

# **ETHNICITY**

## **Politics of Recognition**

**2009/1**

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**Politics of Recognition****CONTENTS**

Vladislav Volkov, Olga Lavrinenko RECOGNITION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE INTERETHNIC DIALOGUE IN LATVIA .....	4
Denis Hanov RECOGNITION OF MINORITY RIGHTS AND LIBERAL PARADIGM: IS A THIRD WAY POSSIBLE? THE CASE OF LATVIA .....	46
Andrius Marcinkevicius ORGANIZING EDUCATION OF RUSSIANS IN LITHUANIA 1918–1940: CHALLENGES OF IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION ...	59
Natalia Filippova RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL ETHNIC MINORITIES IN RUSSIA: PECULIARITIES OF LEGISLATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CHANGING THE SUBJECT STRUCTURE OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION .....	90
<b>Book Review</b> Janis Taurens THE 600-YEAR-OLD HISTORY OF JEWS IN THE BALTICS .....	113
<b>Notes for Contributors</b> .....	120

**Vladislav Volkov, Olga Lavrinenko**

**RECOGNITION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES  
OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE INTERETHNIC  
DIALOGUE IN LATVIA**

In the modern sociological, socio-anthropological and politological scientific literature, and also in the public consciousness the issue of interethnic dialogue has its place in a certain part of society's interethnic interaction. Scientific consciousness tends to study the interaction of interethnic relations in society in the light of an interethnic dialogue only in the situation when both individual bearers of different ethnic identities and collective bearers of collective ethnic identity interact – these are independent ethnic groups with a developed identity which influence the cultural life of a country, the system of communication and even politics. Besides that, the concept «interethnic dialogue» itself is used as an imperative, an urgent demand which is necessary to be able to develop harmoniously a multiethnic society. To demonstrate in which way the recognition of ethnic groups as subjects of an interpersonal dialogue occurs in the modern Latvian civil society the authors used some data from the sociological survey «Interaction of Collective and Individual Identities of Ethnic Groups in the Eastern Latvia as a Factor for Development of a Civil Society» (Project No. 07.2103 of the Latvian Scientific Council, 2007-2008).

**Keywords:** interethnic dialogue, multiethnic society, collective and individual identities, civil society.

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## 1. THE CONCEPT OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

The concept «collective identity» is a significant term for explaining the character of the ethnic identity of national minorities in national states. This concept is used to demonstrate how different symbols or ideologies, which function in a public sphere, are also included into identities. Researchers have found some specific important issues, for example, what is the potential for formation of ethnic minorities' new civic identities, the values of which they would share with the whole society (Vihalemm 2005, p. 52).

The concept of collective identity in the liberal tradition is considered to be one of the key concepts for explaining such phenomena as collective power, rationality and responsibility. Some scientists underline that development of this concept accompanies the explanation of the nature of «collective agents with specific rights, duties and responsibilities». At the same time it is demonstrated that manifestation of collective identity may be of socially destructive character as well, which is expressed, for example, in the collective forms of hatred. Formation of such collective identity is social actors' own initiative, when they impute others such qualities as dishonesty, and degradation, which leads to perception of others as unequal to one's own self. Moreover, hatred can become the only basis for the collective identity. But in general, the collective identity is based on the people's need to see reliability and embodiment of trust in the social group, which they belong to (Loukola 2005, p.111-112).

The so-called homogeneous-heterogeneous approach in political theory views the relationships between the civic and cultural identities as super and subordinate relationships under which one identity cannot reveal itself without suppressing the other. This approach welcomes the existence of different cultural practices in the private sphere, whereas the common civic values should prevail in the public sphere.

The other – pluralistic approach – is based on the idea that a civic participation will be able to establish a connection between the citizenship and the ethno-cultural as well as other differences in a society. The concept of civic identity itself involves awareness of belonging to a specific social group as one of many in a political community. This approach allows interpreting the civic identity as a phenomenon which is constructed in the process of everyday practice, communication and negotiations between different groups. In this sense the civic identity more resembles a process

than a certain state. If the civic participation is hampered, the common identity of citizens can be realized in other forms, for example, through enhancing the ethnic identity. In this case, a multi-culture civic education is especially significant. At the same time groups' common rights should be secured and observed.

David Snow's work «Collective Identity and Expressive Forms» (2001) is one of the most frequently cited works about the issues of collective identity. D. Snow thinks that the concept of collective identity has proved itself necessary in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because a need to understand such social phenomena as identity politics, identity projects, contested identity, insurgent identity and identity movements appeared (Snow 2001).

According to Snow, the concept of collective identity itself as well as the basic concept of identity is rooted in the idea that two or more groups of actors are seen as social objects. That is why it is necessary to introduce the term «identity». Snow agrees with G. Stone's opinion that identity is «coincidence of placements and announcements». This process runs through all social communication and interaction in a society.

Speaking about the collective identity, it is necessary to bear in mind that there are also other types of identity – social and personal. The social identity is an attempt to discern others in a certain place in the social sphere where they belong. This social identification happens when we speak about the social roles of others – the role of «a teacher», «a doctor» etc. The personal identity is viewing oneself as a bearer of social roles. At the same time the concept of collective identity includes such concepts as «we», «they». But these images can be real as well as imaginary. It is important that the collective identity has presupposed the supposition «we» and «they». The collective identity is accompanied by the feeling or understanding of collective interests, and the importance of collective actions. In this respect, the concept «collective identity» is close to sociological interpretations of «collective consciousness» (E.Dürkheim) or «class consciousness» (K.Marx).

D. Snow believes that it would be more appropriate to characterize the collective identity as a process rather than «property» of social actors. The collective identity is a process where social actors understand themselves as a collective unity.

Snow shows the basic differences between the collective identity and the social and personal identities.

- Firstly, the collective identity appears as a dynamic process of social phenomena which can be, (but not necessarily), built into the existing social identities.
- Secondly, the unity which recognizes its «we» does it emotionally, rationally and even on the level of moral consciousness. Such sense of «we» is important for the social mobilization of the unity.
- Thirdly, actualization of the collective identity diminishes the significance of other types of identities.

Snow finds it possible to study scientifically collective identities on the assumption of three analytical approaches – primordialism, social structuralism and constructionism. Primordialism views collective identity from the essentialist perspective, as a natural result of manifestation of some common characteristics – race, gender, ethnicity, etc. Structuralism considers that collective identity is formed objectively as a result of actors' presence in those parts of the social sphere and these actors perform similar social roles. In this sense structuralism and primordialism are similar in understanding collective identity as a result of «natural» manifestation of objective factors on people's consciousness and activity. Constructionism sees collective identity being actively formed in the process of social interaction.

Examination of theoretical approaches to collective identity leads to the idea about the closeness or even similarity of this phenomenon to national commonalities, which can also be studied on the basis of the given theoretical approaches. It is no mere chance that D. Snow himself often uses the examples of collective identity as ethnic identity or national identity.

But it is important to understand the dual character of ethnic groups' collective identity in a civil society. In civic participation people may act both, as representatives of ethnic groups (as bearers of explicitly expressed symbolic ethnic identity) and as representatives of a civil nation. Thereby, indication to the necessity of interaction between identity's ethnic and civic elements in a civic participation, anyway, requires both, academic and public comprehension of these two types of identities. Without such intellectual reflection, concerning the nature of civic and ethnic identity and, consequently, without examining the principles of their interconnections, it is impossible to form a liberal civil society. Especially, as such «monitoring» is never ending in the consciousness of both, the Latvians and ethnic minorities. In self-identification it is also crucial to take into account to what extent these identities realize their limits, that is – to what extent identities' ideologization is limited (according to the style of K. Popper).

## **2. THE ISSUE OF RECOGNIZING COLLECTIVE IDENTITY IN A CIVIL SOCIETY: MODERN VIEWS**

One of the most topical issues is the problem of recognizing the collective identity of ethnic minorities in a civil society. In scientific literature the sphere of the civil society is usually divided into public and private environments, each one having a claim on the autonomy with respect to the economic life of the state and the society. According to Hannah Arendt, existence of public environment is connected with the need to attach «openness» and «publicity» to opinions and actions and, also, to create a «common world». Whereas, the need of privacy is connected with realization of the human subjectivity, «closeness» from the outer world, secrecy, etc. At the same time it is extremely important for the modern society to develop both, public and private spheres, not mixing one with the other (Arendt 2000, p. 7, 8).

That is why collective identity can be interpreted as a part of people's private space because this identity provides reproduction of a great number of non-public life aspects of an ethnic group – its traditions, cultural values, etc. Collective identity as well as the whole private sphere of life appears as a result of the phenomenon of «living together» (Arendt 2000, p. 7). At the same time, collective identity is a part of public and political environment because ethnic minorities are interested in public and legal guarantees for preserving this identity on the state's part.

