgi slepenā Baltijas valstu iedzīvotāju izsūtīšanas operācija "*Krasta banga*" ("Priboj"). *Latvijas Vēsture,* Nr. 2, 1998, 43. lpp.

[63] Ibid., 44. lpp.

[64] Criminal case file. LVA 1986.f., 1. apr., 39276.l., 1. sēj., 16.–24. lp.

[65] Ibid., 28156. l., 4. sēj., 321. lp.

[66] Ibid., 39276. l., 1. sēj., 16.–24. lp.

[67] Izraksts no Iekšlietu karaspēka 24. strēlnieku pulka vēstures formulāra. LVA 1847. f., 1. apr., 14.l. 26.–27. lp.

[68] Criminal case file. LVA 1986. f., 2. apr., P–10433. l., 251.–255. lp.

[69] LKP CK Sevišķais sektors. LVA 101. f., 17. apr., 102. l., 19. lp.

period of 1 April 1954 to 30 October 1956, a further 12 individuals were killed, 81 captured, and 401 persons legalised themselves.[70] Thus, we may infer that 494 individuals were living illegally during this time. Most of these persons hid individually, without any contact with other illegals, but a few small groups of 2–4 persons were found.[71]

The last military operation involving partisans took place on 13 February 1957 in the region of Viļaka, when the five-strong Mičulis family consisting of three men and two women left the forest and legalised themselves. This family had lived in the forest from 1945 onwards. At the time of their surrender, they handed over two hand-held machine guns, three pistols, two rifles, four hand grenades, as well as ammunition.[72]



Fig. 8. Daily life in a partisan bunker: chess, a card game, reading books. Lauciena civil parish in Talsi district, the winter of 1950 (LVA 1986. f., 1. apr., 28398. l., 4. sēj., 209. lp.)

According to USSR security services, the following statistics characterise the twelve-year partisan war in Latvia: 2407 partisans were killed or committed suicide, 5489 were arrested, and 4341 legalised themselves, the majority of whom were deported to Siberia in 1949. Therefore, these statistics by the Cheka show that 12 237 individuals took part in the armed resistance movement.[73] This is a large number, given that their struggle was hopeless and conditions atrocious.

The attitude of the people towards national partisans is precisely expressed in the term used to describe them. Most people called them the *Forest Brothers* which refers to a term born during the 1905 revolution to describe Latvian partisans; a term used then and secretly after the Second World War with positive connotation. The precise equivalent term in Lithuania is *miško broliai*, and *metsavennad* in Estonia, all of which have the same exact meaning.

Non-violent resistance under Stalinism, 1945–1953

Resistance to the Soviet regime was particularly active and intense immediately after the end of the Second World War. Armed resistance and fighting by the Forest Brothers was complemented by a non-violent resistance by many layers of society and groupings, which took many forms and was variously expressed. With partisan

[70] Service report. Par bruņotās bandītu nacionalistiskās pagrīdes likvidāciju Latvijas PSR teritorijā. LVA 270. f., 1.s. apr., 1095. l., 286.–287. lp.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Special report. Par nelegālu Mičuļu padošanos. LVA 270. f., 1.s. apr., 19. l., 31.–37. lp.

[73] Service report. Par bruņotās bandītu nacionalistiskās pagrīdes likvidāciju Latvijas PSR teritorijā. LVA 270. f., 1. s. apr., 1095. l., 286.–287. lp.

activities ending around 1952–1957, non-violent resistance continued uninterrupted thereafter up until the restoration of independence in 1991. After M. Gorbachev came to power in Moscow in 1985, resistance in Latvia occurred under new conditions, which led to awakening of the people and renewal of the Latvian state.

Non-violent resistance between 1945 and 1985 will be studied divided into three distinct periods of time. The nature of this resistance was mostly determined by different levels of Soviet totalitarianism and repression, but there was also an effect due to the psychological state of those who resisted and the clarity of their purpose, in addition to their ability to unite with one another and to organise activities in common. The first period of resistance spanned the period of Stalin's totalitarianism and covers the time immediately after the end of the war in1945 to 1952; during this time, Latvian society still hoped for Western assistance and liberation from Soviet occupation. The period between 1954 and 1964 was characterised by a "Thaw" during the period of rule by N. Khrushchev; during this period, opposition in Latvia was mounted by national communists. The average number of individuals arrested had decreased by a factor of 63 (to 61 arrests annually, from 3863 individuals arrested annually during the Stalin period).[74] The period of rule in the Soviet Union by L. Brezhnev and his two immediate successors (1965–1985) has entered history as a period of stagnation, a time when apathy and a sense of hopelessness was endemic among a large fraction of the population, but during which time the spirit of dissidents and small opposition groups remained unbroken, with unflagging belief in the possibility of change.

One of the most significant forms of active non-violent resistance between 1945 and 1953 was manifested by the work of small illegal underground groups. Numerically these groups were tiny, with 5–10 members, but a few organisations were able to attract several hundred members, and often had local organisational structures in various parts of Latvia. The most active work by such underground groups took place in Kurzeme, in Latgale, and in the north-eastern part of Vidzeme, in places where the majority of national partisan groups were previously to be found.

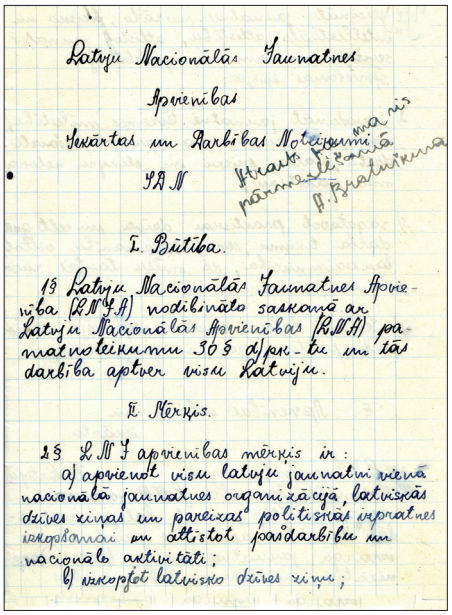
National partisans took an active part in the creation of illegal non-violent resistance groups and facilitated their work, used these as a source of information and support, and also encouraged revealing repressive acts and the illegality of Soviet authority, as well as keeping alive in the general public the idea of renewing an independent Latvia.

Pēteris Supe, commander of the National Partisans' Association of Latvia, helped establish two significant non-violent resistance organisations during 1945, each of which had a network of illegal local groups which covered most of the territory of Latvia. One of these was the Latvian National Association, an anti-communist democratic organisation with political overtones.[75] Its goal was to disseminate anti-Soviet ideas as well as the idea of national independence, extend help to national partisans in the restoration of an independent Latvia. Another organisation was the Association of

[74] *No NKVD līdz KGB: politiskās prāvas Latvijā, 1940–1986: noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 972. lpp.

[75] Latvju Nacionālās apvienības Pamatnoteikumi. LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-10774. l., 9. sēj., 27. lp.

Latvian National Youth, who had provision for activities throughout all of Latvia. Its statutes defined the goal of this organisation — to support implementation of all common national and political efforts by the Latvian people. Members were tasked to explain to the people the real intentions of the Bolshevik, to distribute illegal flyers, appeals, etc. and propaganda materials, to gather information about traitors, to aid the partisans, etc.[76] This association established several regional units during October – December 1945, including in Riga, the Riga District, the districts of Viļaka, Valka, and Alūksne. The unit at Alūksne High School even published its own illegal journal, *Kokle*.[77]



Latvju Nacionālās Jaunatnes
Apvienības
Iekārtas un Darbības Noteikumi
LNJA
Hiasto
I. Bratuškina

I. Bāzība.

1§ Latvju Nacionālās Jaunatnes Apvienība [LNJA] nodibināto saskaņā ar Latvju Nacionālās Apvienības [LNA] pamatnoteikumu 30§ d[arbī]-bu un tās darbība aptver visu Latviju.

II. Mērķis.

2§ LNJ apvienības mērķis ir:
a) apvienot visu latvju jaunatni vienā nacionālā jaunatnes organizācijā, latviskās dzīves ziņas un pareizas politiskās izpratnes iesakņošanai un attīstot pašdarbību un nacionālo aktivitāti;
b) izkopt latvisko dzīves ziņu;

Fig. 9. Organisational and activity regulations of the Latvian National Youth Association. Discovered during a search in November 1945 of the lodgings of Antoņina Bratuškina and included in her criminal case file (LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-10774. l., 9. sēj., 57. lp.)

The majority of the residents of Latgale were strongly anti-Soviet, which fact encouraged not only activities of the partisan movement, but also the work of numerous anti-Soviet groups in cities and civil parishes. The restoration of an independent Latvian state was the principal goal of the organisations (1945–1949) such as the Association of the Patriots of Latvia, "SKOTS", "*Vētras vanagi*" (Hawks of the Storm), "*Tautas balss*" (Voice of the People), and others. They all cooperated with national partisans, as well as collected weapons themselves against the day when favourable circumstances would allow them to help topple Soviet power. The Association of the Patriots of Latvia had approximately 80 members and they had 10 separate illegal groups in various civil parishes.[78] The organisation "SKOTS" had 40 members who operated in 12 separate groups.[79]

Youths at school, whose fear threshold was low and perception of problems more acute, were active in the non-violent resistance movement over the period 1945–1953. Students usually reflected opinions and attitudes of their parents which were kept secret from unknown outsiders, but which they shared among family members. Particularly during the first post-war years, many teachers also were not loyal to Soviet power, but it proved impossible to dismiss all of them even during the 1950s, a fact which alarmed the Central Committee of Latvia and its Secretary J. Kalnbērziņš.[80]

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[76] Latvju Nacionālās jaunatnes apvienības (LNJS) Iekārtas un darbības noteikumi. LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P–10774. l., Vol. 9, 57.–68. lp.

[77] Criminal case file. Žurnāla "Kokle" satura izraksti (in Russian). LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 27924. l., 3. sēj., 16.–81. lp.

[78] Criminal case file. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 1605. l., 1. sēj., 59. lp.

[79] Ibid., 7317. u/l, 277. lp.

[80] Decision adopted on 24 February 1953 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, "Par cīņas pasākumiem pret buržuāziskā nacionālisma un pretpadomju darbības izpausmēm skolu jaunatnes vidū". LVA, PA-101. f., 16. apr., 93. l., 21.–22. lp.

The illegal "*Daugavas sargu apvienība*" (Union of Daugava Guardians) had 35 student members, aged between 13 and 17, and all from the 1st High School of Krāslava. The slogan of this association was, "For the Freedom and Prosperity of our Fatherland". The organisation had its own statutes, a solemn oath, and a patriotic song. This organisation regularly published an illegal, illustrated magazine, written in long hand, *Daugavas Sargs*, which was distinctly national in its orientation. The organisation was able to function and to be very active from 21 November 1945 to May 1948, at which time tens of under-age "counter-revolutionaries" and their parents were arrested and punished.[81] These arrests in Krāslava did not put off high-school students in near-by Indra, who organised a group, the Defenders of Freedom for Latvia, and continued to work underground.

Opposition activities among schoolchildren and youth did not diminish during the first ten years after the end of the war, but at times even increased. J. Kalnbērziņš, Secretary of the CC of the CPL, in his report of 28 February 1953 to the Central Committee of the CPSU was forced to admit that the number of "bourgeois nationalistic" incidents and instances of anti-Soviet activity among students at schools have taken place during the past six months. Eight youth groups have been discovered in Riga, Jelgava, and Talsi, whose members (age 10 to 25 years) disseminated anti-Soviet flyers and news summaries of broadcasts by the radio stations, "Voice of America", and the BBC. The aim of these groups was to fight Soviet power.[82]

During the period of the Stalinist regime, any display of free thinking or even interest in Western literature and art was considered by the repressive services to be anti-Soviet behaviour. Early in 1951, the Ministry of State Security of the Latvian SSR arrested the so-called "French group", individuals who often met to discuss Western literature, works of art, and who had allegedly disparaged Soviet art and literature. Members of the group were sentenced to 5–25 years of corrective labour.[83]

Soviet security services regularly organised provocations in Latvia to attract and to identify nationally inclined individuals, to isolate them from contact with members of the public. For example, in 1949, two members of the LSSR Ministry of State Security unit in Daugavpils, Nikolajs Hļebņikovs and Viktors Sideļņikovs, created a fictitious underground organisation, "The Struggle Against World Communism", which rather quickly attracted seven members, freedom fighters. They were all arrested in the spring of 1950 and received prison sentences of 5–10 years.[84]

Non-violent resistance in Latvia between 1945 and 1956 received no outside support, which prevented these freedom fighters from engaging in more extensive and more impressive activities. Western countries continued their non-recognition of the

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[81] Bluzma, V., Jundzis, T., Riekstiņš, J., Sharp, G., Strods, H. *Regaining Independence: Non-Violent Resistance in Latvia, 1945–1991.* Riga: Latvian Academy of Sciences, 2009, p. 149; Criminal case file. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 1605. l., 1.–9. sēj.

[82] Latvijas Komunistiskās partijas Centrālās Komitejas sekretāra Jāņa Kalnbērziņa 1953. gada 28. februāra vēstule PSKP CK sekretāram Georgijam Maļenkovam. LVA, PA-101. f., 16. apr., 93. l., 21.–22. lp.

[83] Kara tribunāla 1951. gada 29.–30. jūnija spriedums (in Russian). LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., 4657. l., 2. sēj., 215.–218. lp.; the sentence was reduced following a protest lodged by the war prosecutor. See: Ibid., 300.–303. lp.

[84] Bluzma, V., Jundzis, T., Riekstiņš, J., Sharp, G., Strods, H. *Regaining Independence: Non-Violent Resistance in Latvia, 1945–1991*, p. 159.



Fig. 10. Members of the illegal group, Union of Daugava Guardians, of Krāslava 1st High School, in Krāslava, on 18 November 1948. Photograph from the criminal case file (LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., 7317. l., 3. sēj., 59. lp.)

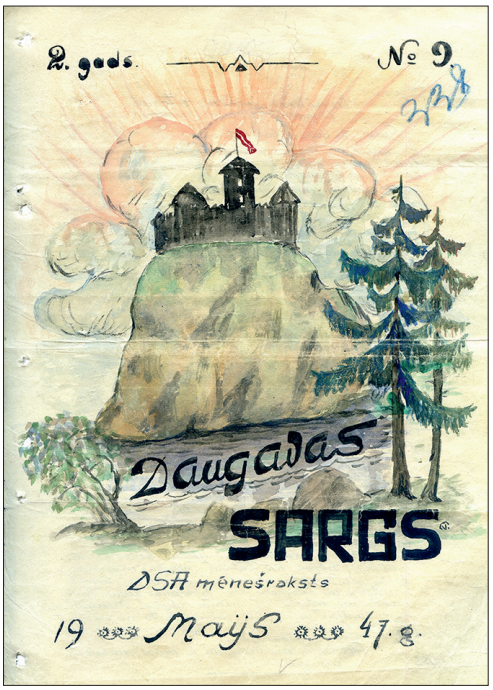


Fig. 11. The journal *Daugavas Sargs*, which was published illegally and distributed (1946–1947) by the organisation Union of Daugava Guardians. Cover page of the journal from the criminal case file (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 1605. l., 9. sēj., 328. lp.)

legitimacy of the annexation of the Baltic States, but they were not prepared to aggravate further their relations with the USSR through practical support of Baltic efforts to regain their freedom. One reason for this reluctance was the position adopted by diplomats and politicians living in exile that it was undesirable to encourage an extensive underground resistance movement in occupied Latvia since it would be quickly discovered, and the best and most loyal persons would suffer greatly.[85]

The non-violent resistance movement in Latvia between 1945 and 1953 was fragmented and lacked any coordination. On the one hand, these circumstances showed up its weaknesses, on the other hand, it rendered more difficult the work of Soviet security services to identify its members. The non-violent resistance movement in many parts of Latvia was strengthened by close cooperation with national partisans.

Non-violent resistance during the period of the political "Thaw", 1954–1964

During the mid-1950s, the Stalinist regime created by J. Stalin in the Soviet Union gradually changed into a relatively softer form of a totalitarian regime. The number of politically motivated arrests decreased and liberties taken by repressive agencies,

[85] Bluzma, V., Jundzis, T., Riekstiņš, J., Sharp, G., Strods, H. *Regaining Independence: Non-Violent Resistance in Latvia, 1945–1991*, p. 142.

including excessive repression under Stalinism, were condemned by N. Khrushchev and the Communist Party; the standard of living improved slightly. Tens of thousands of politically repressed persons returned to Latvia from camps in Siberia, and in a few cases persons wrongly punished were even rehabilitated. This time is often referred to as the "Thaw" in the Soviet Union, and the period roughly coincided with the time spent by N. Khrushchev as leader. However, political repressions continued even during this period, and the *KGB* ensured total control of the population. The USSR engaged in military aggression against Hungary in order to save the teetering Communist regime there, and provoked the "Cuban crisis" in its relations with the USA. The Cold War reached its apogee during this period of time, which led to some ideological tension in Soviet society, particularly in the Baltic republics.

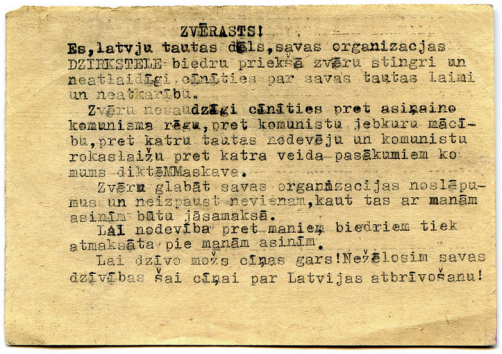
These changes impacted the resistance movement in Latvia over the time period of 1954 to 1964. Armed struggle by national partisans had petered out in the early 1950s. This had an appreciable effect on non-violent resistance: the consequences were not only moral, but also practical, since there was no longer any help or support from the national partisans. The strength of the resistance movement was sapped by disappearance of any hope, or expectation of action by Western countries to liberate the Baltic States, and few in Latvia believed that this might still happen. Every day conditions stabilised and even started to improve, while less repression allowed society to accommodate to the situation and adapt as necessary. On the other hand, total control of society by the *KGB*, and the military might of the USSR, produced deeper despair and lessened hopes for the possibility of change.

The aims and goals of non-violent resistance changed corresponding to the new circumstances, as did the manner in which this resistance was manifested, both in terms of form and methods. Following the return of many politically repressed persons from their places of incarceration in Siberia, changes took place in the make-up of the resistance movement, as some of the returnees continued with their anti-Soviet endeavours.

Aims and goals of resistance under the new conditions came to be less and less associated with demands for restoration of the pre-war independent Latvian state since this appeared to be an unrealistic event. Resistance targeted totalitarianism and some of its manifestations; it also targeted the colonisation and Russification of Latvia, the scope of these processes continuing to increase rapidly at this time. The fact of Soviet aggression in Hungary found an echo in Latvia stimulating resistance.

The *KGB* managed to reduce slightly the extent of anti-Soviet activities among young people at schools. However, new groups of anti-Soviet youth formed during the latter half of the 1950s; these groups were more careful in their activities, and they planned and carried out rather significant political acts. One such group was discovered in December 1957 at Salacgrīva High School in Limbaži District. This was an illegal anti-Soviet organisation, "*Dzirkstele*" (Spark), which had been created in May 1956 by ten students in the upper years of this school. An oath had to be sworn upon joining this group, and members were given code names for conspiratorial purposes. This organisation sought to struggle against the existing regime in Latvia by means of anti-Soviet agitation among the population, by distribution of anti-Soviet flyers, by

illegally displaying the flag of free Latvia, and by acquiring weapons. The group attempted to set up underground groups at several other schools, and to carry out anti-Soviet activities in Estonia. It also mooted blowing up two bridges across the Salaca River.[86] During 1957, anti-Soviet youth groups were discovered at 16 schools in Latvia with a total of 66 members.[87]


ZVĒRASTS!

Es,latvju tautas dēls,savas organizacijas DZIMTSTELE biedru priekšā zvēru stingri un neatlaidīgi cīnīties par savas tautas laimi un neatkarību.

Zvēru nenogurdināmi cīnīties pret asiņaino komunisma rēgu,pret komunistu jebkuru mācību,pret katru tautas nodevēju un komunistu rokaslaižu pret katra veida pasākumiem ko mums diktēMaskavē.

Zvēru glabāt savas organizacijas noslēpumus un neizpaust nevienam,kaut tas ar manām asinīm būtu jāsamaksā.

Lai nodevība pret maniem biedriem tiek atmaksāta pie manām asinīm.

Lai dzīvo mūžs cīņas gars!Nežēlosim savas dzīvības šai cīņai par Latvijas atbrīvošanu!

Fig. 12. Text of the oath sworn by members of the illegal group "Spark", which expresses resolve to fight for the liberation of Latvia and for its independence. 1957 (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 41999. u/l, 449. lp.)

Thanks to strident admission criteria and control during the study process, the resistance movement at institutions of higher education during this period was relatively inactive and less wide-spread. Nevertheless, various anti-Soviet acts occurred from time to time. For example, it was discovered in early 1956 that several students at the Legal Studies Department of the Economics Faculty of the Latvian State University not only regularly listened to "Voice of America", but had even discussed the possibility of renewing a free Latvian state.[88]

Soviet security services were able quickly to identify organised anti-Soviet groups, but the informal groups of friends and individuals who began to carry out anti-Soviet acts were more difficult to detect. Eight workers, officials, and literary figures, among the last, the well-known poet Knuts Skujenieks, were accused in 1962 of anti-Soviet agitation and disloyalty towards their homeland. Although not all of these individuals had acted as a group, and several of them were strangers to one another, the *KGB* nevertheless labelled them as the Baltic Federation Group. It is possible that this label came about from the fact that two individuals had decided to work for separation of the Baltic republics from the Soviet Union.[89] Knuts Skujenieks was accused of seeking to weaken Soviet power as one of his poems spoke of torture and the deportations.

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[86] A special report, dated 18 December 1957, by Jānis Vēvers, Chairman of the Committee for State Security of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR to Vilis Lācis, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, "Par pretpadomju pagrīdes organizācijas likvidēšanu Latvijas PSR Limbažu rajonā". *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj.: Nevardarbīgā pretošanās padomju okupācijas režīmam (1945–1985). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas Baltijas stratēģisko pētījumu centrs, 2013, 61.–64. lpp.

[87] A service report dated 2 January 1958 by Jānis Vēvers, Chairman of the Commttee for State Security of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR to Jānis Kalnbērziņs, Secretary of the CC of the Latvian CP, "Par naidīgām pretpadomju izpausmēm no personām, kuras agrāk represētas par kontrrevolucionāru darbību Latvijas PSR". *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj, 183. lpp.

[88] See the report of 8 March 1956 by Jānis Vēvers, Chairman of the Committee for State Security of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, about anti-Soviet acts by youth in 1955–1956. LVA, 270. f., 1c. apr., 1205. l., 152. lp.

[89] Augstākās Tiesas 1962. gada 28. dec. spriedums. LVA, 1986. F., 1. apr., 44865. u/l, 2. sēj., 116.–175. lp.; Ofkants, U. Pārrunas uz desmit gadiem. Pierakst. M. Puķītis. *Nedēļa*, Nr. 50, 12.12.2005, pp. 30, 32, 34.



Fig. 13. The radio tower located adjacent to the building of the main militia station in Riga; the red-white-red flag of the Republic of Latvia was secretly displayed on the night of 4/5 December 1963. Photograph from the criminal case file of Bruno Javoišs (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45007. l., 1. sēj., 10. lp.)

Some 50–60 individuals were charged and convicted of criminal (political) offences every year between 1956 and 1964.[90]

Their pardon, and subsequent return to Latvia during the second half of the 1950s of many who were politically repressed activated and brought new vigour to the resistance movement in Latvia. Approximately 21 000 individuals convicted of crimes against the Soviet state, and 18 000 deportees returned to Latvia between 1955 and 1957.[91] Most of these persons continued to resist, albeit passively, but still others carried out individual public acts of resistance.

The Committee for State Security concluded that anti-Soviet activity over 1956–1957 had increased to a significant extent, that anti-Soviet flyers were distributed more often, and that there was a rise in the number of anonymous anti-state letters, that more anti-Soviet slogans appeared in public places, and that tearing down red flags continued, as did public display of the red-white-red flag of free Latvia. During 1956–1957, 680 anti-Soviet flyers were distributed in Latvia. On the night of 14/15 May 1957, the Soviet flag flying from the top of a 100 m high radio tower adjacent to the main Militia Station located in the heart of Riga was replaced in secret by the red-white-red flag of Latvia.[92] The same act was repeated on the eve of the USSR Day of the Constitution, on 5 December 1963, by Bruno Javoišs, a student at the Riga Civil Aviation Engineering Institute.

Distribution of illegal flyers of an anti-Soviet nature and other anti-Soviet materials was a wide-spread and popular form of resistance, one resorted to by groups and by individuals acting alone. Another form of resistance consisted of writing anonymous anti-Soviet letters addressed to officials, including senior officials at Party and public Soviet offices. Five young ladies working at Sloka Paper Factory had written and sent such anonymous letters in 1954–1955, which earned them court appearances

[90] Latvijas PSR Prokuratūras pārskats par valsts noziegumu izskatīšanu Latvijas PSR Augstākajā Tiesā. LVA, 270. f., 1c. apr., 1217. l., 18.–21. lp.

[91] A service report dated 2 January 1958 by Jānis Vēvers, Chairman of the Commttee for State Security of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, to Jānis Kalnbērziņs, Secretary of the CC of the Latvian CP, "Par naidīgām pretpadomju izpausmēm no personām, kuras agrāk represētas par kontrrevolucionāru darbību Latvijas PSR". *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj, 176. lpp.

[92] Ibid., 182. lpp.

and convictions.[93] Members of the resistance movement regularly tore down the red Soviet flag and in many cases also raised, in secret, the red-white-red flag of free Latvia. Additionally, portraits and busts of Soviet leaders were damaged regularly.

A tradition with political significance was born in the late 1950s, and quickly developed into a serious anti-Soviet activity, one which the *KGB* was unable to master. Thousands of people gathered at cemeteries in Riga on the days of remembrance of the dead as celebrated by the Lutheran Church, which Soviet authorities had initially authorised. The dates in November fell shortly before the anniversary on 18 November of proclamation of the Republic of Latvia. On these days people placed candles and flowers not only at family graves, but also at memorials to Jānis Čakste, the first Latvian State President, to Z. A. Meiereovics, the first Foreign Minister, and also at memorials to commanders of the Army of Latvia. Flowers and candles with the form and colour of the red-white-red flag were placed there. On several occasions the red-white-red flag was raised illegally at the cemetery.[94] These actions persisted, year on year attracting growing numbers of participants (in their thousands) despite all of these acts being observed, photographed and filmed by members of the *KGB* and its agents, with many participants later being worked over politically.

An internal opposition to the Soviet regime came into being both in Moscow and in Riga during the post-Stalinism period with the goal of making the totalitarian regime more civilised and bearable by the people. In contrast to the goals of the resistance movement this opposition did not seek to change the socialist model, nor to dismantle the Soviet regime, and, consequently, consideration of its activities falls outside the scope of this article.

Non-violent resistance to the Soviet regime during the period of stagnation, 1965–1985

The period of leadership of the Soviet state by L. Brezhnev (1964–1982) and that of his two immediate successors, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko (1982–1985), is justifiably described as a period of stagnation, during which no essential social reforms were made, with Communist ideology and the attitude towards the Baltic States remaining unchanged. The attitude of the political elite towards the people and its opponents became slightly more flexible and tolerant. The number of persons arrested every year for anti-Soviet acts reduced by a factor of 4, in comparison with comparable figures during rule by N. Khrushchev (16 arrests against 61 arrests yearly).[95] Direct

[93] A service report dated 2 January 1958 by Jānis Vēvers, Chairman of the Committee for State Security of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR to Jānis Kalnbērziņs, Secretary of the CC of the Latvian CP, "Par naidīgām pretpadomju izpausmēm no personām, kuras agrāk represētas par kontrrevolucionāru darbību Latvijas PSR". *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj., pp. 150–151.

[94] Latvijas PSR VDK priekšsēdētāja I. Avdjukeviča 1964. gada 27. jūlija ziņojums LKP CK sekretāram A. Vosam par Brāļu kapiem Rīgā. *Okupācijas varu politika Latvijā 1939–1991: dokumentu krājums*. E. Pelkaus (red.). Rīga: Nordik, 1999, 480. lpp.

[95] *No NKVD līdz KGB: politiskās prāvas Latvijā 1940–1986: noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, 972. lpp.

repression of individuals who held opposing views was partly replaced by prophylactic actions, with a change in how of agents of the *KGB* and trusted persons worked, with some dissidents allowed to leave the Soviet Union for foreign destinations.

Softening of policies aimed at the people was the result of a slight let-up in the Cold War, associated with the launch of the process of Cooperation in Security in Europe. This process to a certain extent brought the issue of the illegal annexation of the Baltic States to the attention of the international community, and produced echoes in Latvia and in the other Baltic republics. Russification and colonisation of the Baltic States led to an increase in anti-Soviet sentiments, as did the Soviet invasion and aggression in Czechoslovakia (1968) and suppression of the free labour movements in Poland (1980–1981).

The resistance movement in Latvia did not lessen over the period 1965 to 1985, but it was expressed in new ways, its members had different personal experiences and outlook, while new forms and methods were developed. Passive resistance by the general public to the regime rose in their search for freedom and seeking to insert references to independent statehood in literature, art, in the theatre, and also at the traditional Song and Dance Festivals of Latvia, at which tens of thousands of performers and even more spectators gathered every four years.

The population had changed substantially in its make-up. The fraction of ethnic Latvians in the population had decreased so much, as a result of uncontrolled migration, that they made up barely half of the total. The Russian language ever increasingly pushed out Latvian from daily life. This all strengthened an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, a sense of the nation under threat, which instinctively increased resistance to the regime. The older generation was steadily replaced by younger people who had been born during the occupation period. The dream of an independent state found an echo among them in a process abetted by Western radio broadcasts and illegal literature, as well as through contacts with Latvian émigrés living in Western countries.

Resistance by young people was largely unorganised and sporadic, involving individuals, or featured at most groups of a few people. It targeted colonisation and Russification. In some cases resistance by young people was organised and had far-reaching goals. The illegal group "*Lāčplēsis*" (Bearslayer), active in Cēsis between 1968 and 1970, had 17 young people as its members coming from two local schools. The group set as its goal the renewal of independent Latvia, which was the theme of flyers that they distributed. Members of the group also collected weapons to overthrow Soviet power in Latvia by armed force, if it proved impossible to accomplish this by non-violent means. They intended to recruit Latvian soldiers serving in the Soviet Army. It proved impossible to realise their plans when members of the group were arrested in March 1970.[96]

Illegally listening to broadcasts from Western radio stations grew in popularity, despite official efforts to jam these by technical means, and even though listening to such broadcasts carried unpleasant risks, for example, expulsion from university or

[96] Rimšāns J. Jaunatnes pretošanās izpausmes komunistiskajam režīmam Latvijas PSR (1965–1985). *Latvija un Austrumeiropa 20. gadsimta 60.–80. gados: starptautiskas konferences referāti 2006. gada 10. oktobris, Rīga. = Latvia and Eastern Europe the 1960s–1980s: materials of an International Conference 10 October 2006, Riga.* Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2007, 123.–124. lpp. (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti. 20. sēj.).

being called to answer at a comrades' court. Radio receivers became more accessible and technically capable of receiving broadcasts by Western radio stations, occasionally technically augmented to do so by radio amateurs. The most popular broadcasts in Latvian were by "Voice of America", followed by Radio Free Europe, Vatican Radio, and the BBC. Latvians also listened to broadcasts in Russian by Radio "Svoboda" (Liberty) and "Nemeckaya volna" (Deutsche Welle).

Broadcasts by Western radio stations helped keep alive the spirit of resistance in Latvia in that they provided objective information about mendacious policies implemented by the Soviet regime, and about repression of free-thinkers; they regularly reminded listeners of historical facts and how these were misrepresented by Soviet authorities. Although after the 1960s Western radio broadcasts no longer urged listeners to oppose the Soviet regime, in this way seeking to avoid a new spate of persons suffering persecution, the information that they presented led to activation of the resistance movement and even led to formation of new resistance groups in Latvia. The fact of exile Latvians working at these radio stations was important, in that they knew well the history of the Latvian people and their national interests.

Active members of the resistance movement had gone even deeper underground, and under conditions of total control by the *KGB* they took much greater precautions resorting to conspiratorial methods. At the same time resistance became better focussed and its acts had greater significance; they were able to defend their views based on historical facts and international legal rights, and they were better able to appreciate the significance of the continued legal existence of the Latvian state even after annexation, in this way searching for ways to recover Latvian independence.

