LATVIA'S UNIQUE PATH TOWARD INDEPENDENCE: THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRANSITION FROM A SOVIET REPUBLIC TO AN INDEPENDENT STATE

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Introduction

In the late 1980s, Latvia, a tiny republic in the northwest corner of the former Soviet Union (USSR), seeing a window of opportunity provided by the policy of *glasnost*, instability inside the USSR, and political upheaval within the Warsaw Pact countries, became one of the key agitators among the Soviet republics to demand independence from Moscow—a view shared by several Baltic specialists.[1] This paved the way for the emergence of independence movements in its fellow Baltic republics, Estonia and Lithuania, the latter of which took the lead in seeking to break free from Soviet rule. This caused a domino effect throughout the USSR. In short, the three Baltic republics--Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—set in motion the political process that resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991.[2]

Latvia's road to independence and democratization proved to be quite different from that followed in other Soviet republics, particularly in Latvia's sister Baltic republics—Estonia and Lithuania. Latvia's geopolitical position and demographic composition, as well as cultural and historical variables, created a set of unique challenges that shaped its struggle for independence from Moscow not present in other Soviet republics, particularly the independence movements in Latvia's sister Baltic republics. Latvia's geopolitical position and demographic composition, as well as cultural and historical variables, created a set of unique challenges that shaped its stuggle for independence from Moscow not present in other Soviet republics. Once the policies of *glostnost* and democratization initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev, the director general of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, created an opening for independent political thought, it became possible to express diverse political opinions and engage in political activities more freely. As a result, a nascent civil society emerged in Latvia led by environmental, folklore, and religious groups, each of which adopted specific political agendas.[3] This period of political and national awakening in Latvia is often referred to as the "Singing Revolution" due to its non-violent nature and the significance of traditional Latvian folk music in facilitating the push for independence.[4]

The "Singing Revolution" ignited a major debate concerning historical interpretations of Soviet actions in Latvia after 1939, which caused Latvians to reject the legitimacy of Soviet rule in their homeland. The most important of these historical turning points was commemorated during the so-called "calendar demonstrations" throughout Latvia, which

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jumpstarted the anti-Soviet movement and provided momentum for like-minded activists in the other Baltic republics to mobilize their populations in seeking self-determination.[5] However, due to unique ethnic and demographic challenges, as well as security considerations, the independence movement in Latvia took a backseat to those in Estonia and Lithuania. The most significant of these challenges was that Latvia would have to deal with its high proportion of ethnic Russians in its population, who were unwilling to sever ties with the USSR completely. The ethnic and political tensions that grew out of this situation threatened to produce violence. In addition, the significant Soviet military presence on Latvian territory raised a tangible security issue. If hardliners among Soviet authorities chose to use force in order to keep Latvia in the USSR, there was a strong possibility that the situation would result in a full-scale military intervention. Despite these challenges, Latvia's transition toward independence remained peaceful. Ethnic tensions did not result in a repetition of the large-scale violence that occurred in other Soviet territories (e.g., Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Tadzhikistan), where ethnic conflicts turned bloody.[6] There was also no open military intervention from Moscow, primarily due to Western attention on what was happening in the region and a willingness on the part of the leadership of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to support the Baltic republics in their quest for independence.[7] In 1991, Latvia, joined its Baltic neighbors, in declaring its independence from the Soviet Union. Shortly thereafter, it held parliamentary elections and established democratic institutions. Later, in May 2004, Latvia joined the European Union.

In seeking to establish a viable, fully functioning democracy and an efficient market economy, Latvia has faced multiple obstacles and challenges. Perhaps the most crucial concern proved to be the issue of citizenship and naturalization for non-Latvians. As they wrestled with this issue, Latvian authorities searched for ways to preserve the country's culture while embracing ethnic diversity to ensure equal rights for its various minority groups.

Historical Background

It would be impossible to analyze the political developments that led to Latvia's push toward independence in the late 1980s and early 1990s without examining the country's history, which shaped Latvia's attitude toward the USSR and fanned the flames of its independence movement. Major milestones in twentieth century Latvian history -- the declaration of Latvian independence (November 18, 1918), the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop (or Nazi-Soviet) Pact (August 23, 1939), the annexation of Latvia to the USSR (August 1940), the massive purges and deportations of Latvians (1941, 1949, and 1959), and, the migration of Russian settlers into Latvian cities -- left an indelible mark on Latvian national consciousness, which contributed to the rise of strong anti-Soviet sentiment in that Soviet republic. In the wake of *glasnost* in the late 1980s, these issues stimulated the rise of a new Latvian civil society. For political activists, these events became the foundation upon which Latvia could legitimize its effort to reestablish its independence.

During the Soviet era (1940-1991), Latvian history had been distorted and adjusted to fit the ideological framework created by the Communist Party. As a consequence, ethnic minorities in the USSR were cut off from their historical memory for decades. The period of *glasnost* initiated by Gorbachev in the late 1980s provided an opportunity for a more critical examination of Soviet policies. As soon as this Pandora's Box was unlocked, it was impossible to close it. As Juris Dreifelds, a political scientist at Brock University in

Ontario, writes:

> [H]istory is much more than just a "detached register of significant events of the past. History can be a weapon, a club. It can also be a source of strength and of mobilization, a focal point of intense emotions; it can help define friends and enemies and break down walls or build them up.[8]

For Latvians, by the late 1980s history became both a peaceful weapon for change and an inspiration for political mobilization.

For more than seven centuries, after German-led crusaders conquered Latvian territory in the 1300s, a succession of foreign powers – the Vatican, Denmark, Prussia, Poland-Lithuania, Sweden, and Russia – have controlled various parts of modern-day Latvia. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Latvia had been entirely absorbed into the Russian Empire. However, it retained a certain degree of autonomy, and the German barons remained extremely influential there.[9] Mostly due to the efforts of the German clergy, Latvia attained one of the highest literacy rates in the Russian Empire. By the mid-nineteenth century, over 80% of the Latvian population was literate. In addition, Latvia's geopolitical position, extensive sea trade, and the rise of a publishing industry helped familiarize Latvians with modern political and economic ideas, and lifestyles of Western Europe, as well as those in Moscow and St. Petersburg. During the second half of the nineteenth century, as political scientist Artis Pabriks and historian Aldis Purs point out, a Latvian ethnic identity emerged and became the basis for social organization. The intensity and scope of Latvian professional cultural endeavors (i.e., art, literature, song, and theatre) unified and mobilized a nation, giving rise to a strong sense of national consciousness and the development of a movement interested in preserving Latvian culture against the threats of Germanization and Russification. This period is often referred to as the First Latvian Awakening.[10]

During World War I, Latvians seized upon the opportunity to establish an independent state, and on November 18, 1918, the Latvian National Council formally declared the country's independence. However, de facto independence came only in January 1920, after the last foreign troops left the country. Following the adoption of a new constitution on February 15, 1922, the first Parliament (*Saeima*) assembled in November 1922. Earlier, in the Treaty of Riga (August 11, 1920), Soviet Russia had eccognized Latvian independence and renounced "voluntarily and for eternal times all sovereign rights over the Latvian People and its territory."[11] On September 22, 1921, Latvia, along with the other two Baltic states, joined the League of Nations. Following its declaration of independence, Latvia established itself as a successful state. Dreifelds characterizes this period as the "Second Awakening."[12] After experiencing the hardships of immediate post-war reconstruction, Latvia, by the mid-1930s, achieved prosperity. In addition, the adoption of progressive welfare programs minimized social tensions Moreover, in terms of education, Latvia ranked second in Europe (after Estonia) in the proportion of its population that had attained some level of post-secondary education.[13]

Latvia experienced a major turning point in its history on August 23, 1939. According to the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Latvia (as well as Estonia, Finland, the eastern portion of Poland, Bessarabia, and later Lithuania) came under Soviet control.[14] In its first move to assert its authority over Latvian territory, the Soviet Union, on October 5, 1939, forced the Latvian government to sign a Mutual Assistance Pact. According to the

provisions of this agreement, over 30,000 Soviet troops were deployed in Latvia.[15] Meanwhile, Hitler ordered all ethnic Germans in Latvia to return to Germany. In June 1940, the Soviet Union sent ultimatums to all three Baltic countries, demanding the free entry of an unspecified number of Soviet troops and changes in the composition and policies of the Baltic governments.[16] Lacking allies, the three states capitulated to these demnds. The Red Army entered Latvia accompanied by a special envoy, Andrei Vyshinskij, the individual who had staged the infamous Moscow show trials against Stalin's real and imagined enemies in the 1930s, that helped Stalin maintain his control over the Soviet government, who had now been assigned to ensure Latvia's complete incorporation into the Soviet Union through rapid political, cultural, and economic Sovietization.[17] To "legitimize" the changes, elections were held in all three Baltic republics in July 1940. Each government reported 100% voter participation and near complete support for the Communists (97.6% in Latvia).[18] A massive purge and deportation to Siberia of almost 15,000 Latvians, over half of them women and children occurred on June 13-14, 1941. More purges would follow; during the first year of Soviet occupation, some 35,000 Latvians were either deported or shot.[19]

On June 22, 1941, Operation Barbarossa, the German attack against the USSR, began. Four days later, German troops entered Latvia. The Nazi regime's agenda in Latvia called for the bulk of Latvians to be expelled or exterminated, and the territory to be repopulated by Germans. The Red Army re-entered Latvia in October 1944—an event that caused a massive flight of Latvians, perhaps hundreds of thousands, to Germany or Sweden.[20] They seemed more terrified of Communist rule than Nazi occupation.