But what is important – is understanding of the fact that collective identity which does not coincide with common civic identity exists in reality and it must be perceived rationally as a complex social formation which is present in the private as well as in the public environment. Collective identity of ethnic groups and minorities is not, in this sense, an integral subject equal to civic identity. Accordingly, ethnic minorities' collective identity as such, without clear differentiation of its correlation with the society's public sphere and ethnic groups' private life cannot be seen as a direct component of a country's civic life. Otherwise, such «ethnic illnesses» as, for example, institutionalization of «ethnic business», «ethnic parties of minorities», «ethnic information environment» will become common in the society. Ethnically tinged business and a system of social communication and political parties are acceptable until their limitedness within a civil society is understood by the bearers of collective minority identities themselves. In this aspect, the attempts to merge public and private spheres which have been subjected to criticism by

H. Arendt, seem to be exceptionally interesting. The flourishing of political corruption, the spreading of conformism in public consciousness, the substitution of free public discussion for competition of clan interests, and the suppression of human's individual rights are exactly connected with ignoring the differentiation of public and private spheres. (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 257-258, 265-266).

Public and private spheres are antitheses and, at the same time, they are mutually complementary. H. Arendt possessed a very negative attitude towards mixing public and private environment in the life of a capitalist society, which, in her opinion, led to the development of totalitarianism. According to Arendt, a strict differentiation of these two spheres is a guarantee for preserving democracy and autonomy of a responsible civil society. It is evident that including collective identities into a civil society should come along with a strict division of their functions in public and private spheres. Ethnic groups' collective identity in the public sphere is legitimate as a part of political environment which is open for discussions with representatives of other collective identities. And the norms of this public environment are obligatory for all its actors, who are participants of the public discussion. Existence of collective identity as a political phenomenon thus can be explained by its being included into a public discourse.

Such including of collective identity into a public environment creates conditions for a public recognition of it, either as a whole or of its separate constituents. It is clear that levels of recognition may differ. This is a legal granting of some rights to collective identities, for example, the right to free self-expression and preserving this identity by its individual or collective bearers. This can be recognizing other collective identities as a public resource which is necessary for normal functioning of a society. For instance, this has been revealed in Latvia in the last 8-10 years in the scientific research on economic and socio-political life of the society. The authors of this research see the Latvian society as a multi-ethnic formation (Brands-Kehre, Puce 2005, Dribins 2004, Kruks, Shulmane 2002, Rozenvalds 2005, Tabuns 2006, Vebers 1997, Zepa, 2004, Zepa, Šhupule, Tomšone, Krastina 2006, Zobena 2005). Public attention to the principles of such dialogue, rational comprehension of the dialogue norms, positions of its participants, as well as legal and public context are also very important. In Latvian science and public consciousness mainly a liberal tradition of interpretation of interrelations between a civil identity and minorities' collective identities is underlined. Recognition of collective

identities is manifested in the maintenance of a public dialogue between the bearers of a civic identity and the representatives of minorities' collective identity. But in Arendt's theory there are no restrictions on what type of identities can be acknowledged in a society's public environment – individual or collective.

Avoiding a public discussion with other participants of a public environment, at the same time means a return to the private sphere which cannot claim a political status, imposing its own world-view on other collective identities.

Jürgen Habermas stresses that legislation in western countries as a core of a public environment protects liberal values, and the individual rights of people. Whereas in public life, there is a «fight for recognition», where «the matter is the articulation and consolidation of collective identities». The opposition of collective actors arguing about «collective aims and distribution of collective benefits» takes place in a public environment – «on the political scene». According to J.Habermas, the most topical issue is the one which refers to the public environment of western societies; whether it is possible to reconcile «individualistically inclined theory of rights» and «fight for recognition» of collective actors. Habermas answers in the positive; the history of social democratic movements and liberalism demonstrates a real opportunity for «overcoming suppression of non-privileged groups' rights». But the results of this fight were positive only when collective actors were able to realize their aims within the frames of «a struggle for social and state universalization of civil rights» (Habermas 2001, pp. 332-334).

Habermas is against solving a dilemma of collective identities' recognition which is different from a civic identity in the style of Taylor's multicultural conclusions. He believes that in the policy of recognition of the collective identities, for example, ethnic minorities, it is necessary to draw a borderline between «respect towards a unique identity of every individual irrespective of ... ethnic origin ... and respect towards those forms of activities, practices, and varieties of world-view which have prestige with the members of infringed groups», which was already mentioned by Amy Gutmann. Such recognition of ethnic minorities' collective identities «is aimed not at cohesion of social conditions of life but in defense of integral forms of life and traditions, which, most probably, the members of discriminated groups recognize as theirs» (Habermas 2001, pp. 335-336).

However, being the opponent of a multicultural variant of solution for the issue of recognizing minorities' collective identity, Habermas, at

the same time, does not agree with such a liberal interpretation of the solution which offers «abstract alignment of differences», for instance, between ethnic majority and minorities. Habermas reckons that cultural differences «have to be observed and taken into consideration with the increasing sensitivity to contexts if the rights system wants to be implemented in a democratic way». Such interpretation of liberal rights, which considers the contexts of people's lives, allows avoidance of the concept of special «collective rights» which is alien to liberal ideas (Habermas 2001, p. 343).

Habermas is sure that in the modern Western legal tradition «integrity of a separate legal subject, from the legal point of view, cannot be guaranteed without protection of that intersubjectively divisible context of experience and life in which he was socialized and formed his identity». Collective identities are fully able to be institutionalized and reproduced in a special part of a civil society – a «culture net» which is formed by collective actors themselves, for instance, by ethnic groups; «identity of a separate person is interwoven with collective identities and can be stabilized in a culture net which is assumed as a private property to the same small degree as a native language itself». The task of a state governed by the rule of law is not enhancement of «collective rights» in its legislation, which is actually close to «ecological principle of species conservation», but a guarantee for «possibility of cultural reproduction of life worlds» (Habermas 2001, pp. 357-359). According to Habermas, the concept «life world» is a universal characteristic of a personality which unites its status in the society's public environment as well as in its own private life, people's individual and collective identity.

It is necessary to bear in mind that recognition of collective identity as a part of life world is not always considered in Habermas's theory. The thing is that Habermas sees the concept of «universalism sensitive to differences» first of all on the example of moral unity which is presupposed according to I.Kant's ethics obligatory recognition of the individual identity and personality's autonomy (Habermas 2001, p. 110). At the same time, this obligatory recognition of collective identity does not directly follow from Kant's ethics propositions. Certainly, it is possible to spread the requirements of universal moral norms onto the political sphere where collective actors, for example, and ethnic groups participate in a multiethnic society. It happens all the time when people evaluate social behaviour in all the spheres of society's private and public life from the

point of view of moral norms. However, the requirements for recognition of collective identity do not all follow from such moral evaluation. That is why Habermas uses the concept of a person's «life world» which includes a variety of people's social ties including their collective identity, too.

Habermas admits that modern national states are often based on ethnically pluralistic societies. However, the recognition of inevitability of harmonization of the interests of different collective actors in these societies cannot only be concluded from considerations of a moral communicative discourse. It is necessary to have «political will» and need of «public communication» in order to recognize the priority of a nation's political culture which dominates «subcultures and their identities formed before politics». Such political culture is expressed at its most in «constitutional patriotism» (Habermas 2001, pp. 215-216). But here the democratic mechanism of participation or inclusion is in action which allows the previously discriminated citizens to join the process of formation of legislation (Habermas 2001, p. 245).

Notwithstanding attractiveness of Habermas's theory, many scientists express their critical opinions. In the opinion of the opponents of Habermas's theory, it does not consider the fact that many collective actors are subjects to the pressure of the public sphere as «a dominant culture's value system». In these conditions, minorities not having a hope for effective participation in the political sphere try to create their «own public sphere on the basis of their own marginalized identity» (Osteen 2009).

However, communication itself as a basis for social systems is not a condition to understand the collective identity as a resulting derivative from individual identities. For example, in Niklas Luhmann's sociological theory which considers «the difference between the system and the surrounding world» to be a methodological basis, the idea of communication, in fact, withdraws the emphasis of differences between individual and collective identities. (Luhmann 2007, p. 42). Luhmann finds the approaches of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, which see individual activities in the basis of social systems, limited. The basic process in a society which causes sociality is communication. That is why it is reasonable to describe the parties of the communication process as «participants», which can be both, individual and collective actors (Luhmann 2007, pp. 193, 215).

The concept of communication in Luhmann's theory is of an extremely general character in defining the parties' status: «Communication presupposes living beings that live on their own with their own sur-

rounding world and their own instrument for information processing» (Luhmann 2007, p. 217).