The National Freedom Movement of Latvia (*Latvijas Neatkarības kustība*, *LNK*) was one of the most important and best disguised resistance groups, and it was able to work and stay in existence from 1974 to 1983. The idea of forming such a group was due to the brothers Pāvils and Olafs Brūvers. Initially there were four members, while later their number rose to 20. Members of this group rarely met, even in threes, and most members were not acquaintances. Several members of the group emigrated to live in the Federal Republic of Germany, where they continued their activities and continued to support work of the *LNK* in Latvia, attracting to the group émigrés involved in the "*Gaismas akcija*" (Action of Light) activities. The group had worked out a concrete tactical plan of action which foresaw progressively achieving greater recognition of illegal Soviet acts in Latvia by the public in Latvia, as well as international attention to be paid to such acts, in the end leading to even greater involvement by the public in their work. This group published the illegal *LNK* Bulletin in Latvia (in all 10 issues appeared), and a 16-page monthly bulletin *Pasaule un mēs* (The World and Us), which was published in Germany and distributed also in Latvia; this bulletin reported regularly on repression of members of the resistance movement in Latvia.[97] Members of the group regularly disseminated anti-Soviet flyers, raised the red-white-red flag of Latvia at various locations and put up anti-Soviet posters. A film that they shot illegally of the conditions under which political prisoners were kept and transported at places of their

[97] Pretestības kustība Latvijā 1981. gadā. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45323. l., 196. lp. (paketē 17. lp.).



Fig. 14. Poster displayed in Jaunrauna showing the Latvian national flag and the slogan "Freedom for Latvia", 1 March 1982. Photograph by Jānis Rožkalns, member of the Independence Movement of Latvia, and the Committee of Democratic Youth of Latvia. (From the criminal case file of Jānis Rožkalns and Jānis Vēvers (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45323., 1., 2. sēj., 122. lp.)

incarceration in Latvia (Riga, facility OC 78/7 Krustpils Street) achieved extensive international showing, as well as earning denunciation by USSR diplomats.[98] In September 1980, the *LNK*, together with another illegal organisation, the Committee of Democratic Youth of Latvia, sent a communication to the meeting of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Madrid, demanding an international committee to be established to examine the issue of occupation of the Baltic States, and to organise a national referendum to be held there in the presence of international observers on the subject of the future of the Baltic peoples.[99] In 1976, *LNK*, together with the Committee of Democratic Youth and the Christian Democratic Organisation in Latvia, sent a letter of gratitude to the new Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, who rescinded a decision taken by the previous Labour Government to recognise *de iure* the incorporation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union.[100]

Repressions again were intensified during the brief period of rule by Yuri Andropov as General-Secretary of the CC CPSU. Gunārs Astra, Jānis Rožkalns, Jānis Vēveris, and Lidija Doroņina, all members of the *LNK*, were arrested and deported. On the occasion of his final say in court, Gunārs Astra, on 15 December 1983, recalled the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and, with remarkable precision, went on to list facts from the history of Latvia which could not be contradicted about its occupation and illegal annexation. Even without a legal education G. Astra had concluded that the 1922 Constitution of the Republic of Latvia was still in force, and that Soviet rule in Latvia was not only illegal, but also unlawful since it contravened international law.[101]

New directions appeared in the illegal resistance movement in the form of efforts to coordinate activities with similar movements in Lithuania and Estonia, and with other nations oppressed by the USSR. These efforts took the form of several meetings held by illegal groups, exchange of information, and a number of common events and political campaigns. However, for the most part these contacts were rather brief, sporadic and did not lead to creation of a single coordinating centre. This is understand-

[98] Latvijas Neatkarības kustības dalībnieku atmiņas. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj.: Nevardarbīgā pretošanās padomju okupācijas režīmam (1945–1985). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas Baltijas stratēģisko pētījumu centrs, 2013, 33.–42. lpp.

[99] Iesniegums Eiropas valstu sanāksmei Madridē. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj., 44.–45. lpp.

[100] Misiunas, R. J., Taagepera, R. *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990.* Expanded and updated ed. London: Hurst, 2006, pp. 263–264.

[101] Gunāra Astras pēdējais vārds 15.12.83. *Auseklis*, Nr. 1., 1987, sept., 63.–64. lpp.; Tiesas sēdes protokols. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45322. l., 17. sēj., 101.–240. lp.

able, since no such centre could ever be established at national level in Latvia, and also, that such a task was impossible under the totalitarian conditions of the times.

The representatives of various illegal groups within the national resistance movements of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia had organised several small joint meetings from 1968 onwards in order to analyse the situation and to decide on joint future actions. Baltic dissidents decided, in August 1976, to write a memorandum addressed to Western countries clearly identifying the unlawful nature of nationality policies being pursued by the Soviet regime in the Baltic republics. One of the individuals charged with writing this memorandum, Estonian Mart Niklus, was arrested soon thereafter. In 1977, it was decided at the illegal meeting of Baltic dissidents held in Riga that a committee be formed representing the national movements in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Viktoras Petkus from Lithuania who was to set up this committee was soon arrested, and the committee, in fact, never started to function.[102]

The most significant achievement of joint work by Baltic dissidents was the Baltic Charter drawn up in 1979, which occasionally is also described as a memorandum. The Baltic Charter, then described as "the document with 45 signatures", was signed by Baltic dissidents as follows: 4 Latvians, 4 Estonians, 37 Lithuanians. In addition to mention of the 40th anniversary of signature of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, this document invited publication of the Secret Protocols of the German–USSR Treaty of 23 August 1939, to declare these null and void from the moment of their signature and to help deal with the consequences of this criminal agreement, including removal of foreign troops from the territory of the Baltic States.[103] This document was addressed to the governments of the USSR, and of both German states, as well as to Western governments, and to the General-Secretary of the United Nations. The last was urged to have the next session of the UN General Assembly examine the situation in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, as well as the denial of these peoples to decide their fate.[104] The document attracted world-wide attention and was used in support of a resolution adopted on 13 January 1983 by the European Parliament on the situation in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

For the first time since the period of armed struggle by partisans during the 1950s, a clear and unequivocal demand was made in the Baltic Charter (Memorandum) that the independence of the Baltic States be renewed. In contrast to the position held by partisans, Baltic dissidents during the 1970s demanded restoration of independence in a peaceful, non-violent way. Dissidents, in fact, urged that the situation existing in 1940 be restored, i.e. before Baltic independence was interrupted by occupation, followed by annexation, notably that the lost independent national states be restored.[105]

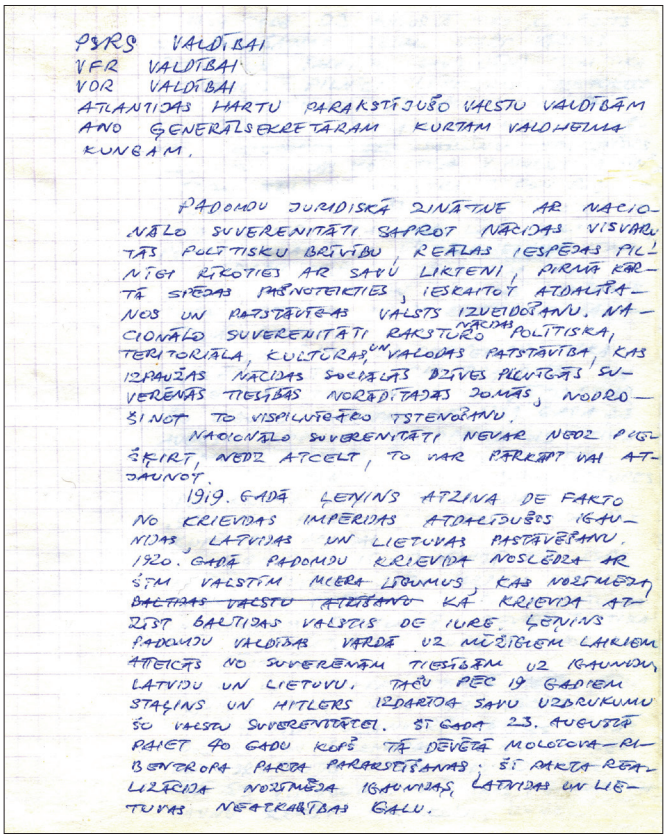
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[102] Misiunas, R. J., Taagepera, R. *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990*, p. 270.

[103] 45 baltiešu memorands (aicinājums). *Auseklis,* Nr. 1, 1987, sept., 108.–111. lpp. Original in Latvian. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45322. l., 12. sēj. (paketē 13. lp.).

[104] Ibid..

[105] Shtromas, A. The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions. *The Baltic States: the National Self–Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.* Smith, G. (Ed.). New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996, pp. 105–106.



PSRS VALDĪBAI
VFR VALDĪBAI
VDR VALDĪBAI
ATLANTIJAS HARTU PARAKSTĪJUŠO VALSTU VALDĪBĀM
ANO ĢENERĀLSEKRETĀRAM KURTAM VALDHEIMA
KUNGAM.

PADOMJU JURIDISKĀ ZIŅĀTNE AR NACIONĀLO SUVERENITĀTI SAPROT NĀCIJAS VISVAIRĀS POLITISKU BRĪVĪBU, REĀLAS IESPĒJAS PIEŅEMT RĪKOTIES AR SAVU LĪRTENI, PIRMĀ KĀRTĀ SPĒJAS PAŠNOTEIKTIES, IESKAITOT ATDALĪŠANOS UN PATSTĀVĪGAS VALSTS IZVEIDOŠANU. NACIONĀLO SUVERENITĀTI RAKSTURO NĀCIJAS POLITISKĀ, TERITORIĀLĀ, KULTŪRAS UN VALODAS PATSTĀVĪBA, KAS IZPAUŽAS NĀCIJAS SOCIĀLĀS DZĪVES PILNĪGĀS SUVERĒNAS TIESĪBAS NORĀDĪTAJĀS JOMĀS, NOZĪMĒ SAVU TO VISPILNĪGĀKO ĪSTENOŠANU.

NACIONĀLO SUVERENITĀTI NEVAR NEDZ PĀRŠĶIRT, NEDZ ATCELT, TO VAR PĀRKĀPT VAI ATSAUNOT.

1919. GADĀ LEŅINS ATZĪNA DE FAKTO NO KRIEVIJAS IMPĒRIJAS ATDALĪJUŠOS IGAUNIJAS, LATVIJAS UN LIETUVAS PASTĀVĒŠANU. 1920. GADĀ PADOMJU KRIEVIJA NOSLĒDZA AR ŠĪM VALSTĪM MIERA LĪGUMUS, KAS NOZĪMĒJA ~~BALTIJAS VALSTU ATZĪŠANU~~ KĀ KRIEVIJA ATZĪST BALTIJAS VALSTIS DE IURE. LEŅINS PADOMJU VALDĪBAS VĀRDĀ UZ NEZĪĢIEM LAIKIEM ATTEICĀS NO SUVERĒNAM TIESĪBĀM UZ IGAUNIJU, LATVIJU UN LIETUVU. TAČU PĒC 19 GADIEM STAĻINS UN HITLERS IZDARĪJA SAVU UZDRUKUMU ŠO VALSTU SUVERENITĀTEI. ŠĪ GADA 23. AUGUSTĀ PAIET 40 GADU KOPŠ TĀ DĒVĒTĀ MOLOTOVA–RIBENTROPA PAKTA PARAKSTĪŠANAS; ŠĪ AKTA REALIZĀCIJA NOZĪMĒJA IGAUNIJAS, LATVIJAS UN LIETUVAS NEATKARĪBAS GALU.

Fig. 15. The Memorandum by 45 Balts, which was illegally translated into Latvian by the dissident Gunārs Astra during the spring of 1980. Document reproduced from the criminal file of Gunārs Freimanis and Gunārs Astra (LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45322. l., 12. sēj.).

Representatives of the non-violent resistance groups in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia drafted and jointly signed a number of other political documents. One of these was an invitation to the International Olympic Committee to respect the principles of the Olympic movement and not to hold the Olympic sailing regatta event in Tallinn since Estonia was an occupied country.[106] A joint letter by Baltic dissidents in October 1981 invited the governments of the USSR and the Nordic States in Europe to set up a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe, also including in this zone the three Baltic States, in this way seeking to reduce the influence exerted by Soviet militarists in the region,[107] and recalled as well the wrongful nature of the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact.

The resistance movement drew fresh inspiration from legal and illegal contacts which were formed with representatives of Latvian exiles living in Western countries. The number of Latvian émigrés living in exile visiting Latvia as tourists increased yearly. Nearly 2000 Latvians from Western countries visited Latvia in 1972.[108] Some were active members of exile organisations in their country of residence. The *KGB* suspected every one of them to be a potential Western saboteur or spy. For example, the statement was made in a letter to the CC of the Latvian CP that, "the leaders of émigré organisations are sending their emissaries to Latvia who seek to establish contacts with nationalist and revisionist elements, as well as with politically immature individuals, mostly among

[106] Cālītis, I. Disidentu kustība Latvijā un citviet PSRS. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas pieredze: rakstu, dokumentu un atmiņu krājums veltīts Barikāžu atceres 15. gadadienai.* Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija: 1991.gada barikāžu dalībnieku biedrība, 2006, 45. lpp.

[107] Misiunas, R. J., Taagepera, R. *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1990*, pp. 299, 301; Baltiešu atklātā vēstule. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45323. l., 196. lp. (paketē 8. lp.).

[108] Valsts drošības komitejas 1973. gada 12. aprīļa dienesta ziņojums LKP CK. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj., 2013, 207. lpp.

the intelligentsia and young people". The *KGB* was of the opinion that the enemy was attempting to prepare a base with a view to creating a nationalist underground in the republic.[109] The main censorship board had noticed the fact that during the latter half of the 1970s, "reactionary Latvian émigrés" had changed from pursuing their long-standing tactic of peaceful acceptance, and called for revolutionary struggle to defend national interests. Proof of this was alleged to the Programme of the National Liberation Front of Latvia, which had been written abroad, but which was attractive to Latvians in the homeland.[110]

The Programme of the National Liberation Front of Latvia was indeed written with foresight and was well thought out; it reflected results obtained through surreptitious collaboration of émigrés with the underground in Latvia. The programme invited all remaining Latvian illusions to evaporate about how liberation would take place through intervention by Western forces, and emphasised the fact that liberation would have to come about by actions of the people of Latvia themselves. The principal goal set out in this programme consisted of renewing an independent and democratic Latvia. The secondary goal called for implementing a variety of measures to liberalise and democratise the existing regime, including recourse to Article 96 of the Constitution of the Latvian SSR which allowed for freedom of speech, press, association, and public demonstrations. The Programme asserted that ethnic Latvians acting alone would not be able to cause changes in the Soviet regime in Latvia. In this regard it was deemed important to support the democratic opposition and dissidents in Russia, as well as to create conditions favourable to establishing a Baltic Federation.[111]

Atis Lejiņš who was one of the authors of this Programme, then living in exile in Sweden, recently confirmed the fact that many useful suggestions for improving and even broadening the scope of this document were received, illegally, from Latvia.[112]

During the 1970s and 1980s, the national resistance movement was supported by Latvian exiles living in the Federal Republic of Germany who helped with activities in Latvia in the context of Operation Light. This campaign proceeded in the context of the International Christian Mission with the leading idea that light and justice will triumph. All activities were carried out in close cooperation with dissidents in Latvia, in particular with members of the *LNK*, illegally supplying useful informative materials as well as describing the situation in Latvia in the Western press and radio. The Social Democratic Workers' Party of Latvia with its leadership located in Sweden sought to project some of its activities into Latvia. Juris Būmeisters, a Candidate of Technical Sciences, was its representative in Latvia and he actively informed Latvian exiles about life under the Soviet regime by means of his articles in Social-Democrat publications in Western Europe. He was arrested in 1980 and sentenced to spend 15 years in prison.[113]

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[109] Valsts drošības komitejas 1973. gada 12. aprīļa dienesta ziņojums LKP CK. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj., 2013, 207. lpp..

[110] Galvenās pārvaldes valsts noslēpumu aizsardzībai presē atskaite. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj., 2013, 95. lpp.

[111] Latvijas atbrīvošanas nacionālās frontes programma. *Brīvība,* Nr. 8, 1975, okt., 6. lpp.

[112] Interview by Tālavs Jundzis with Atis Lejiņš, Riga, 24.08.2015.

[113] Tiesas spriedums. 1981. gada 3. jūnijs. LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45304. u/l, 84.–107. lp.

Internal opposition within the Soviet regime which had shown itself in the 1950s as National Communists, again emerged at the beginning of the 1970s. These communists, many of whom had occupied senior positions in the Party and in Soviet bodies, were deeply concerned by discrimination against Latvians and that Russification had considerably intensified over the preceding ten years. They had sought to discuss these issues at local party level where they were not listened to, but instead, received objections and condemnation. As a result of this experience, 17 Communists, acting on an initiative of Eduards Berklavs, wrote a detailed, well-argued letter about the nationality policy being implemented by the CPSU in Latvia, which was driving the Latvian people into extinction.[114] The letter was addressed to foreign communist parties and was smuggled abroad, where *Brīvība*, a weekly paper of the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Latvia, was the first to publish it in Stockholm. The letter drew the attention first of the Latvian exile community, and later that of a wider international audience to the fate of Latvia and ethnic Latvians in the Soviet Union, and indirectly reminded readers about the occupied and annexed Baltic States. The importance of this letter was diminished by its failure to discuss restoration of Latvian independence and only seeking to reform socialism and mitigating the nationalities policies of the USSR.

Conclusions

The occupation of Latvia, on 17 June 1940, did not meet military resistance since the invading Soviet forces enjoyed a manpower advantage of a factor of ten, and also since Soviet military bases had been installed on the territory of Latvia during 1939. However, dissatisfaction of the people which set in immediately after the Soviet regime was established, accompanied by brutal repression of residents, was expressed in several non-violent ways, with the goal of renewing the independence which they had lost. Activities of a number of resistance groups merit attention, but all of these groups were identified and eliminated through their lack of experience.

Part of the population of Latvia regarded the Nazi regime established after invasion of Latvia by Germany in June 1941 as liberation from the "Red Terror". A national resistance movement started soon after all illusions dissipated about Nazi intentions; a number of groups restarted their activities, other new underground groups were formed, illegal newspapers appeared, and flyers were illegally distributed, all of which revealed the true intentions of the Nazis and which kept alive the idea of restoration of an independent state. The Central Council of Latvia had a special place in work of the underground, since it resolutely appealed for a struggle against the Nazi regime and the possible renewal of Soviet power. A battalion of soldiers led by Roberts Rubenis fought against the Nazis.

The goal of the armed resistance movement — that of the national partisans — was renewal of the independent Latvian state. They had a Western orientation since

[114] Latvijas komunistu vēstule ārzemju komunistiskajām partijām. *Nevardarbīgā pretošanās: Latvijas neatkarības atgūšana (1945–1991) dokumentos.* 1. sēj.: Nevardarbīgā pretošanās padomju okupācijas režīmam (1945–1985). Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas Baltijas stratēģisko pētījumu centrs, 2013, 266.–275. lpp.

actual military assistance from Western countries was hoped for. There were active slashes during the first few years. The partisans controlled large rural areas in Latvia in which the activity by Soviet authorities was paralysed. Several regional organisations were created by partisans in their struggle and these also published illegal newspapers and distributed flyers.

The partisan movement gradually lost vigour due to a growing sense of despair and overwhelmed by the massive extent of their foes. The last high point of partisan activities occurred in 1949 when individuals who had avoided mass deportations to Siberia sought refuge in forests. Elimination of these partisan groups occasionally turned into bloody battles. Armed resistance was finally broken during 1953, but surviving individual partisans continued to live in hiding in Latvia up until the end of 1956. The partisan struggle demonstrated a desperate desire by the people to extricate themselves from their subjection to politically and spiritually foreign Soviet rule.

Armed resistance to the Stalinist totalitarian regime between 1944 and 1956 was complemented by quite wide-spread non-violent opposition by the people, which occasionally was stimulated and supported by national partisans, in the light of their common goal, to renew the lost statehood and independence of Latvia. Anti-Soviet flyers were distributed by individuals and by illegal groups, journals and newspapers were published. Youth at schools were particularly active in the resistance movement as their fear threshold was lower and their understanding of problems more incisive. Resistance was stimulated by the deportations carried out by Soviet authorities in 1949.

The conditions of absolute Stalinist totalitarianism and unimaginable brutality both during 1940–1941, and also later after the end of the Second World War, provided few possibilities for non-violent resistance since often resistance could be equated with suicide as any display of free thinking, or even thoughts about opposing the Soviet regime was punished with the supreme penalty, a death sentence, the most common sentence. For this reason many non-violent resistance groups prepared for armed resistance by collecting weapons and studying fighting methods, in case of the situation changed favouring armed resistance.

During the period of the "political thaw" under N. Khrushchev, there was less and milder repression, armed resistance ceased, and non-violent resistance became more moderate. The principal reason for these latter developments was the end of hopes for receiving Western assistance. Non-violent resistance put less emphasis on restoration of an independent state, and principally was directed against totalitarianism, and the colonisation and Russification of Latvia, the extent of which was accelerating. To a certain extent the efforts by National Communists in Latvia, to ensure greater respect for the interests of the Latvian people and a halt to Russification, were similar to those of the non-violent resistance movement. The group of National Communists were unable to reach their goals and they were removed from their posts or otherwise repressed.

During the period of stagnation from 1964 to 1985, the non-violent resistance movement did not relent in its efforts. The start of the process of cooperation and security in Europe and the associated raising of international awareness of the Baltic question breathed new life into this resistance. The resistance movement developed new ways to manifest itself, new members arrived with different past experience, and

political justification of resistance became more persuasive, and the security precautions taken by the resistance also improved. These processes benefitted from developing contacts with Latvian exiles living in Western countries, also through contacts with other peoples oppressed within the USSR, and, first and foremost, with dissidents in Lithuania and Estonia. Latvian dissidents were able on several occasions to raise awareness of the Baltic question internationally.

Summing up, it is evident that all throughout the period 1940 to 1985 there were individuals and groups, members of the public in Latvia, who resisted both the Soviet and the Nazi regimes. The underlying goal of this resistance always was renewal of an independent Latvian state; many wished to achieve this on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia as adopted in 1922. The national resistance movement identified as their near-term goals softening the totalitarian regime, decreasing the extent to which Latvia was colonised and Russified, and in this sense their aims coincided with those of the National Communists. Fighting the totalitarian regime and armed resistance in the face of overwhelming opposing forces did not lead to the desired results, and the decisive role was played by the varied forms of non-violent resistance. The effectiveness of non-violent resistance was limited by an inability to establish a united resistance movement with a leading centre, but under totalitarian conditions and complete control exercised by the *KGB* such a development was too difficult a task. It is for this reason, and due also to differences of opinion among members of the resistance movement, only a limited number of sporadic actions took place together with dissidents from other oppressed peoples of the USSR, including joint actions undertaken together with dissidents from Lithuania and Estonia. The national resistance movement in fact reached its goal by keeping alive the idea of an independent state of Latvia and helped prepare the ground for the Awakening and the resultant recovery of independence at the beginning of the 1990s.

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Kristīne Beķere

LATVIANS AROUND THE WORLD, 1945–1991

After the Second World War, the overwhelming majority of Latvians in Germany's displaced persons (DP) camps refused to repatriate to Soviet Latvia and as exiles eventually settled in various countries around the world, mainly in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Latvian communities sprang up in these countries and maintained contact with one another through a network of organisations. Their sole *raison d'ĕtre* was to restore Latvia's independence and to preserve Latvian identity until the moment of repatriation had come. This article takes a look at how these exile communities came to be, and at their political activism, achievements in culture, education, and research, and their entrepreneurial endeavours.

Keywords: Latvians around the world, Latvian exile, exile organisations, Latvian independence, political lobbying, culture in exile, science in exile, education in exile, exile Latvian enterprises.

Introduction

The history of the Latvian diaspora or exile community between 1945 and 1991, when it officially concluded, has been researched only partially in the last 25 years since the restoration of Latvian state independence. Individual researchers have analysed the Latvian exiles' political activities in the context of German and American foreign policy.[1] Ieva Zaķe has explored the anti-communist activities of Latvian exiles in the United States.[2] Several books of a general nature that take a look at Latvian communities in a specific region or country have been published.[3] Several studies published both in Latvia[4] and abroad[5] have been devoted to Baltic issues in the political

[1] Spohr Readman, K. Between Political Rhetoric and Realpolitik Calculations: Western Diplomacy and the Baltic Independence Struggle in the Cold War Endgame. *Cold War History,* Vol. 6, No. 1, 2006, pp. 1–42; L'Hommedieu, J. H. *Exile and Constituents: Baltic Refugees and American Cold War Politics, 1948–1960.* Doctoral thesis (monograph). Turku: University of Turku, 2011.

[2] Zaķe, I. *American Latvians: Politics of a Refuge Community.* New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2010.

[3] E.g., Putniņš, A. L. *Latvians in Australia. Alienation and Assimilation.* Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1981; Meija, S. D. *Latvians in Michigan.* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005; Kārklis, M., Streips, L. *The Latvians in America, 1640–1973.* New York: Oceana Publications, 1974; et al.

[4] Zunda, A. *Baltijas jautājums*, *1940–1991.* Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2012; Daudze, A. *Latvija Zviedrijas politikā*, *1945–1991.* Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2011.

[5] E.g., *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*. Hiden, J., Made, V., Smith, D. J. (eds.). London; New York: Routledge, 2008.

agendas of individual countries or within the global context and include mention of the Latvian exile community's activities. Academic research in Latvia about this subject is currently limited to individual articles in conference materials[6] or in scholarly journals and is primarily published in Latvian only. Comparatively speaking, Latvian exile culture, especially literature[7] and theatre,[8] has attracted wider interest of Latvian scholars. This collection includes articles about some of the Latvian exile community's cultural endeavours, which is why this article provides only a general overview about exile culture. The practical, educational, and scientific aspects of the exile community have, however, received little academic review except for the diaspora's own periodicals during the exile years. Also, a comprehensive and analytical history of Latvian exile history remains to be written.

During or after the exile era, various organisations and communities of the exile have published overviews about their activities within various time frames. Both large and very small Latvian organisations — from the American Latvian Association (*Amerikas latviešu apvienība, ALA*)[9] and *Daugavas Vanagi* (Daugava Hawks, a Latvian veterans' organisation)[10] to very small public organisations, congregations, and groups — have published digests about themselves. After the restoration of Latvia's independence, several leading exile organisations released publications about their work in the exile era, including the World Federation of Free Latvians (*Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienība, PBLA*).[11] Studies and other compilations about the history of the Latvian exile communities in, for example, Great Britain,[12] Australia,[13] and South America[14] have been released. In addition, following the restoration of independence,

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[6] A work in Latvian devoted to the Latvian exiles' political activities: *Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas neatkarības idejas uzturēšanā:* Apvienotā Pasaules latviešu zinātnieku III un Letonikas IV kongresa sekcijas materiāli. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2011; various subjects covered in: *Latvija ārpus Latvijas: Kultūra, vēsture, emigrācija un nacionālā identitāte: konferences referātu krājums*. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālais arhīvs, 2014; *Konferences "Trimda, kultūra, nacionālā identitāte": referātu krājums*. Rīga: Nordik, 2004.

[7] E.g., Daukste-Silasproģe, I. *Latviešu literārā dzīve un latviešu literatūra bēgļu gados Vācijā, 1944–1950*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2002; Daukste-Silasproģe, I. *Latviešu literārā dzīve un literatūra ASV un Kanādā, 1950–1965*. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 2007; Daukste-Silasproģe, I. *Tāla zeme, tuvi ļaudis: latviešu Austrālijā: dzīve, literārais process, personības.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2014; Eglāja-Kristsone, E. *Dzelzsgriezēji. Latvijas un rietumu trimdas rakstnieku kontakti*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2013.

[8] E.g., Hausmanis, V. *Latviešu teātris trimdā: Vācija, Austrija, Beļģija, Dānija, Anglija, Zviedrija.* Rīga: Zinātne, 2005; and other books by this author.

[9] Albats, B., Klīve, V. V. *ALA: Amerikas latviešu apvienība, 1951–1986.* Linkolna, Nebraska: Amerikas latviešu apvienība, 1986.

[10] Hāzners, V. *Laiks, telpa, ļaudis: Vēstures apcere.* 5. sēj. Minstere; Toronto: Daugavas Vanagu Centrālā valde, 1974, 1978, 1984, 1995.

[11] *Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienības darbības apskats, 1956–2001: Rakstu un materiālu krājums* Cipulis, A., Brancis, M. (sast.). Rīga: Latvijas Valsts arhīvs, 2001.

[12] *Latvieši Lielbritānijā.* 1. grām. Auziņa-Smita, I. (red.). London: Latviešu nacionālā padome Lielbritānijā; Daugavas Vanagu fonds, 1995. Additional volumes are planned.

[13] *Footprints: Latvians in South Australia.* Krūmiņš, B. (Ed.). Adelaide: Latvian Association in South. Australia, 2010; Didrihsone-Tomaševska, I. *Latvieši Austrālijā: Skats no tālienes: Trimdas gadi*. South Yarra, Victoria: Sterling Star, 2014.

[14] Ozols, I., Restberga-Zalta, M. *Latvieši Arģentīnā: Īsas ziņas par latviešiem Čīlē un Urugvajā.* Buenos Airesa: Imanta, 2001.

numerous activists have published their recollections of the exile community's political activism, in which they were involved.[15]

Testimonials to the Latvian exile community's political activism are scattered around the world and preserved in various archives and libraries in Latvia, the United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, and elsewhere. The work of willing researchers has been impeded by the disarray of these numerous archives. An array of information can be found in the archives of the major exile organisations.[16] Regrettably, not all of them have been preserved as a unified whole. The archives of the American Latvian Association, the European Centre of the Latvian Liberation Committee (*Latvijas atbrīvošanas komitejas Eiropas centrs*, *LAKEC*), and the World Federation of Free Latvians (*Pasaules Brīvo latviešu apvienība*, *PBLA*) were split up, and today their parts are housed in several archives and document repositories.[17] Part of the documentation regarding political activism has been irretrievably lost, especially that which pertains to the work of individuals and their personal archives and Latvian communities in certain countries. For example, hardly any materials can be found regarding the political work of the Latvian community in France, and material about the political work of Latvians in Canada during certain periods has disappeared.

Researchers can also find valuable information, such as memoranda, petitions, letters, and appeals to state institutions and politicians, as well as copies of official responses, in the national archives of the biggest exile communities' host countries[18]. These materials allow us to get a sense of the amplitude of the exile Latvians' political work and its content, as well as reach conclusions about the results and the host countries' attitudes regarding the exiles' political lobbying efforts. Currently, a large portion of material about the exiles' activities from 1980 until 1991 is not yet available in archives due to certain legal restrictions.

The purpose of this article is to define the Latvian exile community's chief characteristics during the time of Soviet occupation by drawing attention to its structure, political work, cultural life and education, as well as some of its significant achievements in research and economic activity. Due to constraints, only trends and the most important events in these fields have been mentioned, with footnotes providing leads on

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[15] E.g., Spilners, I. *Mēs uzvarējām: Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienība Eiropas Drošības un Sadarbības Konferencē un daži citi laikmetīgi notikumi, 1972–1986.* Rīga: Autora izdevums, 1998; Ritenis, J. *Diplomātiskā cīņa par Latvijas Republikas suverinātes atjaunošanu.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 1999; Dēliņš, E. *Konsuls bez valdības, 1979–1991: Piezīmes, dokumenti, materiāli*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1997.

[16] The archive of the Latvian Association of Australia and New Zealand has been handed over to the National Archives of Latvia (Collection No. 2462). The archive of the Latvian National Federation in Canada is located in the Ontario Province Archive in Toronto. The archive of the Latvian National Council in Great Britain is located at the Latvian Documentation Center at *Straumēni* (Catthorpe Mansion), which belongs to the *Daugavas Vanagi* Organisation.

[17] Part of the *ALA* archive has been handed over to the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) archive in Minnesota, and another part is at the ALA offices in Rockville, Maryland near Washington, DC. The bulk of the *PBLA* archive, mostly in copy form, is located in the National Archives of Latvia, with one part being stored at the *ALA* offices in Rockville, MD. A part of the LAKEC archive is at the Latvian Center in Münster, Germany, and another part is stored at the archive at *Straumēni* in the UK.

[18] Translators note: the term "host country" refers to the countries in which Latvian refugees sought and were granted asylum, and where they established their exile communities.

where to find additional information. In addition, this article does not include information about those Latvians who for various reasons emigrated from Latvia after 1991.[19]

Dispersal of Latvians throughout the world

The emigration of Latvians to other countries became noticeable in the second half of the 19th century, when Latvian communities were formed and organised in various parts of the world.[20] The biggest Latvian settlements abroad before the Second World War were in the United States, Canada, Australia, and South America, where the first Latvian settlers arrived at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The reasons for emigrating from Latvia prior to the First World War had to do with events there. For instance, emigration increased sharply after the events of 1905,[21] when many Latvians sought refuge abroad for politicial reasons. Another wave of emigration took place in the 1920s mostly due to religious reasons. Lastly, a minority of emigrants were adventure-seekers or those who hoped to improve their economic circumstances.