Mark Jubilis, a political scientist at Notre Dame, estimates that Latvian wartime losses were perhaps "the most severe in Europe, with Latvia losing 30% of its prewar population."[21] To make matters worse, such suffering did not end with the war. Postwar Soviet occupation brought new waves of purges and deportations, forced collectivization, Russification, and brutal force to ensure Latvian obedience to Soviet rule. Jubilis refers to the postwar Soviet period as "the war after the war," because population losses in Latvia were comparable to those it had suffered during World War II.[22] For more than a decade, Latvian guerilla fighters tried unsuccessfully to resist Soviet control. Dreifelds writes that the "presence of a large contingent of guerillas fighting without any support from abroad and with a totally uneven balance of forces is another index of the depth of antagonism felt by Latvians toward the forcible loss of independence."[23] Another major wave of deportations occurred on March 25, 1949, when more than 40,000 Latvians, including nearly 30,000 women and children under the age of sixteen, were deported to Siberia. Overall, between 1945 and 1953, about 120,000 Latvians were victims of Soviet repression, that is, they were either arrested, deported, or shot.[24]

After Stalin's death, the intensity of Soviet repression in Latvia decreased as the number of arrests and deportations declined significantly. Yet during both the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras (1953-1964 and 1964–1982, respectively), Latvia faced another form of repression, this time cultural. The doctrine of "coming together" (*sblizhenie)* of nations within the USSR and their eventual "fusion" (*sliyanie)*, put forward by Stalin's successor, Nikita Khrushchev, at the Twenty-Second Party Congress in 1961, sought to minimize and eventually obliterate national differences within the Soviet Union.[25] In 1971, at the Twenty-Fourth Party Congress, Khrushchev's successor, Leonid Brezhnev, reiterated this doctrine, and spoke of the emergence of a new "Soviet people" (in the *ethnic* rather than mere *civic* sense of the word) with Russian as their common language. This doctrine

brought about another wave of Russification in the Soviet republics, especially in those where local cultures and languages remained quite distinct, as in the Baltics. Russian became the dominant language in education, government, and media throughout the USSR. As a result, during the 1970s there was a reported 26% increase in the proportion of Latvian people claiming proficiency in the Russian language.[26] Latvian schools rapidly transferred to Russian as the main medium of instruction; literary publications in Latvian became a rarity, and mass media became predominantly Russian-speaking.[27] Understandably, Latvians feared that their language and culture were on the verge of extinction. This fear aroused a reaction to the Russification policies unforeseen by Moscow, namely, an anti-Russian and anti-Soviet resistance that sparked a strong desire to reassert Latvian national self-awareness.[28] Such sentiment remained largely beneath the surface until the 1980s when, given an opportunity by *glosnost*, it blossomed into a full-scale anti-Soviet independence movement.

Differences between Latvia and Both Other Soviet Republics and Satellite States

Despite all of the Soviet republics sharing the same point of departure, the path that each chose after the collapse of the Soviet Union was quite different from one another. This variety can be explained by vast differences in culture, demography, economics, levels of education, historical development, and political culture between individual republics. As a consequence, the methods used by various independence movements, visions of development, and rates of transition differed in each Soviet republic. For some, the road to independence was accompanied by violence (e.g., the Caucasus, Moldova, Russia, and Tadzhikistan); others, including Latvia, managed to achieve a relatively peaceful transition. Their approaches to reform differed, too. Some chose to pursue slow, gradual change; others adopted a "shock therapy" approach in implementing reforms.[29]

The three Baltic republics have always been different from the other Soviet republics. Since they were the last republics to be incorporated into the USSR (1940), they spent much less time under Soviet rule than the others. As a consequence, "Sovietization" had less of an impact in these areas. In addition, the Baltic republics differed from other Soviet republics because they had a living memory of being independent between 1920 and 1940. As mentioned earlier, during that period, they had managed to become relatively prosperous and advanced—they developed a successful market economy, adopted progressive welfare programs, emphasized the attainment of higher education, achieved political stability, and demonstrated favorable treatment toward ethnic minorities.[30] They Baltic republics, pasrticularly Latvia, therefore, believed that they could "make it on their own," without the guidance and control of a larger power. As Dreifelds puts it, "Twenty years of independence provided an antidote against the full effects of totalitarianism."[31] Furthermore, their opposition to communism and the Soviet regime were stronger and more uncompromising than that found in most other Soviet republics. The memory of their annexation to the USSR severely undermined the legitimacy of Soviet rule in the Baltics. Furthermore, in resisting Soviet domination they enjoyed Western support. To Western countries, the Baltic States had a special status because they had not become members of the USSR willingly. There was a widespread consensus in the West that the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, into the USSR in 1940 was illegal. Moreover, the three Baltic republics generally had much closer ties to the Western countries than any of the

other Soviet republics. Consequently, the West was prepared to offer support (i.e., expertise on economic and political matters), to the Baltic republics in their quest for independence.[32]

Political scientist Walter Clemens, Jr., has identified several other factors that differentiated the Baltics from other Soviet republics. For example, the education level and living standards in the Baltic republics were significantly higher than those found anywhere else in the USSR. In addition, the Kremlin had long permitted some degree of autonomy in the Baltic republics. However, because this region bordered the West, it held a vital strategic importance for the USSR. Accordingly, the Soviets maintained a heavy military presence there.[33] The Baltic Military District, headquartered in Riga, included approximately 250,000 Soviet troops.[34] By 1991, 56,000 Soviet troops were stationed in Latvia alone.[35]

After gaining their independence in 1991, the Baltic States refused to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), that formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union.[36] Instead, they joined NATO, and later became members of the European Union.[37] All three states managed to achieve a faster, deeper, and more effective transformation toward democracy and a market economy than other areas formerly under Soviet control. In these respects, the Baltic republics actually had more in common with the Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe than with other Soviet republics. However, while the Soviet satellites – Albania (until 1960), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Poland, Romania (until 1989), and Yugoslavia (until 1948) – were at least formally independent, though heavily influenced politically and economically by the Soviets but not direct federal subjects of the USSR, the Baltic States were an integral part of the USSR under the direct control of central institutions, located in Moscow, and, as such, enjoyed less "international recognizibility."[38] Also, the Baltic republics had to deal with the presence of a large Russian community supportive of the USSR and strongly oriented toward Russia.[39] Besides, Latvia had absolutely no control over its economy since it was subject to a unified central economic plan directed from Moscow. More importantly, the Baltic republics did not have their own armed forces, state organs and institutions or independent laws/jurisdictions that would allow them to establish legal bodies that possessed the authority to administer justice.[40]

Of the three Baltic republics, perhaps Latvia had endured the greatest amount of repression from Moscow. The memory of anti-Soviet guerilla resistance in Latvia in the decade that followed its annexation to the USSR (the 1940s) brought about a heightened suspicion on the part of Soviet leaders toward Latvia, the upshot of which were harsher policies and stricter censorship there. As Dreifelds writes:

> In Latvia the forces of repression were much more visible and given much greater power. It was common knowledge among Balts that plays or literary works acceptable in Tallinn or Vilnius would be censored or vetoed in Riga. "Big Brother" was bigger, meaner and more petty in the middle Baltic republic.[41]

Further evidence of the degree of Soviet repression in Latvia can be seen in its crackdown on religious establishments and beliefs, as manifested in the rapidly declining numbers of Latvians practicing religion (which, in Latvia, is predominantly Lutheran), compared to the other Baltic republics. By the early 1980s, only about 10% of the Latvian population remained practicing Lutherans. By contrast, 33% of Estonians and at least 50% of Lithuanians continued to practice their religion (Lutheranism and Catholicism, respectively).[42]

With regard to the Latvian Communist Party leadership, it was overwhelmingly Russian; ethnic Latvians were severely underrepresented in it. As a result, party elite were unaware of and insensitive to Latvian-specific problems and grievances.[43] By contrast, in Lithuania and Estonia "natives were much more prominent in the hierarchy of power, and the KGB did not have to contend with structures that provided a counterforce to its optimal programs of repression."[44] KGB agents and informants infiltrated every organization in Latvia, and they were more forceful in their methods. Moreover, the coercive power of the Communist Party and the KGB was more pronounced in Latvia since, by housing the headquarters for the Baltic Military Region, it had tmore Soviet troops stationed on its territory than either Lithuania or Estonia.[45] Indeed, as late as 1991 there were 500-600 Russian military instillations and 56,000 Soviet troops in Latvia.[46] In addition, the Latvian cities of Riga and J rmola had become the favorite retirement locations for Soviet officers; by the early 1990s the number of retired officers from the Soviet military, KGB, and the Interior Ministry and their immediate family members residing in Latvia totaled nearly 200,000.[47]