Liberal traditions do not ignore the issue of collective identity, either. For example, in «A Theory of Justice» by John Rawls it is underlined that justice is a value not only for a personality but also for groups of people – for «majority» and «minorities». Justice provides a way for observing rights and responsibilities by the main society's institutions (Rawls 2005, pp. 19-20). In Rawls' opinion, «the principles of justice deal with conflict claims on advantages obtained through a social cooperation; they are added to the relationships between several groups or personalities» (Rawls 2005, p. 30). However, the rational personalities act as an instance on which justice of either principles depend (Rawls 2005, p. 31). At the same time Rawls stresses the possibility of influencing various specific interests of people on their understanding of justice (Rawls 2005, p. 44). Rawls saw separate personalities and associations as the parties of just contracts (Rawls 2005, p. 134). However, Rawls understands that the spread of moral principles of justice on the political sphere can have certain restrictions, for example, when a socially split society hardly agrees with the consolidation of the general concept of justice resulting from majoritarian principles. But, if there is no agreement between social groups in a society, Rawls finds it impossible to find acceptable procedures for consolidation of common everyday principles of justice (Rawls 2005, p. 207). Rawls admits that, speaking about such split societies, it is reasonable to recognize the presence of minorities' civil protest to majority's demands, if such a protest is based on the moral principle too, first of all, of honesty (Rawls 2005, pp. 319-331). Although, Rawls does not speak about justice towards the whole social group, he is interested in that part of a social group which is exposed to maximal risks (Rawls 2005, p. 259).

In the liberal concept of state developed by Robert Nozick, there are clearly seen several ideological sources, based on which, it is possible to reconstruct the interconnection of the individual and collective identities. Firstly, it is John Locke's conception about «natural right» of individuals which is understood as a «law». This theory does not put emphasis on the priority of an individual or collective identity, but asserts the primacy of a natural state over public institutions. At the same time, the theory of «natural right» can be interpreted in an individualistic way as it is done by R. Nozick. It happens when an individual himself is responsible for implementing «natural right»; «In a natural state an individual has the

right to independently provide protection of his rights, protect himself, claim a compensation and punish. To protect his rights, at his request, other people can join him» (Nozick 2008, pp. 29-31). Secondly, it is the theory of morals as a basis for political theory. Ethics is seen in Kant's variant. And here it is really possible to talk about the priority of an individual identity over a collective identity (Nozick 2008, pp. 23, 54-57).

An idea of civil society is the theoretical background of interpretation of collective identities. Jeanne Cohen and Andrew Arato think that popularity of the idea of a civil society among collective actors, for example, ethnic minorities, does not at all mean automatic recognition of their collective identity. The reason – often strong differences between social claims of collective identities and normative requirements of a civil society (Cohen, Arato 2003, p. 458).

One of the mechanisms for harmonization of civil society's requirements and collective identities is discourse ethics. According to its requirements every party in a dialogue should see in the opposing party «independent rational subjects whose demands will be recognized if they are supported by weighty arguments». And such a dialogue should have a character of «a completely public communication process which is not pressured by political and economic forces» (Cohen, Arato 2003, p.460).

Such discourse ethics guarantees an individual's autonomy before the power of collective identity because this ethics is based on an individual choice. As a result of this free choice for self-identification it is possible to form a «united collective which possesses a collective identity and the ability to precisely formulate common or joined interest» (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 469-470).

As it is seen, overcoming of antimony in understanding a civil society as normative requirements or a system of naturally emerging social ties historically is also possible within the concept of Habermas's discourse ethics. Although, the following circumstances should be taken into consideration: no matter how important is to guarantee the mechanisms for collective actors' participation in a civil society, the ideological development, and the popularization of a civil society's model, in which there is one or another type of relationships of various collective actors with each other, is essential. Presence of these collective actors in the sphere of a civil society cannot be substituted by the issue of providing the mechanisms for individual participation in the discourse ethics. The understanding of such participation is required, for example, of ethnic minorities as collec-

tive actors, not only their individual representatives. Certain ethnic groups may themselves desire such representation on a symbolic collective level. But the discourse ethics as a way of individual participation directly avoids the issue of recognizing collective actors and their identities. However, as Kant has already demonstrated, there are not any restrictions before the moral evaluation, and collective identities may enter the circle of objects for moral recognition. But even if one side, for example, ethnic minorities, actualizes the issue of its collective identity in the dialogue, the other side, apart from the moral point of view, does not have any prohibition for a reduction of the issues of collective identity to the level of identity of individual actors – the participants of the moral dialogue.

Cohen and Arato reckon that the methodological frames of discourse ethics allow emphasizing the problematics of collective identities in societies which are characterized with the pluralism of value systems. It is in the discourse where the civic identity, which rests within the individual and group identities, is confirmed and partially defined in a new way. (Cohen, Arato 2003, p. 479) It is necessary to add to the above, said by Cohen and Arato, that collective group identity is also corrected in the situation of discourse, interethnic communication. Cohen and Arato themselves admit the possibility of interpreting the collective identity not only as civil but also as group one (as it happens with Habermas too). They fairly suppose that «the process of public communication definitely ascertains us as the subjects of collective action till the moment the question of society or group's interests may arise». And such collective identity emphasized and formed in the discourse is a post-traditional identity, which is above «empirical solidarities» (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 481-482). Collective identities existing within the frames of the discourse are the best way to overcome the radical pluralism in modern societies when collective actors insist on the significance of only their world-view systems (Cohen, Arato 2003, p. 484).

Certainly, the logics of discourse cannot explain all the constituent elements of collective identity. As a rule, the discourse is formed selectively around some interaction problems of collective actors whose identity has been formed historically in diverse contexts. Many constituents of such collective identity are out of the discourse with other collective actors. First of all, it concerns the religious constituent of the collective identity. The emerging of secular forms of collective identity demonstrates that they often have a bent for the religious form and interpretation. Thus, the

need to exclude other collective identities from the process of self-actualization develops. Certainly, such closeness of religious forms of collective identity is of a relative nature; it changes significantly when we speak about messianism of religious identity. «Closeness» of religious constituents of the collective identity and, consequently, excluding other collective identities from the public discourse emerges when it is necessary to draw cultural, religious, ethnic and other symbolic borderlines between collective actors. As a rule, these borderlines are drawn in the situations of danger, real or imaginary, in which collective actors find themselves.

Theoretically it is possible to universalize the discourse logic presenting it as a permanent context for collective actors' interaction. But, if we follow Kant's logic which is actually the ideological basis for Habermas's theory of communicative interaction, its borders should be defined by the issues of individualistic ethics.

In Cohen and Arato's opinion, discourse ethics is of a contradictory nature. On the one hand, it is a system of procedure rules refusing to judge the content of collective identities of different actors. On the other hand, the principle of universalization in Habermas's theory allows evaluation of the content of collective identities of other actors. Cohen and Arato consider this dilemma to be extremely important for democratic values: «In what way is it possible to reconcile the demands for solidarity of separate social groups with the more general demands for legal relations inside pluralistic societies which consist of a variety of groups as well in such societies?» (Cohen, Arato 2003, p. 486)

This dilemma is highlighted by the fact that not only abstract personalities who require mutual respect of their formal rights but also individuals connected with «intersubjective communicative infrastructure of everyday public life» take part in the discourse. In the process of a dialogue every participant puts forward his/her views or needs and takes on himself the ideal role in a public practical discussion» (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 487-488). At the same time, Cohen and Arato underline that in any interactive discourse there are still issues connected with actors' self-realization, which are defined, for example, by the peculiarities of their biographies and, in general, by their autonomy. It is revealed here that not all questions can be placed in the discussion environment and, consequently, consensus cannot be reached on these questions: «since they suppose such differences about which consensus is impossible to reach and which are impossible to solve by the means of discourse» (Cohen, Arato 2003, p. 491).

The next restriction for universalism of communicative discourse concerns the collective identities which are built on the basis of non-self-reflecting cultures and fall behind in time. Here the respect towards another collective identity should be in the form of tolerance. The issue of recognizing other collective identities with which there is no common political identity is a very complicated one. The situation is much easier where the recognition issues concern such collective identity which has been connected historically with civil societies, where there have been own «institutionalized discourses and principles of democratic legitimacy and basic rights» (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 494-495).

Cohen and Arato connect the necessity to reconstruct the ideas of a civil society with the need «to analyze new forms of collective identity, and, on their basis, to formulate the statements which are able to contribute to creating more free, more democratic communities». To do this it is necessary to abandon the previous dichotomic model «state-society» which was peculiar to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and actually for opposition of liberal forces to authoritarian-bureaucratic states. That is why the most adequate is the analytical division of society's public environment into a public sphere of people's living world and society's political subsystem (i.e. state) (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 544-554). The modernization of a living world is necessary in order to move to a new type of a civil society. This means a move from a conventional substantiation of norms to their communicative substantiation. And in this sense the communicative action becomes central for rationalization of living world and formation of post-traditional civil society. Such rationalization of a living world enables emerging of new volunteer associations with the equal membership rights irrespective of people's origin or other ascriptive restrictions. New social and cultural forms of moral consciousness are formed in these conditions. (Cohen, Arato 2003, pp. 558-559).

