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PĒTERIS STUČKA AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Marina Germane

Pēteris Stučka, the main Latvian theorist of Marxism, Chairman of the Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic, and an instigator of mass terror, repeatedly claimed to be against all nationalisms, even when “under a socialist label”. But when it came to his native Latvia, Stučka was not so quick to subscribe to Leninist internationalism in practice as he was in theory, often demonstrating conflicting views and attitudes, and at times behaving in a manner that would have made any Latvian nationalist proud.

Keywords: Stučka; Latvia; Marxism; social democracy; nationalism; cultural autonomy

Pēteris Stučka remains an enigmatic character in Latvian history, as he lived many lives: a prosperous lawyer and a prominent Social Democrat, a former editor of the Social Democratic newspaper *Dienas Lapa* and the brother-in-law of the famous poet Rainis; Chairman of the Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic and an instigator of mass terror; the first Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and a declared “enemy of the people” during Stalin’s purges in the 1930s (luckily for Stučka – posthumously); a lauded Latvian communist hero and namesake of the Latvian University from 1958 to 1990, and a *persona non grata* in the Latvian nationalist pantheon. In Russia he is probably best remembered as one of the founders of Soviet jurisprudence, but his main legacy in his native Latvia is the short-lived (from December 1918 to May 1919 on most of Latvia’s territory) Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic.¹

The son of a well-to-do farmer from the Vidzeme region, Stučka showed early academic potential, enabling him to enroll in a prestigious German classical high school in Riga at the age of 14. It was there that Stučka met the future poet Jānis Pliekšāns (Rainis), who became a close friend, and whose younger sister Dora he later married.² Upon graduating from school, the two friends continued their studies at the Faculty of Law of St. Petersburg University, where they became attracted to social democratic ideas. Both took turns serving as editors of *Dienas Lapa*, the liberal socialist newspaper of the New Current movement published in Riga. Little is known of Stučka’s other socialist activities in the late 1890s until his arrest (along with other New Current

members) and deportation to the Vyatka region of Russia in 1897. But the fact that Stučka was among the very few people in the Bolshevik Party whose party membership was back-dated to as early as 1895 speaks for itself (Dzērve 1957, 28).

While in exile in Russia, Stučka, among other things, dabbled in statistics – he contributed to several publications of the Vyatka region statistical department (Dzērve 1957). He continued with his social democratic activities too: during the first Congress of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers Party (LSDSP in its Latvian abbreviation) that took place illegally in Riga in 1904, Stučka (back in Latvia) represented the Riga organization and was elected as one of the Congress's chairmen. Although the LSDSP aspired to become a member of the all-Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (RSDRP in its Russian abbreviation), a prolonged dispute about the basis of such membership ensued between the Latvian Social Democrats and their Russian counterparts. Whereas the LSDSP Congress unanimously voted to join the RSDRP on a *federative* basis, the Russian Bolsheviks, especially V. I. Lenin, insisted on the centralized organization of the united party. Although Stučka would eventually change his mind and recognize his “past mistakes”, he was initially a strong supporter of the federation principle: “if we could assume that all members of the organization are ideal people without any human weaknesses, then, understandably, there would not be much to say against such an order [i.e., a centralized party structure]. But, unfortunately, what we see in real life is that revolutionaries also have weaknesses.”³ The majority of the Latvian Social Democrats, Stučka included, remained firm on the federalist principle due to several considerations, such as their willingness to keep a good relationship with the *Bund* (which was adamant on federation), their determination to avoid splintering the Latvian party, and finally, the fear that if the LSDSP joined on a centralized basis all its future activities and propaganda among the workers would be conducted in the Russian language (Kalniņš 1972; Dzērve 1957). “As long as there are a million Latvians who do not speak other languages apart from the Latvian language, it is our responsibility to provide access to Social Democratic theory for them in that language, and to fight for their right to speak, and to conduct business with the state and municipal institutions in that language”, wrote Stučka.⁴

In 1907 Stučka, fearing another arrest, left Latvia first for Finland, and then for St. Petersburg (the order for his arrest and deportation did actually arrive a few days later). In Finland, he met with Vladimir Lenin, the man who would become his role model for years to come. Perhaps it was that meeting, and the ensuing friendship, that completed Stučka's ideological transformation and his final departure from the Menshevik-sympathizing ranks of the Latvian Social Democrats. In 1907 he became the leader of the Latvian Bolsheviks (Kalniņš 1972); however, Šilde (1982) concedes that Stučka did not play a major role in the Russian Bolshevik party until 1917.

Stučka's political metamorphosis was in startling contrast to that of his contemporaries M. Valters and M. Skujenieks, whose ideological evolution took them from the Social Democratic left to the center-right of bourgeois parties. Stučka started out as a “moderate Social Democrat” (as described by B. Kalniņš in 1906 (Kalniņš 1983, 23)), and eventually became a fervent Bolshevik. What exactly led to Stučka's radicalization, while many of his peers, including his closest friend Rainis, became Social Democrats in a present-day sense, is unclear. Was it because Stučka, while studying at St. Petersburg, and later during his exile years in Russia, fell under the

spell of the Russian Marxist tradition, while other Latvian Social Democrats, according to Kalniņš (1983; 1972) had been more exposed to the more moderate teachings of German Social Democrats?