Prior to the Second World War, the United States was the most popular destination for Latvian would-be emigrants: in 1897, there were about 1000 Latvians in the US, but by 1900 this number had swelled to 4000. The total number of Latvians in the United States cannot be precisely determined, but before the Second World War around 40 000 or more Latvians lived there.[22] The first Latvian societies were founded at the end of the 19th century. The Boston Latvian Society was founded in 1889, and in 1896 the first Latvian periodical in the US, *Amerikas Vēstnesis*, was published. Various periodicals and books were published in other American cities that were home to bigger Latvian communities: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and others. Latvian congregations of various denominations were founded in Philadelphia (1883), Boston (1884), New York (1896), and elsewhere. The first Latvian Lutheran minister in America, Hans Rebane,[23] was born in Valka, Latvia. The Philadelphia Society of Free Letts is a noteworthy institution, having been in operation since its founding in 1892. Its mandate was to render assistance to Latvians, while promoting education and the preservation of Latvian culture. In addition, the oldest Latvian library in the US can be found here.[24]

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[19] See: Mieriņa, I. (red.). *Latvijas emigrantu kopienas. Cerību diaspora.* Rīga: LU Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts, 2015.

[20] This article does not cover the departure of Latvians for territories in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine in the 19th century. See: Ķikuts, T. *Latviešu zemnieku koloniju izveidošanās Krievijas impērijas Eiropas daļā (19. gs. 40. gadi – 1914. gads): Promocijas darbs.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 2015.

[21] See the article by L. Lapa, about the year1905, "The 1905 Revolution in Latvia" in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. II, pp. 377–405.

[22] Krasnais, V. *Latviešu kolonijas*. Melbourne: Kārļa Zariņa fonds, 1980; Bērziņš, J. Latvieši pasaulē 1918.–1940. gadam. *Vēsturnieks profesors Dr. phil. LZA ārzemju loceklis Andrievs Ezergailis: bibliogrāfija, darbabiedru veltījumi 70 gadu jubilejā.* Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures institūta apgāds, 2000, 75.–76. lpp.

[23] Ņujorkas latviešu evaņģēliski luteriskā draudze, 1896–1998. New York: Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church of New York, 2000, p. 24.

[24] Lazdiņš, N. Vecākā latviešu grāmatu krātuve ASV. *Archīvs: raksti par latviskām problēmām.* 20. sēj. Melburna: Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienība; K. Zariņa fonds, 1980, 135.–138. lpp.

There were common efforts to organise the Latvian community in the United States. The first American Latvian Congress took place on 3–5 January 1919 in New York and was attended by representatives of Latvian organisations in the United States — those already founded and those in the process of taking shape. During the Congress, the American Latvian National Association (*Amerikas Latviešu tautiskā savienība*) was created. More congresses followed: in September 1919 and in 1920 in New York, and in September 1921 in Boston.[25]

The oldest Latvian settlement in South America was the Rio Novo farmers' colony in Brazil, established in 1890 by 25 families from Riga.[26] The main wave of emigration to Brazil was linked to Baptist life in Latvia in the 1920s. A group within this church believed they were destined to experience a "spiritual revival". Their belief that they were the "chosen" and that they should flee harked back to several Biblical passages, and eventually the "revivalists" turned to the practical idea of emigration. Their preachers' visions pointed to Brazil as their destination.[27] The first Latvian Baptist immigrants to Brazil settled near the bank of the Rio de Peize in the middle of a jungle, and 1 November 1922 is considered the foundation day of the *Vārpa* colony. Second Latvian colony *Palma* was founded soon after. The grueling living conditions did not correspond with many of the settlers' original visions and eventually led to in-fighting and financial problems. The colony flourished in the 1930s up until the beginning of the 1940s. However, by the beginning of the 1950s, it became clear that due to geographic isolation and the nature of the soil, *Vārpa* risked the prospect of economic decline.[28] The first known Latvian organisation in Brazil is the Society of Friends of the Baltic Countries (*Baltijas valstu draugu biedrība*), founded in 1935.[29]

Latvians immigrated to other South American countries as well. Like elsewhere, a significant number of Latvians arrived in Argentina after 1905. Latvians founded their colony *Austra* of about 250 people in Patagonia in 1907. More Latvians arrived in Argentina in the 1920s. Due to internal conflicts, two Latvian organisations were founded, the Latvian Society in Argentina (1928) and the Buenos Aires Latvian Club (1930). Only after the arrival, in 1935, of Latvian Chargé d'Affaires Dr. Pēteris Oliņš, were the Latvian communities of Argentina united under one roof, that of the Latvian Association in Argentina.[30] Smaller groups of Latvians immigrated to other South American countries: for example, in 1929, several Latvian families were residing in Uruguay,[31] and a small number of Latvians lived in Paraguay, Chile, and Bolivia.[32] Precise figures are not available, but it is estimated that about 4000 (and by some

[25] Ceturtais kongress. *Amerikas Atbalss,* Nr. 35, 01.09.1921, 1.–2. lpp.

[26] Veigners, I. *Latvieši Rietumzemēs*. Rīga: Drukātava, 2009, 494.–495. lpp.

[27] Kārklis, A. *A Millenarian Migration*: Vārpa. *Lituanus*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 1987. Accessible at: http://www.lituanus.org/1987/87_3_02.htm (site last visited 07.24.2013).

[28] Ibid.

[29] Gūtmane, D. Latviešu trimdas politiskās aktivitātes Brazīlijā. *Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas neatkarības idejas uzturēšanā.* Apvienotā pasaules latviešu zinātnieku III un Letonikas IV kongresa sekcijas materiāli, 151. lpp.

[30] Ozols, I., Restberga-Zalta, M. *Latvieši Arģentīnā: īsas ziņas par latviešiem Čīlē un Urugvajā.* Buenos Airesa: Imanta, 2001, 5.–10. lpp.

[31] Ibid., 111. lpp.

[32] Krasnais, V. *Latviešu kolonijas,* 488.–493. lpp.

estimates up to 7000)[33] Latvians were living in Brazil by the end of the 1930s, and about 400–500[34] up to, at the most, 1000 in Argentina.[35]

The first Latvian Lutheran congregation in Canada was founded in 1897 in Josephburg in Alberta province. In 1903, the congregation built a church, which was also utilised by a German congregation. The Winnipeg Latvian Friendship Society was founded in 1911, and in 1913 it began publishing its newspaper, *Kanādietis* (The Canadian). Latvians settled primarily in the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario, mostly on farms.[36] Before the Second World War, there were about 500 Latvians in Canada.

The first significant immigration wave of Latvians into Australia took place in the 1890s: by 1891, there were about 158 Latvian-born persons living in Australia, primarily Jews.[37] A greater number of people arrived in Australia after the events of the 1905 revolution in Latvia. Most of these Latvians settled near Sidney. The first Latvian organisation in Australia — the Lettish Association of Sidney — was founded in 1913, and a few years later similar organisations were founded in Brisbane and possibly in Melbourne.[38] In later years, other organisations were founded: the Latvian Club of Sydney in 1928; the Latvian Workers' Society of Sydney; and the Latvian Workers' Club *Auseklis* in Brisbane, possibly in 1915. Port Pierie Latvians were active from 1912–1917 in the so-called Russian Club and library and even oversaw its activities.[39] For a short time, several periodicals were also published in Australia. The 1933 census reported that there were 427 Latvian-born persons in Australia,[40] but the total number of Latvians there before the Second World War was about 700.

Individual, smaller-sized Latvian communities existed in numerous European countries and China, and tiny ones were scattered throughout Africa, Asia, and the Near East.

Latvians in the world due to the Second World War

The greatest dispersal of Latvians came as a result of the Second World War. Towards the end of the war in 1944, fearing Bolshevik terror and deportations, as the front line drew near, hundreds of thousands of Latvians fled west.[41] The Nazi occupation authorities also forced many people to evacuate. In addition to the refugees, in Germany there were Latvian workers, prisoners in jails and concentration camps, and soldiers of

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[33] Veigners, I. *Latvieši Rietumzemēs,* 101. lpp.

[34] Ibid., 103. lpp.

[35] Krasnais, V. *Latviešu kolonijas,* 489. lpp.

[36] Akmentins, O. *Latvians in Bicentennial America.* [Waverly, Iowa]: Latvju Grāmata, 1976, pp. 230–231.

[37] Putniņš, A. L. Early Latvian Settlers in Australia: Setting the Scene. *Early Latvian Settlers in Australia.* Putniņš, A. L. (Ed.). South Yarra: Sterling Star, 2010, p. 10.

[38] Putniņš, A. Pirmā latviešu bibliotēka Austrālijā. *Archīvs,* 20. sēj., 139.–141. lpp.

[39] Putniņš, A. L. Early Latvian Settlers in Australia: Setting the Scene. *Early Latvian Settlers in Australia*, pp. 214–221.

[40] Birškys B., Birškys A., Putniņš, A. L., Salasoo, I. *The Baltic Peoples in Australia: Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians.* Melbourne: Australasian Educa Press, 1986, p. 73.

[41] See the article by I. Feldmanis on the events of the Second World War in Latvia, "Latvia During the Second World War (1939–1945)", in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. II, pp. 512–557.

the Latvian Legion in this multitude. During the war, close to 200 000 refugees left Latvia, of which the great majority ended up in Germany. In the summer of 1945, about 122 000 refugees[42] from Latvia found themselves in the American, British, and French occupation zones. Part of the Latvian Republic's diplomatic service was also abroad.

The status of the Latvian refugees in Germany after the Second World War was unclear. In their first publications from the summer of 1945 they referred to themselves as "Latvians in emigration" with or without the additional phrase "in exile". They emphasised the fact that their emigration was forced upon them, and soon they began calling themselves exiles. Although the Latvian refugees emphasised the political dimension of their status, the Western authorities did not refer to them as exiles; they were, rather, "displaced persons" ("DPs" for short, an abbreviation the Latvians quickly adopted in reference to themselves).[43] After Germany's capitulation, seeing that only a tiny fraction of Baltic refugees agreed to repatriate to the Soviet-occupied Baltic states, the administrative authorities of the Western powers began referring to the Balts (with the exception of the Baltic Germans) as "non-repatriable displaced persons".[44] Even later Balts were not officially granted exile status.[45]

Beginning in 1946, the Latvian exile community in Germany dispersed. Some people set off for different countries of their own accord, while others were recruited as a workforce.[46] By the end of the 1940s, the main Latvian exile communities had been established in the United States, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and Sweden. Smaller but equally noteworthy communities sprang up in Brazil, France, New Zealand, and Argentina. In the mid-1960s, about 156 000 Latvians or roughly 10% of all Latvians were in exile.[47] It must be noted that many Latvians chose not to take an active part in the exile community: some maintained only periodic ties with it, while others shied away from it altogether. The best known and documented part of the Latvian exile community is the one that took an active part in its social life and organisations. Practically nothing is known about the families that withdrew from Latvian life in exile.

The status of Latvian refugees in Sweden was different. There is evidence that the Kingdom of Sweden recognised *de jure* the Soviet annexation of the Latvian Republic soon after its occupation in 1940.[48] However, the Swedish authorities took a different approach to Baltic refugees who arrived in Sweden after 1948.[49] In spite of protests and

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[42] Due to the lack of precise figures the number of Latvian refugees is put at 150 000. How many Latvian citizens viewed themselves as exiles is also debated. See: Dunsdorfs, E. *Trešā Latvija.* Melburna: Latvijas skautu prezidenta Ģenerāļa Kārļa Goppera fonds, 1968.

[43] The term was created in 1943, when plans were being forged for dealing with the post-war refugee issue.

[44] Non-repatriable displaced persons. Recent noteworthy research: Cohen, G. D. *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order.* Oxford: University Press, 2012.

[45] Deksnis, E. B., Beķere, K. Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas neatkarības uzturēšanā 1945–1991. *Latvieši un Latvija: Akadēmiski raksti*. 3. sēj.: *Atjaunotā Latvijas valsts.* Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2013, 72. lpp.

[46] For example, as part of the European Voluntary Workers programme.

[47] Dunsdorfs, E. *Trešā Latvija,* 48. lpp.

[48] For more on Sweden's policies in regard to the Baltic question, see: Daudze, A. *Latvija Zviedrijas politikā, 1945–1991*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2011.

[49] Deksnis, E. B., Beķere, K. Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas Latvijas neatkarības uzturēšanā 1945–1991. *Latvieši un Latvija: Akadēmiskie raksti.* Vol. 3: *Atjaunotā Latvijas valsts*, 72.–73. lpp.



Fig. 1. A chess tournament at the Altgarde displaced persons camp in Germany, 27 April 1947 (from *DP Albums*, ID96)

desperate attempts of resistance, including suicide, in 1946, Sweden extradited 146 Baltic soldiers to the USSR; of these, 130 were Latvian, 9 Lithuanian, and 7 Estonian.[50] The majority of Latvian refugees were granted the right to reside in Sweden, but the number of Latvians in Sweden decreased by about half, as refugees sought to emigrate to safer host countries. Latvian political actions in Sweden were impeded and earned minimal recognition from the Swedish authorities due to its neutral stance towards the Soviet Union.[51] Nevertheless, the Latvian community in Sweden was very active, and it played a special role due to its proximity to the homeland, which ensured closer ties with Latvia. During the so-called National Awakening period (late 1980s) Sweden's Latvian community actively took part in the extraordinary events unfolding in Latvia.

Latvians around the world have exhibited the tendency to consolidate into communities and organisations. The first exile organisations were founded in displaced persons' camps and in the new homelands. In the camps Latvian refugees founded organisations, societies, interest clubs, and artistic collectives, such as choirs, theatre and dance troupes, literary groups, etc., as well as the first political organisations.[52] Recalling the intensity of cultural and social life in the DP camps, which could never be repeated later, former exiles have compared life in those conditions to life in a small town or parish in Latvia,[53] and the time spent in these camps is often referred to as "Little Latvia". After emigrating to their new homelands, Latvians resumed congregating and creating cultural and artistic groups.

In addition, large, multi-faceted organisations representing Latvians of a specific region or country were established, and political and charitable causes were pursued in addition to matters of culture and education. Such central organisations emerged in practically all the countries in which a significant number of Latvians settled. The biggest such central organization,, the American Latvian Association, was founded on

[50] For more on this act of extradition, see: Silamikelis, V. *With the Baltic Flag through Three Occupations.* Riga: Jumava, 2005; Freivalds, O., Alksnis, E. *Latviešu karavīru traģēdija Zviedrijā*. Kopenhāgena: Imanta, 1956.

[51] Ibid., 23.–60. lpp.

[52] About cultural life in displaced persons camps, see: Wyman, M. *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–1951.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998, pp. 156–177.

[53] Sprūdžs, Ā. Latvietības mozaīka un princips "Audiatur et altera pars". *Literatūra un Māksla*, Nr. 22, 20.05.1989, 4.–5. lpp.

24 February 1951[54] and represented all nationally inclined Latvians in the United States.[55] Like similar Latvian organisations elsewhere, it was involved in many activities, but *ALA* was definitely a political organisation with the goal of: "restoring Latvia's independence and the freedom and self-determination of the Latvian people in the framework of a united Europe."[56] *ALA* not only represented the numerically biggest Latvian exile community, but it was also located in the centre of the exiles' political efforts — the United States of America. During the Cold War, the US was the main counter-force to the communist bloc and the Latvian exile community's main ally. For these two reasons, *ALA* became the most active Latvian exile organisation in the world.

Table 1

The main Latvian exile organisations[57]

Organisation	Founding date, place
Germany's Latvian Central Council (*Vācijas Latviešu centrālā padome*)	1945, 1951* Germany
Latvian National Foundation (*Latviešu nacionālais fonds, LNF*)	1947 Stockholm
Latvian National Federation in Canada (*Latviešu nacionālā apvienība Kanādā, LNAK*)	1948 Toronto
Latvian National Council in Great Britain (*Latviešu nacionālā padome Lielbritānijā, LNPL*)	1950 London
American Latvian Association (*Amerikas Latviešu apvienība, ALA*)	1951 Washington, DC
Swedish Latvian Central Council (*Zviedrijas Latviešu centrālā padome, ZLCP*)	1953 Stockholm
Daugavas Vanagi, DV (in English —Daugava Hawks)	1945/1952** Zedelheim, Belgium
European Centre of the Latvian Liberation Committee (*Latvijas Atbrīvošanas komitejas Eiropas centrs, LAKEC*)	1951 London
World Federation of Free Latvians (*Pasaules Brīvo latviešu apvienība, PBLA*)***	1956 London
Latvian Association of Australia and New Zealand (*Latviešu apvienība Austrālijā un Jaunzēlandē, LAAJ*)	1951/1972**** Melbourne
South American Latvian Association (*Dienvidamerikas Latviešu apvienība, DALA*)	1977 São Paulo

* Germany's Latvian Central Council reworked its statutes after the displaced persons camps were shut down in 1951.

** At its meeting in London, in 1952, *DV* incorporated external information activities in its statutes.

*** Initially, *PBLA* was called the Free World's Latvian Association. The name was changed in 1970.

**** Founded in 1972, the New Zealand Latvian Association merged with the Latvian Association of Australia.

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[54] For more on the founding of *ALA*, see: Albats, B., Klīve, V. V. *ALA: Amerikas Latviešu apvienība, 1951–1986,* 1.–16. lpp.

[55] Ibid., 7. lpp. Congress delegates represented slightly over 12 000 members, which did not prevent one from concluding that *ALA* spoke for all Latvians in the US (around 100 000 at the time).

[56] Ibid., 203. lpp. E. Freivalds' presentation points about *ALA*'s objectives in the political realm.

[57] Table from: Deksnis, E. B., Beķere, K. Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas neatkarības uzturēšanā 1945–1991, 80. lpp. For more on the formation of exile organisations, see the same, 79.–84. lpp.



Fig. 2. The logo of the World Federation of Free Latvians

In addition, numerous regional Latvian organisation associations were established: in 1951, *LAKEC*, the European Latvians' central organisation, was founded. It united Latvians from eleven European countries. Though a large number of countries was represented, most active were *LAKEC's* biggest participant organisations in Great Britain, Germany, and Sweden.[58] One of the latest regional organisation associations to emerge was the South American Latvian Association (*DALA*) which since 1977 has united Latvians in Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, and Mexico.[59] *DALA* was founded largely due to the increasing political activities of Latvian organisations around the world, and particularly those of the World Federation of Free Latvians; Latvians in South America wanted to take more active part in them.[60]

The World Federation of Free Latvians emerged in the 1950s as the central Latvian exile organisation: it formally represented all Latvians in the "free world", that is, outside Soviet-occupied Latvia and the communist bloc. The decision to create the organisation (initially called the *Brīvās pasaules latviešu apvienība*, *BPLA*, or the Free World Latvian Association), was adopted on 14 October 1955 in London on the basis of an agreement between *ALA* and *LAKEC*,[61] but *BPLA* began its practical operations on 25 February 1956, which is also viewed as its official founding moment. *BPLA's* primary aim was "to advance the cause of Latvian independence and the renewal of Latvian statehood and independence, the preservation of (Latvian) culture and creative activities, and help to Latvians scattered around the world".[62] In the exile years *ALA* representatives played a leading role in the work of *BPLA/PBLA*.[63]

There were other global organisations that united Latvians on all continents. The *Daugavas Vanagi* was such an organisation. It was founded in 1945 with the intent to provide aid to Latvian war veterans and their families. In 1952, with departure from Germany, it expanded its activities by branching out and establishing local chapters in the United States, Australia, Canada, and elsewhere. The organisation established several aims: caring for compatriots, preserving Latvian identity, and promoting the restoration of Latvia's independence.[64] The organisation is still active in Latvia and abroad.

The Christian Church and congregations were culturally and socially at the centre of the exile community. There were Lutherans (the majority), Catholics, and Baptists among the Latvians. Almost one half of all Latvian Lutheran ministers had gone into

[58] Dunsdorfs, E. Sabiedriskā rosība mūsu organizācijās. *Archīvs*, 12. sēj, 1972, 43. lpp.

[59] Veigners, I. *Latvieši Rietumzemēs*, 130. lpp.

[60] Gūtmane, D. *Latviešu trimdas politiskās aktivitātes Brazīlijā,* 158. lpp.

[61] See *BPLA*'s draft statutes, which were adopted at the meeting of the central board of the American Latvian Association on 5 March 1955. *Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienības darbības apskats, 1956–2001*, 26.–27. lpp.

[62] Ibid., point 2.

[63] The first *PBLA* chairman from another country (other than the US) was Linards Lukss (Latvian National Federation in Canada) who was at the helm from 1988 to 1989.

[64] For more on this, see: Hāzners, V. *Laiks, telpa, ļaudis*. 5. sēj. Minstere; Toronto: Daugavas Vanagu Centrālā valde, 1974, 1978, 1984, 1995.

exile, including the Archbishop and most deans, and immediately after the war they established the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Outside of Latvia (*Latviešu Evaņģēliski luteriskā baznīca ārpus Latvijas, LELBĀL*), which remained active in all the exile years. By 1969, the Latvian exile community's Lutheran congregations owned 40 churches and about 15 rural properties and congregation buildings.[65] Following the Pope's 1952 apostolic constitution, spiritual care of the exile Latvian Catholics was to be administered by national congregations in their host countries; these congregations answered to a representative of the Emigration High Council chosen by the Pope at the Holy See. Because Catholics comprised a small minority among Latvian exiles (about 10%), only two congregations in the United States had their own churches.[66]

The role of the Church was especially important in those countries where the Latvian communities were smaller and geographically scattered, such as in South America. In such circumstances the Latvian congregations assumed the role of the central organisations, and congregation bulletins were in effect the main newspaper of the whole community: for example, the newspaper *Karakasas Ev. Luteriskās Draudzes Vēstis* (Caracas Ev. Lutheran Congregation News) was for many years the only Latvian language periodical published in Venezuela.

The Latvian scout and guide movement was already up and running in exile by July 1945, structured on the system established in Latvia before the war. In 1954, an instructional programme was adopted, which anticipated linking the general programme with that of each host country while implementing a Latvian instruction programme.[67] This approach was meant to reconcile Latvian traditions with those of the host country. The Latvian scout and guide movement in exile remained active until Latvia's independence in 1991.

Thus, in the 1950s, a hierarchy within the Latvian exile community's organisational structure emerged, starting with local city organisations and cultural clubs, the central representational bodies of the various host countries, and ending with the world organisation. A network of contacts was created, allowing Latvians in exile to coordinate their work in various areas, including political activism, and to effectively disseminate information within and without the community.

To coordinate political efforts to restore independence, beginning in the 1950s, but especially in the 1960s, there were numerous joint efforts between Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians in individual countries,[68] as well as at the global level. The best known and most active global organisations were: the Joint Baltic American Committee, founded in 1961; BATUN (Baltic Appeal to the United Nations), founded in 1966; and the Baltic World Council, founded in 1972. Cooperating already in Germany's displaced persons camps, the Balts realised that a bigger crowd attracted greater attention. The three Baltic nations' similar fates during the Second World War created similar political demands and aims, mainly the restoration of independence in the

[65] Lūsis, A. Mūsu baznīca svešuma robežās. *Archīvs,* 9. sēj., 1969, 11. lpp.
[66] Ručs, K. Latviešu katoļu draudžu nacionālā nozīme trimdā. *Archīvs*, 9. sēj., 1969, 17.–21. lpp.
[67] *Pasaules tālēs: latviešu skautisma astoņdesmit gadi.* Rīga: Junda, 2000, 111.–113. lpp.
[68] For example, the Baltic Federation in Canada, the Baltic Council of Australia, etc.

homelands. Cooperation towards this goal was natural and advantageous for all the Baltic exiles. The Latvian exiles cooperated with other diasporas as well, becoming involved in the work of the anti-communist Assembly of Captive European Nations (ACEN), for example.

The political work of Latvians in exile[69]

Latvians who wound up in exile never recognised the Soviet annexation of Latvia as legitimate and maintained that the Latvian state still existed *de jure*. A number of Latvians held on to their Latvian passports for decades, asserting the continuity of the Latvian state, if only in the legal context. They viewed exile as a temporary situation and set the preservation of Latvian identity and the restoration of Latvian statehood as their primary objectives.

The restoration of Latvia's independent statehood was the exiles' highest aim, and their organisations reiterated it at the national and global level. The citizens of Latvia wished to return to a free country, and the restoration of Latvia's independence was the leitmotif underlying the exiles' nearly 50-year span of existence; this wish was essentially the very bedrock of the exiles' identity and as such helped preserve the community and slowed down assimilation.[70]

The exile organisations and activists worked earnestly towards the achievement of this goal in their lifetime. The means towards this end were varied and included all activities, including cultural endeavours and the preservation of language and traditions and the passing down of these to the next generation. Yet it was the exiles' political work that most clearly demonstrated their concerns about the restoration of Latvia's independence.

Although the nature and intensity of these efforts differed during various periods in time and in various countries, overall they manifested themselves as two principal trajectories. One was direct political lobbying; that is, contacting the government institutions and politicians in one's host country, as well as international organisations. The other route was attracting attention to the Baltic question, which included promoting awareness among the public in one's host country about the fate of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to elicit interest and sympathy. Various forms of public political protest were this action's most visible manifestation. Already in the first years after the war, Latvians outside of Latvia commemorated Latvian Independence Day, the Soviet deportations of 14 June 1941, and other important dates. Pickets, marches, and demonstrations were the most popular forms of political protest and often coincided with concrete historical events and anniversaries. There were also processions to lay wreaths and flowers at various monuments dedicated to military heroes and freedom fighters.

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[69] This section is based on material from: Deksnis, E. B., Beķere, K. Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas neatkarības uzturēšanā 1945–1991, 67.–103. lpp.

[70] Upeslācis, V. Latviešu tautas kopas 10 gadi. *Latviešu trimdas desmit gadi: rakstu krājums*. Tichovskis, H. (Ed.). [Toronto]: Astras apgāds. 1954, 272. lpp.

Some demonstrations included theatrical components, and often Latvians wore their traditional folk costumes at political demonstrations.

When characterizing the exiles' political activities in various countries, it is important to note that they were banned in certain countries (in South America) or conflicted with the host country's official stance regarding the Baltic issue (such as Sweden). In these instances the Latvian community's political messages were merged with its cultural programme.

Upholding the policy of non-recognition of Latvias' incorporation into the Soviet Union

From the 1950s until the late 1980s, Balts in exile had no real, practical means of achieving the restoration of their homelands' independence. Therefore, their most important objective was the preservation of these countries' legal status. Most of the world's democracies, including the United States, continued to recognise the Baltic States' status as independent countries *de jure* and did not recognise the Soviet Union's claims on those territories. The United States policy regarding Baltic independence was defined in US Secretary of State Sumner Welles' 23 July 1940 declaration,[71] which clearly stated that the US did not recognise the Soviet annexation and incorporation of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This position was built on the 1932 Stimson Doctrine, which stated that the United States did not recognise the annexation of another country's territory by force or threat.

For the Latvians in exile, it was absolutely crucial to preserve the policy of non-recognition. State continuity of the Baltic States as subjects of international law, even if only in theory, was the primary basis for any demands regarding the restoration of these countries' independence. If the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States had been accepted *de jure* by the most influential Western countries, thereby legitimizing and strengthening the USSR's positions there, it would have made the chances of restoring independence remote indeed. The preservation of the Baltics' *de jure* status as independent states for more than 50 years is a unique case in the history of international law and had a considerable effect on the evolution of this framework.[72]

By the early 1970s, the *de jure* question of the Baltics had become pressing. Efforts to improve relations between the US and the Eastern Bloc countries in the first half of this decade caused the Balts to worry whether the United States would continue to adhere to its policy of non-recognition of the Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States. At the same time, the German Federal Republic was also implementing a new course in foreign policy by trying to normalise and establish diplomatic relations with its eastern neighbours, the Polish People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, and the

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[71] Statement by the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Welles, relating to the incorporation of the Baltic States. Released to the Press 23 July 1940. *Baltic States: A Study of their Origin and National Development; Their Seizure and Incorporation into the USSR: Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression*, House of Representatives, Eighty-Third Congress, Second Session, 1954. Under the Authority of H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438.

[72] McHugh, J. T., Pacy, J. T. *Diplomats without a Country: Baltic Diplomacy, International Law, and the Cold War.* London: Greenwood Press, 2001, p. 112.



Fig. 3. Latvian exile youths protesting at the 1975 OSCE Summit in Helsinki. (Photograph from the personal archive of Ģirts Zēgners)

German Democratic Republic, which alarmed Latvians in exile.[73]

Signs of a shift in relations between the US and the USSR emerged from meetings of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Helsinki in 1973–1975, alarming Baltic exiles who worried that the interests of the Baltic States could be sacrificed for the sake of more important agreements with the Soviet Union. Aside from human rights and other issues, one of the main points of the Helsinki Final Act calling for the Territorial Integrity of States[74] worried the exiles. Recognising current borders would cement the USSR's claims on the Baltic States and would considerably complicate the restoration of their independence. To facilitate the work of political lobbying, Baltic organisations around the world founded the Baltic World Council, also known as the Baltic World Conference (BWC). Together with the World Federation of Free Latvians and other exile organisations, the BWC employed all means during the OSCE talks to remind the international public and the governments of the Free West of the Baltic States' tragic fate not only as a historical event but as an important component of current political processes. Spearheaded by a Latvian American Uldis Grava, the BWC group distributed literature about the question of the Baltic States to the delegations of participating states.[75] The Balts also met with high-ranking politicians from the West. For instance, in 1974, shortly before his flight to Helsinki to sign the Final Act, US President Gerald Ford met with representatives from various ethnic groups, including Balts, and reaffirmed the continuation of the United States' non-recognition policy regarding the Baltic States.[76] A Baltic delegation travelled to Helsinki; it was present during the signing of the Final Act and distributed its Memorandum on the Baltic question.[77] At first, the Soviet delegation

[73] For example, Chairman of the European Latvian Youth Association Viktors Grigulis' 26 August 1976 letter to West German Chancellor Willy Brandt about the legal consequences of a GFR-GDR agreement and the Foreign Ministry's 16 September 1970 reply to V. Grigulis. German Foreign Ministry (Auswärtiges Amt) Archive, Bestand 41, Bd. 109.

[74] See the Helsinki Final Act's "Decalogue" Article IV on "Territorial Integrity of States". Accessible at: http://www.osce.org/helsinki-final-act (site last visited 12.12.2017).

[75] The Memorandum was prepared by Baltic organisations in Sweden (adopted in November 1972). B. Vītoliņa's personal archive, Bruno Kalniņš collection, 1. 1970–1972.

[76] The minutes of these discussions published in: Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969/76, 39, doc. 322, pp. 926–930.

[77] The Memorandum about the occupation and the Soviets' neocolonial policy towards the Baltic States. Rockville (USA), *PBLA* Archive, OSCE file. For more on the significance of the Memorandum, see: Loeber, D. A. Latvijas neatkarības atjaunošanas prasības dažos dokumentos pirms 1990. gada 4. maija. *4. maijs: Rakstu, atmiņu un dokumentu krājums par Neatkarības deklarāciju.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2000, 27.–32. lpp.

tried to derail the Baltic activists' efforts,[78] but their efforts of intimidation attracted even more attention to the Balts' demands, and from then on the USSR failed to prevent the Balts from spreading their message of protest.

In spite of the Baltic exiles' efforts, the wording in the Helsinki Final Act regarding the borders in Europe could be interpreted in various ways. In order to ensure that the United States' position on the Baltics remained unchanged in reference to Soviet incorporation, the Balts exerted great efforts, and, thanks to them, on 5 May 1976, the 94th United States Congress adopted Senate Resolution No. 406, which stressed the US policy of non-recognition of the Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States, notwithstanding the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. The US House of Representatives adopted a similar resolution, No. 864.[79] However, the signing of the act left many Baltic exiles doubting the possibility of the restoration of the Baltic States' independence.



Fig. 4. Māris Ķirsons protesting at the opening of the 11 November 1980 OECD conference in Madrid. (Photograph from the personal archive of Ģirts Zēgners)

The Baltic exile organisations did everything in their power to ensure that the Baltic issue remained topical in later conferences, where the act was reviewed. The first such conference was opened on 4 October 1977 in Belgrade, and the Balts succeeded in including their representatives in the US delegation. Public Baltic demonstrations in Belgrade were not possible, and *PBLA* representative and Baltic lobbyist Olģerts Pavlovskis was expelled from Yugoslavia. This in turn attracted public attention to the Baltic question. There were additional Baltic protests and attempts at finding partners for dialogue among delegates in Madrid (1980–1983), Ottawa (1985), and Vienna (1986–1989). Both Latvian organisations and Latvian individuals were active in lobbying delegations and engaging in public protests. For each meeting *PBLA* prepared and distributed a report documenting the Soviet Union's violations of the Helsinki Final Act in Latvia, as well as copies of important documents pertaining to the Baltic States, including the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.[80]

Latvians organised special events in 1985 to commemorate the 10th anniversary since Helsinki summit. *PBLA* organised a political campaign called the "Copenhagen Tribunal" in 25–27 July 1985, during which an international collegium of prominent jurists heard testimony and expressed their verdicts on Soviet human rights abuses. A

[78] In 1973, even succeeding in getting the Baltic delegation's members arrested. See: I. Spilners' letter to US Secretary of State Williams Rogers in regard to the arrest of the Baltic World Council delegates in Helsinki in 1973. IHRC Archive, JBANC Collection, Box 39, Folder "JBANC Correspondence, 1973".

[79] For an overview of the drafting of this resolution, see: Genys, J. B. The Joint Baltic American Committee and the European Security Conference. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1978, pp. 245–255.