The problem of collective identity's recognition in a public environment of a civil society is also seen in the context of ethnic problems, more precisely, within the frames of the possibility for unbiased moral evaluation. This possibility for unbiased moral evaluation of social issues comes from the republican ideals of the Enlightenment which emphasized the public sphere of politics. Applying universal moral norms to evaluating social-political reality is also an obstacle for depoliticization of the public sphere (Young 1990, p.97, 107). In this case such group differences should not be ignored but, on the contrary, publicly recognized and permitted into heterogeneous publicity (Young 1990, p. 179).

### 3. RECOGNITION OF AN ETHNIC GROUP AS THE SUBJECT OF AN INTERETHNIC DIALOGUE IN CIVIL SOCIETY

In the modern sociological, socio-anthropological and politological scientific literature, and also in the public consciousness the issue of interethnic dialogue has its place in a certain part of society's interethnic interaction. Scientific consciousness tends to study the interaction of interethnic relations in society in the light of an interethnic dialogue only in the situation when both individual bearers of different ethnic identities and collective bearers of an ethnic identity interact – these independent ethnic groups with a developed identity which influence the cultural life of a country, the system of communication and even politics. Besides that, the concept «interethnic dialogue» itself is used as an imperative, an urgent demand which is necessary to realize in order to harmoniously develop a multiethnic society.

It is obvious that the interethnic dialogue is possible when not only individual people – bearers of an original ethnic identity are recognized as its subjects, but it is essential to recognize the potential of a collective identity of ethnic groups in the formation of a civil society. As it is known, the issue of recognizing ethnic groups as fully-fledged subjects of the interethnic dialogue arouses the largest number of discussions in scientific literature which review the issue of collective and individual legal relations, national state and pluralistic civil society, multiculturalism, liberalism, etc. (Barry 2001, p. 19-55, Kymlicka 2007, p. 61-172, Wiewiorka 1998, p. 881-910)

Scientists, who successively criticize theories of multiculturalism and recognition of rights of ethnic groups for being fully-fledged subjects of the interethnic dialogue (for example Brian Barry), rightly protect the unity of a civil society and emphasize inviolable full rights for all its members irrespective of their ethnic origin. These critics are also right when they speak about the social activity of a liberal society and about participation in a public dialogue – it must be a person's free choice but not *a priori* connected with division of a society into ethnic or any other social groups. At the same time, the opponents of such liberalism are also right if it claims to deny or absolutely ignore groups' cultural and ethnic differences. In modern civil societies along with individual bearers of identity, including ethnic identity, there are also collective actors, social subjects in spite

of the fact that they sometimes understand their identity fragmentation (Jürgen Habermas).

In order to demonstrate in which way the recognition of ethnic groups as subjects of an interpersonal dialogue occurs in the modern Latvian civil society the author used some data from a sociological survey «Interaction of Collective and Individual Identities of Ethnic Groups in Eastern Latvia as a Factor for Development of a Civil Society» (Project No 07.2103 of the Latvian Scientific Council, 2007-2008). Teachers from 157 secondary schools from all the regions of eastern Latvia participated in this survey.

### **3.1. Methods**

The goal of the research was to determine how mutual interrelations of individual and collective identities of representatives belonging to ethnic groups of Eastern Latvia correlate with the development of civic society. The field work was conducted from May, 2007 till June, 2007. At all the stages of work, quality was controlled: analysis of the questionnaires by experienced researchers; instructions given to the interviewers about the essence and peculiarities of the survey; monitoring interviewers' work at the place of questioning by experienced researchers, who were unfamiliar with the interviewers; visual analysis of the handed in questionnaires (if they look tidy, if they are filled in correctly and precisely, if they are logically filled in), control by means of statistical analysis.

The quantitative survey was conducted in the form of questionnaires in two languages: Latvian and Russian. Amount of samples depends on the following factors: variations of population (by mother tongue); the sample design (by kind of sample – mixed, by method – without repetition, by type – stratified by the main research directions) and accuracy of the results. Accuracy of the results can be increased (for instance, by reducing the sample error) by increasing the amount of samples; however, increase in the accuracy is «slow» (or decrease in the error is slow) and rather inconsiderable. The amount of teacher samples (457 respondents) was determined in order to get statistically substantiated result; the minimal number of analyzed cases (respondents) in one data aspect in the subgroup has to be minimum 50 (the amount of total population is 4,657, see Table 1). Moreover, the amount of samples has to be sufficient enough to conduct data analysis up to the following limit: the smallest one in the

Eastern part of Latvia is in Kraslava region – 6.7%, Latvians 48.7% (Educational Institutions in Latvia in 2006) (Izglītības iestādes Latvijā 2006).

In order to determine by means of an occasional sample that there are 50 respondents in this subgroup, the amount of samples has to be as follows:  $50 / 0.067 / 0.487 = 457$  respondents. Unfortunately, the authors of the project were not able to involve such amount of respondents; as a result 156 teachers were questioned.

*Table 1*

**Distribution of teachers by Eastern Latvia regions**

Region, city		Number of pedagogical staff	Including the number of teachers
1	Balvi region	564	494
2	Daugavpils region	608	480
3	Kraslava region	550	461
4	Ludza region	492	448
5	Preili region	706	616
6	Rezekne region	804	680
7	Daugavpils	1310	1057
8	Rezekne	529	421
	total:	5563	4657

In order to achieve the goal set in the research, it is important to maintain representativeness by the following indices: gender groups, nationality groups, territorial groups (Izglītības iestādes Latvijā 2006; Latvijas 2006, p.58).

Table 2

**Comparison of social demographic and territorial characteristics of respondents and official statistical data**

Indices	The share of particular groups among the respondents	Statistical data ***	Difference between the data of the official statistics and the data of the research
<u>Gender groups:</u>			
Men	17%	12%	5%
Women	83%	88%	5%
<u>Nationality groups:</u>			
Latvians (incl. Latgalian)	42%	44%	2%
Russians	35%	40%	5%
Byelorussians	5%	6%	1%
Poles	13%	7%	6%
others (Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Jews, etc.)	5%	4%	1%
<u>Territorial groups:</u>			
Daugavpils	32%	23%	9%
Rezekne	10%	9%	1%
Balvi region	9%	11%	2%
Daugavpils region	8%	10%	2%
Kraslava region	7%	10%	3%
Ludza region	9%	10%	1%
Preili region	13%	13%	0%
Rezekne region	12%	15%	3%

As it is clearly seen, the difference between the data in several indices constitutes up to 9%; consequently, in order to decrease systematic errors it is essential to conduct weighting or correcting of data before further analysis.

The correcting takes place by means of proportional weights, which are determined separately for each sample subgroup, which has single sampling ratio (for instance, for each stratum) and is marked as  $\pi_k$ , the general form for each being  $\pi_k = \% \text{ of stratum of the total population} / \% \text{ of stratum in the sample}$  (Maletta 2009).

$$\pi_k = \frac{N_k/N}{n_k/n} \quad (1)$$

According to such weights, the stratum  $k$  gets proportional weight  $\pi = 1$  if this group is presented in the sample in the same proportion as it is in the total population. However,  $\pi k < 1$  if the group was over-sampled (i.e. its proportion  $n_k/n$  is larger than the proportion  $N_k/N$ ). And  $\pi k > 1$ , if the group was under-sampled (its proportion was less than the proportion in the total population). When the sample design implicates hierarchical scheme of division of major strata into substrata, the weights, as a matter of fact, are calculated in the same way. The final sample ratio is the result obtained by successive multiplications of the sample ratios at different levels. If weighting is conducted in SPSS 11.5, it has to be taken into consideration that, first of all, SPSS automatically rounds out weighted frequencies to the nearest integer. The rounding takes place on the level of total weighted frequency, rather than on the level of individual weights. As a result, there could appear few inconsistencies in the final tables. Secondly, SPSS rounds out only weighted frequencies, rather than the totals of interval variables in the tables. In its turn, it could lead to inconsistencies in the sums in rows and columns. For larger frequencies, such as hundreds and thousands, discrepancy in a few decimals could hardly be a problem; however, for the cells containing one or two-digit frequencies, such inconsistencies can cause confusion. That is why, in these cases, the table should be followed by a warning about discrepancies connected with the rounding.