The ideological genesis of Latvian social democracy is a contentious issue. Kalniņš, for example, insists that Latvian social democracy developed in the “Western Socialist spirit”, and drew its inspiration from the works of Bebel, Kautsky, and Lafargue, and not from Plekhanov, Akselrod, Martov, and Lenin. He writes that the movement was started by graduates of German high schools who continued their education at Dorpat University, while reading socialist books from German bookstores in Baltic cities (Kalniņš 1956, 94; 1972, 134–35). Likewise, F. Cielēns (1961, 244) also writes that Latvian Social Democrats were not familiar with the works of Russian Marxists until 1906. Without a doubt, German socialist publications after 1890, the year the German Reichstag did not renew the Anti-Socialist Laws, were more abundant than illegal Russian Marxist literature. These still needed to be smuggled into Latvia; hence the famous suitcase filled with socialist literature brought by Rainis from his trip to Switzerland in 1893. But Rainis himself, along with Stučka, M. Skujenieks, F. Cielēns, V. Bastjānis, A. Petrēvics, A. Buševics and many other prominent Latvian socialists, spent their student years in St. Petersburg and Moscow when the cities’ universities were in the vanguard of new ideas and political change. They were hardly isolated from the Russian Marxists, whose ideological differences with their German counterparts, before the rise of Leninism, were relatively minor. Indeed, J. Ozols (1906, 30), describing the first steps of the Latvian Social Democratic movement, explicitly states that the Latvian intelligentsia was exposed to “German and Russian socialist literature” in Dorpat and “other Russian universities”. J. Jansons (Brauns), one of the most prominent Latvian Social Democrats of the early period, recalls that the first Latvian Marxists, cordoned off in “our idle provincial corner”, had at first been isolated from the Russian Marxists and Russian émigré political currents (like G. Plekhanov’s group Liberation of Labor, based in Geneva). However, Jansons attests that although the New Current members gained their initial introduction to Marxism from the works of Marx, Engels, and Kautsky as early as 1895, they also became familiar with the “Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia’s Economic Development” by P. Struve, and “The Development of the Monist View of History” by the “Father of Russian Marxism” Plekhanov (the latter work, according to Jansons, had a particularly profound impact on Latvian Social Democrats). “I want to stress that our Marxism has not appeared thanks to one or other particular person; neither has it been borrowed from abroad as a ready-made ideological mold. No, it was a process of collective thought, to which our democratically inclined young people, following different paths, contributed together” (Jansons 1913, 83).

Overall, it seems to be an oversimplification to deny any Russian influence on the socialist movement in Latvia and to characterize it as a strictly Western-style moderate movement – not least because of the revolution of 1905 in Latvia, and the role of the Social Democrats in it, which belie its supposedly moderate character. Rather, as another prominent Latvian socialist, J. Augškalns-Aberbergs (1929, 17) describes it, Latvian Social Democrats chose their own path, leaning towards German Social Democrats ideologically, but following their Russian counterparts when it came to revolutionary tactics. Until the final split in 1918, Latvian Bolshevism and Latvian

Menshevism (a division that mirrored the one in the RSDRP) represented two sides of the same coin. As Ezergailis (1983, 23) puts it, “the difference that existed between the Latvian Bolsheviks and Mensheviks was much more a matter of personalities than it was of programs”.

Strictly speaking, Latvian Marxism, while widely recognized as exceptional in tactics, never had its own theoretical base. Ezergailis (1974, 24) names *Stučka* as one exception to the “dearth of theoreticians” in Latvia (coincidentally, the short life-span of the Latvian Soviet shows that *Stučka* was not so good at tactics). But in terms of his overall grasp of Marxist ideology, familiarity with its various strains, and of the sheer scope of issues covered in his own writings, *Stučka* was infinitely superior to his contemporaries, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks alike, who in their theoretical work usually concentrated on one particular aspect of socialism (as with culture for *Rainis*, and the national question for *Skujenieks*). Ezergailis (1974, 88) correctly observes that *Stučka* “was not forced to join the Bolsheviks”, and that prior to the revolution of 1917 he did not necessarily perceive Lenin as his intellectual superior. Rather, *Stučka* stood for his own brand of Marxism, his own system of beliefs, which eventually led him to converge with the Russian Bolsheviks. Swain (2010, 1999) observes that *Stučka* represented “Latvia’s own Marxist tradition” – a tradition that he also defines as Latvian “Luxemburgism”.⁵

Rosa Luxemburg, a German Marxist of Polish-Jewish extraction, who represented the left wing of German social democracy (together with K. Liebknecht, she founded the German Communist Party in 1918), was famously in simultaneous opposition to the revisionists, to the Marxist orthodox center, and to the Bolsheviks. A revolutionary Marxist herself, she relentlessly criticized E. Bernstein for his opportunistic departure from the Marxist concept of history, ardently disagreed with K. Kautsky on the question of mass strike and the spontaneity of the revolutionary movement, and vehemently opposed the Bolsheviks on the issues of democracy (of which, it needs to be said, Luxemburg had her own interpretation), nationality, and self-determination (this list of Luxemburg’s ideological grievances against her fellow Marxists is not exhaustive).

It is a well-known fact that Marxist theory, Austro-Marxism notwithstanding, has little to say on nationality in general. Set against this background, Nimni (1991, 50) calls Luxemburg “probably the most uncompromising Marxist commentator on the national question”. He explains Luxemburg’s “inability to conceptualize the national phenomenon” by her adherence to the “logic of epiphenomenalism”, or, in other words, her stubborn refusal to examine national communities in an analytical framework different from the Marxist theory of the universal development of the forces of production (Nimni 1991, 56).

Swain (1999, 668) posits that Latvian social democracy in general was “Luxemburgist through and through”, and that it was “closer to the ideas of Rosa Luxemburg than Vladimir Lenin”, while *Stučka* in particular was “dogmatically Luxemburgist” when it came to the question of nationality. In support of the first part of his statement, Swain refers to the aforementioned claim made by B. Kalniņš that Latvian social democracy had closer links with German rather than with Russian Marxists. This, in Swain’s interpretation, ensured that the Latvian party “kept a certain distance from Lenin and his fractional disputes” until the outbreak of World War I,

pursuing its own policy of “worker Menshevism” and insisting on operating within a federal structure. But the Latvian Social Democrats’ aloofness, stresses Swain, should not be confused with moderation, especially in their position on the agrarian question. Indeed, while Lenin repeatedly revised his position on agrarian reform prior to 1917, Latvian Bolsheviks, especially Stučka, who was considered an authority on the matter among them, stubbornly stuck to immediate nationalization of the land and the means of agricultural productions, as well as collectivization – a policy which proved to be disastrous and which ultimately led to the Bolsheviks’ demise in Latvia. Stučka’s position on the agrarian question is, in fact, very close to that of Luxemburg, who fiercely criticized “Lenin and his friends” for the “sudden, chaotic conversion of large landownership into peasant landownership”, which in Luxemburg’s opinion piled up “insurmountable obstacles to the socialist transformation of agrarian relations” (Luxemburg 2012, 43–44).