[80] *Report on the Implementation of the Helsinki Final Act in Soviet Occupied Latvia: 1982.* Rockville: World Federation of Free Latvians, 1982.

march that marked the conclusion of the "tribunal" paved the way for a related event, the Baltic Freedom and Peace Cruise in the Baltic Sea, which was organised by the exile youth organisations of all three Baltic States. The main objective of the cruise was to remind "the closest neighbors of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania that peace in Europe is inseparable from respect for human rights and the restoration of democracy in all three Soviet-occupied Baltic republics".[81] Other demands issued during the cruise included the removal of nuclear weapons and impediments to self-determination, as well as the cessation of Soviet human rights abuses in these countries. Participants expressed their support for Balts who had been imprisoned for fighting for environmental protection. With their calls for actions these youths addressed a wide amplitude of concerns, emphasizing that a nation's right to self-determination was the basis and guarantee for other rights and freedoms.[82] The issues that the Balts addressed were critical not only in the context of the Baltic States, and they were widely discussed in the media and wider society. The Baltic Freedom and Peace Cruise remains without a doubt one of the most successful political events of the exile years: it generated widespread interest in the fate of the Baltics. More than 2000 articles worldwide were devoted to it, and it triggered scores of counter-publications and announcements from the Soviet side. This event "propelled the question of Baltic independence onto the front pages of leading newspapers at a time when nobody other than the Balts themselves were aware of this issue".[83] By emphasizing their conviction that changes in the USSR were imminent, the organisers of the cruise were able to alter (including within the Baltic exile community itself) the prevailing pessimistic view that positive change within the Soviet Union and thereby in the Baltic States was nearly impossible.

Another unexpected and serious setback for the Latvian exiles' hope for the restoration of Latvia's independence was the decision in the summer of 1974 by two Western countries — Australia and New Zealand — to recognise *de jure* the annexation of the Baltic States. In their attempts to have this decision revoked, Latvian Australians tried to educate the Australian public on the issue in hopes that the government's decision would be overturned. Protest marches and demonstrations with posters were organised in the country's biggest cities. On 9 August, about 15 000 Balts converged on the streets of Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide to protest. About 4000 demonstrators marched with torches in Melbourne.[84] These activities went hand in hand with political lobbying. Letters of protest and letters demanding an explanation of the decision to recognise *de jure* the Baltic States' incorporation were sent to Australian government ministers and leading members of the opposition. Baltic Australian exiles were asked to contact their representatives to clarify their positions, voice their protest, and demand that the decision be revoked.[85]

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[81] Invitation by Mārcis Štāls to take part in the Baltic Freedom and Peace Cruise. Stockholm, June 1985. *Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienības darbības apskats, 1956–2001*. Rīga: Latvijas Valsts arhīvs, 2001, 127. lpp.

[82] Baltic Peace and Freedom Cruise Rationale, June, 1985. Personal archive of Māris Graudiņš.

[83] Graudiņš, M. Latviešu trimdas loma neatkarības idejas uzturēšanā. Accessible at: http://www.barikadopedija.lv/raksti/555161 (site last visited 03.11.2017).

[84] Par tiesībām un taisnību *Austrālijas Latvietis*, Nr. 1241, 20.08.1974, 1. lpp.

[85] Austrālijas Baltiešu padomes darbības programma. 20.08.1974. LVA, 2462. f.



Fig. 5. The Ladies' March for Freedom was held on 28 September 1974 to protest the Australian government's decision to recognise *de jure* the incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR. (Photograph from the personal archive of Valda Liepiņa)

Because they were well organised, the Balts were able to expand their protests beyond Australia. Balts from all around the world sent letters of protest to the Australian government. There were well-coordinated demonstrations at Australian embassies in the United States and in other countries. Baltic demonstrations took place during the Australian prime minister's visits to Bonn, New York, Canada, and Great Britain.[86] Latvian Australians established wide cooperation with Liberal Party politicians who were naturally inclined to speak out against their rivals' decision. Cooperation with the opposition became especially significant after the Labourist government's categorical refusal to review the adopted decision. Revoking the decision was only possible if the opposition came to power. These hopes were fulfilled: a few days after victory in the Federal Election, the Liberal Party revoked the decision. New Zealand did not back away from its decision, in spite of local Latvians' efforts.

Even though in the mid-1970s it seemed that there was no immediate practical meaning for this decision and its reversal, it was undoubtedly a very significant event from the perspective of international relations and international law. The repeal of the decision directly contributed to the preservation of non-recognition of Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States by other countries around the world. Morally vindicated, this important victory buoyed the exiles' spirits and strengthened their self-confidence, and this in turn energised their political efforts not only in Australia but elsewhere as well, including South America, for example. The Latvian exile community's successfully defended non-recognition policy was widely held onto by the majority of Western Bloc countries up until the restoration of the Republic of Latvia in 1991, and its existence played an important role in the process of renewing independence.

Exile Latvians' participation in the events of the National Awakening

As the political situation in the Baltic States changed in the late 1980s, Latvian exile organisations had to adapt. In a short span of time the unthinkable happened: political cooperation between exiles and nationally inclined, informal organisations in Latvia, such as the Popular Front of Latvia (PFL, *Latvijas Tautas fronte*), *LNNK* (*Latvijas Nacionālās neatkarības kustība*, or the Latvian National Indepedence Movement), the so-called Citizens' Congress, and other smaller groups were established.

[86] Eglītis, V. Uzticēšanās pašu spēkiem. *Universitas*, No. 37, 1976, 38. lpp.



Fig. 6. A meeting between representatives of *PBLA* and the Popular Front of Latvia, on 16 May 1989, at Abrene in France. (Photograph from the personal archive of Guntis Bērziņš)

A meeting between representatives of Latvian exile organisations and the Popular Front of Latvia at the Latvian centre, Abrene, in France, on 13–18 May 1989, was an important event in establishing political cooperation. The *PBLA* board, the head of *Daugavas Vanagi*, eight PFL council and board members, and representatives of *LNNK*, Latvia's Rebirth Party, and the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party were present.[87] A wide range of issues, including politics, economics, culture, and education, were discussed. The political work group focussed its attention on how to remedy the effects of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (the occupation of the Baltic States) and on the PFL's political goals moving forward, choosing complete restoration of independence or partial sovereignty as part of the USSR. The views of *PBLA* and PFL differed on many political issues; for instance, they failed to work out a joint declaration on how to deal with the fallout of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.[88] *LNNK* representative Eduards Berklavs reiterated numerous times that his movement's ultimate goal was the complete restoration of Latvia's independence, whereas the PFL people were far more cautious and apparently were not authorised to conclude any agreements.[89] Nevertheless, the *PBLA* board unanimously adopted a resolution to support "national political" cooperation between the exile community and Latvia, and to back "all of PFL's efforts to strengthen the Latvian people's situation and promote the complete restoration of Latvia's independence".[90] The meeting in Abrene marked a turning point and a transition from seeking out contacts to the commencement of practical cooperation. After the meeting in Abrene, *PBLA* decided to expand its work in Europe, setting up an information centre in Münster, but PFL leaned more and more towards engaging in the fight for Latvia's full political and economic independence.[91]

The two sides agreed to establish regular contacts and meetings to coordinate their political work. The 2nd Congress of the PFL in October 1989, in which it adopted a stance on complete independence rather than autonomy within the USSR, erased the exile Latvians' lingering doubts about the advisability of cooperation. The PFL's unequivocal announcement left no room for interpretation, and those diplomats and

[87] Ritenis, J. *Diplomātiskā cīņa par Latvijas Republikas suverenitātes atjaunošanu,* 57. lpp.

[88] For the PBLA board meeting protocol in Abrene on 17 May 1989, see: Kalnciema, A. PBLA un LTF pirmā oficiālā tikšanās Francijā, Abrenē 1989. gada 13., 14., 17., 18. maijā. *Latvijas Arhīvi,* Nr. 1/2, 2009, 157. lpp.

[89] Ritenis, J. *Diplomātiskā cīņa par Latvijas Republikas suverenitātes atjaunošanu,* 57.–58. lpp.

[90] For the *PBLA* board meeting protocol in Abrene on 17 May 1989, see: Kalnciema, A. PBLA un LTF pirmā oficiālā tikšanās Francijā, Abrenē 1989. gada 13., 14., 17., 18. maijā, 159. lpp.

[91] Laķis, P. LTF un PBLA seminārs Abrenē 1989. gada 15.–18. maijā. *Pasaules brīvo latviešu apvienības darbības apskats: 1956–2001*, 152.–153. lpp.

consular workers who until then had hesitated threw their support behind the PFL.[92] Latvian exiles actively engaged in efforts related to the restoration of independence, providing significant advisory, monetary, and technical support to the PFL and helping with the exchange of information and establishment of diplomatic ties between Latvia and countries of the West. In addition, PFL support groups abroad helped in every way possible with the effort of moving Latvia towards independence.[93]

Parallel to establishing contacts with organisations in Latvia, the exile organisations continued their political lobbying and distributing information to the general public in their host countries. Numerous protests took place around the world to mark the 50th anniversary of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, on 23 August 1989. In March, a postcard blitz was underway, with senders demanding that their recipients, Western country politicians, annul the pact and help restore the Baltic States' right to self-determination.[94] An estimated 10 000 postcards were sent out.[95] At the end of August, there were demonstrations in cities in Australia,[96] the United States, and Europe to mark the 50th anniversary of the pact and to support the Baltic Way[97], a peaceful protest in which about two million people in the Baltic countries joined hands to form a human chain across the Baltics, linking Vilnius, Riga, and Tallinn. The Baltic Way on 23 August 1989 demonstrated that the majority of Balts wished to regain independence. Diplomats from the Baltic States met with US State Department representatives and discussed the pact's secret protocol.[98] There were special events in Bonn, too, on 23 August, including a demonstration, press conference, a special church service to commemorate all the people who had perished in the Baltic States as a result of the pact, and a manifestation.[99]

In 1989, thanks to the creation of a European Parliament member support group and the persistent lobbying efforts of the exiles, the parliament adopted a resolution on the independence of the Baltic States.[100] As part of the lobbying effort, EU Member States were addressed directly,[101] and there were visits to European institutions and meetings with their employees.[102]

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[92] See Anatols Dinbergs' testimony on the situation in Latvia to the US Senate in 1989. *Hearing Before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, One Hundredth First Congress, The Baltic Question, October 19, 1989.* Printed for the Use of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE 101-1-9].

[93] For information about the exiles' cooperation with LTF see: Īvāns, D. *LTF Rietumos.* Rīga: [b.i.], 2001.

[94] Prasīsim Hitlera–Staļina pakta anulēšanu. Daugavas Vanagu Centrālās valdes aicinājums. *Austrālijas Latvietis*, 03.03.1989, 1., 4. lpp.

[95] Tauta Latvijā — tauta Bonnā. *Austrālijas Latvietis*, Nr. 1987, 21.07.1989, 1.–2. lpp.

[96] 700 baltieši soļo. *Austrālijas Latvietis*, Nr. 1994, 08.09.1989, 1.–2. lpp.

[97] The Baltic Way was a peaceful demonstration in all three Baltic States on 23 August 1989 with the intent to attract the world's attention to the effects of the 1939 Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in the Baltic States.

[98] Baltijas valstu diplomāti ASV Ārlietu ministrijā. *Austrālijas Latvietis*, Nr. 1994, 08.09.1989, 2. lpp.

[99] Tauta Latvijā — tauta Bonnā, 1.–2. lpp.

[100] Resolution on Independence of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Adopted in 1989, published in the EC's Offcial Bulletin, *OJ C* 047, 02/27/1989, p. 129. Accessible at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:JOC_1989_047_R_0121_01&from=EN (site last visited 03.15.2017).

[101] A report by Imants Lieģis on his mission to Ireland (Dublin) in March 1990. Personal archive of Ruta Parris, folder *Baltiešu Padome Lielbritānijā.*

[102] This sort of lobbying is typical for European institutions (although less so in the the late 1980s), but for it to be successful, lobbyists need to meet with the actual decision-makers, whose identity it is difficult to ascertain based only on public information.



Fig. 7. A Baltic demonstration in London in support of Baltic independence on 6 February 1991. (Photograph from the personal archive of Guntis Bērziņš)

Latvian exiles were actively involved in the independence movement and supported it in all ways outside Latvia. In the so-called National Awakening period the exile community continued to inform societies around the world about the situation in Latvia, stressing in particular the Latvian nation's longing for freedom and political independence.

In the LSSR (Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic) Supreme Soviet elections of 18 March 1990, the PFL won the majority of seats. In its platform it had clearly spelled out its objective — the restoration of an independent Latvian state. The newly elected Supreme Soviet promptly got to work, and on 4 May 1990 it issued a declaration "On the Restoration of the Independence of the Republic of Latvia".[103] During this complicated period, the Latvian exiles' assistance to the government of Latvia was indispensable: they helped establish contacts in the US and elsewhere and assisted the new delegations in communicating with their serious partners in dialogue.[104]

Starting in June 1990, a number of Latvian exiles, including *PBLA* Chairman Gunārs Meierovics and *PBLA* Information Bureau Chief Jānis Ritenis, became involved in helping the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia establish international relations. In 1990, with the help of Latvian exiles, Latvian officials visited their European counterparts 13 times and took part in various international gatherings.[105] A special occasion was the visit of the new Latvian government's Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis with US President George Bush on 30 July 1990.

Latvians in exile were especially active in reaction to the tense situation in Riga during the "Barricades" in January 1991[106]. The American Latvian Association set up an information hotline: it was possible to call this number for the latest news from Latvia, and it was manned around the clock. Latvian Americans were invited to contact their House Representatives and demand action on the situation in the Baltic States. Latvians abroad made sure that events in the Baltics were being reported on in the American press.[107] The fact that Latvians lived all over the US was used to maxi-

[103] For more on the restoration of the independence of the Republic of Latvia, see the article by T. Jundzis, "Regaining the Independence of Latvia", in *Latvia and Latvians,* Vol. I, pp. pp. 54–92.

[104] O. Kalniņš's official report on a meeting between representatives of the Latvian Republic and James Baker on 20 July 1990. Archive of G. Bērziņš, LVA, 2772. f.

[105] Celle, O. Rietumu latviešu līdzdalība demokrātijas attīstībā Latvijā. Blūzma, V., Celle, O., Jundzis, T., a.o. *Latvijas valsts atjaunošana, 1986–1993*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 1998, 453. lpp.

[106] For more on the "Barricades" see the article by T. Jundzis, «Regaining the Independence of Latvia», in *Latvia and Latvians,* Vol. I, pp. 54–92.

[107] Uzsaukums Amerikas latviešiem. *Laiks*, Nr. 5, 16.01.1991, 1. lpp.

mum benefit: people were asked to monitor their local news in addition to major media outlets.

There were protest demonstrations in many cities, from a 200 people rally in Boston[108] to more than 3000 people converging in New York City on 19 January.[109] The leaders of Baltic exile organisations met with US House Representatives[110], government officials, and the US President himself.[111] *ALA* worked closely with the US State Department's Baltic Work Group, which was instructed to follow events in the Baltics and report on them to the US government. The US State Department later thanked *ALA* for providing its work group with crucial information from the Baltic States.[112] For those times, the receipt and distribution of information was rapid. For instance, a telephone call reporting an exchange of gunfire at the Ministry of the Interior in Riga, during which filmmaker Andris Slapiņš was shot, reached the US State Department in 15 minutes.[113]

Not only was the central Latvian organisation in the United States active: smaller regional organisations also put in great effort at this momentous time in Latvia's history. For instance, the American Baltic Freedom Committee of Kalamazoo gathered thousands of signatures beneath a petition to the US President demanding that Mikhail Gorbachev cease all aggression in the Baltic States and relinquish control over Baltic government institutions.[114] This committee was almost entirely made up of Latvians (with one Lithuanian member).[115] Signature pages were sent by fax to the White House on a daily basis.

Similar activities took place in other countries as well. A demonstration by Balts in Australia with the participation of Australian government representatives coincided with the tragic events in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 13 January. Just before the demonstration was about to begin, fresh news (of the Soviet attack on peaceful Lithuanian demonstrators in the Lithuanian capital) amplified its urgency and topicality. Australian television aired scenes in Vilnius filmed by Latvian director Juris Podnieks of the Soviets' tank attack, and the SBS radio station in Melbourne allotted extra air time to the Balts. To commemorate the victims of events that occured on 20–21 January in Riga, Australian Latvians in Melbourne held a memorial service on 27 January, which attracted a lot of attention and was, along with segments on events in the Baltics, widely featured by Australia's mass media outlets.[116]

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[108] Akmentiņš, O. Baltieši demonstrē Bostonā. *Laiks*, Nr. 7, 23.01.1991, 1. lpp.

[109] *Laiks*, Nr. 8, 26.01.1991, 1. lpp.

[110] Apvienotās Baltiešu komitejas protests. *Laiks*, Nr. 7, 23.01.1991, 1. lpp.

[111] Pavlovskis, V. Baltiešu centrālo organizāciju vadītāji apspriežas Baltajā namā. *Laiks*, Nr. 10, 02.02.1991, 1., 6. lpp.

[112] Tērauda, A. ALA darbība Latvijas krīzes laikā. *Laiks*, Nr. 8, 26.01.1991, 1. lpp.

[113] Celle, O. Rietumu latviešu līdzdalība demokrātijas attīstībā Latvijā, 446. lpp.

[114] Petition addressed to the US President. Archive of the Minnesota Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), American Baltic Freedom Committee, File *Petitions.*

[115] Informational letter to fellow Latvians from Chairman of the American Baltic Freedom Committee of Kalamazoo Dr. Valdis Muižnieks on 15 January 1991. Archive of the Minnesota Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), American Baltic Freedom Committee, File *Documents-Originals.*

[116] Liepiņa, V. Austrālijas latvieši un Atmoda. *Latviešu trimdas loma Latvijas neatkarības idejas uzturēšanā:* Apvienotā Pasaules latviešu zinātnieku III un Letonikas IV kongresa sekcijas materiāli, 133.–134. lpp.

The events associated with "the Barricades" reverberated elsewhere in the world. Latvia's diplomatic representative in France, Aina Nagobads-Ābola, submitted a memorandum in the name of the Baltic States to the French Foreign Ministry demanding that the democratically elected governments be recognised. There was a demonstration near the Soviet Embassy in Paris, in which about 1000 people participated.[117] Following the bloody events in Riga and Vilnius, the largest public demontration ever in support of the Baltic States took place in Copenhagen, with about 20 000 people participating and the Danish Prime Minister addressing the crowd.[118] Latvians in Great Britain, Germany, Canada, and elsewhere were very active during "the Barricades".

Like the dramatic events of "the Barricades", the 1991 August Putsch and the Baltic States' declarations of independence garnered worldwide interest. During the putsch, it was difficult to assess the ever-changing situation and to obtain up-to-the minute information, although exiles were often the first to receive the latest news, which they distributed in the countries that they lived in. Upon receiving the first unofficial news of the declaration of Latvia's independence, the Baltic exiles invited the governments of their countries of residence to recognise the independence of the three Baltic States. For instance, on 21 August 1991, Latvians in Australia coordinated a fax "storm" to the Australian Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and other state officials, and in the following days they organised numerous demonstrations and marches demanding recognition of Baltic independence.[119]

The exiles' unrelenting reminders kept alive in Western countries the policy of non-recognition of the Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States and served to remind the world of the unresolved Baltic issue. It was specifically the preservation of the non-recognition policy for 50 years that was so important during the period of restoring independence, and it facilitated the international recognition of the newly independent states.

Latvian culture in exile

The means for achieving the exiles' primary objective, Latvia's independence, were varied and included practically all activities, not only political but cultural ones as well. The teaching of the Latvian language and the passing down of traditions to the young generation were all part of achieving one goal. "An aim can only exist if there is a group working toward it. If the primary objective of all Latvians is freedom for the Latvian nation, then the nation itself and ensuring that it persists into the future constitutes the primary goal."[120]

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[117] Ainas Nagobads-Ābolas ziņojums J. Ritenim par situāciju Francijā. (15.)01.1991. LVA, 2197. f., 1. v., 133. l., 21. lp.

[118] Ritenis, J. *Diplomātiskā cīņa par Latvijas Republikas suverenitātes atjaunošanu,* 144.–146. lpp.

[119] Liepiņa, V. Austrālijas latvieši un Atmoda. 136.–137. lpp.

[120] Sprūdžs, Ā. Mūsu nacionālā darba prioritātes. *Aglonas Vēstis*, Nr. 8, 1973, aug.; Nr. 9, 1973, sept.

Almost all forms of Latvian traditional culture were preserved in exile at the amateur level, such as folk music and dance, choir singing, traditional crafts, etc. Other forms of artistic expression were also pursued, including theatre, literature, music, poetry, visual arts, etc. In many of these fields Latvians achieved distinction not only within the Latvian community but in their country of residence and on a global level.



Fig. 8. A 1955 production by the Sydney, Australia Latvian theatre troupe of Mārtiņš Zīverts' play *Čūska* (Snake). From the left: G. Šēperis, V. Dūte, V. Ducmanis, S. Tomsone, U. Siliņš, and L. Dombrovska. (www.historia.lv)

There were many talented Latvian writers and poets in exile,[121] and many outstanding works of literature were created in exile. Many Latvian exile writers are considered among the best of their contemporaries, and their works are recognised as exemplary in Latvian literature. This list includes writer Anšlavs Eglītis, poets Zinaīda Lazda and Veronika Strēlerte, the essayist and philosopher Zenta Mauriņa, and many others. Poet Dzintars Sodums' translation in exile of James Joyce's *Ulysses* is a remarkable achievement; it was published in Latvia in 2012.[122] Interest in Latvian literature in exile was widespread, and new genres were added to Latvian literature. Memoirs based on personal tragedies as a result of the war and escape from Latvia and new life in exile were published. Some of them are well written and interesting. Approximately 130 novels were written in the first 20 years of Latvian exile.[123] Anthologies of Latvian exile poetry were published. Literary and book clubs were established, and events dedicated to Latvian literature were popular.[124] The interest is evident in the large number of books published in exile, which Latvian exiles purchased and read.

Music was also popular in exile.[125] It is estimated that approximately one-third of Latvia's musicians ended up in exile, but the number of composers was even greater.[126] It was completely natural for composers and musicians renowned in Latvia to continue their work abroad, where new talents emerged, such as composer Tālivaldis Ķeniņš. Although Latvians in exile pursued mostly traditional forms of music and dance, such as folk dancing, folk song singing, playing the *kokle* (a traditional Latvian string instrument), and choir singing, professional musicians addressed other musical genres. Latvian music concerts were popular among the exile community.

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[121] For more on some of the exile community's outstanding literary figures, see the article by A. Rožkalne, "Contribution of Latvian Literature to the World Culture" in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. I, pp. 478–518.

[122] Džoiss, Dž. *Uliss.* Sodums, Dz. (tulk., komentāri, epilogs). Rīga: Liepnieks & Rītups, 2012.

[123] Rudzītis, J. Latviešu literatūra emigrācija. *Archīvs*, 6. sēj., 1966, 26.–27. lpp.

[124] For instance, regarding Australia, see: Daukste-Silasproģe, I. *Tāla zeme, tuvi ļaudis: latvieši Austrālijā: dzīve, literārais process, personības,* 524.–643. lpp.

[125] For more on Latvian music in exile, see the article by A. Klotiņš, "Latvian Music in the World", in *Latvia and Latvians,* Vol. I, pp. 519–562.

[126] Bērzkalns, V. *Latviešu dziesmu svētki trimdā, 1946–1965.* [New York]: Grāmatu draugs, 1968, 26. lpp.



Fig. 9. The Seattle Latvian Society Choir with its leaders P. Galiņš and P. Pētersons (in the middle), 1962. Photograph by A. Skuja (Bērzkalns, V. *Latviešu dziesmu svētki trimdā, 1946–1965* (Latvian Song Festivals in Exile, 1946–1965). [Brooklyn]: Grāmatu draugs, 1968, 235. lpp.

Theatre was also very popular among Latvian exiles.[127] Theatre flourished in the displaced persons camps in Germany, where so many Latvian actors, directors, and set designers ended up after the war. As they dispersed to various host countries all over the world, it was not always possible to establish professional theatres; instead, amateur drama troupes emerged. Their repertoire included classics from Latvian literature and new works written in exile. In spite of financial hardship and the lack of qualified directors, Latvian theatre in exile was a popular form of entertainment and activity, which brought the community closer together. Several Latvians in exile achieved success in cinema.[128]

One of Latvian culture's most vivid manifestations is the Song Festival, and this tradition was continued outside Latvia by the exile community.[129] The first major event of this nature in post-war Germany, the Latvian (DP) Song Days, took place in June 1946 in the Fischbach Latvian camp near Nürnberg with about 650 singers participating. Later similar song days took place in Esslingen near Stuttgart. Approximately 1000 singers participated, and this was one of the biggest cultural events of the DP era in Germany.[130]

After departing for their designated host countries, Latvians continued to found choirs and organised a variety of events related to singing. This variety included the main song festivals, the Song Festival in Canada, the West Coast, US Song Festival, and "song days" in various countries and regions. In the first 20 years after the Second World War, from 1946 until 1965, there were 40 Latvian song days or song festivals — 13 in Germany, one in Austria, 14 in England, five in Canada, and seven in the United States. The song festival repertoires included works by both Latvian composers and non-Latvian composers from around the world, but about 75% of the usual repertoire comprised works that had been popular in Latvia before the war. Song festivals were an inspiration to create new works. Competitions for writing new choir songs were sometimes announced, and some of the winning songs were included in future song

[127] For more, see the article by V. Hausmanis, "Theatre in Latvia in the European Context", in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. I, pp. 595–627.

[128] See the article by I. Pērkone "Latvia and Latvians in World Cinema", in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. I, pp. 628–659.

[129] On choir singing and song festivals, including in exile, see the article by I. Grauzdiņa and I. Šarkovska-Liepiņa, "Choir Singing and Song Festivals in Latvia", in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. I, pp. 563–594.

[130] Bērzkalns, V. *Latviešu dziesmu svētki trimdā, 1946–1965,* 30.–46. lpp.

festivals.[131] The song festivals were not only about singing. There were other events as well, such as art exhibits, Latvian crafts shows, various competitions and parades, as well as folk dancing performances. The wearing of traditional Latvian folk costumes at the song and dance festivals helped popularise their craftsmanship and the preservation of this special aspect of Latvian traditional culture.

The song festivals, "song days", and other cultural events played a crucial role in the preservation of Latvian identity in exile. One such major event were the so-called Latvian Culture Days in Australia, which still take place at the end of each year. The first such event took place in Sydney in 1951. In the following year, the Latvian Association of Australia proposed that the event become an annual tradition all over Australia and that it be organised in a different big Australian city each year.[132] Latvian Culture Days were held in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, and later in Perth, Canberra, and elsewhere. Similar events were held in other countries as well. The significance of such culture days in strengthening (Latvian) identity has been described by Dr. Pauls Jurevičs: "One of our Culture Days' most important goals could be to help us realise the importance of our nation and its value in our spiritual existence, and if we can complete but a part of this aim, then even this would be very meaningful."[133]



Fig. 10. Mārīte Ozere, winner of the 1963 "Miss USA" beauty contest. (Publicity photo)

Latvian exiles published numerous periodicals, the biggest of them being the newspapers of the Latvian central organisations. Some of the newspapers, which continued to be published during the exile community's entire existence, were: *Londonas Avīze* (London Paper, Great Britain, from 1942), *Latvija* (Germany, from 1946), [134] *Austrālijas Latvietis* (Australia's Latvian, from 1949), *Laiks* (Time, from 1949), and *Latvija Amerikā* (Latvia in America, from 1951).[135] In addition to the exile community's major newspapers and the bulletins of Latvian organisations, specialty magazines were published, such as the Latvian student fraternity and sorority academic magazine *Universitas* (circulation 6000), the literary magazine *Jaunā Gaita* (The New Course), the sports journal *Sporta Apskats* (Sports Review), and others. In 1970, for example, Latvians in exile were publishing 318 periodicals (including the internal bulletins of Latvian organisations).[136] In 1984, there were 376.[137] The Latvian Press Society was

[131] Bērzkalns, V. *Latviešu dziesmu svētki trimdā, 1946–1965*, 327.–345. lpp.
[132] *Latviešu kultūras dienas Austrālijā, 1951–1970.* Dulmanis (red.). Melburna: Austrālijas Latviešu kultūras fonds, 1971, 16.–23. lpp.
[133] Jurevičs, P. Kultūras dienas pagātnē un tagad. *Latviešu kultūras dienas Austrālijā, 1951–1970,* 10.–11. lpp.
[134] *Londonas Avīze* and *Latvija* were merged in 1986 and are now published as *Brīvā Latvija.*
[135] Dulmanis, V. Latviešu brīvā prese divdesmit gados. *Archīvs*, 10. sēj., 1970. 11.–13.lpp.
[136] Dunsdorfs, E. Brīvās pasaules latviešu periodika. *Archīvs*, 10. sēj., 1970, 89.–90. lpp.
[137] Silkalns, E. Trimdas periodiskie izdevumi. *Archīvs*, 24. sēj., 1984, 129. lpp.

active with 383 members worldwide[138], and libraries were being created. It was typical for all Latvian centres to have a small library, but some of these libraries attempted to collect everything published in exile, such as the Latvian Centre in Münster, Germany and the Latvian Library in Melbourne. The Melbourne Latvian Society Library had 12 355 items in its inventory (books, brochures, copies of articles, etc.) along with 700 records and 150 audio cassettes.[139]

Sports were also a means of consolidating the community; Latvians had actively engaged in sports already in Germany's DP camps. The first Baltic Sports Festival was organised in Augsburg in 1945. The Latvian Sports Council in Exile was founded in 1950, and work on organising athletic life throughout the community was begun. Smaller sports councils and organisations were established in individual host countries, and annual Latvians sports conventions were organised; by the end of 1990, there had been 21 such conventions.[140] In addition to amateur sports activities, numerous Latvians in exile achieved noteworthy professional results. Some of them even represented their host countries at the Olympics. For instance, the Australian team at the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne included five athletes of Latvian descent: three basketball players; a track and field athlete, and a swimmer.[141] Various athletic competitions were often included in cultural programmes.

To recognise the role of culture in preserving Latvian identity, Latvian exiles set up various awards and prizes for outstanding achievements in this field. The most notable of these awards was *PBLA* People's Prize (*Tautas balva*). Since 1963, it has been awarded to writers, social activists, and organisations and continues as a tradition today.[142] The *PBLA* prize was the Latvian exiles' highest prize and was awarded to individuals or groups for outstanding achievements in culture, public life, and education. Latvian communities in various countries around the world also awarded prizes; for example, *ALA* awarded its Cultural Foundation Prize, and there were prizes named after foundations and individuals.[143]

Like Latvian education and language instruction, culture in exile was an essential part of the Latvians' efforts to preserve their national identity and pass it down to future generations. Amateur ensembles, such as choirs, dance groups, theatres, etc. were not only a way to pass the free time; they were also each individual's link to that which was inherently Latvian. Culture played the role of shaping personal identity and a sense of community. Major cultural events, such as the song festival, allowed Latvians from various continents to meet, communicate, and maintain their Latvian self-awareness together. To support and contribute to Latvian culture abroad, in exile, and coupling it with political activism and the education of the young generation: these were

[138] Irbe, V. Latviešu žurnālists. *Archīvs*, 10. sēj., 1970, 10. lpp.

[139] Dunsdorfa, L. Melburnas latviešu biedrības bibliotēka. *Archīvs*, 20. sēj., 1980, 146. lpp.

[140] For more on Latvian sports in exile, see: *Trimdas latviešu sporta vēsture, 1945–1995*. B.v.: Latviešu sporta padome ārzemēs, 2001.

[141] To read about sports events in Latvian exile, see the article by U. Grāvītis, "The World Context of Sport and Athletes in Latvia", in *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. I, pp. 752–788.

[142] For a full list, see: http://www.pbla.lv/par-pbla/pbla-balva/ (site last visited 12.18.2016).

[143] Ābele, K. Balvas latviešu kultūras darbiniekiem emigrācijā. *Archīvs*, 10. sēj., 1970, 193.–214. lpp.

the worldwide Latvian exile community's common objectives, and for these purposes its central organisations set up institutionalised mechanisms, such as cultural foundations, annual prizes, and other forms of financial support.