Only a part of the SPSS syntax for weighting of respondents – teachers by Latvian nationality, gender, region (Eastern Latvia region) is given in the article:

```
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=1 weight=0.8.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=2 weight=1.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=3 weight=1.36.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=4 weight=1.39.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=5 weight=1.59.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=6 weight=1.23.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=7 weight=1.11.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=1 AND regioni=8 weight=1.43.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=1 weight=0.54.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=2 weight=0.68.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=3 weight=0.92.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=4 weight=0.94.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=5 weight=1.07.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=6 weight=0.83.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=7 weight=0.75.  
If taut_new=1 AND v_21=2 AND regioni=8 weight=0.94.  
EXECUTE.
```

By the means of highlighting the input commands: Edit/ Select All; Run, new variable – weight – will be added to the data file. It is the command, which is used as a variable of weighting. The systematic error of this research is neutralized by the means of data weighting, distortions are eliminated, and difference in several indices constitutes up to 3%.

Table 3

**Comparison of social demographic and territorial characteristics of the respondents with the official statistical data (after weighing)**

<b>Indices</b>	<b>The share of particular groups among the respondents</b>	<b>Statistical data *, **, ***</b>	<b>Difference between the data of the official statistics and the data of the research</b>
<u>Gender groups**:</u>			
Men	12%	12%	0%
Women	88%	88%	0%
<u>Nationality groups***:</u>			
<u>Latvians (incl. Latgalians)</u>	45%	44%	1%
<u>Russians</u>	37%	40%	3%
<u>Byelorussians</u>	7%	6%	1%
<u>Poles</u>	6%	7%	1%
<u>others (Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Jews, etc.)</u>	5%	4%	1%
<u>Territorial groups*:</u>			
<u>Daugavpils</u>	21%	23%	2%
<u>Rezekne</u>	10%	9%	1%
<u>Balvi region</u>	11%	11%	0%
<u>Daugavpils region</u>	10%	10%	0%
<u>Kraslava region</u>	9%	10%	1%
<u>Ludza region</u>	10%	10%	0%
<u>Preili region</u>	13%	13%	0%
<u>Rezekne region</u>	16%	15%	2%

**Source:** *Izglītības iestādes Latvijā 2006, p 15; Latvijas 2006, p.58*

In the given sample the trustful probability of which constitutes 95%, statistical error is 5.31; consequently, accuracy of the final results in this research is normal (Yadov 2005, p.321) (see Table 4).

Table 4

**Dependence of the accuracy of the final result on the sample error**

<b>Accuracy of the final result:</b>	<b>excessive</b>	<b>normal</b>	<b>approximate</b>	<b>provisional</b>	<b>estimate</b>
The sample error:	less than 3%	3-10%	10-20%	20-40%	more than 40%
Trustful interval:	less than 0.03	0.03-0.1	0.1-0.2	0.2-0.4	more than 0.4

According to the amount of subsample, relevance of percent differences in this research has been determined by the following (Table 5):

Table 5

**Relevance of percent differences according to the amount of subsample**

<b>The amount of subsamples by number</b>	<b>Significant difference in %, when the error is not more than 5%</b>
50	20
100	14
150	11.5
200	10
300	8
500	6.3
1000	4.5
5000	2

While analyzing the data, the author also performed comparing of the average values using the statistics of H.B.Mann and D.R.Whitney's U-criterion (SPSS 2009).

$$U = NM + \frac{N(N+1)}{2} - \sum_{k_1} Rank(x_1)$$

In the analysis of frequency tables in the given research, percentage is calculated according to the number of respondents who have answered this question. As to the sample of the research, it has to be mentioned that it is stratified and representative. In the analysis of the research results, non-parametric method of checking hypotheses has been used; while conducting frequency analysis, significant difference in percentage for particular amount of samples has been taken into consideration.

### **3.2. Research data**

Eastern Latvia is characterized by a really large ethnic variety, which is represented by Latvians as well as ethnic minorities. In this survey the emphasis is put on the subject of the interethnic dialogue as analysis of peculiarities of collective actors. In this connection, it is very important to answer a question: «To what extent representatives of one ethnic group are ready to recognize other ethnic groups as their partners, fully-fledged subjects of an interethnic dialogue?» It is crucial to demonstrate if the civil society perceives ethnic minorities as fully-fledged subjects of an interethnic dialogue. What might be the indicators of this recognition? Ethnic groups in the multicultural and multiethnic environment often institutionalize their ethnic collective identity creating non-governmental organizations, educational establishments, mass-media which function in the native language of the ethnic group. Most representatives of ethnic minorities in the sphere of business use their native language for communication. The same situation applies to the entertainment sphere. It is obvious that in the multiethnic and multicultural society the attitude towards that part of public environment in which the national legislation of Latvia allows native languages of ethnic minorities to function, becomes a significant indicator for recognizing different ethnic groups as fully-fledged subjects of an interethnic dialogue.

Interethnic dialogue takes place in a civil society where individual as well as collective actors or the actors who claim the recognition of their collective identity interact. That is why a civil society itself can be considered not only the reality but a construction where social actors can claim recognition of their identity. Respondents were invited to choose the optimum model of a civil society. The possible model was created as an idea – construction with one dominant element which, in some cases, was opposed to its alternative. The alternatives were as follows:

- common civil values – ethnic groups' values;
- individual values – ethnic groups' values;
- values of Latvians (Latgaliens or Latvians and Latgaliens) dominate other ethnic values.

Six variants of such a model were offered:

- civil values are more important than the values of other ethnic groups;
- civil values are a unity of ethnic groups' values;
- Latvians' values should prevail in the civil society of Eastern Latvia;
- Latvians' and Latgaliens' values should prevail in the civil society of Eastern Latvia;
- Latgaliens' values should prevail in the civil society of Eastern Latvia;
- civil rights, but not values of ethnic groups should prevail in a society.

The respondents' answers demonstrated that the majority agreed with the idea of the civil society of Eastern Latvia as a community of ethnic groups – 65.5% of the respondents consider it the optimum model of a civil society. But, in general, the respondents did not perceive this model as an alternative to a civil society in which civil rights and values but not ethnic values prevail: 55.6% found this model positive. A relatively large number of respondents – 59.2% selected the model of a civil society in which civil values prevail over the ethnic groups' values (**picture 1**).

These contradictions in the respondents' answers can be explained by the fact that in the civil consciousness both common civil and ethnic groups' values turn out to be almost equally significant for the people. It is clear that opposition to these values is not productive – these values are interrelated. The only possible alternative for such kind of connection might be the model in which Latvians' values (Latgaliens or Latvians and Latgaliens) prevail. 20.6% of the respondents (30.3% Latvians, 8.8% Russians and 21.4% representatives of other ethnic groups) found the model of the civil society of eastern Latvia in which Latvians' values prevail to be the optimum. Approximately the same attitude is revealed to the model of a civil society in which Latvians' and Latgaliens' values (22% of the respondents fully agree) or Latgaliens' values (18.1% of the respondents fully agree) prevail.

At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that majority of Latvian respondents (58.2%) think that the most acceptable

model of civil society in western Latvia is the one which reflects the values of ethnic minorities living in the region. The next significant model is the one in which civil values prevail over the values of ethnic groups and civil model (57.6% of the respondents) and the model in which personal values but not the values of ethnic groups prevail (48.6%). The last in the scale of priorities is the model of civil society in which values of Latvians and Latgalians (37.9%), values of Latvians (30.3%) and values of Latgalians (27.7%) prevail. These data indicate that multicultural ideas of the most acceptable model of civil society in this region prevail in the consciousness of the interviewed representatives of the largest ethnic groups of Eastern Latvia. The multicultural model presupposes a collective actor, in our case, balance of interests of the traditional ethnic groups, which allows the civil society to function successfully. It is significant that these attitudes are spread among the secondary school teachers who are one of the groups of people who form society's consciousness.

Recognition of ethnic groups as subjects of interethnic dialogue was revealed in the attitude towards social and political activities of these groups. Approximately the same number of respondents think that the main aim of political activities of ethnic groups should be connected with formation of a civil society and preserving the national language and culture of ethnic groups (61.2% and 60.1% respectively) (**picture 2**). The same refers to the ideas of respondents about the aims of ethnic groups' representatives' participation in non-governmental organizations, which would promote formation of a civil society and preserving the language and culture of ethnic groups. (50.5% and 5.8% respectively). Considerable differences were observed only in the respondents' views on the priority aims of the educational system. 69.9% of the respondents think that the educational system, firstly, should form the civil identity of a personality, but 46.6% believe that the priority aim is to form the ethnic identity of a personality. Such differences in the evaluation of the aims of the educational system of Latvia in the issue of civil and ethnic identity of a personality, in our opinion, is a positive indicator, and it also proves the fact that common human values have a stronger position than the collective ethnic values in the teachers' consciousness. It is also important to underline that the respondents' answers to this question only slightly differed among the representatives of different ethnic groups.