What were the other similarities in the ideological outlooks of the German revolutionary Marxist and the leader of the Latvian Bolsheviks? Stučka admittedly shared Luxemburg’s uncompromisingly negative stance on the right of nationalities (especially small ones) to self-determination – which she famously called “an idle petty bourgeois phrase and humbug” (Luxemburg 2012, 49) – as “the greatest danger for international socialism” (Luxemburg 2012, 55). She considered the recognition of the right of nationalities to self-determination, which former Russian provinces, including the Baltics, opportunistically used for achieving state independence, as the Bolsheviks’ greatest mistake (Kolakowski 2005, 428). Stučka wrote in 1919:

Neither the Latvian Social Democratic Party, nor its successor the Latvian Social Democracy, has ever used a slogan of “independent”, “sovereign” Latvia. On the contrary, we always ridiculed this slogan as absurd, as during the era of imperialism the independence of tiny states is nothing other than diplomatic deception, and during the era of socialism it is simply unnecessary. (Stučka 1919, 6)

Stučka, like Luxemburg, uncompromisingly clung to the classical Marxist principle expressed by Engels as a “universal revolution on a universal terrain”:

Only the proletarian revolution can freely and without a hidden agenda proclaim the real self-determination of the peoples. But this does not mean that it will create a fragmented world of small separate national units; the proletarian revolution is by its nature a true carrier of true internationalism and it recognizes that communism should result in an all-world union of communist autarchy. (Stučka 1972a, 223)⁶

For Luxemburg, who never changed her views on the matter, this obstinacy cost her her proper place in the Communist pantheon. In the 1930s, her position was linked by Stalin to the theory of permanent revolution formulated by Trotsky, whom Stalin claimed she had inspired. “In consequence, all that was distinctive in Rosa Luxemburg’s political and theoretical views became a dead letter” (Kolakowski 2005, 431–32).

Stučka’s views on the subject of universal revolution proved to be more flexible. After allowing himself to be coaxed by Lenin and Stalin into accepting the post of the Head of the Latvian Soviet government, and perhaps in exchange for Lenin’s

forgiveness for the disastrous results of this government's rule, he compromised and acknowledged that:

To protect itself from imperialistic accusations, the Soviet state must recognize the bourgeois or democratic self-determination of nations, leaving it to each nation to live out this illusion internally, and should simply liberate them [nations] from external imperialistic influences and conduct broad propaganda for proletarian, or Soviet self-determination supported by the working people. (Stučka 1972a, 223)

But here, I think, the similarity between Luxemburg's and Stučka's views ends. For example, while Luxemburg was in strong opposition to the proletarian dictatorship implemented by the Bolsheviks as a reign of terror (Luxemburg herself interpreted the proletarian dictatorship as a "manner of applying democracy", not its elimination), Stučka had no qualms about unleashing terror and silencing his opponents during his short rule in Latvia. I also beg to differ with the second part of Swain's statement that Stučka was "dogmatically Luxemburgist" on the question of nationality. Luxemburg was unwavering in her opposition to the very idea of nation; she was not prepared to make any sentimental concessions to her native Poland, whose long-sought independence she fiercely opposed (she often put the words "The Poles" in inverted commas in her writing); nor did she show any compassion towards the Polish Jews during the pogroms of 1903–1906, sternly advising them not to expect recognition of their cultural rights under capitalism. This unwavering position on national matters cannot be compared to Stučka's, who, when it came to all matters Latvian, demonstrated surprising ambiguity, as I will show later in this article.

Stučka's stance on the national question was perhaps the most important point of his ideological divergence from his Social Democratic peers in Latvia. The works of K. Renner, and especially of O. Bauer, on the national question and non-territorial cultural autonomy had a profound impact on the Latvian Social Democrats, inspiring Skujenieks's book *The National Question in Latvia* (1913) and Valters's *The Question of Our Nationality* (1914), and ultimately transforming the Latvian social democracy into an independence-seeking movement. It needs to be said that although Stučka ultimately rejected the Austro-Marxist vision as nationalism under a socialist label, he did not, at the time, eschew Austro-Marxism as categorically as the Bolsheviks' main theorist on the national question, J. Stalin, who viciously criticized Renner and Bauer's theory of nationalism, labeling it "weak", "idealistic", and "self-refuting", in his 1913 essay *Marxism and the National Question*. Stučka, in fact, considered Bauer's book *Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy* (1907) to be "the first substantial work on the national question from a Marxist point of view", and praised Bauer's explorations of nations' pasts (Stučka 1972, 88). Stučka (1972, 93) also gave a generally positive evaluation of Skujenieks's *The National Question in Latvia*, which owed a significant intellectual debt to Bauer, but in conclusion he wrote: "People and nations are important facts that cannot be simply discarded ... here I agree with M. Skujenieks; however, we must not make a leap to nationalism from here. I hope that the author will not follow this path, either." Ezergailis (1974, 115) juxtaposes Skujenieks's "autonomous federalism" with the "democratic centralism" of Stučka, asserting that Skujenieks's thesis was based on a "belief in the uniqueness of Latvia and her higher economic and cultural level". Paradoxically, Stučka was also convinced

of Latvia's superiority over Russia – but that only led him to believe that the socialist revolution stood a better chance in Latvia than in Russia, and he remained adamant to the end that the interests of the proletariat could not be reconciled with those of the national bourgeoisie.

Stučka's growing dedication to class struggle and the world revolution, which seemed to intensify rapidly from 1907 onward, deepened the rift between him and the Latvian Mensheviks, the question of Latvia's independence from Russia becoming the decisive point. Arguably, until the February Revolution of 1917, and immediately afterwards, all Latvian Social Democrats advocated some kind of cultural autonomy for Latvia in a free democratic Russia. As observed by Ģērmanis (1968, 41), "the difference in the various drafts and declarations of autonomy which appeared after the Revolution was in the question of relations with Russia". In the course of just a few months, though, all Latvian political parties, apart from the Bolsheviks, abandoned the earlier autonomy projects and started pursuing full independence.⁷ Stučka became the main advocate for the preservation of the union with Russia, which was reflected in the numerous articles he published in the Social Democratic press at the time.