Furthermore, of the three Baltic republics, Latvia experienced the highest rates of immigration by settlers from Russia and other Soviet republics, and thus had one of the largest proportions of the non-titular population in the entire USSR. Estonia had a large Russian population as well, but nowhere near the size of that in Latvia. According to census figures, by 1989 the indigenous population made up only 52% of Latvia's population, whereas that number in Lithuania and Estonia stood at 80% and 61.5%, respectively.[48] In urban areas, Latvians actually comprised the minority. The massive influx of Russian-speaking settlers had accelerated the process of denationalization in Latvia, causing ethnic Latvians to fear that they were on the verge of physical and cultural extinction. Most Latvians believed that "the time was now or never to save their gene pool and culture from assimilation with outsiders."[49]

Another difference between Latvia and its fellow Baltic republics was that it had much less contact with the West. Estonia had close ties with Finland due to geographic proximity and a shared cultural, historical, and linguistic heritage. Lithuania, due to a strong presence of the Roman Catholic Church there, had close ties with Poland and other Catholic countries in Western Europe. In addition, Lithuanians and Estonians had access to Western radio- and TV-broadcasts and print media through neighboring states; Latvia did not enjoy such links with the West.[50]

Overall, due to various economic, ethno-cultural, geopolitical, and historical distinctions, the independence movement in Latvia was unique in comparison to those in other Soviet republics including its sister Baltic republics. Latvian activists were the first to mobilize large segments of the population, unite them under a common cause (i.e., self-determination), and openly confront Communist authorities. As Anatol Lieven, a correspondent for the London *Times* in Moscow, observed, "Latvia was definitely the pathbreaker in patriotic demonstrations and revelations."[51] This period of popular grass-roots mobilization is known as the "Third Awakening."[52]

Latvian Awakening, the Singing Revolution, and the Calendar Demonstrations

The Third Awakening in Latvia sprang from two major sources. The first was traditional folk culture activism. These activists organized massive folk music revival festivals

throughout Latvia. Initially, they sought to preserve Latvia's cultural heritage, but gradually, they took on a more pronounced political agenda—arousing support for national self-determination. Because of the importance of folklore in Latvian culture and the non-violent nature of the movement, this period of national revival in Latvia is commonly referred to as the "Singing Revolution."[53]

The other source of political mobilization in Latvia, as in Estonia and Lithuania, was the environmental protection movement. According to Dainis Ivans, the first leader of the Latvian People's Front, "In Latvia everything began with the movement to save the environment."[54] The catalyst for this movement was a Soviet plan to construct a hydroelectric dam on Latvia's largest and most cherished river, the Daugava. An article in the Latvian literary newspaper, *Literatura un Maksla* (*Literature and Art*), warned that the dam would destroy the Daugava's ecosystem, thus arousing widespread protest against the project that resulted in a massive public campaign in October 1986 involving demonstrations, letters of protest, meetings, and petitions with tens of thousands of signatures collected.[55] This display of public outrage came about in part due to the Chernobyl Nuclear Plant disaster that had occurred in April 1986. Bowing to the anti-dam protests, in early November 1987 the USSR Council of Ministers passed a decree to halt construction of the dam.[56] As Pabriks and Purs argue, the anti-dam movement was "the first success story of Latvian collective action against Soviet authorities" in nearly half a century, and it inspired additional large-scale resistance movements against Soviet rule.[57]

The reason why these two movements – folklore and environmental – were the first to surface stems from the fact that initially Soviet authorities perceived them as relatively harmless, and, therefore, did not crack down on them immediately. However, folk music and environmental activists, after testing the limits of *glasnost* without experiencing any immediate violent backlash, started to "push the envelope," taking on new and more controversial issues, hoping to push the liberalization process beyond Gorbachev's original intention.[58] What happened next was something that Gorbachev neither expected nor desired: the "newly released energies of civil society in the Baltics focused on reviving national identities and asserting national interests."[59]

The fact that the folklore and the environmental movements sparked broader nationalist sentiment should hardly come as a surprise. Nationalism often emerges as a reaction against external threats, whether real or perceived. Latvians believed that Moscow's encroachment on their cultural heritage through an aggressive policy of Russification and its attack upon Latvia's natural resources by what they perceived to be a destructive environmental policy that threatened to undermine the most cherished asset of their nation. Not surprisingly, this stirred up an intense emotional response. After all, when a nation perceives a threat to its cultural legacy and/or natural environment, it considers national existence to be under attack. This is especially true if a natural or cultural object that has deep historical, religious, or symbolic significance for a nation is seemingly under attack by outsiders. For Latvians, the Daugava River represents such an object. As the Ganges River is for Hindus, an olive tree for Palestinians, the horse for Mongols, the Alps for the Swiss, the sakura for the Japanese, and fjords for Norwegians, the Daugava, for Latvians, is not just a beautiful landmark or a source of livelihood; it is a sacred symbol of their nation. It flows through more than 350 kilometers of Latvian territory, including the capital city before emptying into the Gulf of Riga. Its banks contain the remains of fallen warriors who died resisting the enslavement of Latvia over the past seven centuries. According to Latvian tradition, the white stripe on the national flag represents the

Daugava, and the maroon stripes symbolize the blood spilled on both banks of the river in the struggle for Latvian independence.

Daina Stukuls Eglitis, a Latvian-American assistant professor of sociology at George Washington University, has explored the symbolic significance of the Daugava for Latvians. It has served, she argues, as a "powerful symbol of [Latvian] national ideas, ideals, and aspirations across centuries."[60] Indeed, the Daugava is the frequernt subject of Latvian traditional and contemporary poetry (e.g., *Daugava* – a poem by Latvia's best-known poet, Jēnis Rainis) as well as Latvian folk songs, (e.g., *River of Fate).* Eglitis writes that:

> From the Bearslayer who would, in the nineteenth-century epic, rise from the depths of the Daugava to overcome his foe and free the nation, to the myriad songs and poems dedicated to Latvia's "river of fate," the Daugava is a powerful poetic space and a link between the myths and histories of the past and the visions and hopes of the present and future. In the song [*The River of Fate*], the souls of the dead call out from the depths, imploring the living to seek freedom and to realize the desires of the nation.... The Daugava, across time, is portrayed in the cultural canon as a site of battle, of mourning, of triumph, and of remembrance.[61]

This explains why the grassroots campaign to protect the Daugava River carried such an emotional charge and became a primary catalyst for political change.

Similarly, the movement to preserve Latvian folklore stemmed from the threat of the complete obliteration of Latvia's culture. In his classic speech, "What is a Nation?" the nineteenth-century French philosopher and historian Ernest Renan stressed that one of the two necessary components constituting the spiritual principle of a nation is a common past – "the possession in common of a rich legacy of remembrances," and a common present – "the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common."[62] In Latvia, this heritage had been systematically under attack. With communist ideology permeating Latvian culture and the works of genuine Latvian literature and art being destroyed, Latvian folklore, still preserved in the rural areas and transmitted orally from generation to generation, was the only remaining link to the country's ancestral legacy. The campaign to revive this last vestige of Latvia's cultural identity gained momentum with the first gleam of hope for a rebirth of an independent Latvia. Mythology, oral narratives, songs, and traditional rituals were seen as the foundation upon which Latvian culture could be rebuilt.[63]

The first step in promoting national revival was to fill in the "blank spots" in Latvian history erased during the Soviet era. For nearly five decades, the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the 1941 deportations were forbidden topics of discussion in the USSR. Baltic historians and journalists used the opportunity provided by *glasnost* to shed light on these events. Exposing the truth about the period of Soviet occupation greatly undermined the legitimacy of Soviet rule in Latvia in the eyes of many Latvians and Westerners.[64]

In 1987, a newly created Latvian human rights watch group, Helsinki '86, organized a mass demonstration to commemorate the 1941 deportations. The demonstration, which occurred on July 14, 1987, attracted a crowd of over 5,000 at the Monument of Freedom in Riga.[65] This marked the beginning of a series of "Calendar Demonstrations" in Latvia, which commemorated the most important dates in the history of Soviet occupation of

Latvia and twentieth-century Latvian history in general. This included a demonstration on August 23 – the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and November 18 – the anniversary of Latvia's first declaration of independence. Over the next few years, the "Calendar Demonstrations" became regular occurrences. In 1988, they drew crowds of over 100,000 people. By then, the atmosphere had become much more decidedly anti-Soviet, and the maroon-white-maroon flags of independent Latvia were displayed openly.[66]

The most impressive demonstration, widely covered in both the USSR and the West, occurred on August 23, 1989 – the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Activists from the three Baltic republics collectively organized one of the most effective publicity campaigns ever held – the "Baltic Way." Two million people (roughly the size of the entire population of Latvia), held hands, creating a human chain that extended from Vilnius, through Riga, and on to Tallinn.[67] This marked the culmination of the "Singing Revolution," and emphasized the non-violent nature of the Baltic struggle for independence. It also demonstrated the strength of Baltic solidarity, as well as the organizational skills among the popular fronts in each of those republics. More importantly, it demonstrated the truly mass nature of the Baltic movement for independence. After all, organizational skills alone could not mobilize two million people to participate in an event. According to Jubilis, "As [participants] joined hands, each person in the 400-mile line passed on the word "freedom" to the person next to him or her."[68] This emotionally captivating scene attracted much attention in the international media, but it also received a strong rebuke from Moscow. Three days later, the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) issued a statement which blamed "fascist organizations" for the Baltic "nationalist hysteria," and denounced the demonstrations as "hooligan actions."[69]

The "Baltic Way" demonstration marked the peak of Latvian Awakening. Masses of people were mobilized, grass-roots groups grew in numbers, and people were no longer scared to voice their opinions. In order to make certain that their opinions were heard and made a difference, Latvians started to organize independent political groups. A "nascent" civil society- an important prerequisite for Latvia's transition toward democracy—began to emerge.