Achievements in education and science in exile

There were high numbers of highly educated people, the intelligentsia, and the arts community among Latvian refugees during the Second World War. More than 3000 Latvian teachers were registered in the Allied zones after the war, where they organised Latvian language instruction for refugee children. Already by the summer of 1945, schools of various levels had been established in the German refugee camps. In the 1946/1947 school year, 242 Latvian institutions of education (kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools, trade and technical schools, children's homes, and universities) were operating in the Allied zones, with about 15 000 children and young people enrolled.[144]

In the first years of exile, hoping they would shortly be returning to their homeland, Latvians based their education system on that of independent Latvia with a single goal: to prepare them for life in peace-time Latvia. Supported by the agencies in charge of the camps, Latvians organised re-training courses for adults, so that refugees could obtain jobs in practical professions much in demand after the war. On some occasions, these courses turned into trade schools related to agriculture, gardening, forestry, etc. By the end of the 1940s, due to massive emigration, many of these schools were closed, and by 1951, only 23 Latvian schools and one secondary school remained in Germany.[145]

In spite of poverty and chaos in post-war Germany, with the blessing of the Military Authority of the British Zone and the support of the Dean of the University of Hamburg, Baltic refugees, under the leadership of University of Latvia Professor Fricis Gulbis, founded the Baltic University in Hamburg in 1946 (from 1947 in Pinneberg). Its role in ensuring higher education for Baltic refugees was crucial primarily because many German institutions of higher education lacked the capacity to take on additional students due to the ravages of war. In addition, the military authority declared that no more than 10% of students at German universitities could be refugees, which is why not all Baltic students had the opportunity to enroll. The former students of all three Baltic universities, whose studies had been interrupted by the war, enrolled in the Baltic University, and they listened to lectures by Baltic professors, many of whom were Latvian. The official language at school was German, but so-called national subjects, such as language, history, and geography were taught in the students' native languages. In the 1946–1947 school year, 1200 students were studying at the Baltic University, and the majority of them were Latvian.[146] The university had eight

[144] Staris, A. Latviešu skolas un izglītība Rietumu trimdā. *Rietumu trimdas latviešu pedagoģiskā doma (1944–1990): Antoloģija*. Rīga: Raka, 2004, 10.–11. lpp.

[145] Ibid., 17. lpp.

[146] Staris, A. Latviešu skolas un izglītība Rietumu trimdā, 13. lpp.



Fig. 11. A social gathering in the 1950s at the Bankstown, Australia Latvian school named after E. Siliņa. (www.historia.lv)

departments: Architecture and Engineering, Philology, Chemistry, Agriculture, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Medicine, Mechanical Science, Economics and Law. Seventy-five students graduated from the Baltic University, and 53 of these were Latvian.[147] The Baltic University was open for nine semesters until the fall of 1949; it was forced to close its doors due to the emigration from Germany of students and faculty to their permanent countries of residence. Munich University was open in the American zone from 1945 until 1947 to educate student refugees, of which 208 were Latvian, and 12 instructors from Latvia worked there.[148]

Even after departing from Germany and settling in their new host countries, Latvians focussed great attention on ensuring that their children received a solid education. By the end of 1982, 10 052 Latvians in exile had graduated from different universities and colleges. It is estimated that in the 1960s the proportion of exile Latvians who earned a degree was the same as the median indicator of the US, which at the time was the highest in the world.[149] In all, Latvians have obtained their higher education in 25 countries, primarily in the United States, Canada, and Australia,[150] where the largest Latvian communities were concentrated.

In addition to higher education, Latvians in exile viewed a "Latvian education" as crucial, that is, the teaching of the Latvian language, history, culture, folklore, traditional crafts, etc. The communities made an attempt to create a unified set of instruction principles and formulated specific pedagogical objectives for such an education in exile: to teach Latvian youth the Latvian language and Latvian history and culture, and to instill in them patriotic sentiments. Their overall attempt was to try to make children living abroad aware of their Latvian identity.

In order to achieve these aims, Latvians in exile established a network of Latvian "Sunday" schools in all places, where there were large concentrations of Latvians. In 1977, there were Latvian schools in the United States (53), United Kingdom (at least 6), Australia (12), Canada (10), Germany (10), Venezuela (2), and Sweden (6).[151] In addition to these, there was a number of schools that had not submitted information about

[147] For more on the Baltic University, see: *Baltijas Universitāte, 1946–1949: Rakstu un fotogrāfiju krājums.* Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte, 1996.

[148] Staris, A. Latviešu skolas un izglītība Rietumu trimdā, 13.–14. lpp.

[149] *Latvian Graduates of Universities and Colleges in the Free World, 1945–1975.* Melbourne: K. Zariņa fonds, 1978, p. 9.

[150] Dunsdorfs, E., Liepiņa, B. Desmit tūkstoši akadēmiski izglītotu latviešu 1940-1982. *Archīvs*, 24. sēj., 1984, 153.–154. lpp.

[151] Kronlins, J. Latviešu skolas brīvajā pasaulē 1977. gadā. *Archīvs*, 17. sēj., 1977, 97.–108. lpp.

their work to the central organisations. Activities at these schools took place on the weekends and (in some instances) offered a course-like curriculum; sending one's child to such a school was optional for the parents. According to various studies, as many as one-third to only 14% of Latvian children (including those born to mixed marriage[152] couples) attended these exile community schools.[153]

Since their inception, Latvian education schools were faced with numerous hardships, including a lack of funding, outdated teaching methods and curriculum, and a lack of interest on the part of many parents in enrolling their children. As time went by, some of these problems became acute; for example, the teachers who had been educated in Latvia aged, and it was difficult to find qualified instructors to replace them. Beginning in the late 1970s, a new problem emerged: an increasing number of children of partially Latvian descent who were born to parents of mixed marriages and did not speak Latvian.[154] In spite of these problems and endless discussions on how to proceed, the Latvian Sunday schools were successful in achieving their primary goal: providing their school children with the foundation for a Latvian identity. Of course, it was impossible to fully avert assimilation, and the exiles' original objective — to prepare Latvian youth for its return to Latvia — became practically unattainable.



Fig. 12. Baltic University logo

During the entire span of the exile years, from 1945 and up after the end of exile era until 1998, there was only one official secondary school outside Latvia that offered a curriculum taught entirely in Latvian: this was the Münster Latvian Secondary School in Germany. It opened in 1946 in Augsdorf and was moved to Münster in 1957, where it was housed in its own building. Beginning in the 1960s, it began attracting students of Latvian descent from all over the world. More than 600 students have graduated from it.[155]

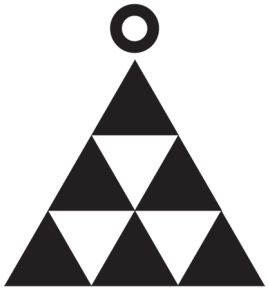


Fig. 13. The logo for the first 3×3 camp in Latvia. (Madliena, 1990)

One-week camps, which were intended to raise their participants' awareness of their heritage, were very popular, such as *Divreizdivi*[156] (Two Times Two) and *Trīsreiztrīs* (Three Times Three).[157] *Divreizdivi* was intended for young people between the ages of 18 and 30, whereas *Trīsreiztrīs* was a camp for Latvians of all ages. These camps were meant to promote a sense of belonging and contacts between participants. The first *Trīsreiztrīs* camp with 161 participants

[152] In this translation, the term 'mixed marriage' refers to a marriage between an ethnic Latvian and a non-Latvian (translator's note).

[153] Dunsdorfs, E. Kā aplēst latviešu bērnu skaitu? *Archīvs*, 17. sēj., 1977, 117.–126. lpp.

[154] Liepkalns, A. Trimdas skolu nelīdzenais ceļš. *Archīvs*, 17. sēj., 1977. 29.–44. lpp.

[155] For more on this secondary school, see: *Minsteres latviešu ģimnāzija, 1945–1998.* Rīga: Elpa, 1999.

[156] For more on these camps, see: Miezītis, S. Divreizdivi: An Experiment in Latvian Cultural Immersion. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring 1979), pp. 74–81.

[157] The name for this camp is an extension of "*Divreizdivi*", or "Two Times Two", emphasizing that three generations of Latvians can participate: grandparents, parents, and children.

was held in 1981 at Garezers (a property owned by Latvian Americans in the United States). By 1989, 40 such camps had been held in five countries (US, Australia, United Kingdom, Sweden, and France) with almost 4500 participants.[158] The first *Trīsreiztrīs* camp in Latvia took place in 1990 with about 300 participants and continues to take place there each year.

Science

Among the many highly educated people who ended up in exile there were many scientists and academics. Also, it is understandable that in a community in which higher education was highly prized so many Latvians in exile chose an academic career in life.

The scientists, scholars, and academics who left Latvia as professionals and those who finished their studies and took up careers outside Latvia are two different categories of people. The latter group can be divided into two sub-categories: those who experienced the Second World War and refugee status as children or adolescents and were educated and worked in their professional fields in their host country, and those who grew up and were academically and professionally trained in exile.[159]

The war, the refugee experience, and exile had an adverse effect on the academics of the first group. In the first post-war years, people who had worked, for example, as university professors were often forced to work as labourers in unskilled professions to make a living; their academic work was relegated to that of a hobby, and some even abandoned it. The plunge in social standing, the psychological trauma brought on by the war and forced emigration, not knowing the language of the host country, and the inability to adapt to its society — all these factors adversely affected this category of Latvians, and they were never able to reassume their former social roles they had had previously in Latvia. Most Latvian scholars in the field of humanities who succeeded in continuing to work in the academic field were nevertheless forced to retrain. It was difficult to continue and conduct research on fields related to Latvia, such as its economy, language, history, etc., because sources on these subjects, readily available in their native land, were not accessible abroad. Scholars who ended up in Sweden were in a better situation, because a substantial source of materials on Latvia was available in its libraries and institutions of higher education, and Baltic studies in Sweden continued to exist. Starting in 1970, Stockholm University even had a Department of Baltic Studies.[160] For many scholars, their link to Latvia's scholarly research was broken, and those who continued to publish scholarly works (often at the level of a hobby) did so by reworking their previous research.

Most of the academics were forced to retrain, also because subjects related to Latvia were of little or no interest to universitities and research centres in the West. This

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[158] Ruperte, L. Trīsreiztrīs. *Rietumu trimdas latviešu pedagoģiskā doma: Antoloģija*. Rīga: Raka, 2004, 289.–291. lpp.

[159] Plakans, A. Remaining Loyal: Latvian Historians in Exile 1945–1991. Zadencka, M., Plakans, A., Lawaty, A. (eds.). *East and Central European Writing in Exile 1939–1989.* Leiden: Brill, 2015, pp. 71–73.

[160] Rūķe-Draviņa, V. Baltu valodas Stokholmas universitātē. *Archīvs*, 24. sēj., 1984, 101. lpp.

was also true for the generation of scholars who grew up in exile: narrow fields of study related to Latvia could not compete in the academic field nor in the narrow academic job market. Nor was the Latvian exile community capable of funding, especially in the first years, fields of study related to Latvia.

In spite of these factors, there were scholars who gained notable international recognition in their field of study, such as: Pēteris Lejiņš, professor of sociology at the University of Maryland and chairman of the Joint Baltic American Committee; Sergejs Slaucītājs, professor at the National University of La Plata in Argentina who headed several Latvian organisations in his country; geophysicist Leonīds Slaucītājs; Professor of Chemistry at the University of Chicago Edvards Anderss; and many others in the humanities and the exact sciences.[161] Scholars involved in Latvian studies deserve special mention, such as Latvian historians Arnolds Spekke, Edgars Dunsdorfs, Edgars Andersons, Andrievs Ezergailis, and Indriķis Šterns. Haralds Biezais was a scholar of culture and the history of religion. Visvaldis Klīve was a theologian, and Benjamiņš Jēgers and Velta Rūķe-Draviņa were some of the experts in Latvian linguistics.

Latvians in exile organised conventions devoted to the technical sciences. The first took place in New York in 1965, followed by Montreal (1967, 1976), Toronto (1972), Visby (1979), and Münster (1982), with representatives of Soviet-occupied Latvia taking part in several of them.[162] The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) brought together Baltic scholars working in the field of humanities. The first conference devoted to Baltic studies took place at the University of Maryland in 1968; AABS was founded at the end of the conference. The conference was initiated by the so-called Sciences Committee of the Latvian Academic Association, and it was supported by Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian organisations in the US.[163] The Baltic Studies conferences helped establish contacts between Baltic academics and with non-Baltic scholars interested in the Baltic region, thereby establishing Baltic Studies as an academic research field in the West.

Books on Latvian history and culture written and published in exile played an important role in cementing the community's identity. One such notable publication is the 12-part series on Latvian history published by publishing house *Daugava* in Sweden; its first volume was released in 1958.[164] The last book in this series[165] came out in 2002 after the restoration of Latvia's independence. It is important to note that the authors worked on these tomes on a voluntary basis and without compensation:

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[161] Grosvalds, I., Meirovics, I. On the technical sciences, see, for example: Latviešu tehniskās inteliģences devums zinātnē emigrācijā. *II Pasaules latviešu zinātnieku kongress. Rīga, 2001. gada 14.–15. augusts:* tēžu krājums. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmija, 2001. 608. lpp.

[162] Legzdiņš, R. 6. LTZ kongresam sanākot. *Latvija*, Nr. 28, 1982, 26. jūl., 5. lpp.

[163] Ziedonis, A., Jr. On the Advancement of Baltic Studies by the AAVS. *Lituanus*, Vol. 17, No. 4, Winter 1971.

[164] For example: Švābe, A. *Latvijas vēsture 1800–1914.* Stokholma: Daugava, 1958; Dunsdorfs, E., Spekke, A. *Latvijas vēsture, 1500–1600*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1964; Andersons, E. *Latvijas vēsture, 1914–1920*. Stokholma: Daugava, 1967; Aizsilnieks, A. *Latvijas saimniecības vēsture, 1914–1945*. Stokholma Daugava, 1968; et al.

[165] Šterns, I. *Latvijas vēsture 1180–1290: Krustakari*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2002.

they saw it as their moral obligation. Because their primary sources were in Latvia and thus inaccessible, the books contain numerous mistakes and imprecisions, but nevertheless they were important not only in exile, but in Latvia as well after the restoration of independence, when there was an acute shortage of historical works untainted by Soviet ideology. In certain subjects of Latvian history there is still a lack of quality books that could replace the *Daugava* series. Work on a Latvian encyclopedia was also begun in exile and published in five volumes.[166] Generally speaking, the value of these fundamental works on Latvia's history, culture, art, etc. exceeded their scholarly value. The work on and publishing of these books promoted a consolidation of the Latvian exile community. They constituted a unique Latvian exile "mental space" to which exiles belonged and which vastly differed from Latvia's Soviet cultural space.

Latvian exiles documented their own history and their public activities in books and periodicals. An outstanding example of this sort of documentation is linguist and bibliographer, University of Illinois Professor Benjamiņš Jēgers' five-volume bibliography[167] of Latvian publications in exile.[168] This work covers the period from mid-1940 through 1991. It includes a numbered list of books, brochures, periodicals, musical notes, and other publications, about 11 250 titles in all. The exiles' scholarly publication *Archīvs* was also devoted to documenting, chronicling, and assessing life in Latvian exile. It was published from 1960 until 1993 in Australia and edited by Melbourne University Professor Edgars Andersons. Each edition was devoted to an aspect of Latvian exile life; for example, Volume 6 was devoted to literature and music, Volume 17 to education, etc.

Latvian academic student associations (fraternities and sororities) were active in exile, both those founded in Latvia and in exile. In 1970, there were 23 fraternities with about 4450 members[169] and 12 sororities with about 2300 members.[170]

Latvian exiles saw higher education as invaluable, and many of them pursued academic careers and worked in various fields of research. Latvian exiles felt it important to provide their children and youth with a Latvian education, and they pursued subjects like Latvian history, culture, and linguistics out of a sense of moral duty, because in Soviet Latvia this was not possible or was being done in a way that was unacceptable to them.

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[166] *Latvju enciklopēdija 1962–1982*. 5. sēj. Andersons, E. (red.). Vašingtona: Amerikas latviešu apvienības latviešu institūts, 1983–2008.

[167] Jēgers, B. *Latviešu trimdas izdevumu bibliogrāfija*. 5 sēj. Stokholma: Daugava, 1968–1994.

[168] On B. Jēgers see: Krēsliņš, J. Valodnieks un bibliogrāfs Benjamiņš Jēgers. *Jaunā Gaita*, Nr. 256, 2009, marts. Accessible at: http://jaunagaita.net/jg256/JG256_Kreslins-Jegers.htm (site last visited 10.10.2016).

[169] Bērztīss, A. Latviešu studentu korporācijas. *Archīvs*, 12. sēj., 1972, 210.–212. lpp.

[170] Sātiņa, N. Latviešu studentu korporācijas. *Archīvs*, 12. sēj., 1972, 217.–218. lpp.

The economic situation of Latvians in exile

In the first years following the Second World War, Latvians dispersed throughout the world encountered financial hardships and a low standard of living. Most of these former refugees were forced to work as physical labourers for low wages, and as a result they found themselves among the needy in their host countries. Only a few managed to maintain their former social standing and to find employment compatible with their education and experience. The material situation of Latvians who ended up in Germany's displaced persons camps is comparable to that of a person who has lost almost everything to fire.[171]

In spite of hardships, many Latvians succeeded in settling down in their host countries and established careers and even businesses. Only some 20 years after arriving in their new adoptive homelands (that is, in the 1970s), Latvians owned about 1000 businesses of various sizes in 13 countries: Canada, the US, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Denmark, Great Britain, Luxembourg, West Germany, Spain, and Sweden. Most of these businesses were in manufacturing or some sort of trade (43.3% of known businesses), and to a lesser degree in the service sector (42.5%). About 14.2% of them were related to agriculture and fishing. It is interesting to note that most of the businesses related to agriculture were located in South America; the service sector dominated in North America and Europe, but involvement in manufacturing, various trades, and fishing was typical of Latvians in Australia and New Zealand. This can possibly be attributed to the economies of these countries and the new immigrants' former professions.[172] Horticulture and fruit growing were popular among Latvians, and they ventured into exotic realms like growing of silkworms. In terms of manufacturing, construction dominated, including the manufacturing of building materials and providing services related to construction. In the service sector, Latvians owned grocery, book, and garment stores, etc.

Inmobiliaria Riga was a good example of a highly successful Latvian-owned business; it was founded in Venezuela in 1973. The company built highrise apartment buildings and had about 100 Latvian shareholders.[173] The shareholding company was led by engineer Vilis Vītols, today chairman of the very well-known charitable Vītols Foundation in Latvia, and engineer Andris Bērziņš. According to the company's statutes, 10% of its proceeds were to be donated to Latvian organisations; in fact, most of the proceeds went to the Venezuelan Latvian Association.[174] Thanks to the financial support of *Inmobiliaria Riga*, the Venezuelan Latvian Association was able to open the Latvian House in Caracas.[175] There were other successful Latvian-owned companies in Venezuela.

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[171] Šilde, Ā. Sociālās dzīves pārvērtības. Šilde, Ā. *Trimdinieka raksti: 1944–1990.* Minstere: Latvija, 1991, 214.–215. lpp. (First published in *Tēvzeme*, 23.07.1947).

[172] Grīnvalds, J. Latviešu uzņēmumi. *Archīvs,* 16. sēj., 1976, 8.–12. lpp.

[173] Lietuviete par Venecuēlas latviešiem. *Latvija Amerikā.* Nr. 8, 23.02.1980, 14. lpp.

[174] Interview with Vilis Vītols "Dienvidamerikas latviešu politiskās aktivitātes". *Baltiešu kopienu sabiedriskās un politiskās aktivitātes Dienvidamerikā, 1945–1991:* Letonikas V kongresa sekcijas materiāli. Rīga: Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas Baltijas stratēģisko pētījumu centrs, 2013, 85.–86. lpp.

[175] Jāvar piespiest sevi. *Diena*, Nr. 44, 05.03.1993, 3. lpp.

There are examples of successful businesses owned by Latvians all around the world and not only in the field of construction. For instance, a Latvian bread baking business called *Riga* in Sydney, Australia, employed 100 workers in 1975 with a turnover of about AUD $2 000 000 a year.[176] In addition, there were various successful manufacturing plants in Canada and the US.

Latvians in the world developed their businesses not only as individuals but collectively, too, within the Latvian community, when the reason for founding the business was to satisfy the needs or interests of the community. Credit unions were among the most popular and important forms of business within the Latvian exile community. The first such credit union was founded in 1959 in Toronto, but by the early 1970s there were 20 credit unions. The Toronto Latvian Credit Union's balance sheets far exceeded those of any other Latvian credit union,[177] and it remains a viable financial institution.

There were other public companies, such as a Latvian applied arts cooperative in Melbourne, an agricultural manufacturing cooperative in Brazil; numerous publishers and booksellers, such as *Ceļinieks*, the *Daugavas Vanagi* bookstore in Toronto, and others.[178] To a certain extent, almost all of the major exile organisations were involved with some level of entrepreneurship, such as providing loans, etc.

Not only individuals became well-to-do and purchased private homes; Latvian organisations in exile did, too. Latvian congregations built their own churches. Organisations purchased buildings to house their administrative offices and accommodate public gatherings and cultural events. Usually these buildings were home to various amateur ensembles, Latvian Sunday school, a Latvian library, etc. Property in the countryside was also purchased for recreational purposes, such as Garezers in Michigan (US), the New York Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation camp in the Catskill Mountains, and others in the United States, Canada, and Germany, as well as a castle named Abrene in the Loire Valley in France.

Buildings and properties were purchased as senior centres for the community's old folks. In addition, Latvian cemeteries were established. Social care was a concern for the exiles already in the post-war years, when Latvian veterans and refugees who had sustained injuries and sickness needed care. In 1952, Latvians purchased a property in Freiburg, Germany, for their veterans and called it Bērzaine. Later it served as a recreation centre. Today it is maintained as a hotel and recreation centre.

In 1953, a home for Latvian veterans of both world wars and Latvians pensioners without families opened in Almelia, England. Two additional homes opened in later years.[179] In 1975, the Latvian veterans' organisation *Daugavas Vanagi* established a centre in the English countryside at Catthorpe Manor (*Straumēni* in Latvian). This centre housed Latvian seniors, and a variety of cultural events and social gatherings took place there. The property is still used for these purposes, and the Latvian Docu-

[176] 150 000 kukuļu nedēļā. Kas jauns V. Bērziņa lielajā maizes cepšanas uzņēmumā Sidnejā. *Austrālijas Latvietis*, Nr. 1387, 25.07.1975, 6. lpp.

[177] Prods, A. Brīvās pasaules latviešu kredītkooperatīvi. *Archīvs*, 12. sēj., 1972. 195.–202. lpp.

[178] Misa, E. Latviešu sabiedriskie uzņēmumi. *Archīvs*, 16. sēj., 1976, 19.–40. lpp.

[179] Abakuks, A. Pensionāru mītnes un aprūpes nami Anglijā. *Archīvs*, 28. sēj., 1988, 161.–163. lpp.

mentation Centre with its collection about Latvian life in Great Britain is housed there. Similar senior centres were established in Australia (*Latviešu ciems*, or Latvian Village, in Melbourne in 1986 and Sidrabene in 1963 in Adelaide), as well as in Canada (*Kristus Dārzs*, or Christ's Garden) in Toronto in 1986, etc.

Latvians in exile were quick to learn new professions or reestablish their careers outside Latvia and ensure a decent living for themselves through hard work. The majority of Latvians quickly attained middle-class status in their host countries, bought houses, and founded successful businesses. This success is mirrored by the speed at which Latvian organisations acquired properties. Because their organisations relied heavily on their members' contributions, the purchase of properties was only possible when the community was financially stable. Latvian societies and organisations purchased properties for their social and cultural activities, but in later years some of these centres were used to house Latvian seniors.



Fig. 14. The so-called "Clock House" at *Straumēni*, a countryside property owned by the *Daugavas Vanagi* organisation that also houses the Latvian Documentation Centre. 2010. Photograph by Kristīne Beķere

Conclusion

The first significant Latvian communities outside Latvia emerged at the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century, particularly after the events of 1905 in Latvia. The biggest communities emerged in the United States, in South American countries, and in Canada and Australia. In terms of numbers, the biggest Latvian diaspora emerged after the Second World War.

After the war, Balts in displaced persons camps in Germany or in Sweden refused to repatriate to their Soviet-occupied homelands and expressed their conviction that their countries' independence would one day be restored. They emphasised that they were in political exile, and that it was impossible to go back while their countries were occupied. In the early 1950s, the biggest Latvian exile communities emerged in the United States, Australia, and Canada, as well as in Great Britain, Germany, and Sweden. Smaller communities could be found in Brazil, Argentina, France, New Zealand, and elsewhere.

Latvians abroad demonstrated admirable organisational skills; by the early 1950s, they had created a multi-layered organisational structure that helped consolidate Latvians dispersed throughout the world. Latvian societies and associations in certain cities grew into nationwide organisations, and wherever Latvians settled a solid organisation emerged. National organisations were merged into regional ones, until in 1955 *PBLA*, which represented Latvian exiles from all over the world, was founded. It was *PBLA* that ensured contacts between Latvians from various countries and helped

plan and organise local and international events. Latvian exiles successfully cooperated with Estonians, Lithuanians, and other diasporas and created organisations to achieve their common political goals.

The restoration of Latvia's independence was the Latvian exiles' highest goal. Latvian exile organisations and individuals engaged in political lobbying in the interests of the three Baltic States, contacting their host countries' governments and international organisations. Public protests and demonstrations helped raise awareness about the Baltic States and their fate. Because a practical means for achieving their goal was out of reach in the foreseeable future, the most important achievement of Latvian exiles was ensuring that the policy of non-recognition *de jure* of Soviet incorporation of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia remained intact for nearly 50 years, and this is viewed as atypical in the history of international law. The US policy of non-recognition facilitated international recognition of the newly independent states in 1991. The exile community's activities during the so-called Awakening period were crucial to success. The exile organisations were a channel for truthful, unadulterated information; they strove to pass this on to the governments and the public in their host countries, especially during the volatile "Barricades" and "Putsch" periods. Partly thanks to the exiles' intense lobbying efforts, countries in the West were quick to recognise the Baltics' independence, which helped expedite their detachment from the Soviet Union. The exiles' experience with Western governments facilitated the establishment of a network of international contacts and diplomatic representations. Representatives of the Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian exile communities assumed various roles in the newly independent states' governments.

Practically all spheres of Latvian exile life were aimed at preserving the idea of a free and independent Latvia and promoting its restoration. By devoting themselves to Latvian culture and language, Latvians in exile were essentially demonstrating that independence would come, sooner or later. Latvians in exile were very active in preserving their national identity. Participation in choirs, dance ensembles, theatres, etc. was not only a form of entertainment but a means to demonstrate one's belonging to a culture and trying to preserve it. Numerous cultural venues, in which Latvians from around the world took part, helped promote a sense of belonging to the exile community and to Latvian culture.

For these same reasons, education was very important to the Latvian exiles. Teaching Latvian language, history, geography, and traditional culture to Latvian youth was crucial in passing the community's ethnic identity on to those born in exile, so that they could work towards the older generation's goal — to promote the restoration of Latvia's independence. Although a certain degree of assimilation was inevitable, this goal slowed the process down and helped unify the Latvian communities in exile.

Latvians in exile pursued various professions and were successful in many endeavours, including art, literature, music, science, and sports. They were also successful in business ventures. Some Latvians who had been successful in their creative endeavours in Latvia before the war were able to pursue their professions abroad, while those Latvians who were educated abroad and established their professions in exile also expe-

rienced success. The activities of Latvians in exile are characterised by a specific dualism: the ability to integrate into their host countries'societies while remaining active in and committed to their "parallel (Latvian) world," fighting to restore Latvia's independence, and participating in Latvian community life.

About the author

Kristīne Beķere (b. 1984) studied at the University of Greifswald in Germany, obtained a master's degree in history in 2009. Main research interest: the history of the political activities of the Latvian exile community. Started PhD studies at the University of Latvia in 2011. Vice President of Baltic Heritage Network (since 2012), an organisation devoted to the preservation of history of the Baltic diaspora. Works as a researcher at the Baltic Strategic Research Center at the Latvian Academy of Sciences.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AABS – Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies
ACEN – Assembly of Captive European Nations
ALA – American Latvian Association (*Amerikas Latviešu apvienība)*
ALF – Archives of Latvian Folklore
AUCP(B) – All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)
BATUN – Baltic Appeal to the United Nations
BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation
BCB – Baltic Central Library, Dept. of the National Library of Latvia (*Baltijas Centrālā bibliotēka*)
BCE – before Common Era
BWC – Baltic World Conference
CC – Central Committee
CCL – Central Council of Latvia
CE – common era
CP – Communist Party
CPC – Council of People's Commissars
CPL – Communist Party of Latvia
CPL(B) – Communist Party of Latvia (Bolshevik)
CPSU – Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CVVM – part of collections of the National History Museum of Latvia
CWC – Corded Ware culture
DALA – South American Latvian Association (*Dienvidamerikas Latviešu apvienība)*
DOSAAF – Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Fleet (*Добровольное общество содействия армии, авиации и флоту*)
DP – displaced person
DV – Daugava Hawks (*Daugavas Vanagi*)
EU – European Union
FRG – Federal Republic of Germany
ILH – Institute of Latvian History
KGB – Committee for State Security (of the USSR) (*Комитет государственной безопасности*)
LAAJ – Latvian Association of Australia and New Zealand (*Latviešu apvienība Austrālijā un Jaunzēlandē)*
LAKEC – European Centre of the Latvian Liberation Committee (*Latvijas Atbrīvošanas komitejas Eiropas centrs)*
LBC – Lettonica and Baltic Centre, unit of the National Library of Latvia (*Letonikas un Baltijas centrs*)
LELBĀL – Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Outside of Latvia (*Latviešu Evaņģēliski luteriskā baznīca ārpus Latvijas*)
LNA – National Archives of Latvia (*Latvijas Nacionālais arhīvs*)
LNAK – Latvian National Federation in Canada (*Latviešu nacionālā apvienība Kanādā*)

LNB – National Library of Latvia (*Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka*)
LNF – Latvian National Foundation (*Latviešu nacionālais fonds)*
LNK – National Freedom Movement of Latvia (*Latvijas Neatkarības kustība*)
LNNK – Latvian National Independence Movement (*Latvijas Nacionālās neatkarības kustība*)
LD – edition of *Latvian Folk Songs* (*Latvju dainas*)
LNPA – Association of National Partisans of Latvia (*Latvijas Nacionālo partizānu apvienība*)
LNPL – Latvian National Council in Great Britain (*Latviešu nacionālā padome Lielbritānijā*)
LSD – Latvian Social Democracy
LSDWP – Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party
LSSR – Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic
LSU – Latvian State University
LVA – State Archives of Latvia (*Latvijas Valsts arhīvs*)
LVKFFDA – Latvia State Archive of Audiovisual Documents (*Latvijas Valsts kinofotofonodokumentu arhīvs*)
LVVA – Latvian State Historical Archives of the National Archives of Latvia (*Latvijas Nacionālā arhīva Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs*); *f(onds), apr(aksts), l(ieta), lp (lapa)* – fund, inventory, file, page
MGB – Ministry of State Security (*Министерство государственной безопасности*)
MIC – Military-Industrial Complex
MTS – Machine and Tractor Stations
MVD – Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Министерство внутренних дел)*
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NKGB – People's Commissariat for State Security (*Народный комиссариат государственной безопасности*)
NKVD – People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*Народный комиссариат внутренних дел*)
OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PBLA – World Federation of Free Latvians (*Pasaules Brīvo latviešu apvienība*)
PFL – Popular Front of Latvia
RLS – Riga Latvian Society
RMM – Literature and Music Museum (*Rakstniecības un mūzikas muzejs*)
RSDSP – Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party
RSFSR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
TASS – Russian News Agency (*Телеграфное агентство Советского Союза*)
TSDC – Centre for the Documentation of the Consequences of Totalitarianism (*Totalitārisma seku dokumentēšanas centrs*)
SSR – Soviet Socialist Republic
UK – United Kingdom
UL – University of Latvia
UN – United Nations
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPR – Ukraine People's Republic
USA – United States of America
USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VEF – State Electrotechnical Factory (*Valsts elektrotehniskā fabrika*)
YMCA – Young Men's Christian Association
ZLNV – Northern Latgale Independence Unit (*Ziemeļlatgales Neatkarības vienība*)
ZLCP – Swedish Latvian Central Council (*Zviedrijas Latviešu centrālā padome*)