Stučka obviously believed, like the leader of the Russian Bolsheviks V. Lenin, that in the absence of any coercion the Latvian working class would make the right choice:

Right now is the time to finally decide what we want when we say "Latvia and Russia". The self-determination rights of the Latvian people do not depend on bureaucrats or generals any more, but only on the people themselves. Therefore we should openly say what our thoughts are on this question.⁸

Stučka does not see the union with Russia as the only possible choice; he has obviously contemplated other options, while still considering the final proletarian victory in the class struggle an ultimate goal:

Let us admit that we were never frightened (and could not have been frightened) by the danger of separation from the autocratic – at that time – Russia. Whatever you say about the German regime, there were, and there still are, certain political freedoms there. The economic development there is so advanced, that when any serious Social Democrat imagines the possibilities of the *final fight* there, his heart skips a beat (and there is no doubt that some of our big patriots, at the bottom of their hearts, think the same). A German eagle, or a Russian scepter – for the [Latvian] proletariat it makes no difference; what is important is to be close to our own class comrades, either in Germany or in Russia, as the final fight for socialism is still ahead of us.⁹

But no matter how dedicated he is to the idea of the world revolution, Stučka is not prepared to sacrifice the unity of the Latvian people – here he seems to be in full agreement with the nationalists:

The natural desire that the Latvian people do not get split up between the two masters [i.e., Russia and Germany] is quite understandable. It is understandable even to those who are in no way nationalists, simply because in this case their cultural force would also be split up, and this would lead to endless chauvinism Everybody is concerned that this separation should not happen, albeit for

different reasons; at the very least, this concern can be expressed with an old saying: "In heaven or in hell, but all together!"¹⁰

However, *Stučka* believes that with the recent democratic changes in Russia, and with the common goals shared by the Latvian and Russian proletariat, there can be no hidden dangers if Latvia decides to stay with Russia:

But the Latvian proletariat does not have the slightest reason to long for separation, not beforehand, and not now when it has been shedding blood together with its Russian comrades for the final victory. We wholeheartedly believe that our democratic freedoms, also in terms of our language specifically, are not threatened by Russian democracy.¹¹

The ambiguity of *Stučka's* views on Latvian independence is clearly demonstrated in his article published in May 1917. On the one hand, *Stučka* persists in his "Luxemburgist" position on the undesirability of the independence of small states:

We say that comrade Lenin goes too far to the national side when he insists on the unlimited rights of every nation to secession, and we say that it is generally childish to talk about the independence of small states during the imperialistic era. Comrade Lenin, as a member of a big nation, offers us more rights than we really want; and we say that it is the union of the big states that is really in the proletariat's best interests¹²

On the other hand, *Stučka* yet again asserts that a divided Latvia is not the price he is prepared to pay: "But we, Latvian Social Democrats, also allow the possibility that if in a complicated international situation, Kurzeme was forced to become independent, or to become a free port territory, then we would also obviously vote for the rest of Latvia joining the independent Kurzeme."¹³ Altogether, it seems that *Stučka* may have considered Latvia being a part of Russia a short-term tactical solution before the universal socialist revolution came to pass: he claims that the Latvian Bolsheviks are, above all, "for a broadly democratic, self-governing, undivided Latvia within a democratic Russia, if not within a wider all-European or all-world democratic republic"; and that "only then it will be in Kurzeme's interests to be annexed by Russia when it is an equal part of Russia or of an even wider democracy".¹⁴

Ģermanis (1968, 72) also observes that the attitude of the Latvian Bolsheviks to the national question was "particularly significant", as although "they parroted the principle of 'democratic centralism' and advocated a class struggle", they cooperated with other Latvian political parties and organizations on the question of autonomy on several occasions in 1917, and in "certain hypothetical international situations" promised to support the separation of Latvia from Russia.

As a well-established lawyer, in his early years *Stučka* managed to combine his Social Democratic activities, mainly in the theoretical field, with a comfortable bourgeois existence (see *Valters* 1969; *Kalniņš* 1983; *Lorencs* 2005). Both *Valters* and *Kalniņš* mention *Stučka's* large, handsomely appointed apartment and the generous hospitality that he extended to his fellow (and less comfortably situated) Social Democrats. *Valters* (1969, 198) claims, however, that "the hardness of a Communist chieftain was present in his soul already in the 90s; behind all this bourgeois façade

there was something else ... some concept of justice which did not want to take into account the laws of life and its unavoidable deficiencies". Valters repeatedly juxtaposes the personalities of Stučka and Rainis (whom Valters worshipped); he speaks of Stučka's "autocratic leftism", his consistency, his opposition to the national idea, and his intolerance. For Stučka, with his "lawyer's psychology", writes Valters, this is the idea that rules absolutely, and that should be meticulously implemented. Valters remarks caustically that Stučka's pen name *Paragrafs* (Paragraph) was indeed very fitting (1969, 198). Lorencs's (2005, 100) descriptions of Stučka are unequivocally negative: he speaks of Stučka's "cowardly caution", his aloofness, his lack of "comradely warmth", and his haughtiness. "The morality of an underground movement, its special comradeship, closeness and altruistic selflessness were completely alien to Stučka", claims Lorencs (2005, 100). It is impossible to determine just how much these personal recollections of Stučka, written at a much later date, were informed by subsequent developments in Stučka's political career – consciously or not, the benefits of hindsight may be hard to resist.

In any case, the apparent clash between Stučka's benign "bourgeois" appearance and his dogmatic ideological fanaticism puzzled even casual observers. George Popoff, who left a detailed account of life in Riga under the Bolshevik government, despite repeatedly calling Stučka "the Latvian Lenin", nevertheless insists that "he was no savage terrorist or bloodthirsty tyrant, but rather a quiet thinker and deliberate theorist, a sort of Red professor. Moreover, in private life he was a pleasant and good-natured old fellow, by no means inaccessible to argument" (Popoff 1932, 57). Describing the public address that Stučka delivered in response to the rumors circulating about the impending massacres of the German and Jewish population – a speech which Popoff witnessed – he writes:

I must confess that he won all our hearts immediately – indeed, he made an exceedingly agreeable impression. What a charming old fellow he seemed as he stood there on the platform, and how quiet, highly moral and "unrevolutionary" was all that he said! An extreme socialist, of course; but not a trace of the savage tyrant, the rabid Bolshevik! He was more like a comfortable, good-natured shopkeeper, a professor or a clergyman. (Popoff 1932, 69–70)

Referring to Stučka's low-hanging moustache, Popoff calls him "an amiable walrus" (Popoff 1932, 70). However, just a few months later, recounting the increasing panic among the Bolsheviks after the fall of Mitau when they were bracing themselves for the defense of Riga, Popoff changes his tune:

Even President Stutchka, who till now had always been considerably more moderate than such rabid extremists as Simon Berg, Endrup, Danishevsky,¹⁵ the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal and most of the other Bolshevik leaders, and had acted to some degree as a brake on their frantic zeal, now changed his tone – doubtless from fear that he would lose his popularity and that the control of the movement would slip out of his hands. He became less and less of the good-natured and friendly theorist and professor we had formerly known; he displayed a new roughness and irritability; and indulged more and more frequently in

demagogic utterances, from which he had hitherto completely abstained. (Popoff 1932, 205)

By the time of Popoff's description of him in his memoir, Stučka had not just become a hardcore Marxist – in many of his views he was more radical than his role model Lenin (who reportedly had to intervene upon receiving complaints about Stučka's "excesses" during his reign over the Latvian population). Stranga (2007, 104) writes that Stučka's communism, the "perfect Latvian communism", was implemented with the aim of showing Russians how to build a real, "pure" communism different from their own – and that meant endless terror.¹⁶

The Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic was proclaimed on 17 December 1918.