The Development of Civil Society in Latvia

The earliest independent associations in Latvia can be described as mostly moderate. They focused primarily on environmental issues and cultural revival; some touched upon human rights issues. The most prominent among these early groups were: the Latvian Environmental Protection Club (VAK), or the Green Movement, which had organized the protest campaign against the construction of the dam on the Daugava River; the Latvian Artists' and Writers' Union, which focused on cultural issues; and, the human rights watch group, Helsinki '86, which initiated the "Calendar Demonstrations." In 1987-1988, such associations became more numerous and politicized. Between 1985 and 1991, Riga had the highest percentage of civil society groups in the USSR (52% as compared with the average of 31% per Soviet republic).[70] In late 1988, as in virtually all Soviet republics, a Latvian People's Front was formed as an umbrella organization for various informal groups and activists[71] Throughout the entire process of development of the early stages of civil society in the Baltics, there was a high degree of transnational cooperation between the three Baltic popular fronts. For example, in May 1989, an assembly of the leadership of the three Baltic popular fronts produced a number of joint declarations (the so-called

Tallinn Resolutions) outlining their common goals. This was the first agreement in Soviet history to be signed by independent groups in three Soviet republics without the participation of Moscow.[72]

The intensity of political activism among Latvians reached its peak in March 1990 during the election for the Latvian Supreme Soviet. The pre-election campaign included concerts, debates, mass rallies, and media campaigns. As in most Soviet republics, the election resulted in a clear victory for national independence movements. The majority of seats went to younger, highly educated, middle-class, ethnic Latvian members of the Latvian Popular Front; the "old guard" was effectively replaced (only 15 of 197 elected deputies had previously served in the Latvian Supreme Soviet).[73] After 1990-1991, however, Latvian political groups would become much more cautious due to a Soviet blockade and a violent backlash against Lithuania's declaration of independence, as well as pressures from the local conservative Russian population.[74]

Even though membership in these organizations was technically open to anyone in Latvia regardless of ethnicity, the language of communication was Latvian which hindered participation by many Russians. Their limited access to these civil society groups and to the republic's political elites became an important factor in the political isolation of Latvia's Russian population.[75] As a consequence, they increasingly saw themselves as alienated, helpless, voiceless, and disenfranchised. This "us versus them" mentality created a potential for fostering instability, especially in an atmosphere filled with anxiety and uncertainty about the future.

Responses to Developments in Latvia from Latvian Russians and Other Soviet Republics

Blaming local Russians for years of Soviet despotism and all of the problems that stemmed from it, which seemed extremely unfair to them, exacerbated ethnic tensions in Latvia. Many Latvians had come to associate Russians with "foreign conquest, political tyranny, debasement of culture and public manners, and economic decline."[76] Somehow, criticism of Stalinism and violence against Latvians had morphed into criticism of the Russian people in general. Many of the more radical ethnic Latvians started to openly refer to the Russians in Latvia as "occupiers," "imperialists," and "colonists." While these views were held by many Baltic residents, the Russian nation should not bear collective guilt for the crimes committed by Stalin and his successors. After all, as Anotol Lieven points out, "the Russian people were never consulted, in free elections, as to their support for Communism and its policies."[77]

As the independence movement in Latvia gained momentum, the Russians in Latvia became divided in their opinions. Many wanted to maintain the status quo, that is, preserve the USSR. On October 18, 1988, ten days after the founding congress of the Latvian Popular Front (PFL), Russian-oriented traditionalists established a "Russian version" of the PFL: the Latvian International Working People's Front (Interfront). It organized several mass rallies in February 1989, and called for a general strike by non-Latvian industrial workers.[78]

Interfront did not represent the views of the majority of Russians in Latvia, only the most conservative faction among them. Contrary to what many Latvians believed, there was no uniform support for the Soviet Union among Russians in Latvia. Many, especially the younger, more educated, and middle-class Russians (many of whom were born, raised,

and educated in Latvia; spoke the Latvian language; and identified more with Latvia than with the Soviet Union), were staunch supporters of Latvian independence. Their support was heightened by the so-called "zero option" statement issued in July 1989 by the PFL and later included in their platform for the 1990 election, which promised that all Latvian residents, regardless of their ethnicity, who supported Latvian independence would be granted Latvian citizenship.[79]

Meanwhile, Russia responded in a variety of ways to these developments in the Baltics. Initially, many Russians believed that the calls for independence were orchestrated by radical extremists and nationalists and did not represent the views of the majority of the population in the Baltic republics. A statement issued by the Central Committee of the CPSU in August 1989, three days following the "Baltic Way" demonstration, condemned:

> the separatist line that has been pursued in the past months...by certain forces in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia," and was based on "intimidation, deception, disinformation, and even moral terror and defamation of all who disagreed, all who remained true to internationalism and the idea of an integral Soviet Union.[80]

A stern warning accompanied this statement:

> Things have gone too far. The fate of the Baltic peoples is in serious danger. People should know into what abyss they are being pushed by the national leaders. The consequences could be disastrous....The very viability of the Baltic nations could be called into question.[81]

Conservatives demanded that order be restored in the Baltic republics and that they be kept within the USSR by any means necessary. Gorbachev, however, despite issuing numerous warnings, and threatening economic sanctions and the use of military force to maintain Soviet control in the Baltics, opposed a full-scale military conflict. Whereas Russian nationalists resented the special claims asserted by the border nations and considered it their duty to protect the Russian Diaspora in the Baltic region, other Russians "welcomed freedom wherever it emerged and hoped that it might spread" to Russia. Indeed, many liberal democrats voiced their support for the Baltic movements for democracy and environmental protection. Reform-minded liberals led by Boris Yeltsin were sympathetic toward the plight of Latvia, and established close cooperation between liberal movements in Latvia and Russia. In other Soviet republics, reform-minded nationalists inspired by their Baltic counterparts, followed suit. By 1990, nationalist Popular Fronts had been organized in Belarus, Caucasus. Moldova, and Ukraine.[82]

Independence and New Political Institutions

In spite of the fact that the idea of independence enjoyed support among the vast majority of the Latvian population, and that political forces in Latvia were highly mobilized by the end of 1980s, the actual political struggle to achieve de facto independence in Latvia was just beginning. On May 4, 1990, the newly elected Latvian Supreme Soviet, controlled by the People's Front, issued a declaration of independence. It also declared that, according to international law, Latvia's annexation to the USSR had been illegal. According to the new Latvian authorities, Soviet actions and treaties since

1939-1940, namely, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of October 1939, the July 21, 1940 declaration that attached Latvia to the USSR, and subsequent actions `by Soviet troops were illegal according to the precepts of international law at the time. As stated in a report by Latvia's foreign minister to the USSR, the Soviets had acted in direct violation of a number of multilateral and bilateral treaties, including Article 42 of the Laws and Custom, of War on Land (The Hague, 1907),`the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928), the London Convention on the Definition of Aggression (1935), and the Non-Aggression Pact between the USSR and Latvia (1932). Furthermore, the 1940 declaration violated the constitutional requirement under Article 77 to hold a referendum.[83] The point was made that the pre-1940 Latvian republic still existed *dejure*, and that the Latvian constitution of 1922 remained in force. However, in an effort to avoid a harsh response from Moscow similar to Russia's resaction to Lithuania's declaration of full independence in mid-Maarch 1990, the Latvian Supreme Soviet made it clear that the "renewal of Latvian Republic state power would come into force after a transition period" which would end with the assembly of the Latvian Parliament (*Saeima*), a path mirrored by Estonia. In doing so, the continuity of the pre-1940 Latvian Republic was established, and the Latvian Constitution of 1922 was reaffirmed..[84]

A harsh reaction from Moscow followed anyway. Two weeks later, on May 15, Gorbachev declared the Latvian resolution null and void.,[85] his decree encouraged an attempt by several thousand Soviet military cadets and retired officers to storm the Latvian Supreme Council building. The attack was repulsed by local police and "Black Berets" or OMON, a special riot militia established, ironically, for quite the opposite purpose of dispersing nationalist and reformist demonstrations.[86]