The results of the survey demonstrate that recognizing collective actors and their collective identity in the civil society of Latvia does not

mean that the respondents are ready to «make ethnic» the mechanisms of their political activities which have been deeply rooted in the liberal political culture in Latvia. The respondents were invited to answer the question, «what is the most important factor for formation of a civil society?». The possible answer variants can be grouped as follows:

1. individual civil participation in the elections of Saeima and local municipalities, participation in the work of political parties and non-governmental organizations, interest in public and political life of Latvia in mass media and science, including participation in mass media debates together with politicians;
2. corporate activities of ethnic and religious groups (ethnic groups should form their own political parties, educational establishments, mass media, entrepreneurial structures, non-governmental organizations).

Among the factors forming the offered civil society there are the factors which have already been consolidated as constituent parts of liberal and democratic political culture of Latvian residents – participation in the Saeima and local municipalities elections, 84.9% and 85.8% respectively (**picture 3**). However, a significantly smaller number of respondents expressed their opinions about the importance of the corporate ethnic factor in the development of a civil society – from 25.9% («ethnic groups form entrepreneurial structures») to 40.1% («ethnic groups form their own political parties»). It is important that the differences in the respondents' answers – Latvians and Russians – about the significance of corporate ethnic factors for the formation of a civil society are minimal. Thus, it is possible to state that multicultural ideas of the interviewed secondary school teachers in Latvia are liberal. There is a concord of views among all the ethnic groups in society that the activities of political parties, educational establishments, mass media, non-governmental organizations and entrepreneurship can be defined as intolerable egocentrism, focused only on observing the interests of their own ethnic group.

The respondents were asked about their personal involvement in the creation of a civil society. It turned out that the proportions of this participation approximately corresponded to the respondents' ideas about the desirable factors of developing a civil society. The respondents emphasized a relatively high level of participation in the elections to the Saeima (77%) and local municipalities. In addition, the respondents in their individual activity did not reveal any interest in participation of ethnic communities in organizing political and economic structures of the society.

Only 6% of the respondents noted that they participated actively in the formation of entrepreneurial structures in their ethnic groups, 7.1% – in the formation of political parties, 9.9% – in the formation of non-governmental organizations, 11.4% – in the formation of mass media, 12.2% – in the formation of educational establishments. Besides that, there were some minor differences in the opinions of the respondents of different nationalities about the ethnic structures' low level of participation in political, economic and public life. According to the survey results, the respondents not only fully rejected intensification of egocentrism and considered it the least acceptable model of a civil society in the Eastern Latvia, but in real life hardly ever followed such principles (**picture 4**).

#### **4. INTERETHNIC DIALOGUE AS A WAY OF DEVELOPING ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE COLLECTIVE IDENTITY OF REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS**

Unity of subjects of interethnic communication depends not only on the inner willingness of representatives of ethnic groups but also on their readiness to accept and recognize the opposite party as such a subject. Mutual recognition of representatives of ethnic groups as fully-fledged subjects of interethnic dialogue becomes the most important condition of this dialogue.

Data of numerous observations of peculiarities of an interethnic dialogue which were carried out by researchers in Latvia prove that it had two pronounced dimensions – individual and collective, and group. The participants of an interethnic dialogue act as separate personalities – bearers of ethnic identity and, at the same time, as ethnic groups themselves or their fragments. In addition, modern social science makes a special emphasis on the significance of ethnic groups or collective actors in a social interaction in general and in the interethnic dialogue in particular (Barth 1996, p.78-81, Habermas 2001, p. 333 – 334).

In the given research the issue of recognition of ethnic minorities as fully-fledged subjects of the interethnic dialogue are examined through studying the respondents' attitude towards two important forms of institutionalization of ethnic minorities' identity:

- mass media functioning in ethnic minorities' languages;
- secondary level educational establishments functioning in ethnic minorities' languages.

#### 4.1. Attitude towards mass media functioning in ethnic minorities' languages

The respondents were asked to express their attitude towards different statements about mass media functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages. The attitude should be assessed on a three-point scale according to the level of influence of mass media on the processes underlying in Latvian society («influence significantly», «influence and not influence», «not influence»).

The respondents were invited to assess the following statements:

- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a historic tradition in Latvia.
- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a proof for the weak position of the Latvian language.
- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a former Soviet era inheritance.
- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to preserve their culture and language.
- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to create a multi-community society.
- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a requirement of the EC Framework Convention for the Protection of National languages.
- Minorities Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a type of entrepreneurial activity.
- Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is influence from other countries.

The results of the survey demonstrated that a large number of respondents (63.8%) think that mass media functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages, firstly, reveals the desire of ethnic minorities to preserve their native language and culture (**picture 5**). The next significant statement is «Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a historic tradition in Latvia» (48.3%). Only about one fifth of the respondents agreed with the statement that the public processes in Latvia are influenced by such a mass media peculiarity as «Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a proof of the weak position of the Latvian language» (20.2%), «Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a former Soviet era inheritance» (17.6%), «Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is influence from other countries» (19.2%).

These data indicate the fact that the vast majority of the respondents do not perceive as a contradiction the necessity for ethnic minorities to develop their identity using mass media in their native languages, on the one hand, and the priority position of the official state language in the information environment, on the other hand. Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is perceived as a historic tradition of a multicultural civil society in Latvia, but not as the inheritance of the Soviet era or as a result of other countries' influence.

At the same time the respondents' opinions differed considerably in assessing the mass media in the national minorities' languages as «a desire of ethnic minorities to create a multi-community society», «a type of entrepreneurial activity», «a requirement of the General Convention For the Protection of National Minorities».

Each statement was supported by approximately the same number of respondents. Such disagreement in views can be explained by discussions in the public political consciousness about the threat of dividing the state into two communities, about the influence of business on the political society and about the place of international legislative acts in the Latvian national legislation in the sphere of ethnopolitics. It is evident that these discussions had not consolidated society's awareness.

There are very interesting data which indicate the attitude of some statistically larger groups of respondents – Russians and Latvians – towards the significance of mass media for minorities' languages. The data show that there are no significant differences in the assessment of the given statements about the influence of mass media on the ethnic minorities' languages between Russian and Latvian respondents (Mann – Whitley coefficient is more than  $p > 0.05$ ). It is interesting that both – Russian and Latvian respondents interviewed reckon that mass media in the languages of ethnic minorities is a historic tradition in Latvia and, at the same time, they think that mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages indicates the desire of ethnic minorities to create a multicomunity society in Latvia.

There were significant differences (Mann-Whitley coefficient is less than 0.05) in the opinions of Latvian and Russian respondents on the following statements: mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a proof of the weak position of the Latvian language, mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is inheritance from the former Soviet era, mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities

to preserve their culture and language, mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages shows influence of other countries. It is obvious that issues about the importance of the official state language in the life of ethnic minorities in Latvia, evaluation of the significance of the Soviet period and assessment of the importance of other states in the modern public life of ethnic minorities estrange Latvians and the Russian ethnic minority. There are considerable differences in the assessment of the influence of mass media on the ethnic minorities' languages as the desire of these ethnic groups to preserve their culture and language. Opinion of Latvian respondents is less optimistic than that of Russian respondents. However, it is not worth exaggerating the differences in the opinions of Russian and Latvian respondents on the importance of mass media for the ethnic minorities' languages in the state's public life. As it can be seen in **Table 6**, the considerable differences among the given subgroups of respondents refer to the part of the assessment scale which refers to the division «significant and insignificant role» and «does not play a significant role».

#### **4.2. Attitude towards the secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages**

In the course of the survey we tried to discover the attitude of the interviewed teachers towards such form of ethnic institutionalization as secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages.

And the respondents were offered the same statements which were used for assessing mass media functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages:

- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a historic tradition in Latvia.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a proof of the weak position of the Latvian language.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is inheritance from the former Soviet era.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is the desire of ethnic minorities to preserve their culture and language.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is the desire of ethnic minorities to create a multi-community society.

- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a requirement of the General Convention For the Protection of National Minorities.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a type of entrepreneurial activity.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages shows influence of other countries.

It is significant that the respondents assessed the importance of secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages in the civil society of Latvia similar to how they assessed mass media which is published in the ethnic minorities' languages. Among the eight statements offered for evaluating such schools, in the respondents' opinion there are two statements which have the greatest influence on the public life – «Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to preserve their culture and language» (70.7%) and «Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a historic tradition in Latvia» (59.9%).