INDEX OF PERSONS

A

Ābers Benno (1909–1999) – Latvian lawyer, pedagogue 320
Adam of Bremen (a.k.a. Adam von Bremen, Adamus Bremensis, before 1050 – after 1081) – chronicler, canon of Bremen Church 37, 40, 45, 235
Adamovičs Ernests Ludvigs (1884–1943) – Latvian theologian, terminologist, Minister of Education 112, 115
Adolphi Henricus (a.k.a. Heinrich, 1622–1686) – German clergyman, Lettonist, translator of hymns 146, 147, 150
Afanasyev Mikhail (Михаил Афанасьев, 1884–1941) – commander of partisan squad (Afanasjevs' squad) in Rēzekne during the Latvian War of Independence 448, 468
Ako (Acco, ?–1206) – Liv elder in Sala (Mārtiņsala) 85, 231, 233
Albats Hermanis (1879–1942) – Latvian lawyer, diplomat 484, 578
Albert von Buxhoevden, (a.k.a. Albert von Buxthoeven, von Buxhoeveden, Buxhovden, Buxhoveden, Buxhowde, von Apeldern, ca 1165–1229) – clergyman of German extraction, bishop of Ikšķile and Riga 224, 225, 233
Albin Karl (?–1905) – mechanic-foreman at painters' shop of the Russo-Baltic Wagon Factory 383
Albrecht (a.k.a. Albrecht Hohenzollern, Albrecht von Brandenburg-Preußen, Albrecht von Brandenburg-Ansbach, 1490–1568) – Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, Duke of Prussia 268
Albrecht Friedrich (1553–1618) – Duke of Prussia 292
Aleksandrov Fyodor (Федор Александрович Александров, 1850 – after 1909) – Russian military figure, commander of Riga Training Battalion for non-commissioned officers 380
Alexander I, see Romanov Alexander I
Alexander II, see Romanov Alexander II
Alexander III, see Romanov Alexander III
Alexander Harold (1891–1969) – British Army officer, field-marshal 460
Alexei (Mikhailovich), see Romanov Alexei 460
Alfred the Great (849–899) – Anglo-Saxon King 205
Algirdas (ca 1296–1377) – ruler of Lithuania 255
Alksnis Jēkabs (Яков Иванович Алкснис, 1897–1938) – Soviet military figure, fighter pilot 685
Alnor Walter (1892–1972) – Gebietskommissar in Libau, Reichskommissariat Ostland 541
Alter Peter (b. 1940) – German historian 364
Alunāns Heinrihs (1835–1904) – Latvian journalist, book publisher, member of the New Latvian movement 159
Alunāns Juris (born Gustavs Georgs Frīdrihs Alunāns, 1832–1864) – Latvian poet, publicist, linguist, press figure, member of the New Latvian movement 151, 158, 159, 161, 347, 348, 355, 357, 361–363, 365, 366
Ambundi Johannes (a.k.a. Johann Ambundi, Johannes Ambundi von Schwan, ?–1424) – Archbishop of Riga 211
Anderson Benedict (1936–2015) – politologist, anthropologist, historian 364
Andersons Edgars (1920–1989) – Latvian historian 302, 547, 781, 782
Anderson Walter (Valters Andersons, 1885–1962) – Baltic German folklorist, ethnologist 107
Anderss Edvards (Edward Anders, born Alperovičs, b. 1926) – chemist of Jewish extraction 781
Andreeva Natalia (Наталия Сергеевна Андреева, b. 1972) – Russian historian 396

Andreev Andrei (Андрей Андреевич Андреев, 1895–1971) – Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 528
Andropov Yuri (Юрий Владимирович Андропов, 1914–1984) – Chairman of the Committee for State Security (*KGB*), General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 653, 661, 741, 744
Anna (Ioannovna), see Romanova Anna
Anna von Mecklenburg (1533–1602) – spouse of Godthardt Kettler, Duke of Courland and Semigallia, Duchess 284, 287
Anno (turn of the 12th and 13th cent.) – Liv elder in Turaida 233
Annuss Jānis (1883–1964) – Latvian politician, Minister of Finance 504
Ansgar (Anscarius, Anscharius, 801–865) – monk of Benedictine Order, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, missionary in Scandinavia 45, 132
Antonescu Ion Victor (1882–1946) – officer, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of the Kingdom of Romania, military dictator of Romania 485
Apala Zigrīda (b. 1936) – Latvian archaeologist 209
Apals Jānis (1930–2011) – Latvian archaeologist 31, 203
Apanasenko Josifs (Иосиф Родионович Апанасенко, 1890–1943) – general in the Soviet Army, Commander of Central Asian Military District 675
Apīnis Aleksejs (1926–2004) – Latvian historian of book publishing and literature, librarian 353
Apinis Jānis (1867–1925) – Latvian colonel, later general, in the Latvian Army 448
Apinis Roberts (1892–1938) – Latvian commissar in the Latvian Riflemen's division 437
Apsītis Hermanis (1893–1942) – Latvian lawyer, public figure, Minister of Justice 490
Arbusow Leonid (Leonīds Arbuzovs, 1848–1912) – Baltic German historian 326
Arbusow Leonid Hans Nikolaus, jun. (Leonīds Arbuzovs, 1882–1951) – Baltic German historian 141
Ariste Paul (1905–1990) – Estonian linguist 50
Aristotle (Aristotelēs, Ἀριστοτέλης, 384–322 BC) – Ancient Greek philosopher 317
Āronu Matīss (1858–1939) – Latvian journalist, bibliographer, critic 104
Asars Jānis (1877–1908) – Latvian publicist, journalist 389, 393
Aspazija (born Elza Rozenberga, 1865–1943) – Latvian poetess 390
Astra Gunārs (1931–1988) – Latvian dissident, politically repressed 744, 746
Atgāzis Māris (1935–2018) – Latvian archaeologist 210
Audofleda (Audeflede, ca 470–526) – Queen of the Ostrogoths, sister of Clovis I, King of the Salian Franks 214
Augstkalns Alvils (1907–1940) – Latvian linguist, bibliographer 142
Augustus II the Strong (1670–1733) – Elector of Saxony and King of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth 304, 306
Augustus III (1696–1763) – Elector of Saxony and King of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth 306, 307
Aule (14th cent.) – Livonian Order vassal of Latvian extraction 256
Auns Muntis (b. 1955) – Latvian historian 199, 222, 276, 279
Anund (1008?–1050?) – son of Swedish King Olof 237
Auseklis (born Miķelis Krogzemis, 1850–1879) – Latvian poet, publicist, teacher 372
Auškāps Jūlijs (1884–1942) – Latvian chemical technologist, Minister of Education of Latvia 492, 495, 496, 501, 503
Auzāns Andrejs (1871–1953) – commander of 7th Bauska Latvian regiment, later – commander of 2nd Latvian Riflemen brigade, general in the Latvian Army 409, 413, 415
Avdjukevičs Longins (1916–1988) – chairman of the *KGB* in the Latvian SSR 638, 639, 654
Ax Adolf (1906–1983) – SS Oberführer, commander of the 15th Division of the Latvian Legion 553
Āzēns Jānis – commander of the 4th regiment of Red Latvian Riflemen division 426

B

Bacon Roger (1214–1294) – English philosopher, Franciscan friar 47
Bagramyan Ivan (Иван Христофорович Баграмян, 1897–1982) – Deputy Minister of Defence of the USSR of Armenian extraction, marshal 604

Balodis Francis (1882–1947) – Latvian archaeologist, Egyptologist 201, 223
Balodis Jānis (1881–1965) – Latvian general, commander-in-chief of Latvian Army, Minister of War 451, 455, 456, 458, 459, 485, 494, 506, 568
Baltais Mirdza Kate (b. 1949) – Latvian historian 550, 552
Bangerskis Rūdolfs (1878–1958) – Latvian military serviceman, commander of 1st Daugavgrīva Latvian Riflemen regiment, general, SS Gruppenführer, inspector general of Volunteer Latvian SS Legion 423, 539, 540, 551, 721
Baranauskas Tomas (b. 1973) – Lithuanian historian 523
Barons Krišjānis (1835–1923) – Latvian publicist, man of letters, folklorist, member of the New Latvian movement 100, 102, 104, 105, 107, 109, 158, 348, 356, 357, 358, 365, 366, 454
Bārs Juris (1808–1879) – Latvian physician, poet, linguist 156, 157
Bartholomew the Englishman (Bartholomaeus Anglicus, before 1203–1272) – Franciscan friar, medieval thinker 47
Batov Pavel (Павел Иванович Батов, 1897–1985) – Commander of the Baltic Military District 685
Baudouin d'Aulne (?– ca 1243) – Cistercian of Walloon extraction, papal legate in the Baltic region, bishop of Semigallia 236
Baumanis Jānis Frīdrihs (1834–1891) – Latvian architect, chairman of Riga Latvian Society, member of New Latvian movement 368
Becker Jakob – Swedish postmaster in Riga in the 17th cent. 190
Beekes Robert Stephen Paul (b. 1937) – Netherlandish linguist 130
Beissinger Mark (b. 1954) – American politologist, pedagogue 598
Belševica Vizma (1931–2005) – Latvian writer, translator 626
Benninghoven Friedrich (1925–2014) – German historian, archivist 249, 250, 251, 254
Berelis Guntis (b. 1961) – Latvian literary critic, writer 355
Berger Gottlob (1896–1975) – SS Obergruppenführer 536, 538
Bergmann Gustav von (Gustavs Bergmanis, 1749–1814) – Baltic German clergyman, publisher, linguist 99
Bergs Arveds (1875–1941) – Latvian lawyer, public figure 381, 479
Beria Lavrentiy (Лаврентий Павлович Берия, 1899–1953) – CPSU functionary, People's Commissar (Minister) of Internal Affairs, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union 603
Berklavs Eduards (1914–2004) – Latvian National Communist, the First Secretary of Riga CPL Committee, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Latvian SSR 602, 608, 748, 768
Bermondt-Avalov Pavel (Павел Рафалович Бермонт-Авалов, 1877–1973 or 1974) – general in Russian anti-bolshevik forces, Commander-in-Chief of West Russian Volunteer Army 433, 436, 445, 457–463, 466, 467, 469, 470–474, 461, 463, 470, 491
Bērziņš Alfrēds (1899–1977) – Latvian public figure, politician, Minister of Public Affairs 485, 488, 489, 491, 501
Bērziņš Andrejs (1875–1941) – Latvian politician, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry 484, 487, 503–506, 511
Bērziņš Andris – Latvian engineer, representative of Latvian exile community in Venezuela 783
Bērziņš Jānis (1941–2017) – Latvian historian 378, 393
Bērziņš Ludis (1870–1965) – Latvian teacher, folklorist, Lutheran clergyman 96, 108, 109
Bērzkalne Anna (1891–1956) – Latvian folklorist, pedagogue 107, 109
Bezzenberger Adalbert (1851–1922) – German philologist, archaeologist 163
Bielenstein August (Augusts Bīlenšteins, 1826–1907) – Baltic German clergyman, writer, linguist, ethnographer, folklorist 100, 101, 160, 163, 360
Biezais Haralds (1909–1995) – Latvian theologian, religion historian 116, 119, 120, 273, 549, 553, 781
Biezbārdis Kaspars (1806–1886) – Latvian teacher, linguist, publicist 159, 360
Bikov Alexander (Александр Николаевич Быков, 1860–1919) – Russian specialist in industrial legislation, pedagogue, political figure 391
Birkavs Valdis (b. 1942) – Latvian lawyer, Prime Minister 596, 702, 703

Birkerts Pēteris (1881–1956) – Latvian folklorist, pedagogue, writer 108
Biron Ernst Johann von (Ernsts Johans Bīrons, 1690–1772) – Duke of Courland and Semigallia 306, 307
Biron Peter von (Pēteris Bīrons, 1724–1800) – Duke of Courland and Semigallia 308
Biryuzov Sergey (Сергей Семенович Бирюзов, 1904–1964) – Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR 685
Bisenieks Nikolajs (1906–1981) – Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia 645
Blaumanis Rūdolfs (1863–1908) – Latvian writer, playwright, journalist 381
Bleiere Daina (b. 1949) – Latvian historian 521, 548, 557, 629
Bļodnieks Ādolfs (1889–1962) – Latvian politician, leader of New Farmers–Small Landowners Party 478, 479, 481, 504
Blumbergs Jānis (1886–1941) – Latvian politician, Minister for Trade and Industry 507
Blūzma Valdis (b. 1951) – Latvian historian, law scholar 203, 208, 221, 223, 225
Bock Heinrich August von (Heinrihs Augusts fon Boks, 1771–1863) – Baltic German lawyer, politician, writer 330
Böckenförde Heinrich von (a.k.a. Schüngel, ?–1437) – Master of the Livonian Order 255
Bokalders Jānis (1885–1982) – Latvian statistician, economic geographer 484
Bolšteins Ludvigs (1888–1940) – commander of the Latvian border guard, general 714
Bopp Franz (1791–1867) – German linguist 154
Borkowsky Oskar (Oskar Borlcowsky, Oskars Borkovskis, 1872–1945) – Baltic German lawyer, acting Prime Minister of the Latvian Provisional Government 455
Bormann Martin (1900–1945) – Adolf Hitler's private secretary, Chief of the Chancellery of the National Socialist German Workers' Party 536, 538
Bosanquet Vivian Henry Courthope (1872–1943) – consul of Great Britain in Riga 419
Bowring John (1792–1872) – English politician, translator 99
Brandenburg Luise Charlotte von (1617–1676) – Princess of Brandenburg-Prussia, Duchess of Courland and Semigallia 299
Brandis Moritz (Mauritius Brandis, ca 1550 – after 1600) – Livonian chronicler of German extraction 267
Brasche Gustav Wilhelm Sigmund (Gustavs Vilhelms Zigmunds Braže, a.k.a. Braše, 1802–1883) – Baltic German clergyman, man of letters, linguist 161
Brastiņš Ernests (1892–1942) – Latvian painter, publicist, researcher of hill-forts, founder of Neopagan religious movement *Dievturība* 107
Bratuškina Antoņina (b. 1926) – member of national resistance movement 735
Bräutigam Otto (1895–1992) – German diplomat, lawyer, head of the Central Political Department at Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories 537
Breidaks Antons (1932–2002) – Latvian linguist 131, 136, 137, 264, 267
Breikšs Dailonis (1911–1952) – commander of national partisans in Cēsis district, code name "Kundziņš" 731
Brežgo Boļeslavs (1887–1957) – historian 328
Brezhnev Leonid (Леонид Ильич Брежнев, 1906–1982) – General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR 594, 614, 734, 741
Briedis Frīdrihs (1888–1918) – commander of the 1st Daugavgrīva Latvian Riflemen Regiment 411, 423
Briedis Jānis – commander of the 5th Regiment of Latvian Red Riflemen Division 426
Briedis Kārlis – Commissar (emissary) of the 2nd Regiment of Latvian Red Riflemen Division 387
Brigaders Jānis (1882–1905) – Latvian teacher 393
Brīvzemnieks Fricis (born Fricis Treilands, 1846–1907) – Latvian folklorist, member of the New Latvian movement, poet, translator 103–105, 161
Broedrich Silvio Alois Max (Silvio Aloizs Makss Brēdrihs, 1870–1952) – Baltic German baron, one of the performers and facilitators of German colonisation idea of the Baltic region 404
Brotze Johann Christoph (Johans Kristofs Broce, 1742–1823) – artist of German extraction in the Age of Enlightenment, ethnographer, historian, student of local history 169, 174, 175, 178, 199, 279

Brozović Dalibor (1927–2009) – Croatian linguist 130
Bruiningk Karl (Carl) von (Karls fon Bruinings, 1742–1848) – Baltic German liberal, country nobleman 325
Brümmer Michael Philipp Engelbrecht von (Mihaels Filips Engelbrehts fon Brimmers, 1848–1912) – Baltic German baron, landlord of Odziena Manor 399
Brundage James Artur (b. 1929) – USA historian, translator of *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* into English 211, 223
Bruņenieks Mārtiņš (1866–1950) – Latvian philologist, researcher of mythology 116
Bruno von Querfurt (a.k.a Bonifacius, ca 974–1009) – Catholic saint, monk, archbishop 220
Brūvers Olafs (b. 1947) – Latvian dissident, human rights defender, member of "*Gaismas akcija*" (Action of Light) 743
Brūvers Pāvils (b. 1949) – Latvian dissident, journalist of Radio Free Europe, theologian 743
Buchanan George William (1854–1924) – British diplomat, ambassador of Great Britain to Russia 419
Bula Dace (b. 1960) – Latvian folklorist 98, 106, 110
Bułak-Bałachowicz Stanisław (1883–1940) – commander of a unit in Russian Northwestern Army, Estonian, after that – Polish Army 470
Būmeisters Juris (1918–2000) – dissident, member of Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party 747
Burkins Augusts (1871–1942) – Latvian teacher 162
Bush George Walker Herbert (b. 1924) – President of the USA 770
Büttner Ludwig Georg Friedrich (Georgs Bitners, 1805–1883) – Baltic German clergyman, folklorist 100
Butulis Ilgvars (b. 1948) – Latvian historian 501, 557

C

Čakste Jānis (1859–1927) – Latvian lawyer, President of Latvia 565, 720, 741
Čakste Konstantīns (1901–1945) – Latvian law scholar, politician, member of national resistance movement, chairman of Latvian Central Council 542, 543, 546, 547, 720, 721
Carol al II-lea al României (1893–1953) – King of Romania 485
Cassiodorus Flavius Magnus Aurelius (ca 490–583) – magister officiorum under Theoderic the Great, King of the Ostrogoths 44
Catherine II, see Romanova Catherine II
Caunītis Juris (1826–1861) – Latvian teacher, publicist, public figure, member of New Latvian movement 356
Celmiņš Gustavs (1899–1968) – Latvian politician, leader of *Pērkonkrusts* organisation, member of national resistance movement 546, 718
Charlemagne (Carolus Magnus, 742–814) – King of the Franks, representative of Carolingian Dynasty 44, 99
Charles II (1630–1685) – King of Scotland, also King of England and Ireland 301
Charles X Gustav (Karl X Gustav, 1622–1660) – King of Sweden 300
Charles XI (Karl XI, 1655–1697) – King of Sweden 150, 151, 324
Charles of Saxony (Karl von Sachsen, 1733–1796) – Prince of Saxony, Duke of Courland 307
Chernenko Konstantin (Константин Устинович Черненко, 1911–1985) – General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR 741
Chernichenko Stanislav (Станислав Валентинович Черниченко, b. 1935) – Russian specialist of international relations 519, 520
Chervinskii Yurii (Юрий Евгеньевич Червинский, b. 1937) – deputy chairman of the *KGB* in Latvian SSR 639, 664
Chicherin Georgy (Георгий Васильевич Чичерин, 1872–1936) – Soviet public official, diplomat 579
Childe Vere Gordon (1892–1957) – Australian archaeologist, philologist 52
Churchill Winston (1874–1965) – British politician, Prime Minister of Great Britain 730
Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero, 106–43 BC) – Roman statesman, politician, lawyer, philosopher 317
Cielēns Fēlikss (1888–1964) – Latvian lawyer, politician, publicist, member of the Saeima, minister, member of national resistance movement 547
Cimze Jānis (1814–1881) – Latvian pedagogue, collector of folksongs, founder of Latvian choir music 101, 102, 106

Circāns Antons (1918–1947) – Latvian chief of communication unit, later chief of staff of Latvian National Partisan Union, code name "Vārpa" 728
Clotilde (Chrodechild, Chrodichild, ca 474–544) – Queen of the Franks, saint of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches 1 pc 190
Clovis I (Hlodowig, ca 466–511) – King of Salian Franks 205, 214
Czinege Lajos (1924–1998) – Minister of Defence of People's Republic of Hungary 706

D

Dabrelis (Dabrel, Dobrel, Dabrelus, ?–1211) – elder of Turaida Livs from the left bank of the Gauja 217, 228, 232
Dailidė Pranas (1888–1965) – Lithuanian diplomat, ambassador to Latvia 584
Dambe Vallija (1912–1995) – Latvian linguist 137
Dambītis Roberts (1881–1957) – Latvian general at Latvian Army 447
Daniševskis Jūlijs Kārlis (1884–1938) – one of Latvian Bolshevik leaders, deputy head of the government of Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic 419, 426, 427, 434, 478
Dankers Oskars (1883–1965) – Latvian general at Latvian Army, director-general of the internal affairs of Latvian Self-Administration at Generalbezirk Lettland, Reichskommissariat Ostland 567
Daragan Iosif (Иосиф Федорович Дараган, 1848–1918?) – head of Riga–Orel railway 388
Dardzāns Pēteris (1889–1985) – Latvian officer of the 1st Daugavgrīva Regiment, later – commander of Troitsk Battalion 438
Darius (Dārayava(h)uš, 522–486 BC) – King of Persia 42
Dauge Juris (1835–1910) – Latvian writer, teacher, member of the New Latvian movement 356
Daugeruthe (Dangeruth,? –1213) – Lithuanian elder 214, 222
Davies Norman (b. 1939) – British historian 533
Deglavs Augusts (1862–1922) – Latvian writer, press figure 356, 368
Dekanozov Vladimir (Владимир Георгиевич Деканозов, 1898–1953) – functionary of the Security Services, Party and Government of the USSR, deputy chairman of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs 588, 589
Delle Nikolajs (1851–1939) – economic and public figure 398, 399
Denikin Anton (Антон Иванович Деникин, 1872–1947) – Russian general, Commander-in-Chief of Russian Southern Armed Forces 434, 435, 436, 440
Depkin Liborius (Liborijs Depkins, 1652–1708) – Baltic German clergyman, lexicographer 149, 221
Dereviansky Vladimir (Владимир Константинович Деревянский, 1894–1980) – USSR envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Latvia in 1940 600
Diakonoff Igor (Игорь Михайлович Дьяконов, 1915–1999) – Russian historian, linguist 52
Dietrich III Damerow (?– ca 1410) – bishop of Dorpat 257
Dimitriev Radko (Радко Димитриев, 1859–1918) – general of Bulgarian extraction in the Russian Army, commander of the 12th Army 411, 414, 421
Dini Pietro Umberto (b. 1960) – Italian linguist, translator 130, 131, 134
Dinsbergs Ernests (a.k.a. Ernests Dinsberģis, 1816–1902) – Latvian teacher, translator, writer, public figure, member of the New Latvian movement 153, 360
Dionysius Fabricius (16th–17th cent.) – Jesuit dean in Duchy of Livonia (*Ducatus Ultradunensis*), chronicler 119, 266
Dīriķis Bernhards (1831–1892) – Latvian press figure, member of the New Latvian movement, chairman of Riga Latvian Society 365
Dišlers Kārlis (1878–1954) – Latvian lawyer, public official, writer 484, 490
Döbner Christian August Karl (Augusts Dēbners, 1800–1873) – clergyman of German extraction, bibliographer 161
Döring Friedrich Julius (Frīdrihs Jūliuss Dērings, 1818–1898) – teacher of German extraction, art historian, librarian 163
Doroņina-Lasmane Lidija (b. 1925) – dissident, politically repressed 744
Dorošenko Vasilijs (Василий Васильевич Дорошенко, 1921–1992) – historian 260, 262
Douglas Robert (1611–1662) – field-marshal in the Swedish Army 300

Dozītis Kārlis (1894–1939) – commissar of Latvian Red Riflemen Division 424
Drava Kārlis (1911–1947) – member of Latvian national resistance movement 723
Dravnieks Jēkabs (1858–1927) – Latvian teacher, lexicographer 159, 162
Dravnieks Mārcis (19th cent.) – Latvian peasant 339
Drechsler Otto-Heinrich (Oto Heinrihs Drehslers, a.k.a. Drekslers, 1895–1945) – Commissar-General of Generalbezirk Lettland of Reichskommissariat Ostland 533, 535, 538, 541, 544, 545
Dreijers Māris (b. 1947) – deputy head of the 5th Department of the *KGB* in the Latvian SSR 666
Dreijmanis Pāvils (1895–1953) – Latvian architect 499, 500
Dressell Georg (Georgs Dreselis, 1654–1698) – Baltic German Lutheran clergyman, linguist 147
Drivinalds (a.k.a. Drunvalds, Drivinalde, 13th cent.) – son of Tālibalds, the ruler of Tālava 223, 226, 227
Drīzule Rita (1921–2017) – Latvian folklorist 116
Dumpe Olga (1893–1942) – Latvian railway employee 637
Dunsdorfs Edgars (1904–2002) – Latvian historian, economist 169, 172, 250, 254, 261, 262, 269, 579, 781
Durkheim Émile David (1858–1917) – French sociologist, social psychologist, philosopher 354
Dyomin Nikita (Никита Степанович Демин, 1910–1989) – member of the Military Council of Baltic Military District, head of the Political Department 604

E

Eden Anthony (1897–1977) – British politician, Foreign Secretary of Great Britain 488
Eginhardus (Einhardus, ca 770–840) – chronicler, biographer of Carolus Magnus 44
Eglītis Anšlavs (1906–1993) – Latvian writer, journalist, painter 773
Eglītis Augusts (1896–1966) – People's Commissar for Internal Affairs of the LSSR, later – Minister for the Interior, major-general 728
Einhorn Paul (1590?–1655) – German theologian, clergyman, culture historian 94, 97, 126, 145, 146, 200, 274
Eisen Johann Georg (Johans Georgs Eizens, 1717–1779) – clergyman of German extraction, publicist 326
Eisenhardt Ulrich (b. 1937) – German lawyer, pedagogue 323
Ēķis Ludvigs (1892–1943) – Latvian public figure, politician, Minister of Finance 504–508
Ekšteins Modris (b. 1943) – Canadian historian of Latvian extraction, writer 531
Elger Georg (Georgs Elgers, 1585–1672) – Catholic priest, author of ecclesiastical texts, translator 148
Elizabeth (Petrovna), see Romanova Elizabeth
Endzelīns Jānis (1873–1961) – Latvian linguist 108, 131, 133, 137, 160, 164, 718
Engels Friedrich (1820–1895) – German philosopher, entrepreneur 327
Ērglis Dzintars (b. 1967) – Latvian historian 542, 546, 547
Erk Ludwig (1807–1883) – German musician, composer 101
Ezergailis Andrievs (a.k.a. Andrew Ezergailis, b. 1930) – American historian of Latvian extraction 530, 540, 546, 548, 550, 781
Ezeriņš Jānis (1894–1944) – general in the Latvian Army 449

F

Felder Björn (b. 1974) – German historian 503
Feldman Esper (Еспер Александрович Фельдман, 1854–1913) – officer in the Army of Russian Empire, one of the punitive expedition leaders in Vidzeme 398
Fichte Johann Gottlieb (1762–1814) – German philosopher, theoretician of German nationalism 372
Fischer Johann (1636–1705) – Superintendent-General of Vidzeme 150
Floßmann Ursula (b. 1944) – German politologist, historian, anthropologist 329
Foelkersahm/Fölkersahm Hamilcar von (Hamilkārs fon Felkerzāms, 1811–1856) – Baltic German liberal, Land-Marshall of Vidzeme Knighthood 321
Foelkersahm/Fölkersahm Hamilcar Eugen Magnus Baron von (Hamilkārs fon Felkerzāms, 1854–1929) – Baltic German lawyer, right-wing liberal political figure, deputy of the State Duma of Russian Empire 326, 334

Fölckersam Melchior von (Melhiors fon Felkerzāms, 1601–1665) – counsellor of the dukes of Courland, chancellor of the Duchy 300
Ford Gerald Rudolph (1913–2006) – President of the USA 764
Franciscus de Moliano (13th cent. – 14th cent.) – Roman papal representative and inquisitor in Livonia 239
Fraser Malcolm (1930–2015) – Prime Minister of Australia 744
Fredborg Erik Lars Arvid (1915–1996) – Swedish journalist 531
Frederic III von Hohenzollern (1657–1713) – Elector of Brandenburg-Prussia, the first King of Prussia 304
Frederic Willliam von Brandenburg – see Hohenzollern Frederic William
Freytag von Loringhoven Leon Balthasar Gaston (Leons Baltazars Freitāgs fon Loringhofens, 1870–1935) – military serviceman, the first commander of the Baltic Landeswehr 448
Frīdrihsons Jānis (a.k.a. Jānis Skrauja, 1892–1941) – figure in Latvian security service, director of Security Police Department of the Ministry for the Interior 480
Friebe Wilhelm Christian (Vilhelms Kristiāns Frībe, 1762–1811) – Baltic German theologian, tutor, publicist, enlightener 351
Frotscher Werner (b. 1937) – German lawyer, law scholar 318
Fürecker Christoph (Kristofors Fīrekers, ca 1615–1684 or 1685) – Baltic German linguist, lexicographer, poet 93, 146, 149, 264

G

Gabrāns Antons (1924–1949) – commander of national partisans in Abrene district, code name "Zemitāns" 730
Gailis (Gayle, the first half of the 13th cent.) – elder of Mežotne 217
Galvanauskas Ernestas (1882–1967) – public official of Lithuania, Prime Minister, minister in several Cabinets 588
Gamkrelidze Tamaz (b. 1929) – Georgian linguist 52
Garda-Rozenberga Ieva (b. 1980) – Latvian philologist, researcher of oral history 542
Gediminas (ca 1275–1341) – Grand Duke of Lithuania 248, 265
Gedvilas Mečislovas (1901–1981) – functionary of the Communist Party of Lithuania, Minister for the Interior of the Lithuanian SSR 588
Geifman Anna (b. 1962) – American historian 395
Georgiev Vladimir (Владимир Иванов Георгиев, 1908–1986) – Bulgarian linguist 52
Gerhards Guntis (b. 1966) – Latvian bioarchaeologist 210, 251
Gerulis Georg (a.k.a. Georgs Gerullis, Jurģis Ģerulis, 1888–1945) – German linguist of Lithuanian extraction 267
Gerverder (Gerverders, end of the 12th cent.) – baptised Liv in Sala 231
Gimbutienė Marija (Marija Gimbutas, 1921–1994) – American archaeologist of Lithuanian extraction 52, 53, 112, 132,
Girininkas Algirdas (b. 1949) – Lithuanian archaeologist 53
Glück Johann Ernst (1652–1705) – German clergyman, translator 150, 151
Godmanis Ivars (b. 1951) – Latvian physicist, Prime Minister, member of the Saeima and European Parliament 770
Goethe Johann Wolfgang von (1749–1832) – German poet, writer, nature scientist, public official 354, 355
Goldmanis Jānis (1875–1955) – Latvian politician, deputy of the State Duma of Russian Empire, Minister of Defence of Latvia 408
Goltz Rüdiger Graf von der (1865–1946) – German general, count, commander of German Military Forces in Latvia 430–432, 451, 454–456
Goppers Kārlis (a.k.a. Kārlis Gopers, 1876–1941) – officer of Latvian Riflemen, general in the Latvian Army 423
Gorbachev Mikhail (Михаил Сергеевич Горбачев, b. 1931) – General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, President of the USSR 663, 664, 668, 706, 707, 711, 712, 734, 771

Gorbunovs Anatolijs (b. 1942) – politician, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia 685
Gordeyev Ivan (Иван Иванович Гордеев, 1855–?) – officer in the Army of the Russian Empire 397
Goreliks Konstantīns (1908–1935) – soldier in the Latvian Army 472
Gotze Ernst (Ernsts Goce, ?–1905) – director of factory in Jelgava 383
Grabis Rūdolfs (1906–1996) – Latvian linguist 146
Graudonis Jānis (1913–2005) – Latvian historian, archaeologist 137
Grava Uldis (1938–2018) – Latvian journalist, public figure, politician, member of the Saeima 764
Grāvere Rita (b. 1947) – Latvian historian, bioarchaeologist 203
Grāversons Jānis (1914–1950) – Latvian national partisan 732
Grāvītis Eduards (1913–1973) – Latvian Lutheran clergyman, national partisan 728
Greene Warwick (1879–1929) – head of the USA mission in the Baltic States 471
Greenfeld Liah (b. 1954) – sociologist, politologist, anthropologist 354
Grīnbergs Gustavs Jēkabs (1884–1981) – colonel in the Latvian Army 447
Grīniņš Ferdinands (1884–1906) – fighter of Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party 404
Grīviņš Jānis (19th cent.) – Latvian peasant 339
Grosvalds Oļģerts (1884–1962) – Latvian diplomat 571
Gubarev Aleksei (Алексей Александрович Губарев, 1931–2015) – Soviet cosmonaut, deputy director of the Central Scientific Research Institute, Ministry of Defence of the USSR 705
Guéneau Jean (1887–1946) – engineer of the Navy of France 419
Guibernau i Berdún Maria Montserrat (b. 1960) – Catalan politologist, sociologist 349, 375
Gulbis Fricis (1891–1956) – Latvian physicist, pedagogue, founder and the first president of the Baltic University 777
Gusakovsky Iosif (Иосиф Ираклиевич Гусаковский, 1904–1995) – Commander of the Baltic Military District, lieutenant-general 604
Gustavus II Adolphus (Gustav II Adolf, 1594–1632) – King of Sweden 290
Gutzkow Karl Ferdinand (1811–1878) – German writer, playwright, journalist, member of the movement "Young Germany" 348

H

Haberland Christoph (Kristofs Hāberlands, 1750–1803) – Baltic German architect, chief architect of Riga 499
Hamann Johann Georg (1730–1788) – German writer, philosopher, mystic 96
Harder Johann Jakob (1734–1775) – German clergyman, pedagogue, folklorist 93, 94, 98, 126
Harder Christoph (1747–1818) – German book publisher, man of letters, Lettonist 95
Hasselblatt Werner (1890–1958) – German expert in rights of national minorities, lawyer, politician 534
Hauzenberga-Šturma Edīte (1901–1983) – Latvian linguist 109
Hedwig Eleonora (1636–1715) – Queen of Sweden 173
Heine Christian Johann Heinrich (1797–1856) – German poet, journalist, essayist, literary critic, member of the literary group "Young Germany" 348, 355
Henning Detlef (b. 1959) – German historian 377
Henry of Livonia (Indriķis, Heinricus de Lettis, Heinrich von Lettland, ca 1187– after 1259) – Catholic priest, author of *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 47, 81, 114, 136, 142, 200, 209–211, 214, 217, 221–223, 225, 226, 231, 236, 238, 239, 247, 249, 274
Herder Johann Gottfried von (1744–1803) – German poet, theologian, philosopher 93, 94, 96, 98, 99, 110, 126
Hermanarich (Ermanarich, ?–376) – King of Ostrogoths 44
Herodotus (Hēródotos, ca 484–ca 425 BC) – ancient Greek historian 42
Hesselberg Heinrich (1792–1848) – German clergyman 156
Hildebrand Michael (1433–1509) – archbishop of Riga 282
Hilpert Carl (1888–1947) – German military serviceman, commander of Army Group Courland, general 540