In September 1990, Gorbachev, pressured by hardliners in the Soviet government, decided to use military force to prevent the secession of Latvia and the other Baltic republics from the USSR.[87] Soviet paramilitary units stationed in Latvia (OMON – Special Purpose Mobile Units – and Black Berets) occupied the headquarters of the Latvian State Prosecutor, and later, the Ministry of Interior, and the Latvian Press Building where they stopped the publication of all non-Communist papers. They also seized control of several government organizations, harassed and kidnapped government officials, and destroyed a number of customs posts in an attempt to scare Latvians back "into the arms of Moscow."[88] However, the confrontations in Latvia never reached the level of intensity as those that had occurred in Vilnius. These events united Latvians of different political persuasions and ethnic backgrounds (including ethnic Russians) against the USSR, and inspired much sympathy from the West.[89] In the end, the last Soviet attempt to hold onto Latvia failed in large part because the Soviet Army stood aside. It heeded an appeal from Yeltsin not to shoot, and feared possible worldwide condemnation if it tried to suppress the independence movement in Latvia.[90]

On March 3, 1991, the results of a referendum in Latvia that asked voters "Are you for a democratic and independent Republic of Latvia?" showed widespread support for independence (74% answered Yes).[91] In August 1991, immediately after the failed coup against Gorbchev in Moscow, the Latvian Supreme Council went into emergency session, and on August 21, Latvia declared its full and immediate independence.[92] Two days later, Russia officially recognized the newly independent Latvian state. About two weeks after that, on September 4, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies also recognized Latvia's independence. On September 17, Latvia, together with its fellow Baltic republics, received international recognition by gaining admssion to the United Nations.[93]

Latvia had finally restablished its' independence, but amidst the ecstatic celebrations the sober reality hit. Now that the principle goal had been achieved, an entirely new set of problems, questions, and challenges sprang up. These included: a lack of experienced politicians to govern the country due to a lack of familiarity in governing and dealing with difficulties arising from economic pressures, corruption, meeting the demands of rural areas, limited support for independence from the non-Latvian portion of the population, the need for a new constitution, and the emotional and physical exhaustion of politicians involved in the struggle for independence.[94] In addition, the Latvian Popular Front quickly lost support; the nationalist and pro-democracy movements "lost steam" following the acquisition of independence as socioeconomic conditions deteriorated rapidly.[95] The high turnover of political elites created an impression of a "power vacuum" at the top. Overall, there was an overwhelming sense of "Now What?" among the Latvian population.

In 1993, the new legislative body – the Fifth *Saeima* – was established, consisting of 100 members elected through proportional representation. The electorate included only pre-1940 Latvian citizens and their direct descendants. Thus, Russians and other non-titular ethnic groups were completely shut out of political participation. Ironically, in the 1993 election to the new parliament, the Latvian Popular Front – which had led the independence movement and had dominated the previous legislature – failed to reach the 4% threshold required to win any seats in the Fifth *Saeima.*[96]

In all, twenty-three groups participated in the election. Curiously, everyone tried to avoid the term "party" due to its negative connotation with the Communist Party. The Communist Party had been declared illegal and was not allowed to contest the results of the election. The different *groups* built their platforms around their plans for economic reform and resolving the problem of defining citizenship. Traditional concepts of left and right did not apply in this election. Rightist parties were categorized as such primarily on the basis of their exclusivity on the question of citizenship, their desire to "repatriate" postwar immigrants to their countries of origin, and their tough stance regarding the treatment of former Communists. Center parties were only moderately nationalistic on the citizenship question and decidedly pro-free-enterprise on economic issues.[97] The leftist parties received most of their support from non-Latvians. The biggest victor in the election was a center party, Latvia's Way (32.4%). Overall, the election was a success. With an 89% turnout and 874 candidates contesting 100 seats, it demonstrated that Latvia was on its way toward democratization.[98]

On July 21, the *Saeima* accepted the 1922 Latvian Constitution in its entirety before electing a president. Among the three nominees, there was only one local Latvian, Guntis Ulmanis; the other two came from the West. Ulmanis won the vote in the *Saeima* (53%), despite opposition from many rightist groups, radical nationalists, and the Independence Movement against Ulmanis because he had been a member of the Communist Party for more than twenty years. However, he remained a credible presidential candidate because, during his youth, he had been deported to Siberia.[99] As president, Ulmanis could appoint the prime minister, ratify international agreements, as well as appoint and receive diplomats. He could also initiate laws and refer laws back to the *Saeima* for a second reading. In addition, he could call for the dissolution of the *Saeima*, provided that he first received support from at least 50% of the population in a referendum. If more than half of the population opposed the referendum, the president had to resign.[100]

Citizenship Law

The issue of citizenship has been the focus of Latvian politics for many years and a major point of contention between Latvians and non-Latvians. It has also caused problems with Latvia's eastern neighbors and the international community at large. Since there was "no precedence for legal state restoration after such a long period of foreign annexation," international human rights experts had difficulty developing a uniform opinion on the matter.[101]

In October 1991, following the declaration of independence, citizenship in the new Latvian republic was automatically granted to those who or whose parents (at least one) had held Latvian citizenship prior to the Soviet occupation in 1940. The question now was how to deal with more than 700,000, mostly Russian-speaking non-citizens, who had settled in Latvia after 1940, as well as their descendants who had been born in Latvia.[102] This large group of people technically became "aliens," or "stateless persons." Legally, they were referred to as "the former citizens of the USSR who are not citizens of Latvia or another state.[103] Their social and economic rights were severely limited, including their property rights, their right to receive social benefits, their right to work in certain professions, their right of self-defense, and their freedom of conscience.[104] Aina Antane, a professor of history at the Latvia Academy of Sciences, and Boris Tsilevich, a researcher for *Baltic Insight,* a Riga-based Center for Education and Social Research in ethnic policies, rights, and minority issues, point out that, while the *Saeima* engged in protracted debate on the issue, the legal vacuum created a situation in which local administrators in the municipalities could deal with the matter arbitrarily. This led to systematic violations perpetrated by officials in the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Any person denied registration was barred from certain types of employment, social benefits, and marriage registration as well as other aforementioned economic and social rights. This caused several international human rights organizations to express concern over this situation.[105]

Graham Smith, Vivien Law, and Andrew Bohr, all associated with the Post-Soviet States Research Programme, explain that the debate that followed illustrated a common tension between universalist and particularist notions of distributive justice in post-colonial countries. The issue at hand was whether or not the colonists and their descendants, who had played no part in the original injustice, should be expelled from the newly independent country. The former believe that "irrespective of ethnic difference, those who reside within the sovereign territory at the moment of the declaration of independence should have a right to citizenship."[106] Lithuania shaped its citizenship law in accordance with that principle. Particularists, in contrast, argue that "settler communities do not have the automatic right to citizenship."[107] This principle guided the formulation of citizenship laws adopted in Estonia and Latvia.

The guidelines for naturalization contained requirements that caused discontent and widespread protest from local Russian-speaking non-citizens and Russia's politicians, extensive debate among Latvians, and pressure to revise the law from the United States and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The major concerns about the law stemmed from the inclusion of a strict quota provision, its sixteen-year residency requirement, and a demand for a high level of proficiency in the Latvian language. The quota provision proved to be the most controversial part of the draft law. Lieven has calculated that if the quota was adopted and enforced, it would take over five centuries for all the Russian-speaking non-citizens in Latvia to acquire citizenship, even if they met all

other requirements.[108] The U.S.-based human rights organization, Helsinki Watch, offered the following criticism on the draft law: "Many of the draft law's proposals violate the spirit of CSCE documents, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights."[109] Eventually, President Ulmanis answered such criticism from the West by sending the law back to the *Saeima* for reconsideration. On July 22, 1994, the *Saeima* passed a new bill without the quota provision.[110]

According to the new law, citizenship would be granted to those who have been formally registered as residents and who could satisfy the following conditions: five-year permanent residence in Latvia (beginning from May 4, 1990); command of the Latvian language; knowledge of the basic principles of the Latvian Constitution, national anthem, and history of the country; a legal source of income; take an oath of loyalty to Latvia and renounce any previous citizenship. Certain categories of the population, nonetheless, were denied the right to ever apply for Latvian citizenship. These included: military personnel demobilized from the Soviet Army and those who had "worked against Latvian independence through anti-constitutional methods."[111]

The actual naturalization process in Latvia did not start until February 1995, and the rate of naturalization has been very slow. By July 1996, two years after the enactment of the revised citizenship law, less than 2,500 persons had become naturalized citizens of Latvia.[112] Even though the majority of the non-citizens wanted to become naturalized citizens, certain factors prevented them from doing so: their inability to demonstrate proficiency in the demanding language test, their limited knowledge of Latvian laws and history, an expensive naturalization fee, and an unwillingness to forfeit their right to travel to Russia without a visa.[113] In 2004, both the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reprimanded Latvia for its slow rate of naturalization.[114]

The main hurdle in the naturalization process for non-Latvians was their limited command of the native language. According to the 1989 Census, only a small fraction of the Russian-speaking population in Latvia (22%) claimed to be fluent in Latvian, while almost 70% of ethnic Latvians claimed to be fluent in Russian[115] The Russian language, then, was the preferred medium of communication between various ethnic groups. Prior to independence, many Russians did not believe it was necessary to learn Latvian adequately because they:

> liv[ed] amidst Russians, work[ed] in Russian-majority factories, watch[ed] Russian television and with all necessary documents translated into Russian, most simply [saw] no reason to learn the local language. Nor did the level of... Latvian teaching in Russian schools encourage learning [the language].[116]

Then, in 1992, Russian, for all practical purposes, became a foreign language in Latvia. The Language Act adopted that year stated that non-state languages could only be used in the following instances: "for security reasons, at events organized by national cultural societies, at international seminars and conferences, and with foreign tourists (with a special permission obtained from the State Language Center)."[117] Article 4 of the act authorized large-scale attestations of Latvian language proficiency. In order to keep their jobs, employees in all kinds of professions except manual workers (but including cleaning assistants, guards, and restaurant servers) had to undergo attestation. Anyone who failed the language test would have their employment terminated on the grounds of "professional incompetence."[118]

Passage of these citizenship and language laws further alienated Russians in Latvia, even those who had initially been strong supporters of Latvian independence. Katya Borschova, a Latvian Russian journalist for the Popular Front newspaper, best expressed such sentiment:

> We feel under constant pressure because of the continual barrage in the Latvian press and on television; the constant talk of 'colonists,' 'aliens,' fifth columnists,' 'illegal immigrants'; the constant stress on a 'Latvian Latvia', the exaltation of everything Latvian, the denigration of everything Russian. This is especially irritating when it comes from individuals who only a year ago were stressing that this was not a national struggle. It is having the effect that Russians who had been strongly committed to learning Latvian are now giving it up; simply because they can't stand to be bullied into learning [the language].... All this is especially depressing for those who, like me, worked for independence and stood on the barricades in January and August. We feel betrayed and made fools of....[119]

The controversy surrounding the citizenship question put an additional strain on inter-ethnic relations in Latvia and revived tensions between the nationalist movement and the non-Latvian population. This should come as no surprise since nationalism is a defining theme in Latvian politics both pre- and post-independence.

Latvian Nationalism and Ethnic Relations

Rasma Karklins, a political scientist who specializes in the study of ethnicity in post-Communist Europe, maintains that the concept of nationalism is complex, ambiguous, and bears "[v]arying historical and value connotations in different societies."[120] At the core of nationalism, she maintains, lies the "self-assertion of ethnic groups or nations."[121] This self-assertion, however, can be either positive if it strengthens a group's identity, or harmful if it becomes aggressive or engenders a sense of superiority over other groups. In the West, Latvian nationalism has often been perceived as a "negative variable undermining Latvia's democracy."[122] Steven Burg, a specialist in ethnic politics and director of the Brandeis University Research Center on Democracy and Cultural Pluralism, believes that "the politics of nationalism are contrary to the essence of the liberal democratic process," and that democracy and nationalism are "a bad fit."[123] However, many scholars have concluded that nationalism served as a major catalyst in the final collapse of the Soviet state.[124] Ethno-national claims, Karklins avers, was one of the factors undermining the old regime and were linked to broader political phenomena, especially the emergence of democratic forces.[125] Self-assertion of ethnic identity, she continues, is the only way to construct a civil society in a non-democratic system. First, communal (ethnic) ties "provide an informal network that can form the nucleus of an emergent civil society." Second, ethnicity and the symbols of self-rule express common goals that form the basis for mobilizing civic activity and a political culture of solidarity and participation. This culture is crucial for the solidification of social movements into civil society.[126] Donald Horowitz, a specialist in the study of ethnic conflict, adds that "[i]n times of rapid change, ethnic ties can provide a basis for interpersonal trust and affection" and thus provide a building block for social organization.[127]

Thus, nationalism in that sense represented a constructive rather than destructive force

in Latvia's transition to democracy. To Lieven, nationalism served as a major source of positive change in the Baltics. What he means by nationalist movements, however, are national independence movements. Lieven believes in the benefits of a "large-scale commitment to national identity in helping along the process of state-building, in strengthening democracy and in overcoming the negative side-effects of marketization."[128] Overall, nationalism has been a powerful ingredient among Latvians, which provided the impetus for Latvia to break away from Soviet rule and initiate radical changes. This nationalism, however, has been confined to ethnic Latvians.

The "ugly" side of nationalism is also evident in Latvia in the form of a few radical nationalist and informal neo-Nazi groups that have tried to incite ethnic discord and inter-ethnic violence.[129] Carrying signs that read: "Latvia for Latvians," "Russian Invaders Get Out," and "Death to the Invaders,"[130] these groups have encouraged beatings of ethnic Russians and demanded that they be forcefully removed from the country.[131] Despite these occasional disturbances, no one has died in Latvia as a result of ethnic conflict.[132] Indeed, the Baltic republics have avoided the massive violence that has victimized some Soviet subjects in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Moldova. Still, the ethnic issue represented one of the most acute challenges that Latvia faced in seeking independence and democratization primarily due to its extremely high proportion of non-Latvian population.

Demography and Language in Latvia

Due to uncontrolled immigration from neighboring Soviet republics after 1940 and the massive deportations of Latvians to Siberia, by the late 1980s Latvians comprised only about half of the population in their own republic. Consequently, a paradoxical and inherently unstable situation has developed in Latvia where all ethnic groups feel insecure and threatened.[133] The fear of being a minority in their own country has become a major concern among Latvians.

That fear became particularly acute following the publication of the 1989 Census, which, as noted earlier, revealed that only 52% of the population claimed to be Latvian.[134] Estonia also contained a significant number of ethnic Russians and other minorities (although not as high as in Latvia, at 38.5%), but in Lithuania the number was not high enough to raise serious concern (less than 20%). Age distribution patterns provided another source of concern for Latvians. They comprised a minority in every age group between 19 and 44 (especially 30 to 39).[135] This stemmed from stunted birth rates in the decade after World War II when Sovietization, collectivization, guerilla war, and deportations combined to suppress family growth. The largest percentage of Latvians are 75-years-old and older. Thus, Latvians have become a minority among those who account for the bulk of the workforce in their own country.

Furthermore, Latvians comprised the minority of the population in all major urban areas in their country. Each of the eight largest cities in Latvia had an overwhelmingly more non-Latvian than Latvian population.[136] In Riga, Latvia's capital and its largest city, which is responsible for the bulk of the country's output in publishing, higher education, and culture, Latvians comprise roughly one-third of the total population there (36.5%).[137] The situation was significantly different in the other Baltic republics. In Estonia and Lithuania, the number of ethnic Russians was also high in the capital cities (Tallinn and Vilnius, respectively) in each republic, but there were secondary cities (Tartu and Kaunas,

respectively) that could provide "alternate cultural inputs or serve as a counterweight to the capital."[138] Latvia had no such city. The second largest city in Latvia, Daugavpils, had only 125,000 inhabitants, and the lowest percentage of Latvians—only 14%.[139] Rather than provide a counterweight to the non-Latvian atmosphere of Riga, this city has become a "demonstratively Russian-speaking fortress seemingly oblivious to the changes that have occurred in the country."[140] During the period of awakening, Daugavpils attracted Russian conservatives. In fact, the Daugavpils Soviet adopted a resolution which proclaimed the Latvian declaration of independence of May 4, 1990, inoperative within city limits.[141]

The language situation proved unsettling for ethnic Latvians. Seventy percent of the population (including two-thirds of ethnic Latvians) knew Russian (this was the highest rate for titular nations in any Soviet republic). Conversely, only 18% of non-Latvians knew Latvian.[142]A staggering 83% of Latvians reported that they used Russian in opening conversations with strangers. In Riga, Russian was the language of daily life. This huge imbalance of linguistic knowledge in Latvia, or "asymmetrical bilingualism," as Jubilis calls it, probably serves as one of the best indicators of the unequal power relationships between Moscow and the Soviet republics during the period of Soviet rule.[143]

Despite these demographic and linguistic factors that favor Russians residing in Latvia, Latvian-Russians felt increasingly insecure there. They had been used to thinking of themselves as a part of the Russian majority in the USSR; now, they found themselves "in an unfamiliar role of being a minority in the foreign land with citizenship rights left at the discretion of another ethnic group."[144] Of course, due to their large numbers, Russianns in Latvia felt less threatened than did their counterparts in Estonia and Lithuania. Still, such a dramatic change in power relations between the two groups has caused considerable ethnic tension. Latvians have become increasingly more assertive (quite rightly) in their demands that non-Latvians make a serious effort to learn the language and to accept the cultural traditions of the native population. The reluctance of Russians to adapt to the Latvian way of life is no longer tolerated as it had been during the period of Soviet rule. Consequently, the treatment of the Russian minority in Latvia has become the major point of contention in relations between Latvia and its eastern neighbor.

Russia: Threat or Partner?