Shortly afterward, Stučka arrived in Latvia from St. Petersburg. It was, strictly speaking, already a second attempt at establishing socialism in Latvia – the first being the *Iskolat* Republic (*Iskolat* – a Russian abbreviation of the Executive Committee of Latvian Workers, Soldiers, and Landless Peasants), whose brief existence encompasses the period between July 1917 and February 1918 (with the advance of the German troops, *Iskolat* retreated to Moscow, where it was later disbanded). *Iskolat* proclaimed itself the highest organ of power in Latvia and issued a decree on nationalization of all agricultural land and natural resources, and on the formation of the Red Guard. Ģērmanis (1968, 63) observes that "a part of *Iskolat*'s decrees had a pronounced national inclination: all business in government institutions was to be transacted in the Latvian language, and school programs were altered to emphasize the teaching of Latvian language and Latvian history". On Latvia's position vis-à-vis Russia, *Iskolat* declared that it "recognizes the autonomy of a united Latvia (Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale) which is based on democratic centralism, i.e., a system that does not exceed the framework of the decreed principles of the Russian dictatorship of the proletariat (*sic*) and at the same time ensures the broadest self-determination of the Latvian labor democracy".¹⁷ The Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic was the *Iskolat*'s successor in more ways than one – the *Iskolat*'s former Chairman Fr. Roziņš (Āzis) was, alongside Stučka, one of two possible candidates for the head of the new Latvian Soviet government. Dribins (2011, 51) describes how after the vote among the Latvian Bolsheviks in Moscow – where on 4 December 1918 the decision was to take place – turned out to be equally divided between the two candidates, Stučka and Roziņš reportedly tossed a coin that flipped in Stučka's favor. Roziņš, unperturbed, acquiesced to becoming the Commissar for Agriculture in Stučka's government.

After announcing the dawn of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and adopting a new constitution (which closely followed the constitution of the Russian Federation of 1918, which Stučka had helped to develop), Stučka formed a central government, and a number of Soviets responsible for the main spheres of life in Soviet Latvia, i.e., economy, finance, welfare, education, etc. Initially welcomed by the general population, Stučka's government quickly lost its popularity because of the nationalization of the land, and the collectivization of the means of production – two ideas intrinsically foreign to the Latvian farmer of the time. Famine followed collectivization, and the regime employed repression, such as executions dispensed by military tribunals, torture, and property confiscations, to stifle discontent.

The Latvian Soviet has received uneven treatment at the hands of historians. If Soviet historiography endlessly glorified its short existence as a heroic attempt stifled by

the imperialist forces, Latvian historians writing in emigration and after 1991 tend to emphasize the active role of Bolshevik Russia in installing Stučka's government, and the overall chaos of war in the Latvian lands in 1918 (Šilde 1976; Bleiere *et al.* 2005). The same goes for anecdotal evidence. For example, Kroders (1968) attributes the Bolsheviks' popularity in Kurzeme to the general confusion in the occupied territories in 1919, when the residents of the devastated land were past caring about ideological agendas: "Whoever comes – Bolsheviks or Mensheviks, it will be a relief from the German occupation's inhumanity and destruction" (1968, 299). He also mentions mistrust on the part of the local population towards the "totally non-Latvian surnames in our government – Ulmanis, Meierovics, Valters, Goldmanis, Hermanovskis, and Blumbergs", which he claims helped swing popular support in the Bolsheviks' favor (1968, 300). Centuries-long distrust towards the Germans, public speculation about the uneasy cooperation between Ulmanis and Van der Goltz in general, and popular dismay at the promise of Latvian citizenship Prime Minister Ulmanis had had to give to German soldiers who agreed to fight for Latvian independence must have made fertile ground for seeds of suspicion.

At the same time, historians agree that the electoral records of the municipal elections of 1917 and the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly of the same year unequivocally indicate that the Bolsheviks enjoyed the support of the majority of the Latvian population at the time. For example, in Riga the Latvian Social Democracy (which was by then controlled by the Bolsheviks, who led all the election lists) obtained 41%, while all the other parties together gained 59%; in Valka, the Bolsheviks gained 61% of the votes, in Cēsis 64%, and in Valmiera 75%. In the elections to the All-Russia Constituent Assembly, the Bolsheviks gained 72% of all votes in Vidzeme (by comparison, the Agrarian Union gained 23%, and the Mensheviks 5%; whereas Stučka received 97,781 votes, the Agrarian Union candidate J. Goldmanis got only 31,253 (Zīle and Ziemelis 1979, 20; Šilde 1976, 172)). Stučka's government did not enjoy popular support for very long, but such support was enormous to start with: "In 1917 the Latvian Social Democracy was under Bolshevik leadership and in a position to exult loyalty not only from the party membership but also from thousands of other Latvians" (Ezergailis 1983, 69). Page (1948, 28) also attests that "when the Red Army drove into Latvia in December of 1918, there were numerous indications that it was operating on friendly territory".

The overwhelming popular support further convinced Stučka that Latvia was ripe for a socialist transformation. But the form of this transformation, i.e., Latvia's becoming an independent Soviet state, caused a disagreement between Stučka and Lenin. A true dogmatic thinker, Stučka persisted in his beliefs, and ignored tactical considerations. Stučka had never supported the idea of Latvia's independence, firmly believing that the independence of small countries under imperialism was nothing but a "diplomatic deception", and that under socialism such independence was simply unnecessary (Stučka 1919, 6). Stučka was reportedly "horrified" at the decision taken by Lenin and the Central Committee to form a provisional revolutionary government in Latvia (White 1994; Swain 1999), and only reluctantly agreed to accept the post of head of government of the independent Soviet Latvia in 1919 under considerable pressure from Lenin himself. Nevertheless, upon receiving orders to create a Latvian

Republic, “he endeavored to do it with a certain perfectionism, being convinced that his own ‘power construction’ was superior to that of the Russians” (Šilde 1976, 290).