Himmelstiern Reinhold Johann Ludwig Samson von (Reinholds Johans Ludvigs Samsons fon Himmelštīrns, 1778–1858) – Baltic German lawyer, philosopher, judge 330
Himmler Heinrich (1900–1945) – politician in Nazi Germany, SS Reichsführer 535, 537, 538, 539, 551
Hince Henneke (Henneke Hintze/Hintzke, 15th cent.) – Livonian Order vassal of Liv extraction 255
Hitler Adolf (1889–1945) – German politician of Austrian extraction, Chancellor of Germany, dictator 482, 484, 513, 515, 516, 533, 536, 538, 553, 585, 671
Hļebņikovs Nikolajs – employee at Daugavpils department of the Ministry of State Security of LSSR 736
Hobsbawm Eric (1917–2012) – British Marxist historian 348
Hofmanis Andrejs (1830–?) – Latvian military serviceman, member of the Latvian War of Independence 473
Hohenzollern Elisabeth Sophie von (1674–1748) – Princess of Brandenburg-Prussia, Duchess of Courland and Semigallia 304
Hohenzollern Frederic William von (Friedrich Wilhelm von Hohenzollern, 1620–1688) – Elector of Brandenburg-Prussia 299
Holstein-Gottorf Georg Ludwig (Georg Ludwig von Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf, 1719–1763) – Prince of Holstein-Gottorf 307
Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65–8 BC) – Roman poet 355
Horunzhenko Alexander (Александр Александрович Хорунженко, 1847–?) – military figure in Russia 396
Hroch Miroslav (b. 1932) – Czech historian, politologist 350
Hupel August Wilhelm (Augusts Vilhelms Hupels, 1737–1819) – Baltic German clergyman, historian, publicist 95, 98, 126, 325

I

Idrisi (Abu Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Idrisi, Al-Idrisi, 1100–1165) – Arab geographer, cartographer, Egyptologist 46
Imaks Jānis (1882–1919) – Latvian military serviceman, lieutenant-colonel in the Armed Forces of the Latvian Provisional Government 448
Indāns Jānis Teodors (1895–1941) – Latvian military serviceman, national partisan 732
Innocent IV (Innocentius IV, born Sinibaldo Fieski, Sinibaldo Fieschi, ca 1195–1254) – Pope of the Roman Catholic Church 228
Iordansky Nikolai (Николай Иванович Иорданский) – 2nd company commander at Riga Training Battalion for non-commissioned officers in 1905 380
Ivan IV the Terrible (Иоанн IV Васильевич Рюрикович, 1530–1584) – Tsar of Russia 246, 282
Ivanov Vyacheslav (Вячеслав Всеволодович Иванов, 1929–2017) – Russian linguist 52, 121

J

Jakutis Boleslovas (1890–1969) – military attaché of Lithuania, colonel 584
Jamieson Robert (1772–1844) – Scottish folklorist, antiquarian 99
Janin Pierre-Thiébaut-Charles-Maurice (1862–1946) – French general, chief of French military mission in Russia, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Triple Entente in Eastern and Western Siberia 438
Jannau Heinrich Johann von (Heinrihs Johans fon Jannaus, 1753–1821) – Baltic German clergyman, historian, publicist, enlightener 351
Jansons Jēkabs (1886–1938) – Latvian member of Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, member of the revolutionary movement 389
Jansons Kārlis (1896–1986) – Latvian sculptor 198
Javoišs Bruno (b. 1941) – Latvian student at Riga Civil Aviation Engineers Institute, disident 740
Jeckeln Friedrich August (1895–1946) – SS Obergruppenführer, the highest leader of SS and police in Ostland 533, 534, 542
Jēgens Ojārs (1924–1993) – Latvian poet, artist, book publisher 93
Jēgers Benjamiņš (1915–2005) – Latvian bibliographer, pedagogue 781, 782
Johann Albrecht I (1525–1576) – Duke of Mecklenburg 284

Johann VI Ambundi, see Ambundi Johanness
Johansen Paul (1901–1965) – Estonian historian of Danish extraction 247, 275
Johansons Andrejs (1922–1983) – Latvian culture historian, writer 94, 95, 116
Johansons Edmunds (1936–2017) – chairman of the *KGB* in the Latvian SSR 633, 639, 644, 648, 654, 656–659, 664–666
Jordanes (ca 500–552) – notary to the Alan ruler Cunthigis, later priest 44
Joyce James Augustine Aloysius (1882–1941) – Irish writer 773
Jungingen Konrad von (1355/1360–1407) – Grand Master of the Teutonic Order 261
Jurevičs Pauls (1891–1981) – Latvian teacher, philosopher 775
Jurgens Jānis (1900–1983) – Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, Rector of University of Latvia 602
Jurjāns Andrejs (a.k.a. Jurjānu Andrejs, 1856–1922) – Latvian composer, folklorist 106, 107

K

Käbin Johannes (Ivan) (1905–1999) – the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Estonia 604
Kaktiņš Kristaps (a.k.a. Kristaps Kaktings, 1801–1867) – Latvian man of letters, author of religious works, public figure 353
Kaledin Alexei (Алексей Максимович Каледин, 1861–1918) – Russian general, ataman of the Don Cossack Host 423
Kalējs Oskars (1902–1993) – Latvian artist, founder of Daugavpils History Museum 223
Kalnbērziņš Jānis (1893–1986) – the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia 602, 606, 735, 736, 739–741
Kalniņš Bruno (1899–1990) – Latvian politician, one of the leading figures in Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, chairman of the Foreign Committee of LSDWP 478, 526, 662
Kalniņš Juris (1847–1919) – Latvian teacher, journalist 159, 164
Kalniņš Krišjānis (1847–1885) – Latvian lawyer, chairman of Riga Latvian Society, member of the New Latvian movement, 161, 365, 368, 369
Kalniņš Voldemārs (1907–1981) – Latvian lawyer, pedagogue 338, 339
Kalpaks Oskars (1882–1919) – commander of the 1st Latvian Independent Battalion of the Republic of Latvia, colonel 449, 451, 570
Kambala Staņislavs (1893–1941) – public and political figure, representative of Latgale in People's Council of Latvia 447
Kamenev Sergey (Сергей Сергеевич Каменев, 1881–1936) – colonel, Supreme Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Soviet Russia 435
Kamieniecki Witold (1883–1964) – Polish historian, diplomat, diplomatic representative in Latvia 564
Kaminiskis Jānis (1878–1942) – Latvian building engineer, public figure, state controller, Minister of Finance 493, 510, 511
Kangeris Kārlis (b. 1948) – Latvian historian 541
Kappeler Andreas (b. 1943) – Swiss historian 377
Karidis Micheell (Miķelis Karidis, 15th cent.) – Livonian Order vassal of Liv extraction 256
Kariger Jan (1664–1729) – Jesuit missionary, linguist 152
Kašņikovs Filips (Филипп Иванович Кашников, 1904–1971) – the Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia 603
Katkov Mikhail (Михаил Никифорович Катков, 1818–1887) – Russian journalist, editor of newspaper *Московские ведомости* (Moscow Times) 365
Kaudzīte Matīss (1848–1926) – Latvian writer, teacher 159, 162
Kauliņš Jānis (1863–1940) – Latvian pedagogue, linguist 164
Kaupo (Caupo, ?–1217) – elder of Turaida Livs 82, 85, 211, 217, 231–233, 239, 242
Kazāks Jēkabs (1895–1920) – Latvian modernist painter 625
Kažociņš Indulis (1917–2000) – Latvian historian 531
Kelch Christian (1657–1710) – Estonian Lutheran clergyman of German extraction, chronicler 271

Kemps Francis (1876–1952) – man of letters, politician, cultural figure, member of the Constitutional Assembly and Saeima 165
Ķencis Toms (b. 1985) – Latvian philosopher, folklorist 116
Ķeniņš Atis (1874–1961) – Latvian lawyer, education figure, poet, politician 566
Ķeniņš Tālivaldis (1919–2008) – Latvian composer 773
Kerensky Alexander (Александр Федорович Керенский, 1881–1970) – Chairman of the Russian Provisional Government 420
Kettler Elisabeth Magdalena (1580–1649) – Duchess of Courland and Semigallia 291
Kettler Ferdinand (1655–1737) – Duke of Courland and Semigallia 303–306
Kettler Frederick (Friedrich Wilhelm, 1569–1642) – Duke of Semigallia, later Duke of Courland and Semigallia 287–296
Kettler Frederick Casimir (Friedrich Casimir Kettler, 1650–1698) – Duke of Courland and Semigallia 296, 302–305
Kettler Frederick William (Friedrich Wilhelm Kettler, 1692–1711) – Duke of Courland and Semigallia 304, 305
Kettler Gotthard (1517–1587) – the last Master of Livonia, the first Duke of Courland and Semigallia 244, 283, 284–287
Kettler Jacob (Jakob Kettler, 1610–1682) – Duke of Courland and Semigallia 291–304
Kettler Sophie (1582–1610) – Princess of Prussia, Duchess of Courland and Semigallia 292, 295
Kettler William (Wilhelm Kettler, 1574–1640) – Duke of Courland 287–289, 292, 293, 295, 296
Khrushchev Nikita (Никита Сергеевич Хрущев, 1894–1971) – politician, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR 608, 614, 645, 646, 654, 734, 738, 741, 749
Kiparsky Valentin Julius Aleksandr (1904–1983) – Finnish linguist of Russian extraction 133, 267, 275
Ķipurs Roberts (b. 1977) – Latvian historian 384
Kirhenšteins Augusts (1972–1963) – Latvian microbiologist, state and public figure of LSSR 519, 521, 522, 526, 527, 539, 589, 606
Ķirsons Māris (b. 1940) – Latvian clergyman 765
Klaustiņš Roberts (1875–1962) – literature historian, critic, writer, book reviewer 108
Kļaviņa Sarma (b. 1941) – Latvian linguist 160
Kļaviņš Paulis (1928–2016) – Latvian clergyman, leader of "*Gaismas akcija*" (Action of Light) 662
Klemken Michael (Mihaels Klemkens, 1657–1741) – translator 150
Klīve Visvaldis (1931–2003) – Latvian clergyman, pedagogue, historian 781
Knox Alfred William Fortescue (1870–1964) – British general, military attaché of Great Britain in Russia 412, 416, 422
Kobulov Bogdan (Богдан Захарович Кобулов, 1904–1953) – the First Deputy of the Minister for the Interior of the USSR, colonel-general 729
Kociņš Fricis (1895–1941) – Latvian diplomat, ambassador of Latvia to the USSR 515, 518
Kokare Elza (1920–2003) – Latvian folklorist 115–117
Kokars Imants (1921–2011) – Latvian conductor 627
Kolchak Alexander (Александр Васильевич Колчак, 1874–1920) – admiral, Supreme Ruler and Commander-in-Chief of All Russian anti-Bolshevik Land and Sea Forces 438
Konarska Barbara – Polish landlady in the 17th cent. 194
Konovalov Nikolai (Николай Семенович Коновалов, 1907–1993) – the First Secretary of the Kaliningrad Oblast Committee of the CPSU 604
Konstantin Nikolayevich, see Romanov Konstantin Nikolayevich
Kontsewicz Johannes (a.k.a. Иван Петрович Концевич, Johaness Koncevičs, ?–1913) – teacher, author of textbooks and dictionaries 162
Kościuszko Andrzej Tadeusz Bonawentura (1746–1817) – Polish general, leader of Polish Uprising 309
Koshko Arkady (Аркадий Францевич Кошко, 1867–1928) – police detective 383
Kossowski Tomasz (Tomašs Kosovskis, 1798–1856) – Catholic priest of Polish ethnicity, man of letters, linguist 155

Kotzebue Georg von – lieutenant-colonel of Kurzeme gendarmerie 360
Kozyrev Andrei (Андрей Владимирович Козирев, b. 1951) – Minister of Foreign Affairs of RSFSR (Russian Federation) 700
Kozyrev Semyon (Семен Павлович Козырев, 1907–1991) – USSR diplomat, senior assistant of the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs 585
Krasnov Pyotr (Петр Николаевич Краснов, 1869–1947) – general, ataman of the Don Cossack Host 427
Krastiņš Jānis (1890–1983) – Latvian historian 397
Kretulis Kārlis (1889–1938) – Latvian officer at security service of Soviet Russia, later the USSR 460
Krėvė-Mickevičius Vincas (1882–1954) – Lithuanian writer, pedagogue, politician, Prime Minister 588
Krīgere Elizabete (?–1920) – Latvian medical officer 467
Krišs (19th cent.) – Latvian peasant 339
Kroders Jānis (1851–1938) – Latvian municipality official, member of revolutionary movement 392
Kroders Roberts (1892–1956) – Latvian teatre critic, writer, translator 501
Krodznieks Jānis (a.k.a. Jānis Krīgers, 1851–1924) – Latvian historian, pedagogue 201
Kronvalds Atis (a.k.a. Kronvaldu Atis, 1837–1875) – Latvian publicist, linguist, pedagogue 161, 367, 372
Krūmiņš Vilis (1919–2000) – the Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia 603
Krupšaitis Justinas (?–1920) – soldier in Lithuanian Army 568
Kruse Friedrich Karl Hermann (1790–1866) – German historian, geographer, man of letters 201
Kudreņickis Augusts (1904–1949) – commander of national partisans in Abrene district, code name "Grants" 1 pc 730
Ķūķis Krišs (1874–1945) – Latvian officer, colonel 568
Kulewene (Kulevene, end of the 12th cent.) – Liv in Ikšķile 231
Kundziņš Kārlis (1883–1967) – Latvian Lutheran clergyman, archbishop 718
Kundziņš Pauls (1888–1983) – Latvian architect 499
Kuphaldt Georg Friedrich Ferdinand (Georgs Kūfalts, 1853–1938) – German landscape designer 198
Kurelis Jānis (1882–1954) – Latvian general, member of national resistance movement 438, 542, 711, 722
Kurmin Jan (1790–1860) – Catholic clergyman of Lithuanian extraction, linguist 162
Kursis Arnolds (1919–2012) – Latvian historian 235
Kursīte-Pakule Janīna (b. 1952) – Latvian specialist in literature, linguist, publicist, member of the Saeima 116, 117
Kusber Jan (b. 1966) – German historian 378
Kuzmin Fyodor (Федор Михайлович Кузьмин, 1937–2006) – Commander of the Baltic Military District 685
Kuzmins Valdis (b. 1976) – Latvian historian 554
Kuznetsov Fyodor (Федор Исидорович Кузнецов, 1898–1941) – commander of the Red Army, lieutenant-general 526
Kuznetsov Matvey (Матвей Сидорович Кузнецов, 1846–1911) – industrialist in Russia 379
Kviesis Alberts (1881–1944) – Latvian politician, President of Latvia 479
Kwek Theophilus (a.k.a. Qeck, Teofils Kveks, 1680–1736) – Jesuit missionary 95
Kyrianus (Kirjāns, ?–1206) – christened Liv in Ikšķile 234

L

Lācis Jānis (1876–1942 or 1943) – Latvian worker in Riga, member of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party 387
Lācis Vilis (1904–1966) – Latvian writer, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars (Council of Ministers) of the Latvian SSR 602
Laidoner Johan (1884–1953) – general, Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian Armed Forces 576, 589
Laime Sandis (b. 1982) – Latvian folklorist 116
Laimiņš Antons (1857–1909) – Latvian pedagogue, author of textbooks 159
Lamekins (Lammekinus, early 13th cent.) – Couronian ruler 84, 236, 241, 313

Lammers Hans (1879–1962) – Chief of the Reich Chancellery of Nazi Germany, chief legal adviser of Adolf Hitler 536, 538
Lampsins, brothers (17th cent.) – merchants and shipowners from Vlissingen (Flushing) 298
Lāms Ojārs (b. 1965) – Latvian specialist in literature, pedagogue 373
Lāms Visvaldis (1923–1992) – Latvian writer 649
Lange Jacob (Jākobs Lange, 1711–1777) – Lutheran clergyman of German extraction, linguist 93, 153, 155, 156
Langius Johannes (Johans Langijs, 1615– ca 1685–1690) – Lutheran clergyman, linguist 147, 149
Lannoy Guillebert de (1386–1462) – medieval knight-errant, diplomat 83, 132, 134, 139, 265, 275
Lapiņš Jānis Eduards (1885–1941) – Latvian publicist, writer, pedagogue, ideologist of Kārlis Ulmanis' regime 502
Laretei Heinrich (1892–1973) – Estonian diplomat, public official, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs 576, 577
Latkovskis Vikentijs (1899–1983) – agent of Soviet intelligence service in Latvia 636
Laube Heinrich (1806–1884) – German writer, playwright, theatrical figure, member of the "Young Germany" movement 348
Laube Heinrich (Indriķis Laube, 1841–1889) – Baltic German writer, journalist, translator 161
Laurinavičius Česlovas (b. 1952) – Lithuanian historian 523
Lautenbahs-Jūsmiņš Jēkabs (born Jēkabs Lautenbahs, 1848–1928) – Latvian poet, philologist 371
Layan (Lajāns, ?–1206) – christened Liv in Ikšķile 234
Lazda Zinaīda (born Zinaīda Zelma Šreibere, 1902–1957) – Latvian poetess 773
Lazdiņš Jānis (b. 1966) – Latvian lawyer, historian, pedagogue 203, 208
Lehtosalo-Hilander Pirko-Lisa (b. 1934) – Finnish archaeologist 230
Leitāns Ansis (1815–1874) – Latvian writer, clerk, editor of newspaper *Mājas Viesis*, member of the New Latvian movement 153, 158, 355, 357
Lejiņš Atis (b. 1942) – Latvian politician 747
Lejiņš Pēteris (1909–2002) – Latvian sociologist, pedagogue 781
Lenin Vladimir Ilyich (Владимир Ильич Ленин, born Vladimir Ulyanov, Владимир Ильич Ульянов, 1870–1924) – leader of Bolsheviks in Russia, head of government of Soviet Russia and the USSR 434, 435, 449, 613
Leontiev Aleksandr (Александр Михайлович Леонтьев, 1902–1960) – head of the *NKVD GUBB* (the Main Directorate for the Struggle Against Banditry) of the USSR, lieutenant-general 729
Lerhis-Puškaitis Ansis (1859–1903) – Latvian folklorist, writer 101, 104, 106–109
Lermontov Mikhail (Михаил Юрьевич Лермонтов, 1814–1841) – Russian poet, writer 355
Lešinskis Imants (1931–1985) – chairman of the Committee for Cultural Contacts with Compatriots Abroad, 662
Liberts Jānis Aleksandrs (1888– after 1935) – former major in Serbian Army, served in the Armed Forces of Latvian Provisional Government 451, 455
Lielgalvis Ansis (1878–1921) – Latvian colonel 421
Liepiņš Roberts (1890–1978) – Latvian diplomat, public official, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, mayor of Riga 576, 577
Lieven Anatol Leonid von (Anatols Leonīds fon Līvens, 1873–1937) – Baltic German landlord, prince (Fürst), officer, member of Latvian War of Independence 455, 468, 474
Lieven Wilhelm Heinrich Freiherr von (Vilhelms Heinrihs fon Līvens, 1800–1880) – baron, public official in the Empire of Russia, general, governor general of the Baltic Provinces 358
Liezeris Jānis (1910–1947) – member of the Latvian national resistance movement 723
Litzmann Karl-Siegmund (1893–1945) – Commissar-General of Estonia, SA Obergruppenführer 533, 538
Lockhart Robert Hamilton Bruce (1887–1970) – British diplomat, Head of the British mission in the Soviet Russia 427, 428
Loeber Dietrich André (Dītrihs Andrē Lēbers, 1923–2004) – Baltic German lawyer, politologist, historian 520, 521, 526

Loening Edgar (1843–1919) – German lawyer, philosopher 324, 327
Loktionov Aleksandr (Александр Дмитриевич Локтионов, 1893–1941) – Commander of the Special Baltic Military District 526
Lose Hinrich (1896–1964) – politician in Nazi Germany, SA Gruppenführer, Gauleiter, Reichskommissar for the Ostland 533, 534, 538, 544
Loze Ilze (b. 1936) – Latvian archaeologist 116
Lukaševičs Jānis (1699–1779) – priest of Jesuit Order 152
Luven Yvonne – German researcher of mythology 116

M

Madis (Made, first half of the 13th cent.) – elder of Mežotne 217, 240
Mäe Hjalmar Johannes (1901–1978) – Estonian politician, head of the Estonian Self-government during Nazi occupation 533
Makhno Nestor (Нестор Іванович Махно, 1888–1934) – one of the leaders of Ukrainian peasants' insurrectionary movement 436
Maldonis Voldemārs (1870–1941) – Latvian theologian, pedagogue 164
Mälksoo Lauri (b. 1975) – Estonian lawyer, specialist in international law 524
Mameli Francesco Giorgio (1893–?) – ambassador of Italy to Latvia 483, 490
Manasein Nikolai (Николай Авксентьевич Манасеин, 1834–1895) – Russian public official, lawyer 374
Mancelius Georg (Georgs Mancelis, 1593–1654) – Baltic German Lutheran clergyman, lexicographer, translator 94, 97, 126, 128, 144, 147, 148–150, 158, 161, 264
Mann Michael (b. 1942) – American sociologist 205
Mannhardt Wilhelm (1831–1880) – German researcher of mythology, folklorist 115
Manteuffel Gustav von (Gustavs Manteifelis, 1832–1916) – Baltic German ethnographer, folklorist, publisher 152
Manteuffel-Szoege Hans Joachim Paul Adolph Baron von (Hanss Joahims Pauls Ādolfs fon Manteifelis-Cēge, 1894–1919) – Baltic German officer 454, 455
Marin Abraham (17th cent.) – agent of the Dukes of Courland in London 301, 302
Maršals Ernests (1890–1941?) – first lieutenant in Latvian Army 449
Marthe (ca 1210–1262) – Queen of Lithuania, Mindaugas' spouse 214
Martinsons Kārlis (1896–1968) – Latvian historian 393
Mauriņa Zenta (1897–1978) – Latvian writer, essayist 773
Mayer Harvey Ethan (b. 1936) – American linguist 130
Maynard Walter (Вальтер Вальтерович Мейнард, 1860–1918) – Russian military figure of British extraction, major-general 397
Mazzini Giuseppe (1805–1872) – Italian politician, journalist, leader of Italian national movement, founder of organisations "Young Italy" and "Young Europe" 348
Medem Anna Charlotte Dorothea von (1761–1821) – Duchess of Courland and Semigallia, Duke Peter Biron's spouse 309
Medem Walter von (1887–1945) – German officer, journalist, writer 445
Meder Stephan (b. 1956) – German law scholar, pedagogue 326
Medne Alma (1907–1950) – Latvian folklorist 110
Medvedev Vadim (Вадим Андреевич Медведев, b. 1929) – Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 664
Meierovics Gunārs (1920–2007) – politician, member of the Saeima 770
Meierovics Zigfrīds Anna (1887–1925) – Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister 564, 565, 571
Meillet Antoine (1866–1936) – French linguist 130
Meinhard von Segeberg, Meynardus (ca 1130/1140–1106) – Catholic missionary in Livonia, the first bishop of Ikšķile Meissner Boris (1915–2003) – German law scholar 221, 523
Mekhlis Lev (Лев Захарович Мехлис, 1889–1953) – functionary of the Communist Party, chief of the main political administration of the Red Army of the USSR 586

Mekons Frīdrihs (Friedrich Mekon, 1833–1901) – man of letters, translator 159
Melderis Oļģerts (1926–1949) – Latvian member of national resistance movement, editor of newspaper *Māras Zeme*, code name "Siliņš" 729
Melngailis Emilis (1874–1954) – Latvian composer, folklorist 108
Meltyukhov Mikhail (Михаил Иванович Мельтюхов, b. 1966) – Russian historian 520
Menders Fricis (1885–1971) – Latvian lawyer, publicist, member of the Constitutional Assembly and the Saeima 464, 478, 479
Menius Fridericus (Frīdrihs Mēnijs, ca 1593–1659) – law scholar, historian 97
Meretskov Kirill (Кирилл Афанасьевич Мерецков, 1897–1968) – Deputy Commissar of Defence of the USSR, Commander of Leningrad Military District 674
Merkel Garlieb Helwig (Garlībs Helvigs Merķelis, 1769–1850) – Baltic German writer, publicist, enlightener 351, 363, 369, 370
Merkys Antanas (1887–1955) – lieutenant colonel in Lithuanian Army, politician 585, 588
Mertelsmann Olaf (b. 1969) – German historian, pedagogue 595
Mieriņa Austra (1926–2012) – Latvian historian 332
Miesnieks Kārlis (1887–1977) – Latvian painter 385
Miežinis Mykolas (1827–1888) – Lithuanian clergyman, linguist 162
Mīlenbahs Kārlis (1853–1916) – Latvian linguist, pedagogue 160, 164
Miller Nikolay (Николай Павлович Мюллер, 1848–1905) – officer in the Army of the Russian Empire, lieutenant-colonel 396
Mindaugas (ca 1200–1263) – King of Lithuania 85, 214, 220, 228
Misiņš Augusts (1863–1940) – Latvian general 417
Mollens Willem (17th cent.) – sailor of Dutch extraction in service to dukes of Courland 298
Molotov Vyacheslav (Вячеслав Михайлович Молотов, born Вячеслав Скрябин, 1890–1986) – Soviet state and party figure, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, People's Commissar (Minister) of Foreign Affairs of the USSR 512, 515, 516, 518, 583, 585, 586, 588, 593, 670, 671, 675, 676, 699, 707, 744–746, 765, 768, 769
Monson Edmund (1883–1969) – diplomat, ambassador of Great Britain to Latvia 488
Montesquieu Charles-Louis de (1689–1755) – French philosopher enlightener, one of the founders of theory of separation of powers 321
Moora Harri (1900–1968) – Estonian archaeologist 49, 137, 222
Mortensen Hans (1894–1964) – German geographer, historian 248
Mucinieks Pēteris (1899–1980) – Latvian lawyer, pedagogue 341, 343
Mugurēvičs Ēvalds (b. 1931) – Latvian archaeologist, historian 47, 80, 136, 203, 222, 223,
Mühlen Heinz von zur (1914–2005) – Baltic German historian 248, 255
Muižnieks Jānis (?–1918) – Latvian soldier 569
Muižnieks Vitolds (b. 1975) – Latvian archaeologist 273, 275
Muktupāvela Rūta (b. 1963) – Latvian folklorist, Rector of Latvian Academy of Culture 116
Mundt Theodor (1808–1861) – German writer, publicist, member of movement "Young Germany" 348
Münster Sebastian (1488–1552) – priest of Franciscan Order, professor, cartographer 118, 141, 265, 266
Munters Vilhelms (1898–1967) – diplomat, Minister of Foreign Affairs 484, 488, 515, 577, 584, 586, 652
Muravyov Mikhail (Михаил Артемьевич Муравьев, 1880–1918) – lieutenant-colonel, commander of the Eastern Front 426
Mussolini Benito Amilcore Andrea (1883–1945) – politician, Prime Minister and dictator of Italy, leader of the National Fascist Party 482–484, 486, 488, 494

N

Nagobads-Ābola Aina (b. 1920) – Latvian physician (dentist), honorary consul in Paris, ambassador 772
Nameisis (a.k.a. Nameiks, Namejs, Nameyxe, Nameise, 13th cent.) – Semigallian chief 84, 238, 239, 240
Napoléon Bonaparte (1769–1821) – military and political leader, Emperor of France 320

Natkevičius Ladas (1893–1945) – Lithuanian diplomat, ambassador to the USSR 585
Nebocat Jaan (1844–1908) – Estonian pedagogue of German extraction, man of letters, book printer 162
Neiburgs Uldis (b. 1972) – Latvian historian 545–547, 550
Neikens Juris (1826–1868) – Latvian clergyman, writer, teacher 161, 366
Nepenin Pyotr (Петр Владимирович Непенин, 1849–?) – officer in the Army of Russian Empire, major-general 397
Neredzīgais Indriķis (Blind Henry, 1783–1828) – Latvian poet 153
Nerman Birger (1888–1971) – Swedish archaeologist 237
Nesselmann Georg Heinrich Ferdinand (1811–1881) – German mathematician, linguist 40
Nestor the Chronicler (Нестор Летописец, ca 1056–1114) – Old Russian chronicler 136, 218, 219
Netimeras (Nethimer, early 11th cent.) – Lithuanian ruler 220
Neulande Liene (Lena Neuland, 1921–2010) – researcher of mythology 116
Nicholas II, see Romanov Nicholas II
Niedra Andrievs (1871–1942) – Latvian clergyman, public figure, politician, writer 455–457
Niedre Uģis (b. 1948) – Latvian ethnographer, historian 190
Niitemaa Teodor Vilhelm (Vilho) (1917–1991) – Finnish historian 261
Niklus Mart (b. 1934) – Estonian teacher, disident 745
Nikžentaitis Alvydas (b. 1961) – Lithuanian historian 230, 240, 523
Ninnus (?–1211) – elder of the Gauja Livs 232
Nolde Boris (Борис Еммануилович Нольде, 1876–1948) – Russian lawyer, law historian, diplomatic figure 336
Nolde Gotthard von (1576–1615) – landlord in the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia 288
Nolde Magnus von (1569–1615) – landlord in the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia 288
Nolken Arved Georg von (Georgs fon Nolkens, 1845–1909) – Baltic German landlord 316
North Michael (b. 1954) – German historian 204, 208, 216
Noviks Alfons (1908–1996) – People's Commissar (Minister) of State Security of the LSSR 636, 638, 645

O

Oleg the Prophet (Helgi, Ольгъ, Вещий Олег, ?–912) – Prince of Novgorod, Grand Duke of Kiev 218
Oliņš Pēteris (1890–1962) – Latvian diplomat 454, 755
Olof Skötkonung (ca 980–1022) – Swedish King 46, 235, 237
Orlov Alexander (Александр Афиногенович Орлов, 1862–1908) – officer in His Imperial Majesty's Retinue of the Russian Emperor, major-general, commander of punitive expedition unit in Vidzeme 397
Ortelius Abraham (1527–1598) – Flemish geographer, cartographer 252
Osis Roberts (1900–1973) – Latvian colonel, aide-de-camp to the Commander of the Armed Forces of Latvia, commander of Regiment of Latvian Legion 540
Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso, 43 BC–17/18 AD) – Roman poet 355
Oxenstierna Axel (1583–1654) – public official of Sweden, diplomat 175
Ozere Mārīte (b. 1944) – "Miss USA 1963" of Latvian extraction 775
Ozoliņš Gatis (b. 1972) – Latvian Latvian folklorist 116
Ozols Arturs (1912–1964) – Latvian linguist, folklorist, pedagogue 92
Ozols Voldemārs (1884–1949) – Latvian officer, military theoretician, leader of society of Freedom Fighters *Legion* 422

P

Pahlen Peter Ludwig von der (Pēteris fon der Pālens, 1745–1826) – governor general of Courland 310
Pakalns Guntis (b. 1959) – Latvian folklorist 115
Paleckis Justas (1899–1980) – Lithuanian journalist, Soviet state and party official 588
Palencs Emīls – captain in the Red Army 554
Parsky Dmitri (Дмитрий Павлович Парский, 1866–1921) – general, commander of the 12th Army of Russia 421

Päts Konstantin (1874–1956) – Estonian politician, President of Estonia 575, 576, 584, 589
Pauls Raimonds (b. 1936) – Latvian composer, pianist, member of the Saeima 627
Pavasars Pēteris (ca 1853–1905) – factory foreman in 1905 383
Pavlovskis Oļģerts (b. 1934) – Latvian politician, public figure, member of the Saeima 765
Peive Jānis (1906–1976) – Latvian agrochemist, politician, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Latvian SSR 604, 606
Pelše Arvīds (1899–1983) – Latvian politician, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU 604, 606
Pelše Stella (b. 1972) – Latvian art historian 502
Peniķis Mārtiņš (1874–1964) – General of the Latvian Army 448
Pēšs Indriķis (a.k.a. Heinrihs Pēšs, 1817–1849) – Latvian Lutheran clergyman 353
Peter of Dusburg (a.k.a. Peter of Duisburg, Peter von Dusburg, Petrus de Dusburg, Petri de Dusburg ?–ca 1326) – priest-brother, chronicler of the Teutonic Knights, author of *Chronicon terrae Prussiae* 47
Peter I, see Romanov Peter I
Peter III, see Romanov Peter III
Peters Jānis (b. 1939) – Latvian poet, public figure 627, 658
Pētersons Kārlis (1877–1926) – one of Latvian Bolshevik leaders, commissar of Latvian Red Riflemen Division 426, 431
Petkus Viktoras (1928–2012) – Lithuanian politician, disident 745
Pfeffer von Salomon Franz (1888–1968) – German military serviceman, colonel in German Army, commander of Freikorps (Free Corps) 455, 456
Philby Kim (1912–1988) – member of British intelligence service, agent of Soviet intelligence service 666
Philipp von Ratzeburg (?–1215) – bishop of Ratzeburg 226
Pieroth Bodo (b. 1945) – German law scholar, pedagogue 318
Piłsudski Józef Klemens (1867–1935) – Polish military commander, politician, Chief of State of the Second Polish Republic 485, 575
Pipes Richard (b. 1923) – American historian 427
Pizičs Bērtulis (b. 1947) – Latvian actor 658
Plakans Andrejs (b. 1940) – Latvian historian 204
Plāķis Juris (1869–1942) – Latvian linguist, pedagogue, Minister of Education 138, 164, 267
Plato (Platon, Πλάτων, ca 427–348 BC) – Ancient Greek philosopher 317
Pliny the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus, 23–79) – Roman scientist, politician of Roman Empire 43
Plūdons Vilis (a.k.a. Vilis Plūdonis, born Vilis Lejnieks, 1874–1940) – Latvian poet 390
Podnieks Juris (1950–1992) – Latvian film director, cameraman, producer 771
Poklevinskis Mārtiņš (1902–1951) – commander of national partisans in Jēkabpils district, code name "Mārtiņš" 732
Poniatowski Stanisław August (Stanisław II August, 1732–1798) – King of Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth 308
Poroshin Nikolai (Николай Вячеславович Порошин, 1854–1910) – Russian military figure 397
Portantius Johannes (?– after 1577) – Flemish mathematician, astronomer, cartographer 252
Postnikov Stanislav (Станислав Иванович Постников, 1928–2012) – Commander of the Baltic Military District, Commander of the Western Direction 686
Potemkin Vladimir (Владимир Петрович Потемкин, 1874–1946) – the First Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR 515
Poviliaitis Augustinas (1900–1941) – Director of State Security Department of the Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania 586
Poyntz John 1629/30–1712) – English sailor 302
Priede Gunārs (1928–2000) – Latvian playwright 658
Prutz Hans (1843–1929) – German historian 337