It is evident that the social importance of the secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages connected with the desire of these minorities to preserve their language and culture as well as a historic tradition of Latvia, is even greater than the importance of ethnic minorities' mass media in Latvian. Only 18% -20% of respondents agree with the statements that the existence of secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages indicates the weak position of the state language, or it is a former Soviet era inheritance, or a type of entrepreneurial activity, or influence of other countries. And, again, as in the case with mass media functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages, there was no consensus among the respondents about the following statements:

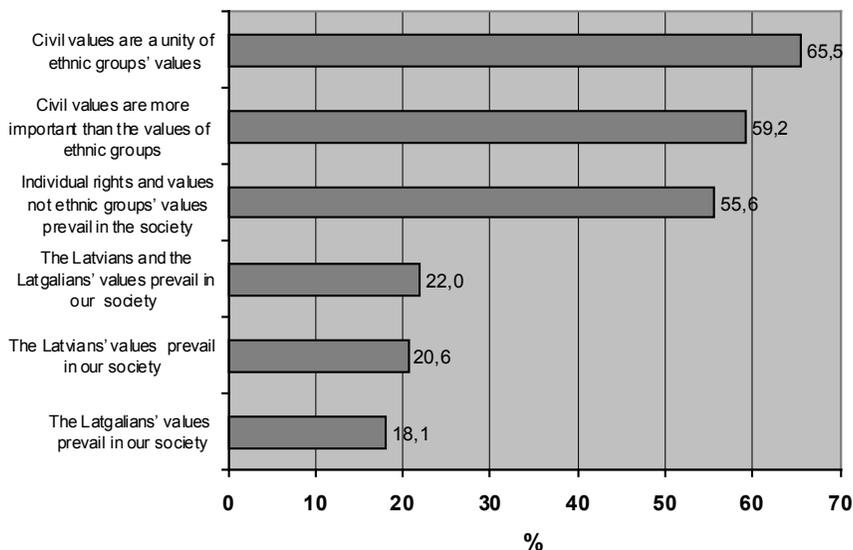
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages shows the desire of ethnic minorities to create a multi-community society.
- Education at secondary schools in the ethnic minorities' languages is a requirement of the EC Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

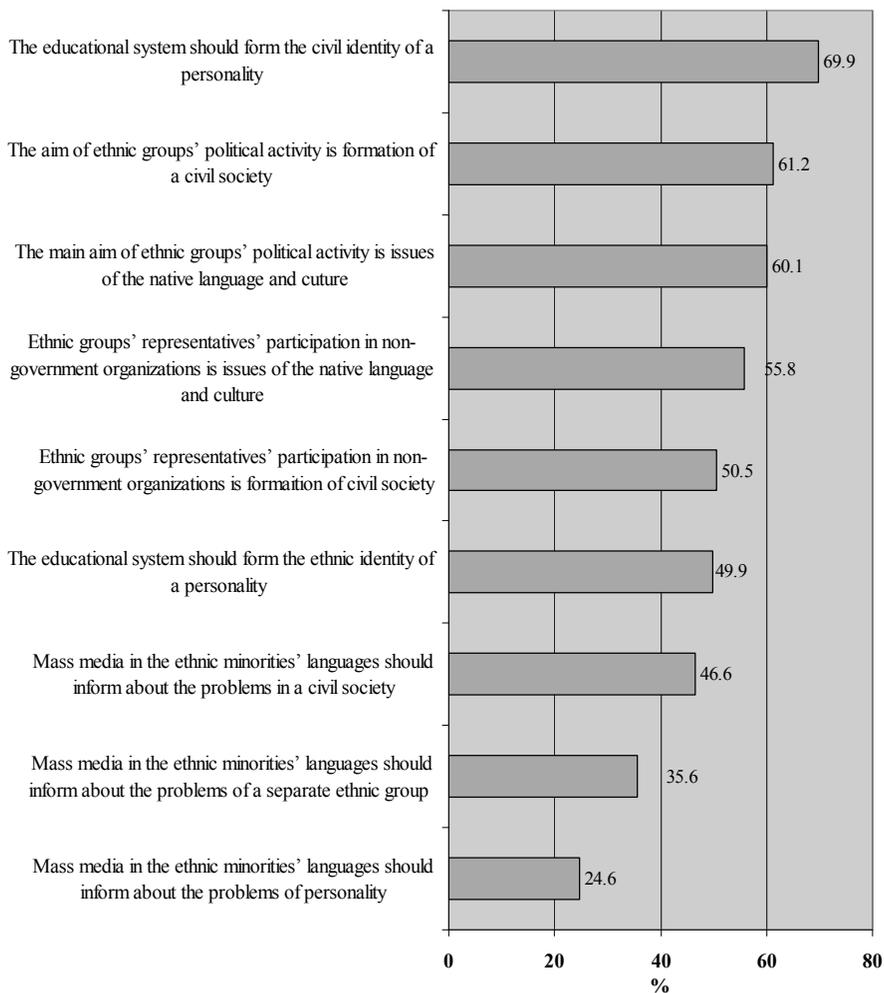
Analysing the point of opinions in the subgroups of Russian and Latvian respondents on the significance of secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities languages, it is necessary to point out that these opinions coincide or differ approximately in the same proportions as in the case with mass media (Table 7).

Analysis of the data obtained indicates that in the public consciousness of people who live in the multicultural and multiethnic Latvian society there are deeply rooted ideas about the interethnic dialogue which presupposes participation not only by individual personalities. The interethnic dialogue is a mutual recognition of the positive role of ethnic groups, their social activities in the functioning of a united political civil society. Certainly, recognizing the ethnic groups as fully-fledged subjects of the interethnic dialogue is a fragmentary phenomenon in Latvia, which can be explained in the following way:

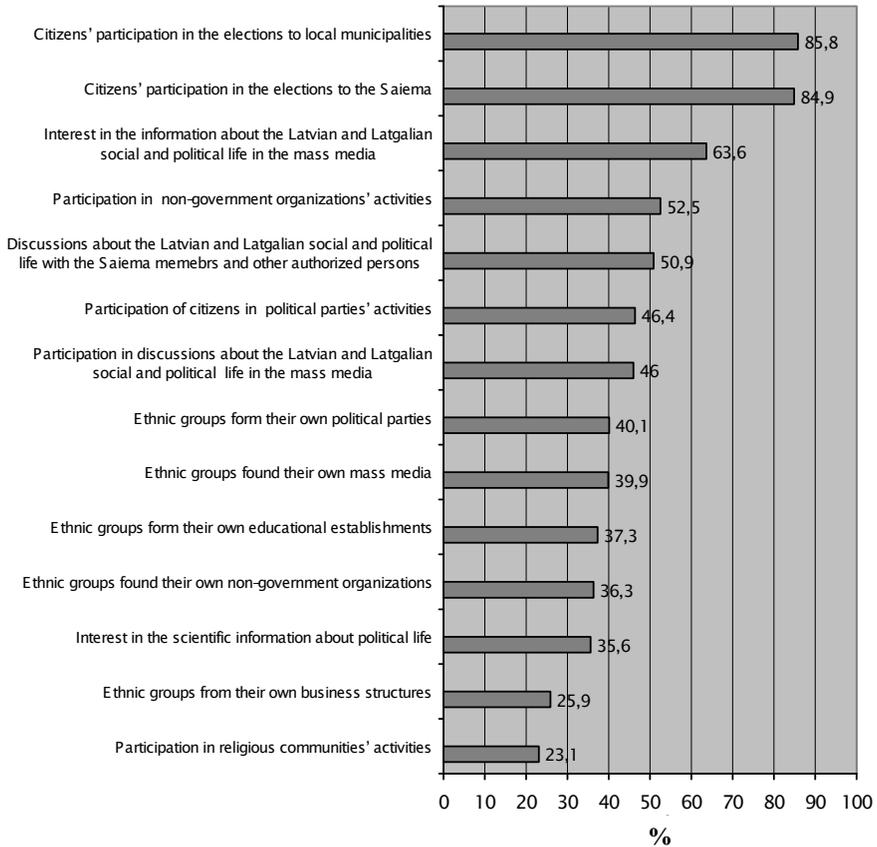
1. Latvian society's multiethnicity and multiculturalism are not included in many fundamental values of the Latvian national state and modern liberal democracy, for example:
  - public interethnic consensus about the only state language;
  - public interethnic consensus about the place of the ethnic (national) minorities' status and autonomy of their culture in the civil society of Latvia.
2. Liberal and scientific consciousness has little interest in the collective identity of ethnic minorities in modern (post-modern) civil societies.