Stučka’s revolutionary zeal in expropriating land and property and in meting out harsh punishments to the “enemies of the people”, however, was not matched by a similar fervor in matters national or ethnic, despite his repeated assertions of being against all nationalisms, even when under a socialist label.¹⁸ When it came to his native Latvia, Stučka was not so quick to subscribe to Leninist internationalism in practice as he was in theory, often demonstrating conflicting views and attitudes, and at times behaving in a manner that would have made any Latvian nationalist proud. It is a famous fact that Stučka’s “revolutionary” government did not include a single non-ethnic Latvian. Stranga (1998, 26) observes that Stučka’s government, which started its activities with an unmistakably characteristic terror, was “the most Latvian of all governments in the Latvia of 1919 – in terms of its ethnic composition, and in terms of the initial support of the residents”. When it came to geographical borders, Stučka acted like a nationalist – his position on Latgale being an integral part of Latvia remained unshakeable (Šilde 1976, 295); he vehemently defended Valka as a Latvian city in the territorial dispute with Estonia, and insisted that Palanga, claimed by Lithuanians, “is a part of Kurland separating us from Prussia, and is necessary for revolutionary purposes” (Stučka 1919, 26). In the Latvian Soviet, Latvian was declared the official language of communication, and all decrees were issued and public announcements made in Latvian only. Stučka justified choosing Latvian as the only language of communication by claiming that “Latvia is a land inhabited largely by Latvians”, and, incredibly, that “the majority of Latvians do not know any other language”. Dribins mentions that, reacting to criticism from Moscow, the Latvian Soviet government issued a decree on 8 March 1919 that allowed for the use of Russian and Latgalian along with Latvian, adding: “This enabled the majority of Latgale’s Jews to read the communists’ orders and circulars, as they did not speak Latvian at the time” (2005, 9).

Stučka was also strongly opposed to the idea of a centralized Russian government, insisting on conditions of true autonomy in all fields apart from the military: “We are putting forward an unconditional demand for local, i.e., Soviet regional government, and local Soviet control.” He continued that “within those limits which are necessary in order to account for the specific Latvian conditions, we will be autonomists despite any reproaches or accusations of being too independent” (Stučka 1919, 61).

These “specific Latvian conditions”, in Stučka’s own interpretation, deserve a closer look. In striking similarity to his Latvian nationalist counterparts, Stučka appears convinced of Latvia’s superiority to Russia, both economic and cultural. He posits that Latvia, “despite the devastation of the war, still represents an area economically radically different from the rest of Russia, as its capitalist relations are more developed” (1919, 59). (This latter circumstance led Stučka mistakenly to believe that Latvia would be able to take a short cut to socialism.) Having otherwise copied all the management structures and symbols of Soviet Russia, Stučka nonetheless found it impossible to use the famous hammer and sickle emblem: citing the necessity of “stressing the higher level of economic development of the region”, he proposed to replace the sickle, “long forgotten in our land”, with a scythe (1919, 16).

He also recalls how “once upon a time, our Russian comrades made fun of the ‘bourgeois appearance’ of most Latvian workers, of their habit of dressing nicely, living in a nice flat or room, etc.” (Stučka 1919, 58). In an article published in 1914, Stučka casually observes that “Latvian emigrants, who came to live in an environment with a lower degree of development, even in exile managed to assimilate part of the local indigenous population, but being stuck at this stage without further evolution, within one generation slid below the level of local residents” (1972b, 86) – he is obviously referring to Latvians exiled from Latvia to Russia.

Stučka’s animosity toward Baltic Germans rivals that of his nationalist counterparts; he is preoccupied with the past German domination of Latvia, and its influence upon Latvian social and cultural life, observing bitterly: “In 1897, the German influence in Latvia was strong enough to motivate a significant part of Latvians to start calling themselves Germans” (1919, 28). Moreover, using his earlier acquired skills and putting himself on a par with the latter-day Skujenieks in statistical manipulation, Stučka sets out to prove that the overall presence of Germans in Latvia has been exaggerated:

In 1897, out of 282,230 inhabitants of Riga there were 127,046 Latvians and 67,286 Germans, or 24%. In reality, this number is much lower, because one needs to subtract 3,964 Jews (by faith) who declared themselves Germans, and 7,489 peasants with the “German native tongue” (there are no such peasants in the Baltics; they are just Latvian peasants who declared themselves Germans), and as a result the percentage of Germans in Riga in 1897 will not exceed 20% The census of 1913 in Riga provided a totally different picture: out of 517,582 inhabitants there were already 191,956 Latvians, and only 61,923 Germans, or only 12%! And thus the number of Germans in Latvia does not validate all the talk of the German character of Latvia!¹⁹ (Stučka 1919, 29)

But simply disproving German numerical domination is not sufficient for Stučka, and he launches an attack on German culture: “German craftsmen in the countryside are less cultured in comparison with Latvian peasants, and the percentage of illiterate people among the Germans is much higher” (1919, 31). From the countryside he moves to the urban scene, where, according to Stučka, Baltic Germans fare even worse:

Also in the cities all these artisans and petite bourgeoisie of German provenance are no more cultured than Latvians. On the contrary, if one subtracts the so-called literati, or intelligentsia, where Riga’s Germans account for 16%, and Latvians only for 1.5%, then literacy among the remaining Latvian population is 77%, and among the remaining German population – only 67%! (Stučka 1919, 31)

Finally, he makes a rather surprising – for a Marxist – statement, which can be interpreted as recognition of the existing upward class mobility in Latvian society: “The nobility once upon a time represented a closed society. But that was once upon a time! This difference is disappearing with each passing day” (1919, 31).

There is no unanimous opinion on Stučka’s attitude towards the Jews. Stranga (2007), for example, believes that Stučka was not an anti-Semite, and supports his position with the argument that the *Bund* was able to continue its activities in the

Soviet Latvian Republic, and that there were no impediments to education in Yiddish. Stranga does, however, mention that Stučka's national communism created two-fold problems for Russian-speaking Jews: first, the communist regime consistently implemented the Latvian language as the official language of communication; and second, Stučka was a consistent defender of a "united and indivisible Latvia" that included Latgale, causing dissatisfaction among those Latgalian Jews more oriented towards the Vitebsk province of Russia – a dissatisfaction that Stučka chose to ignore (this, according to Stranga [2007, 105], can hardly be held against Stučka).