Ptolemy Claudius (Klaúdios Ptolemaîos, after 83– ca 170) – Greek–Egyptian nature scientist, astronomer, geographer 43, 44
Pugachev Yemelyan (Емельян Иванович Пугачев, 1742–1775) – leader of peasant uprising in the Empire of Russia 321
Pugo Boriss (1937–1991) – politician of Latvian extraction, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, Minister for the Interior of the USSR 606, 639, 663
Pumpurs Andrejs (1841–1902) – Latvian poet, land surveyor, officer of Russian Army 372, 373
Pūpols Osvalds (1904–1941) – leader of underground organisation *Viesturieši* 714
Pūtelis Aldis (b. 1963) – Latvian folklorist 116
Pytkeyanne Hennike (Hennike Pitkejāne,15th cent.) – Livonian Order vassal of Liv extraction 256
Pytkeyanne Vilmas (Vilmass Pitkejāne, 15th cent.) – Livonian Order vassal of Liv extraction 256

R

Radiņš Arnis (b. 1951) – Latvian historian, archaeologist, museum figure 203
Ragnhilda (Ragneda, 10th cent.) – daughter of Ragnvald, Prince of Polotsk 1 pc 190
Ragnvald (Ragnvaldr, Рагвалод, Рогволод, ca 920–978/980) – Prince of Polotsk 218
Rainis (born Jānis Pliekšāns, 1865–1929) – Latvian poet, playwright, translator, member of the Constitutional Assembly and the Saeima 380, 390, 410, 624
Ramans Jānis (1871–1957) – Latvian diplomat 452
Ramēķis (Rameka, Rameke, early 13th cent.) – son of Tālibalds, the ruler of Tālava 226, 227
Rancāns Nikodems (1870–1933) – Catholic priest, member of National Awakening of Latgale, history researcher 165
Rastrelli Francesco Bartolomeo (1700–1771) – court architect of Italian extraction in the Empire of Russia 186
Rātminders Johans (a.k.a. Jānis Rātminders, 1812–1880) – Latvian teacher, poet, translator 356
Rebane Hans (?–1912) – clergyman of Latvian and Estonian extraction in the USA 584, 754
Reichelt Katrin (b. 1966) – German historian 541
Reiznieks Voldemārs (1877–?) – Latvian publicist 502, 503
Renfrew Andrew Colin (b. 1937) – British archaeologist, palaeolinguist 53, 54
Renner Johann (1525–1583) – German notary public, chronicler 88, 258, 265–267
Riazanov Vasilii (Василий Федорович Рязанов, 1904–?) – chief of the Latvian buro of the Central Committee of AUCP(B) 602
Ribbentrop Joachim von (1893–1946) – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nazi Germany 512, 516, 517, 538, 539, 583, 593, 670, 671, 699, 707, 744–746, 765, 768, 769
Rimbert (Rembert, Rimbertus, ca 830–888) – archbishop in Hamburg and Bremen, chronicler 26, 34, 36, 45, 132, 216, 235
Rimkevičs Jezups (Rymkiewicz, second half of the 18th cent. – first half of the 19th cent.) – Catholic priest, author of Latgallian grammar 155
Ritchie Robin – officer in the Army of Great Britain 468
Ritenis Jānis (1925–2007) – Latvian diplomat, board member of the World Federation of Free Latvians, member of the Saeima 770
Romanov Aleksey (a.k.a. Aleksey Mikhailovich, Алексей Михайлович Романов, 1629–1676) – Tsar of Russia1 299
Romanov Alexander I (Александр I Павлович Романов, 1777–1825) – Emperor of Russia 314, 315, 321, 322, 325, 330, 337, 374
Romanov Alexander II (Александр II Николаевич Романов, 1818–1881) – Emperor of Russia 315, 322, 334, 365, 374
Romanov Alexander III (Александр III Александрович Романов, 1845–1894) – Emperor of Russia 343, 374, 378
Romanov Konstantin Nikolayevich (Константин Николаевич Романов, 1827–1892) – Grand Duke, Admiral-General, son of Nicholas I, Emperor of Russia 365
Romanov Nicholas II (Николай II Александрович Романов, 1868–1918) – the last Emperor of Russia 378, 394, 407, 410

Romanov Peter I (Peter the Great, Петр I, Петр Алексеевич Романов, 1672–1725) – Tsar of Russia, the first Emperor of Russia 305, 307, 320, 374, 670, 671
Romanov Peter III (Петр III Федорович Романов/Karl Peter Ulrich von Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf, 1728–1762) – Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, Emperor of Russia 307
Romanova Anna (Anna Ioannovna, Анна Иоанновна Романова, 1693–1740) – Duchess of Courland and Semigallia, Empress of Russia 305, 306
Romanova Catherine II (a.k.a. Catherine the Great, Екатерина II Великая, nee Sophie Friederike Auguste von Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg, 1729–1796) – Empress of Russia 307–309, 322, 329
Romanova Elizabeth (a.k.a. Elizabeth Petrovna Romanova, Елизавета Петровна Романова, 1709–1762) – Empress of Russia 307
Rosen Otto Fabian von (Oto Fabiāns fon Rozens, 1683–1764) – Baltic German landlord, Landrat 324
Rosenberg Alfred (Alfreds Rozenbergs, 1893–1946) – German politician of Baltic German extraction, Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories 502, 533–539
Rosenberger Otto Benjamin Gottfried (Oto Benjamins Gotfrīds Rozenbergers, 1769–1856) – Baltic German linguist 154
Rozenbergs Jānis (1927–2006) – Latvian folklorist 98, 271, 272
Rozentāls Janis (1866–1916 old st./1917 new st.) – Latvian painter 381, 625
Rožkalns Jānis (b. 1949) – Latvian dissident, politically repressed 744
Rubenis Jurijs (1925–2004) – Latvian engineer, politician, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Latvian SSR 606
Rubenis Roberts Nikolajs (1917–1944) – military serviceman, member of national resistance movement 711, 722, 724, 748
Rubenis Vitālijs (1914–1994) – politician, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Latvian SSR, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the LSSR 606
Rubiks Alfrēds (b. 1935) – politician in the USSR and Latvia, member of the Saeima and European Parliament 626
Rückert Friedrich (1788–1866) – German poet, translator 355
Rückert Joachim (b. 1945) – German philosopher, historian, pedagogue 319
Rudzīte Marta (1924–1996) – Latvian linguist, pedagogue 137
Ruģēns Jānis (1817–1876) – Latvian poet 153
Rukmane Mārīte (b. 1950) – Komsomol leader in Latvia 626
Rūķe-Draviņa Velta (1917–2003) – Latvian linguist, folklorist 781
Runce Inese (b. 1976) – Latvian historian 385
Rurik (Рюрик, Rurik, Riurik, ?–879) – legendary Varangian chieftain, Prince of Novgorod, founder of the Rurik Dynasty 218
Rūsiņš (Russinus ?–1212) – elder of Sotekle, Latgalian land of Tālava 217, 222, 224, 233
Russow/Rüssow Balthasar (1536–1600) – Lutheran clergyman of Estonian or German extraction, chronicler 132, 266
Rust Mathias (b. 1968) – German amateur pilot 691

S

Sabaliauskas Algirdas (1929–2016) – Lithuanian linguist 135
Samarin Yuri (Юрий Федорович Самарин, 1819–1876) – Russian philosopher, historian, publicist, Slavophile 324
Sandler Rickard (1884–1964) – Swedish Social Democratic politician, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden 484
Šaulys Jurgis (1879–1948) – Lithuanian diplomat, economist 565
Sausverds Fēlikss (1932–2011) – employee at the *KGB* in Latvian SSR 635
Saxe Maurice de (Moritz von Sachsen, 1696–1750) – Prince of Saxony, Duke of Courland and Semigallia 305, 306
Saxo Grammaticus (ca 1140 – ca 1220) – medieval monk, chronicler 46, 235
Schabe (Šābis, 13th cent.) – elder of Semigallians 240
Schirren Carl Christian Gerhard (Karls Širrens, 1826–1910) – Baltic German historian, professor 316

Schoultz Carl Friedrich (Karls Frīdrihs Šulcs, 1720–1782?) – Vidzeme landlord of Baltic German extraction, Landrat 326
Schwerin Johann Ulrich von (Johans Ulrihs fon Šverins, ?–1637) – landlord 194
Scott Walter (1771–1832) – Scottish writer 99
Sedov Valentin (Валентин Васильевич Седов, 1924–2004) – Russian archaeologist 130
Sēja Ludvigs Kārlis (1885–1962) – Latvian diplomat, pedagogue, member of national resistance movement 585
Seljamaa Julius Friedrich (1883–1936) – Estonian diplomat, public official, Minister of Foreign Affairs 576
Serov Ivan (Иван Александрович Серов, 1905–1990) – Chairman of the Committee for State Security (*KGB*) 650
Service Elman Rogers (1915–1996) – American culture anthropologist 204
Setälä Eemil Nestor (1864–1935) – Finnish linguist, politician 48, 49
Shustin Semyon (Семен Матвеевич Шустин, 1908–1978) – People's Commissar of State Security of LSSR 636
Sideļņikovs Viktors – employee in Daugavpils department of the Ministry of State Security of LSSR 736
Sigfridus (15th cent.) – Catholic priest 267
Sigismund II Augustus (Zygmunt II August, 1520–1572) – King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, the first Duke of Livonia 244, 283, 284, 288, 323
Siliņš Leonīds (1916–2005) – member of national resistance movement, Latvian historian, public figure 532, 547
Sīmonsons Dāvids (1859–1933) – general in the Latvian Army 457
Simpson James (1873–1934) – British nature scientist, diplomat, President of Court of Arbitration in the Baltic States 569
Sineus (Си́неус, Sinehus, ?– 864) – brother of legendary Rurik, Prince in Beloozero 218
Šīrons Jēkabs (1863–1906) – Latvian teacher 397
Sirvydas Konstantinas (1579–1631) – Lithuanian Catholic priest, lexicographer 148
Sivers Friedrich von (Frīdrihs fon Zīverss, 1748–1823) – landlord, Landrat, governor of Courland 337
Sivers Friedrich Maximilian Oscar Freiherr von (Maksimiliāns fon Zīverss, 1857–1919) – proprietor of Skrīveri Manor, dendrologist, forester 395
Skalbe Kārlis (1879–1945) – Latvian writer 390
Skallagrímsson Egill (ca 904 – ca 995) – Iselandic bard, warrior 46, 235
Skrinda Antons (a.k.a. Ontons Skrynda, 1881–1918) – medical officer, writer, figure in National Awakening movement of Latgale 165
Skrzypek Andrzej (b. 1944) – Polish historian, pedagogue 565
Skučas Kazys (1894–1941) – general in the Army of Lithuania, public official, Minister for the Interior 586
Skujenieks Knuts (b. 1936) – Latvian poet 739
Skujenieks Marģers (1886–1941) – Latvian politician, public figure, statistician, publicist 481, 506
Skytte Johan (1577–1645) – Swedish politician, governor general of Vidzeme 190
Slapiņš Andris (1949–1991) – Latvian director, cameraman 771
Slaucītājs Leonīds (1899–1971) – Latvian geophysicist, geographer 781
Slaucītājs Sergejs (1902–1982) – Latvian astronomer 781
Smelters Pēteris (1894–1949) – Latvian folklorist, clergyman 165
Smetona Antanas (1874–1944) – public official of Lithuania, President of Lithuania 575, 584, 587, 588
Smiltnieks Žanis (1893–1931) – Latvian sculptor 198
Smith Adam (1723–1790) – Scottish economist, philosopher 330
Smith Anthony D. (b. 1939) – British sociologist 376
Šmits Pēteris (1869–1938) – Latvian linguist, folklorist, ethnographer 93, 107–109, 115
Šnē Andris (b. 1973) – Latvian historian, archaeologist 203, 207
Šneidere Irēne (b. 1952) – Latvian historian 527
Snell Karl Philip Michael (1753–1806) – German publicist, pedagogue, theologian, enlightener 351

Sniečkus Antanas (1903–1974) – Lithuanian politician, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania 604
Šnore Elvīra (1905–1996) – Latvian archaeologist 80, 209
Snyder Timothy (b. 1969) – American historian, pedagogue 513, 711
Sodums Dzintars (1922–2008) – Latvian writer, poet, translator 773
Sollogub Vasily (Василий Устинович Соллогуб, 1848–1917) – temporary Governor General of the Baltic Provinces 385, 397
Solon (Σόλων, ca 640 – ca 558 BC) – ancient Greek political figure, lawmaker, poet 327
Solonina Vladimir (Владимир Константинович Солонина, 1851–?) – officer in the Army of Russian Empire, major-general 397
Solzhenitsyn Aleksandr (Александр Исаевич Солженицын, 1918–2008) – Russian writer 660
Sophie Amalie von Nassau-Siegen (Sofija Amālija, 1650–1688) – Countess of Nassau-Siegen, Duchess of Courland and Semigallia 292
Soskovets Oleg (Олег Николаевич Сосковец, b. 1949) – the First Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation 701
Spāģis Andrejs (1820–1871) – Latvian teacher, publicist 161
Spalviņš Heinrihs (a.k.a. Heinrich Spalwing, Indriķis Spalviņš, 1841–1913) – Latvian teacher 159
Spekke Arnolds (1887–1972) – Latvian philologist, historian, diplomat 781
Sproģis Jānis (1833–1918) – Latvian folklorist, archivist 103, 140
Stalin Joseph (born Ioseb Jughashvili, Иосиф Виссарионович Джугашвили, Сталин, 1878–1953) – General Secretary of the CC of AUCP(B) Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR 109, 438, 513, 515, 518, 521, 585, 586, 594–596, 600, 603, 604, 607, 612–614, 619, 624, 625, 629, 642, 645, 649, 651, 661, 671, 672, 674–676, 680, 710, 724, 734, 736, 737, 749
Stender Gotthard Friedrich (Gothards Frīdrihs Stenders, 1714–1796) – Baltic German Lutheran clergyman, linguist 93–95, 97, 111, 152–156
Šterns Indriķis (1918–2005) – Latvian historian 203, 225, 226, 236, 261, 781
Šterns Roberts (1884–1943) – Latvian painter, teacher, publicist 502
Stērste Andrejs (1853–1921) – Latvian lawyer, man of letters, linguist 159, 374
Stock Karl – military serviceman, lieutenant in German military intelligence service 454
Stodewescher Sylvester (?–1479) – archbishop of Riga 261, 262
Stolypin Pyotr (Петр Аркадьевич Столыпин, 1862–1911) – Russian politician, public official, Prime Minister of the Russian Empire 336,
Storno Johann Rudolph – 17th cent. Swiss artist 169
Stradiņš Pauls (1896–1958) – Latvian doctor, medicine historian 718
Stranga Aivars (b. 1954) – Latvian historian 392, 511, 526, 528, 541, 546, 557
Straubergs Kārlis (1890–1962) – Latvian folklorist, man of letters 94, 96, 109, 116
Strautnieks Žanis (1903–?) – soldier in the Latvian Army 268
Strēlerte Veronika (1912–1995) – Latvian poetess 773
Stribingius Joannis (Jānis Stribings, 16th–17th cent.) – Jesuit, father in Riga collegium 122
Strods Heinrihs (1925–2012) – Latvian historian 98, 515, 530
Strods Pēteris (1892–1960) – Latvian of Catholic Church 165
Stryk Heinrich von (Heinrihs fon Strīks, 1873–1938) – Baltic German politician, Land-Marshal of Vidzeme 454
Stucka Kirils (1892–1938) – commander of Latvian Riflemen Division 437
Stučka Pēteris (1865–1932) – one of Latvian Bolshevik leaders, Chairman of the Government of Soviet Latvia 419, 423, 428–432, 440, 449, 456
Šturms Eduards (1895–1959) – Latvian archaeologist, historian 133, 135
Šūlmeisters Dāvis (1861–1906) – Latvian agriculturist 397
Šūlmeisters Jānis (1886–1906) – Latvian agriculturist 397
Supe Pēteris (1920–1946) – Latvian agronomist, leader of the National Partisan Union 734
Suvorov Alexander (a.k.a. Suvorov-Rymniksky, Александр Аркадьевич Суворов-Рымникский, 1804–1882) – public official of the Russian Empire, general, Governor-General of the Baltic Provinces 358, 364, 366

Švābe Arveds (1888–1959) – Latvian lawyer, man of letters, historian 95, 109, 116, 177, 201, 220, 224, 236, 240, 323, 336, 500, 501
Svarāne Melita (1916–2011) – Latvian historian 339
Švēde Kārlis (1893–1921) – Latvian chief of staff of Latvian Riflemen Division 437

T

Tacitus Publius (Gaius) Cornelius (ca 56–117) – Roman orator, lawyer, historian 43–45, 114, 201, 210
Tālibalds (a.k.a. Tālivaldis, Talibaldus, Thalibaldus, ?–1215) – ruler of Tālava Latgalians 217, 222, 224, 226, 227
Tallents Stephen (1884–1958) – British army officer, British Government Commissioner for the Baltic Provinces during Latvian War of Independence 571
Tannberg Tõnu (b. 1961) – Estonian historian 601
Teemant Jaan (1872–1941?) – Estonian lawyer, politician 579
Tentelis Augusts (1876–1942) – Latvian pedagogue, historian, Minister of Education 476
Tēraudkalns Valdis (b. 1964) – Latvian theologian, historian of religion, pedagogue 384, 385
Teureck Johann Heinrich (Heinrich Taureck, Johans Heinrihs Teireks, 1727–1778) – Baltic German Lutheran clergyman 274
Theoderic the Great (Flāvius Theodericus, ca 454–526) – King of the Ostrogoths 44
Theoderich (Theodericus, Thidericus, ca. 1150–1219) – Cistercian monk, abbot of Daugavgrīva monastery 234
Thilo Georg Adolf (Georgs Ādolfs Tilo, 1789–1854) – industrialist of Baltic German extraction, merchant 356
Thornhill Cudbert John Massy (1883–1952) – British major, later colonel, military attaché in Petrograd 411, 412
Tillbergs Jānis Roberts (1880–1972) – Latvian painter 625
Timoshenko Semyon (Семен Константинович Тимошенко, 1895–1970) – People's Commissar for Defence of the USSR 675
Tobien Alexander von (Aleksandrs fon Tobīns, 1854–1929) – Baltic German economist, statistician, agrarian historian 332
Toms Vilis (1925–?) – Latvian editor of newspaper *Māras Zeme*, code name "Kārlēns" 729
Tomsons Rihards Kārlis (1839–1884) – Latvian agronomist, industrialist, publicist, member of the New Latvian movement, chairman of Riga Latvian Society 368
Toporov Vladimir (Владимир Николаевич Топоров, 1928–2005) – Russian linguist, mythologist 121, 130, 131
Tote (14th cent.) – Livonian Order vassal of Latvian extraction 256
Tott Claudius (a.k.a. Klaes Akeson Tott, 1630–1674) – governor general of Vidzeme 187
Transehe-Roseneck Astaf von (Astafs fon Tranzē-Rozeneks, 1865–1946) – Baltic German historian, genealogist, lawyer 201, 260, 332
Trasuns Francis (1864–1926) – clergyman, public figure, publicist, member of the Constitutional Assembly and the Saeima 164, 165
Trikovsky Nikolay (Николай Семенович Триковский, 1864–1926) – general, commander of 3rd Siberian Rifle Division 417
Truman Harry (1884–1972) – American politician, President of the USA 650
Truvor (Тру́вор, ?–864) – legendary Rurik's brother, Prince of Krivichs and Izborsk 218

U

Ūdentiņš Oto (1892–1988) – general of Latvian Army, later major-general in the Red Army, deputy chief of staff of Latvian Army 589
Uhland Ludwig (1787–1862) – German poet 355
Uldenago (end of the 12th cent.) – christened Liv in Sala 231
Ulmanis Guntis (b. 1939) – Latvian economist, politician, President of Latvia 702, 703

Ulmanis Kārlis (1877–1942) – Latvian agronomist, politician, Prime Minister and President of Latvia 201, 429, 431, 447, 448, 450, 452, 455–457, 460, 476–496, 498–501, 504–519, 516–521, 526, 564, 565, 570, 575, 576, 584, 589, 609, 620, 714, 719
Ulmann Karl Christian (Karls Kristians Ulmanis, 1793–1871) – Baltic German Lutheran clergyman, writer, publisher of educational literature 100, 161
Ulmann Karl Konrad (Karls Konrāds Ulmanis, 1829–1890) – Baltic German Lutheran clergyman 161
Uluots Jüri (1890–1945) – public official of Estonia, Prime Minister 589
Upelnieks Kristaps (1891–1944) – Latvian captain, member of national resistance movement 722
Upīts Andrejs (1877–1970) – Latvian writer, critic, specialist in literature 625
Urbšys Juozas (1896–1991) – Lithuanian diplomat, public official, Minister of Foreign Affairs 584, 585
Urtāns Juris (b. 1952) – Latvian historian, archaeologist 116

V

Vācietis Jukums (1873–1938) – commander of Latvian Riflemen during the First World War, the first commander-in-chief of the Red Army of Soviet Russia 409, 412, 421–424, 426, 427, 434, 435, 449
Vācietis Ojārs (1933–1983) – Latvian poet 658
Valdemārs Krišjānis (1825–1891) – Latvian economist, publicist, one of the initiators of the New Latvian movement 102–104, 158, 160, 161, 163, 353, 354, 356–360, 364–366, 374
Valdmanis Alfrēds (1908–1970) – Latvian lawyer, politician, Minister of Finance, director-general of law in Latvian Self-Administration at Generalbezirk Lettland, Reichskommissariat Ostland 488, 506, 535, 549
Valk Heiki (b. 1959) – Estonian archaeologist 230
Vanags Pēteris (b. 1962) – Latvian linguist, pedagogue 140, 143, 149
Vares-Barbarus Johannes (1890–1946) – Estonian physician, poet, Prime Minister of the so-called "People's Government" of Estonia 590
Varibuls (Waribule, early 13th cent.) – son of Tālibalds, ruler of Tālava 22, 226, 227
Varidots (Waridote, early 13th cent.) – elder of Latgalians in Autine land 217, 223, 224
Varigribs (a.k.a. Warigribbe, Warigerbe, Varigerbs, early 13th cent.) – elder of Latgalians 223
Vaska Baiba (b. 1950) – Latvian art historian, archaeologist 116, 203
Vasks Andrejs (b. 1947) – Latvian archaeologist 54, 134, 203
Veidnieks Kornēlijs (1899–1942) – Latvian lawyer, politician, public figure 492, 493, 510, 511
Veinbergs Frīdrihs (a.k.a. Fricis Veinbergs, 1844–1924) – Latvian lawyer, journalist, member of the New Latvian movement chairman of Riga Latvian Society 368
Veldre Kārlis – Latvian secretary of minister Alfrēds Bērziņš 489
Vėlius Norbertas (1938–1996) – Lithuanian folklorist 115
Verkhovsky Aleksandr (Александр Иванович Верховский, 1886–1938) – the last Minister of Defence in the Provisional Government of Russia 422
Veščūnas-Jansone Valija Valerija (1902–1990) – first soldier in the Latvian Army, holder of the Order of Lāčplēsis 472
Vesike (Vesiķis, end of the 12th cent. – early 13th cent.) – Liv elder in Turaida region 232, 233
Vestmanis Henrihs (1909–1967) – commander of national partisans in Abrene District, code name "Bārda" 727
Vēveris Jānis (b. 1954) – Latvian dissident, politically repressed 744
Vēvers Jānis (1899–1978) – chairman of the *KGB* in Latvian SSR 638, 645, 646, 739–741, 744
Viestards (Viesthardus, Vesthardus, Vestardus, Vester, Viesturs, ? – after 1229) – elder of Tērvete land, Duke of Semigallia 84, 217, 225, 238–240
Vietzo (Vieco, end of the 12th cent.) – christened Liv in Sala 231
Viezo (Vieco, end of the 12th cent.) – christened Liv in Ikšķile 231
Vīķe-Freiberga Vaira (b. 1937) – Latvian folklorist, psychologist, President of Latvia 99, 116
Vilcāne Antonija (b. 1956) – Latvian archaeologist 90, 222
Viliendi (end of the 12th cent.) – christened Liv in Sala 231
Virza Edvarts (born Jēkabs Eduards Liekna, 1883–1940) – Latvian writer, poet, publicist 483, 495

Visendorfs Henrijs (born Indriķis Ķiparts, 1861–1916) – journalist, book publisher, entrepreneur 105
Visvaldis (Vissewalde rex de Gerzika, Vissewalde, 12th cent. – after 1230) – ruler of Jersika 37, 85, 214, 222–226, 313
Vitkauskas Vincas (1890–1965) – general of division in Lithuanian Army, Minister of Defence, later served in the Red Army 588
Vītoliņš Jēkabs (1898–1977) – Latvian musicologist 98
Vītoliņš Marģeris (1912–1996) – Latvian artist 643
Vītols Vilis (b. 1934) – Latvian contractor, Maecenas, public figure 783
Vladimir (Woldemarus de Plosceke, ?–1216) – Prince of Polotsk 222
Vladimir I Sviatoslavich (Влади́мир I Святосла́вичь, ca 960–1015) – Prince of Novgorod, Grand Prince of Kiev, Orthodox Saint 218, 219
Voldemaras Augustinas (1883–1942) – Lithuanian politician, the first Prime Minister of Lithuania 567
Voss Augusts (1919–1994) – politician, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia 606, 689
Vseslaviches, brothers (Всеславичи, end of the 10th cent. – early 11th cent.) – brothers of the Prince of Polotsk 238
Vyshinsky Andrey (Андрей Януарьевич Вышинский, 1883–1954) – Soviet lawyer and diplomat, public official, Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, commissioner of the Government of the USSR in Latvia 519, 589, 590

W

Wade (Vade, end of the 12th cent.) – christened Liv in Sala 231
Wahr Friedrich Daniel (Frīdrihs Daniels Vārs, 1749 or 1750–1827) – clergyman, gatherer of Latvian folksongs 99
Waite Robert (1919–1999) – American historian 532
Waldeko (Valdeko, end of the 12th cent.) – christened Liv in Sala 231
Waldis Burcard (Burkards Valdiss, 1490–1556) – tinsmith in Riga, poet 94
Wartberge Hermannus de (Vartberges Hermanis, ca 1330 – ca 1380) – brother of Teutonic Order, author of *Chronicon Livoniae* (Livonian chronicle) 251
Wasa Władysław IV (1595–1648) – King of Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth 292, 293
Waza Jan II Kazimierz (1609–1672) – King of Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth 293
Waza Zygmunt III (1566–1632) – King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania 292
Weber Friedrich Hermann (1761–1833) – tutor, artist 169
Weber Henry William (1783–1818) – English publisher 99
Weiner Amir (b. 1961) – American historian 633, 635, 658, 659, 666, 667
Welles Sumner (1862–1961) – USA diplomat 522, 763
Wendt Fyodor (Федор Христианович Вендт, 1857– after 1916) – military figure in Russia 397
Werth Nicolas (b. 1950) – French historian 611
Wetseke (a.k.a. Vyachko, Vetseke, Vesceke, Vesceka, Viesceka,?–1224) – ruler of Koknese 225, 226
Weygand Johann Georg (1680–1740) – doctor, chronicler of the Duchy of Courland 95
Wienbarg Ludolf Christian (1802–1872) – German writer, journalist, literary critic, member of the movement "Young Germany" 348
Wigandus (Wygandus, Vīgands, 13th–14th cent.) – subject of Komtur von Goldingen (Kuldīga) 259, 260
Wilcken Johann Georg (?–1701) – manager of printing-house in Riga 145
Williams Beryl (b. 1940) – Bristish historian 378
Winnig August (1878–1956) – political figure of Germany, rightist Social Democrat, commissioner for the Baltic Provinces 448
Witt Frederik de (1629/1630–1706) – Netherlandish cartographer 252
Witten Christian Bartholomeus (1652–1723) – translator 150
Wittrock Hugo (Hugo Vitroks, 1873–1958) – Baltic German politician, Oberbürgermeister of Riga, Gebietskommissar Riga-Stadt 541
Wolff Christian (1679–1754) – German philosopher 93, 97

Wrangel Pyotr (Петр Николаевич Врангель, 1878–1928) – general, commander of the Russian Army 436, 437, 440
Wulfstan of Hedeby (9th cent.) – Anglo-Saxon traveller and merchant 44

Y

Yaroslav the Wise (Ярослав Владимирович Мудрый, ca 978–1054) – Grand Prince of Kiev 219
Yeltsin Boris (Борис Николаевич Ельцин, 1931–2007) – Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian SFSR, President of the Russian Federation 702, 703
Ylo (Ilo, end of the 12th cent.) – baptised Liv in Ikšķile 231
Yngvar (1016–1041) – son of Swedish King Olof 46, 237
Yudenich Nikolai (Николай Николаевич Юденич, 1862–1933) – Russian military serviceman, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces operating against Bolsheviks in Northwestern Russia 436, 461, 470, 471, 562

Z

Zaķe Ieva (b. 1980) – Latvian sociologist 751
Zāle Kārlis (1888–1942) – Latvian sculptor 498
Zālītis Jānis (1874–1919) – Latvian politician, deputy of the State Duma of Russian Empire, Minister of Defence of Latvia 408, 447
Zaļkalns Teodors (born Teodors Grīnbergs, 1876–1972) – Latvian sculptor, pedagogue 198
Zariņa Anna (1924–2015) – Latvian archaeologist 78, 80
Zariņš Kārlis (1879–1963) – Latvian diplomat, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Great Britain 518, 525
Zawadzki Jan (1580–1645) – voivod of Parnawa (Pärnu) (1642–1644), head of the Polish King's Commission to Courland 294
Żeligowski Lucian (1865–1947) – general in the Army of Poland 466, 563, 568
Zellis Kaspars (b. 1972) – Latvian historian 514, 542
Zemdega Kārlis (born Kārlis Baumanis, 1894–1963) – Latvian sculptor 198
Zemitāns Jorģis (1873–1928) – Latvian military serviceman, colonel, commander of the Latvian Northern Brigade, commander of division 448, 452, 453, 457, 459, 468, 469, 570
Zemītis Guntis (b. 1955) – Latvian historian, archaeologist 116, 242
Zemzare Daina (1911–1971) – Latvian linguist 93
Zhdanov Andrei (Андрей Александрович Жданов, 1896–1948) – state and Party official of the USSR 589
Zicāns Eduards (1884–1946) – Latvian theologian, poet 116
Ziemele Ineta (b. 1970) – law scholar 703
Žiglevica Elza (1898–1919) – member of Women's Auxiliary Corps, holder of the Order of Lāčplēsis 472
Zimmermann Ulrich Johann (Ulrihs Johans Cimmermans, 1737–1796) – Lutheran clergyman, pedagogue 274
Zinkevičius Zigmas (1925–2018) – Lithuanian linguist 139
Zommers Frīdrihs (a.k.a. Frīdrihs Vasarietis, 1881–1972) – founder of the Student Battalion, officer in the Latvian Army, lieutenant colonel, politician, diplomat 461
Zotov Ivan (Иван Зотов, 1903–1963) – USSR envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Latvia 515
Zubkova Elena (Елена Юрьевна Зубкова, b. 1959) – Russian historian 520, 523, 524, 594, 618
Zukulis Staņislavs (1929–1993) – chairman of the *KGB* in the Latvian SSR 639, 660, 666
Zunda Antonijs (b. 1947) – Latvian historian 544, 557
Zutis Jānis (1893–1962) – Latvian historian, pedagogue 325, 326
Zvaigznīte Jēkabs (born Jēkabs Šterns, 1833–1867) – teacher, folklorist, journalist 102
Zvegintsov Nikolai (Николай Александрович Звегинцов, 1848–1920) – governor of Vidzeme 392

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