Initially, before the collapse of the USSR, democrats in Latvia and Russia shared a common interest in weakening the Soviet regime. Yeltsin supported the Baltic independence movement, and, in 1990, he signed inter-state treaties that recognized Baltic sovereignty. However, once Russia and Latvia became independent states, controversial issues such as the presence of former Soviet troops on Baltic territory, the status of Russian settlers in Latvia, the need to clearly delimit a mutually recognized international border, and finding ways to ensure the free transportation of oil and gas, began to drive a wedge between the two countries.[145] In fact, one of the two thorniest issues – citizenship – complicated the dialogue with Moscow on the other one – dismantling the huge Soviet military-industrial establishment in the Baltic states, and vice versa.[146]

In 1993, Yeltsin unleashed heavy criticism regarding the treatment of the Russian population in Latvia. Russia even raised this issue before the UN General Assembly, alleging that ethnic Russians swere suffering "human rights abuses in the Baltic states."[147] The Russian leadership takes Russia's role as the 'protector' of the interests of Russians (and pro-Russian minorities) in neighboring states very seriously. Some believe that this

offers a way of distracting public attention from domestic problems. As one Russian diplomat put it, "Russian politicians are trying to solve the problems of Russians in Riga because they don't know how to solve the problems of Russians in Moscow."[148]

The other issue – withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia – became the highest priority in formulating Latvian foreign and defense policies during the first years of that country's newly established independence. As mentioned earlier, in 1991 there were over 50,000 Russian troops in Latvia, and Latvians were anxious for them to leave as soon as possible.[149] At the same time, Russia had a vital strategic interest in maintaining its military presence in Latvia, and hoped to keep some of its 600 military installations inside Latvia, near the Russian border. The issue was finally resolved in 1992 when the UN adopted a resolution requiring the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states. But, this troop withdrawal proved to be a lengthy process; while it was mostly completed by 1994, the last soldier did not leave until the end of 1999.[150]

Generally, from the very beginning of the newly independent Latvian Republic, security concerns were a major fear. Basically, Latvia has been left to its own devices to defend itself, which, at best, were slim. In 1994, Latvian defense forces contained approximately 5,000 regular military personnel (mostly inexperienced draftees, ages 18 or 19), 572 officers, and 470 civilian administrators. Their equipment was limited to 20 small-sized ships, 4 airplanes, and 6 helicopters.[151] It was obvious that Latvia would not be able to effectively defend itself in the event of a military conflict. Latvia, therefore, anxiously sought membership in NATO, joining as a full member on May 1, 2004, and, later, the European Union, to mask its military weakness.

Latvia's Accession to the European Union

For Latvia, the political benefits of EU membership were obvious. It signaled membership in an elite transnational institution committed to political stability and liberal democracy. It also meant acquiring powerful allies such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, which would give Latvia greater confidence. For Latvia, a small and historically vulnerable country that had suffered through a history of foreign domination, EU membership meant stability and security. More important, it would mark a final break from its Communist past while offering Latvia some protection from Russia.

The potential economic gains for Latvia from EU membership also seemed grandiose. In order to rebuild its economy, Latvia desperately needed foreign aid. The EU, Latvians believed, would nurse the Latvian economy back to life. It would provide a chance for economic growth and improvements in living standards comparable with those in the West. The EU, to Latvians, would be an "anchor in the West's prosperous stability, allowing them to turn their backs on the chaos and poverty of the East."[152]

The response in Western Europe to Latvia's accession to the EU was rather mixed. On the one hand, many in Western Europe believed that including their neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe – after their long struggle against communism – would be the morally right thing to do. It seemed that this was the inevitable next step in the development of the EU. Although some European leaders expressed concern about instability in Latvia and the other Baltic States, their membership in the EU was probably the only way to ensure that political extremism, ethnic conflict, surges of migrants, environmental disasters, or a reversion to dictatorship or Communism in the region could be avoided. In addition, there were economic and strategic advantages for the EU: "Bringing the young countries into

the bosom of the EU would help foster stability in the Union's own backyard." Enlarging the EU also meant expanding the market, and it promised economic opportunity for increased exports and a low-cost manufacturing base.[153]

On the other hand, the costs and complications of EU enlargement could be high. Latvia, much like other post-communist countries, would require enormous sums of aid to restructure its economy in order to align it with EU standards. By the end of the accession talks in 2002, Latvia was the poorest among the new candidates; its GDP per capita being less than $4,000.00 (USD).[154] Several countries, especially Austria and Germany, also worried about a possible influx of cheap foreign labor from Latvia and other eastern European countries which would increase unemployment and depress wages within the EU.[155] Perhaps more important from an economic standpoint, many believed that the candidate countries were not ready to join the organization. Indeed, European Commission President Jacques Delors warned that it would take fifteen to twenty years before they were actually ready for membership.[156]

The accession negotiations were severely strained by the controversy over Latvia's Citizenship and Language Acts. Many Western experts and human rights organizations believed that these laws bordered on discrimination of ethnic minorities in Latvia and thus represented a human rights violation.[157] Pressured into a more lenient attitude toward non-citizens by the fact that the issue complicated Latvia's accession to the Council of Europe, CSCE, and the EU, the Latvian government agreed to revise these laws.[158] Another issue regarding Latvian accession to the EU was the Schengen Agreement on border controls. In order to ensure the freedom of movement within the EU's new borders, it would be necessary to tighten control over external borders. For Latvia, this meant imposing tighter visa restrictions for visitors to and from Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine, which would certainly cause friction with each of these countries. This would also create tension within Latvia as a large portion of the population of that country have close relatives in these former Soviet republics and, therefore, would oppose strict visa requirements.[159]

These issues affected the initial enthusiasm for membership in the EU among Latvians, and, in a referendum held in September 2003, the Latvian people approved the accession, but with only slightly more than the required 50% of the vote -- the lowest percentage among all the new candidate states.[160] On April 16, 2003, Latvia's Accession Treaty was signed in Athens, and, after the agreement was ratified by the EU member states, Latvia acceded to full EU membership on May 1, 2004, along with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.[161]

Conclusion

Latvia, a small multi-national state that has endured a centuries-long history of foreign domination, continues to search for its voice and identity. Over a ten-year period from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, Latvia underwent a breathtaking transformation – from an oppressed Soviet republic to an independent democratic state. The challenges that Latvia faced along the way were tremendous. Aside from the Herculean tasks of building a new set of state institutions, restructuring its economy, developing the capability to defend itself, reclaiming its culture and language, and establishing its presence in the international arena, Latvia faced the additional task of reconciling the interests of different ethnic groups within its borders. The greatest challenge Latvians struggled with was the country's peculiar ethnodemographic composition: the titular nation makes up only slightly more

than half of the entire population; the other half is made up of Russian settlers and their Russian-speaking descendants. Latvian authorities, then, were faced with two equally unacceptable alternatives: ignore the interests of a large portion of its' population and thus provoke civil unrest, if not ethnic strife, or risk the total extinction of Latvian culture, tradition, and identity. As if sailing between Scylla and Charybdis, Latvia has struggled to steer clear of both evils.

In order to safeguard Latvia's newly-acquired independence, Latvian authorities opted for a rather controversial ethnopolitical strategy, especially in the areas of citizenship and language. These policies were perceived by non-Latvians as discriminatory, and aroused indignation domestically, as well as in Russia and from the broader international community. The controversy complicated the process of Latvia's accession to the EU and other international intergovernmental organizations. Bowing to domestic and international pressures, the Latvian legislature has made significant revisions to its naturalization laws.

Latvia and its fellow Baltic States have been among the most successful of the new societies that emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union. They managed to mobilize massive non-violent resistance, and their perseverance paid off. That said, numerous issues remain to be settled before Latvia can become a viable stable democracy with a functioning civil society governed by the rule of law. Latvians will have to find some compromise between safeguarding their national interests and establishing a fully democratic society where civil rights and liberties are guaranteed to all citizens and residents. In the process of building their nation-state, they will have to make certain that universal liberal democratic principles rather than Latvian nationalism serves as their polestar. To be sure, they have made significant strides in ensuring the rights of minorities and liberalizing citizenship laws by providing opportunities for non-Latvians to learn the native language and appreciate Latvian culture, as well as making the process of naturalization of non-Latvians more reasonable. Latvian leaders seem to have realized that in order to build a functioning democracy, they need to incorporate diverse groups into Latvia's public life and allow for their political participation in Latvian civil society. Hopefully this will reduce current ethnic tensions; relieve the pressure on Latvia from its eastern neighbor–Russia; strengthen the country's political institutions; and, eventually give rise to a long-term stable democracy.

ENDNOTES

[1]See, for example, Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolutions; Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; Their Path to Independence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 221; Juris Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 20.

[2]Levien, *Baltic Revoltions,* 219; Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 2.

[3]Artis Pabriks and Aldis Purs, "Latvia: Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nation: The Baltic States-Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania,* eds. David J. Smith, Artis Pabriks, Aldis Purs, and Thomas Lane (London: Routledge, 2004), 45-57.

[4]Ibid., 4.

[5]Levien, *The Baltic Revolutions,* 221.

[6]For the contrast between Latvia's peaceful revolution with the violence that accompanied revolutions in other Soviet republics, see Mark Jubilis, *The Politics of Post-*

Soviet Latvia (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001), 190-91 (Moldova, Tajikistan); Lieven, *The Baltic Revolutions,* 191 (Ossetia, Moldova); Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 1 (Caucasus, Moldova, Tadzhikistan, Russia); Walter J. Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire* (New York; St. Matin's Press, 1991), 3 (Kazakhstan, Armenia, Georgia), 254, (Transcaucusus, Abkhsia, Central Asia).