Bobe (1971) posits that Stučka's government discriminated against Jews, and therefore can be counted as anti-Semitic. V. Ziv, in an article published on 22 May 1924, the fifth anniversary of the liberation of Riga, paints the Stučka government as extremely hostile towards the Jews: "The minority question arose for the first time in Latvia on 2 January 1919, when the 'victorious' army led by Stučka occupied Riga. From this day onwards, and until the Bolsheviks' retreat, Latvia became an epicenter of the persecution of minorities."²⁰

According to Ziv, a "nationalist war" was waged under the slogan of social equality, when Jewish, German, and Russian shopkeepers and landlords were singled out for lootings, confiscations, and persecutions. Ziv reports, as "characteristic of the regime", that those minority representatives who were able to speak Latvian enjoyed certain privileges. He draws attention to the fact that there was not a single German or Jew among the commissars. Ziv mentions a rather curious fact about the procurement of printing paper – according to him, the Bolshevik newspaper *Цiņa* was published on paper of the highest quality, whereas newspapers in minority languages could only get hold of small quantities of wrapping paper to print on. Ziv goes as far as to posit that "the advent of the communist government opened the history of anti-Semitism in Latvia – until then, Latvians and Jews were good neighbors. There was no old reckoning between them, and there could not have been, as both were equally oppressed in the past".²¹

Dribins (2009) asserts that the majority of Latvian Jews, despite being the poorest part of the population, did not support the Soviet government in 1919, and that approximately 1000 Latvian Jews were fighting in the Latvian national army against the Latvian Bolsheviks and the Red Army. "In any case, after the Soviets were driven out of Latvia, Stučka was forced to change his attitude – or, to be more precise, his political tactic – towards the ethnic minorities" – Dribins (2009, 9) mentions Stučka's later publications in which he attempted to "defend" Latvian Jews against the alleged anti-Semitism of the leader of the Latvian Social Democrat-Mensheviks, M. Skujeniēks.

Stučka himself categorically denies all accusations of anti-Semitism against his government, but notably not the existence of anti-Jewish sentiment among Latvians in general – which he tries to attribute to the Latvian propertied classes exclusively. But then, carried away by his own rhetoric, he repeatedly shoots himself in the foot. For example, he starts with a typical socialist-internationalist argument about class struggle: "The Latvian bourgeoisie, and its petite bourgeoisie are anti-Semites with a long history. Jews in Latvia are largely merchants and factory owners, and they were competing against the rising Latvian bourgeoisie." But then, a few sentences later, the overall tone of proletarian compassion changes to ill-disguised contempt: "Besides,

there are those *Moskovskye* suburbs in Riga, where the impoverished Jewish population is living side by side with true Russian darkness” (Stučka 1919, 55). Yet the ensuing passage evokes writings on the same topic by the ardent nationalist Ernests Blanks:

It should be added that another feature of Latvian Jewry, especially of that in Riga and Kurland, is their “German orientation”.... As a consequence, the nationalistic hatred of the Latvian bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie towards the Germans has been extrapolated to Jews. And the joy with which this part of the Jews welcomed the German occupation both in 1917 and in 1919 also served this cause. (Stučka 1919, 55)

After the Soviet government was ousted by the Latvian national army, Stučka retreated to Moscow, where he dedicated his efforts to the drawing up of the Soviet civil code. He passed away in 1932, and his ashes were placed in the Kremlin Wall behind the Mausoleum of his role model Lenin. During the Great Purge, Stučka’s legal theory was declared a “harmful ideology”, and Stučka himself an “enemy of the people”. He was rehabilitated after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party, and made an exemplary communist hero in Latvia – both the Latvian University (which was established by Stučka’s government in 1919), and the small town of Aizkraukle were named after him.

As much as the memory of Stučka and his Latvian Soviet was hated in interwar Latvia, subsequent historical events put it in a somewhat different perspective. For example, Šilde (1982, 195), comparing the Latvia of 1919 to that of the Stalinist era, points out several advantages of Stučka’s regime, namely: (1) only Latvians, and not Russians, were in the government and among the party leaders; (2) Stučka, overall, did not strive to bring any Russians to Latvia; (3) there were no overarching, all-republican ministries: everything was concentrated in Latvians’ own hands; and (4) the Latgalian dialect was allowed, and on the whole Latgale was joined to Latvia.

Similarly, Dribins observes:

He will never be forgiven for the “red terror” horrors of 1919, for ignoring the wishes of Latvian landless peasants, and for his negative stance on the demands for national independence. But the Latvian people also remember how Stučka opposed Latvia’s Russification, sometimes harshly arguing with the big comrades from Moscow. It distinguishes him positively from the later communists, especially when compared with A. Peļše, A. Voss, and other spineless toadies. (2005, 135)

Interestingly, Dribins (1997, 86–87) himself names M. Skujenieks as the founder of the movement within Latvian nationalism that would later become known as “national communism” – an ill-fated attempt by a group of Latvian communist leaders, such as E. Berklavs, V. Krūmiņš, and P. Dzērve, to expand the Latvian Republic’s autonomy and to eliminate the Russifying aspects of the Soviet regime during the Khrushchev Thaw (Misiunas and Taagepera 1983). It seems, however, that a much closer comparison can be drawn between Stučka and the national communists, especially between him and Pauls Dzērve. Prior to his demise during the purge of 1959, Dzērve served as the Director of the Economy Institute of the Latvian Academy of Sciences. In 1957, Dzērve published a newspaper article and a book about Stučka, which – rather meekly, truth be told – attempted to interpret Stučka’s widely

acknowledged “mistakes” in agrarian policy and in the overall management of the first Latvian Soviet as creative attempts to protect his native country, with its unique history and nature, from certain aspects of Bolshevization.²²

It is hard to gauge what was deemed as a worse transgression by the Communist Party: Dzērve’s own program of unorthodox economic measures aimed at protecting Latvian industry and agriculture, or his alleged tarnishing of the image of “this noted Soviet Latvian figure”, “the communist internationalist and the fighter for friendship between nations”, Comrade Stučka. Apparently, Comrade Dzērve “exhibited serious political mistakes” and “revealed his own inability to correctly understand the nature of P. Stučka’s mistakes and their importance” by using them “as a positive example of independent and creative attempts to answer questions about Socialist construction, of taking revolutionary initiative, by taking into consideration Latvia’s uniqueness”.²³

The Latvian national communists will be fondly remembered for their failed attempts to resist Russification in Latvia long after their demise in 1959. In the late 1980s, the elderly E. Berklavs would become one of the most prominent leaders of the independence movement and the founder of the Latvian National Independence Movement (LNNK in its Latvian abbreviation), which would transform into an important political party in the newly independent Latvia.²⁴ As for comrade Stučka, who was a source of inspiration for the national communists, he sank into oblivion – as soon as Latvia regained independence, both the University of Latvia and the town of Aizkraukle were relieved of his name as a part of the overall purge of the Communist past.