[7]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 63.

[8]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 22.

[9]Since the 1300s, Latvian territories were ruled by German nobles. Even after Latvia had been incorporated into the Russian Empire in the eighteenth century, German barons remained the local political, economic, and cultural elites there. Ibid., 26.

[10]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 4; Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 26-27.

[11]See, "Peace Treaty between Latvia and Russia," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign affairs of the Republic of Latvia, August 11, 1920 (accessed February 10, 2012), http://www.mfa.gov/lv/en/policy/peacetreaty/, 4.

[12]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition*, 26.

[13]Ibid., 27.

[14] Ibid., 32.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 24.

[17] Ibid., 32.

[18] Ibid., 24.

[19] Ibid.; Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 46.

[20]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 44.

[21]Jubilis, *The Politics of Citizenship and Language in Post-Soviet Latvia,* 45.

[22]Quoted in Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition*, 43.

[23]Ibid. 44.

[24]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire*, 65.

[25]Ibid., 62.

[26]Ibid., 65.

[27]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 32.

[28]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 50.

[29]In economics, shock therapy refers to a rapid reorientation of a country's economic system toward a market economy. This usually includes immediate trade liberalization, massive privatization of state assets, elimination of state subsidies, and a sudden end of price controls. See Jeffrey Sachs, *Understanding 'Shock Therapy'* (London: The Social Market Foundation, 1994).

[30]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 27-29.

[31]Ibid., 12.

[32]Ibid., 5-6.

[33]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire*, 65.

[34]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 49.

[35]Lieven, *Baltic Revolutions,* 203.

[36]Ibid., xiv.

[37]J. Graham Bowley, "The New Central and Eastern European Member States," in *Europe Today,* eds. Ronald Tiersky and Erik Jones, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 370, 410.

[38]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 122.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 48.

[41]Ibid.

[32]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 65.

[43] Dreifelds, *Latvia in Ttransition,* 48-50.

[44]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 65.

[45]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 50.

[46]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 123; Lieven, *Baltic Revolution,* 203.

[47]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 48-50.

[48]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 65.

[49]Ibid., 2.

[50]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 47-48.

[51]Levien, *The Baltic Revolutions,* 221.

[52]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 52.

[53]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 110.

[54]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 47-48.

[55]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Changes," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 52; Lieven, *Baltic Revolutions,* 221.

[56]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 55.

[57]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabrks, Purs, and Lane, 52.

[58]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 60.

[59]Ibid., 60-61.

[60]Daina Stukuls Eglitis, *Imagining the Nation: History, Modernity, and Revolution in Latvia* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2002), 232.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" in *Becoming National: A Reader,* eds. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 41.

[63]Dreifields, *Latvia in Transition,* 54.

[64]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 74.

[65]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 53..

[66]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 67.

[67]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transitiion,* 54.

[68]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 85.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Anders Uhlin, *Post-Soviet Civil Society: Democratization in Russia and the Baltic States* (London: Routledge, 2007), 54.

[71]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 58.

[72]Ibid., 61.

[73]Ibid., 66.

[74]Ibid., 75.

[75]Aina Antane and Boris Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Paul Kolsto (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 141-42.

[76]Lieven, *The Baltic Revolutions,* 185.

[77]Ibid., 176.

[78]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 170.

[79]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 86. The "Zero Option" view of citizenship meant that when a state declared its independence, citizenship in the newly independent state is automatically granted to all permanent residents of this state regardless of their ethnicity and duration of residence. The "First Republic Option," in contrast, suggests that citizenship be granted only to those who were residents of the original state prior to occupation, and to their direct descendants. In the case of Latvia, this would mean that citizenship would be granted only to those who resided in Latvia prior to 1940 and to their direct descendants.

[80]Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 233.

[81]Ibid., 234.

[82]Ibid., 141-42.

[83]Imesis Feldmanis, "The Occupation of Latvia: Aspects of History and International Law," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, http://www.nfa/gov/lv/en/policy/history/-aspects (accessed August 15, 2012), 1-6.

[84] Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 233.

[85]Ibid., 258.

[86]Dreifelds,, *Latvia in Transition,* 79-80.

[87]Ibid., 76.

[88]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,*eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 258.

[89] Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 77.

[90]Ibid., 82-96.

[92]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds., Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Smith, 64.

[93]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integratuion in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed., Kolsto, 99.

[94]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 79.

[95]Ibid., 79-80.

[96]Ibid., 92-94. It is noteworthy to point out that the solidarity movement in Poland also failed to achieve the 5% cut during elections held in that country in the fall of 1993.

[97]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia ,"in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet States; An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 89.

[98]Dovile Budryte· *Taming Nationalism: Political Community Building in Post-Soviet Baltic States* (Abterstat, U.K.: Ashgate, 2005), 103.

[99]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-*

Buildin and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies; An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan, , ed. Kolsto, 89.

[100]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 82-96.

[101]Ibid.

[102]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies; An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 89.

[103]Budryte, *Taming Nationalism,* 103.

[104]Antane and Tsilevich, "Ntion-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 99.

[105]Ibid., 98.

[106]Ibid.

[107]Graham Smith, Vivien Law, Andrew Wilson, Annette Bohr, and Edward Allworth, *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 93-94.

[108]Ibid., 94.

[109]Lieven, *The Baltic Revolutions, 310;* Burdyte, *Taming Nationalism,* 310.

[110]Driefelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 97.

[111]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kzazkhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 108.

[112]Levien, *The Baltic Revolutions,* 310.

[113]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kzazkhstan,* ed., Kolsto, 112.

[114]Ibid.

[115]Quoted in Lieven, *The Baltic Revolutions,* 308.

[116]Rasma Karklins, *Ethnopolitics and Transition to Democracy: The Collapse of the USSR and Latvia* (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1994), 3.

[117]Ibid.

[118]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 13.

[119]Quoted in Ibid.

[120]Karklins, *Ethnopolitics and Transition to Democracy,* 42.

[121]Ibid., 65.

[122]Quoted in Ibid., 67.

[123]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 13.

[124]Many scholars, including: Walter C. Clemens, Jr., *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire,* 5-10; Krisyian Garner and Stefen Sterland, *The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993), ix. 7; Rasma Karklins, *Ethhnopolitics and Transition in Democracy,* 27-49; Donald Horowitz, 'Patterns of Ethnic Separation," in *Compartive Studies in Society and History, 23 (1981):165-95;* Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* 2nd ed (Berkeley, C*A:* University of California Press, 2000), 229-88; Valery TIshkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 207-27.

[125]Clemens, Jr., *The Baltics Transformed,* 65.

[126]Quoted in Ibid., 67.

[127]Ibid., 129.

[128]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 13.

[129]Antanne and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Iinvestigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 72-73.

[130]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 148.

[131]Dreifelds,, *Latvia in Transition,* 143.

[132]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia," in *Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 64.

[133]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition,* 47.

[134] Ibid., 48-49.

[135]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 148.

[136]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition*, 144.

[138]Drefelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 144.

[139]Antane and Tsilevich, "Nation-Building and Ethnic Integration in Latvia,' in *Nation-building and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies: An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan,* ed. Kolsto, 71.

[140] Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 144.

[141] Ibid., 148.

[142]Jubilis, *Nationalism and Democratic Transition*, 48-49.

[143]Ibid., 49.

[144] Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 144.

[145]Victor M. Sergeyev, "The Historical Structure of Conflicts in the Baltic Area and the Long-Term National Interests of Russia," in S*tability and Security in the Baltic Sea Region: Russian, Nordic, and European Aspects,* ed. Olav Knudsen (Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999), 26.

[146]John Hide and Patrick Salmon, *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century,* rev. ed. (London: Longman, 1994), 189.

[147]Ibid.

[148] Ibid., 190.

[149]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 123.

[150]Ibid.

[151]Dreifelds, *Latvia in Transition,* 105.

[152]Bowley, "The New Central and Eastern European Member States," in *Europe Today*, eds. Tiersky and Jones, 3rd ed.., 372.

[153]Ibid., 3rd ed., 370-71.

[154]International Monetary Fund, "Republic of Latvia: 2004 Article IV Consultation-Staff Report; Public Information Notice on the Executive Board Discussion; and Statement by the Executive Director for the Republic of Latvia," IMF Country Report 04/260, Approved by Susan Schadler and Matthew Fisher, International Monetary Fund: Publications, August 2004, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2004/cr04260.pdf (accessed May 23, 2012), 3.

[155]Bowley, "The New Central and Eastern European Member States," in *Europe Today*, eds. Tiersky and Jones, 3rd ed., 356.

[156]Ibid., 3rd ed., 379.

[157]Lieven, *The Baltic Revolutions*, 310-11.

[158]Pabriks and Purs, "Latvia: The Challenges of Change," in *Postcommunist States and Nations,* eds. Smith, Pabriks, Purs, and Lane, 78.

[159]Bowley, "The New Central and Eastern European Member States," in *Europe Today*, eds. Tiersky and Jones, 3rd ed., 356.

[160]Ibid., 3rd. ed., 391.

[161]Ibid., 3rd ed., 370-71.