It is an irony of history that Pēteris Stučka, a dogmatic Marxist and a Communist warrior, is ultimately best remembered in Latvia for an aberration in his professed creed, namely for the nationalist feelings which he himself took such great care to suppress.

Notes

- 1 For an English translation of Stučka’s legal writings, see Shalet, Maggs, and Beirne (1988).
- 2 The early friendship between Rainis and Stučka subsequently developed into a very uneasy relationship. It is described in detail in the fictionalized biography of the Latvian national poet, *Rainis and His Brothers* by R. Dobrovenskis (2000), where Stučka is portrayed as one of the “brothers” alongside J. Jansons (Brauns), P. Dauge, M. Valters, and others.
- 3 As quoted in Dzērve (1957, p. 51).
- 4 Stučka, P. (1906) ‘Vienotā partija vai partiju apvienojums’, *Cīņa*, Nr. 29, 25 March, as quoted in Dzērve (1957, p. 75).
- 5 Kolakowski (2005, p. 403) refers to “Luxemburgism” as “a particular variant of Marxism which, though not possessing an articulate philosophical basis, occupies a place of its own in the history of the socialist doctrine”.
- 6 Quoted as per Stučka, P. “Nacionālisms un tautu pašnoteikšanās”, first published in 1972 in Stučka, P. (1972) *Nacionālais jautājums un latviešu proletariāts. Darbu izlase. 1906–1930* (Rīga, Liesma); with a footnote that the article was written not earlier than the end of 1920.

- 7 It seems impossible to determine who was the first to voice the idea of Latvian independence, as there are many contenders. M. Valters was repeatedly credited as the author of the idea of Latvian independence. For example, Apine (1974, 190; 2005, 33) mentions that Valters promoted the idea of Russia's "decentralization-desintegration" as the only alternative to the existing order in an article published in 1903, and came up with an even more radical solution – to create "as many states as there nations in present-day Russia" in an article published in 1905. Dribins (1997, p. 163) contends that Valters "was the first to raise the flag of national independence". Šilde (1985, 192) interprets the expressions "organized national communities" and "political national unions", which Valters repeatedly used in his book *The Question of Our Nationality* (1914), as euphemisms for Latvian national independence. Cielēns (1961, 505) believes that L. Laičēns (who at the time was still a National Democrat) was the first to put forward the demand for Latvian sovereignty in the newspaper *Dzimtenes Atbalss* during the summer of 1917. E. Blanks, one of the leaders of the National Democratic Party, whose members Ģērmanis (1968, 51) calls the "most active and vociferous spokesmen" for the widest possible autonomy for Latvia, is yet another possible contender.
- 8 Stučka, P. (under the pseudonym §) (1917) "Latwija un Kreewija", *Zihņa*, 10, 24.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Stučka, P. (under the pseudonym §) (1917) "Kurzemes aneksijas jautajumā", *Zihņa*, 7, 20. This statement by Stučka is, in my opinion, in clear contradiction with the assertion made by Ezergailis (1974, 86) that "Stučka did not differ from Lenin to any significant degree on the matter of tactical use of the nationality question". I would like to argue that there was less difference in Stučka's and Lenin's views on nationality in general, than on the "tactical use" of it. It was precisely Lenin's flexibility on the national question for the sake of strategy that both Luxemburg and, albeit not quite as vehemently, Stučka were so opposed to.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Simon Berg – the head of the Riga Soviet; Rūdolfs Endrups – Commissar for Finance in Stučka's government; Jūlijs Daniševskis – Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and for a while also Commissar for Social Welfare (Šilde 1976, 292).
- 16 The precise number of the victims of Stučka's regime remains unknown. Šilde repeatedly mentions (1976, 295; 1982, 195) 3632 people shot (1549 in Riga, and 2083 in the countryside), but Stranga (2007) observes that these numbers are not supported by documental evidence.
- 17 *Bīvais Strēlnieks*, 22.12.1917, quoted in Ģērmanis, U. (1968) "The Idea of Independent Latvia and its Development in 1917", in Sprudz, A. and Rūsis, A. (eds) *Res Baltica. A Collection of Essays in Honour of the Memory of Dr. Alfred Bilmanis*. Leyden, A.W. Sijthoff, p. 64.
- 18 Stučka was closely familiar with the works of Austro-Marxists; he disagreed with O. Bauer on the future of the national question, but acknowledged his "diligent work in researching the past" and praised Bauer's "new ideas" (see Stučka 1972c, 38–39).
- 19 Stučka obviously chooses to ignore the fact that although numerically ethnic Latvians grew from 1897 to 1913, their percentage of the whole population of

- Riga over the same period fell from 45 to 42. It is unclear how he came up with the number of 191,956 Latvians in Riga in 1913 (Stučka does not identify his sources) – other sources indicate that the number of Latvians in Riga in 1913 was around 217,000, or 42% of the whole population of the city (see, for example, Skujenieks 1938, 12). Stučka's observation of the inflated number of Germans is supported by Skujenieks (Skujenieks 1913, footnote * on p. 188), who also writes: "Russian statistics define ethnicity by native tongue. Many Jews have declared Russian and German as their native tongues. Therefore the numbers of Germans and Russians are inflated on account of Jews."
- 20 Dr. V. Ziv (1924), "Stuchka I menshinstva", *Segodnya*, 22 May.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 The boldest of Dzērve's statements goes as follows: "Pēteris Stučka was fighting against the bureaucratic centralism which ignored local conditions and peculiarities, which was present in the work of the management of some of the organizations and enterprises which were under control of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation" (1957, p. 131).
- 23 Document No. 57, "Secret report by L. Lapina, Head of the Science, Schools and Culture Section of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist party, and N. Muravjov, Deputy Leader, to the Bureau. December 15th, 1959", (Plakans 2007, 270–71).
- 24 In 1997, LNNK merged with the *For Fatherland and Freedom* (TB in its Latvian abbreviation), forming a conservative right-wing alliance with a nationalist agenda. In 2010, LNNK/TB joined forces with the radically nationalist party *All for Latvia*.

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