*Picture 1: The optimum model of a civil society. (%)*

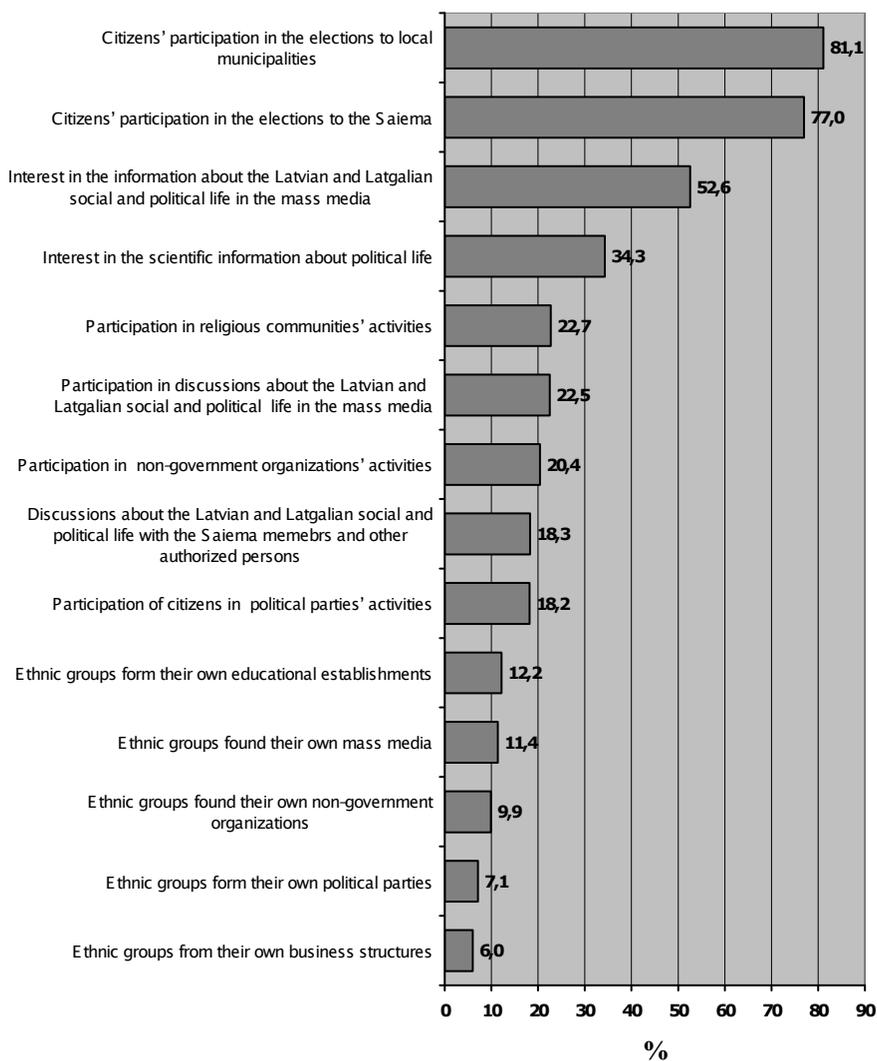


*Picture 2: The most important factors of formation of a civil society (%)*

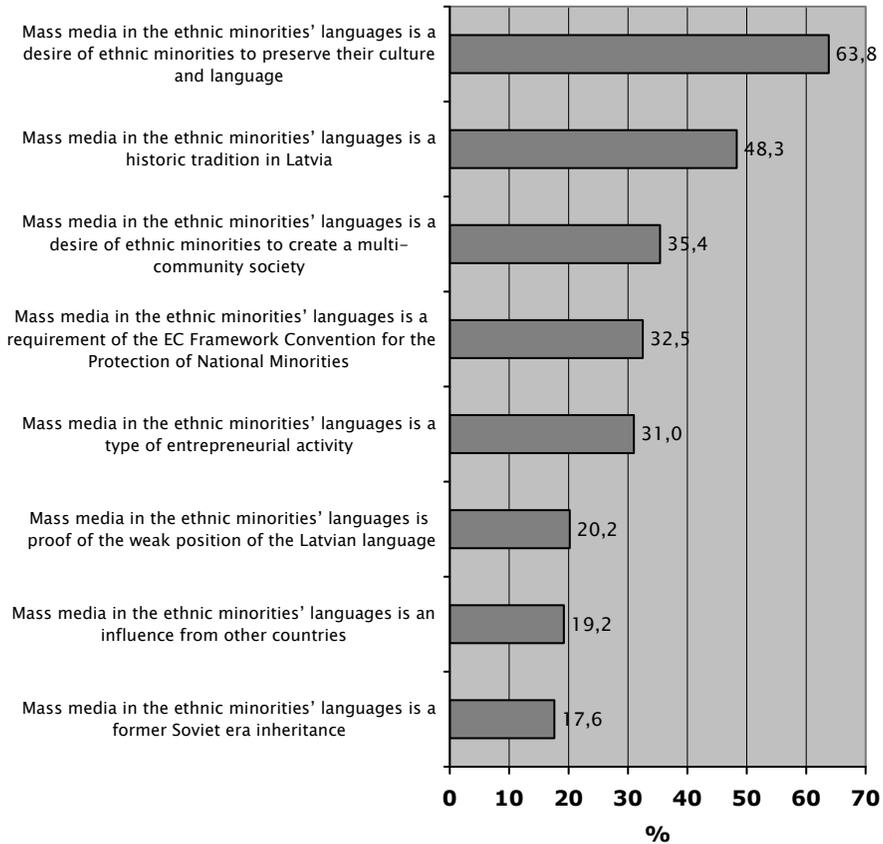
*Picture 3: Evaluation of the factors of formation of a civil society in the Eastern Latvia (answer – «very important» (%))*



*Picture 4: Personal contribution to the enhancement of a civil society (answer – «yes, I use it» (%))*



*Picture 5: The role of mass media in the ethnic minorities' language in Latvian society (answer – «important role» (%))*



**Picture 6: The role of secondary schools functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages in Latvian society (answer – «important role» (%)).**

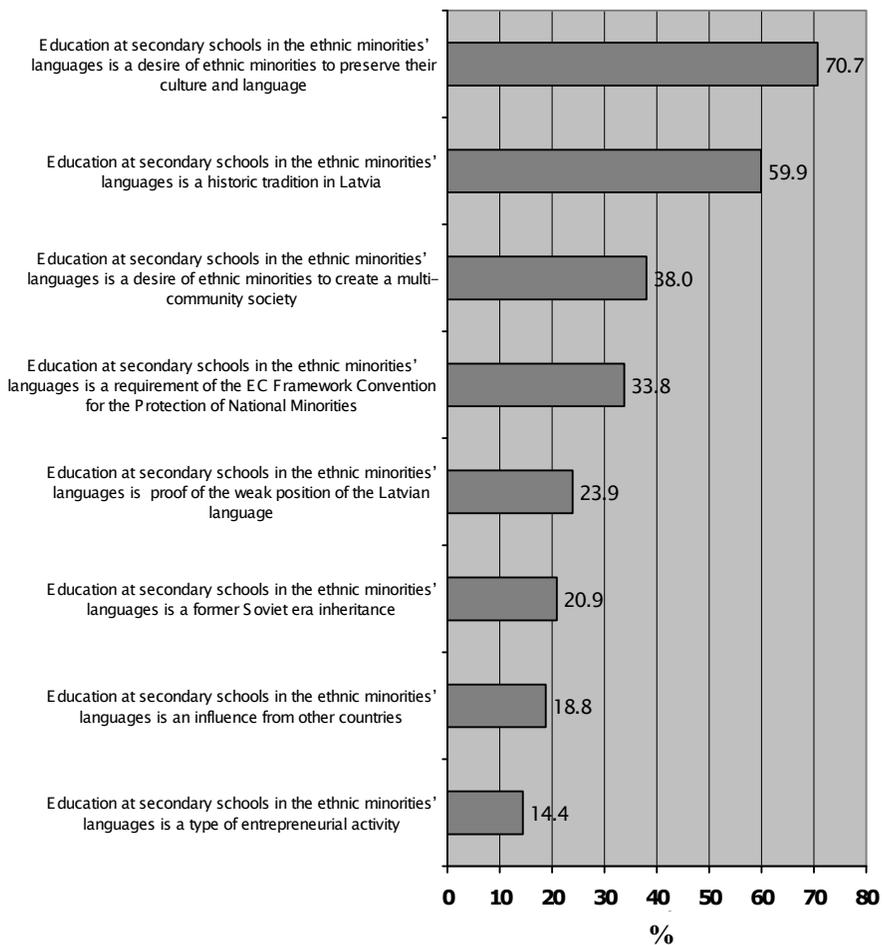


Table 6

**The role of mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages  
in Latvian society ( Answers according to the scale:  
1- «significant role», 3 – «not significant role»)**

		Average evaluation among Latvian respondents	Average evaluation among Russian respondents	Mann – Whitney coefficient
1	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a historic tradition in Latvia.	1,58	1,63	0,770
2	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a proof of the weak position of the Latvian language.	2,07	2,52	0,001
3	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is inheritance from the former Soviet era.	2,10	2,78	0,000
4	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to preserve their culture and language.	1,67	1,39	0,011
5	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to create a multicomunity society.	1,98	2,03	0,495
6	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a requirement of the EC Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities	1,87	1,91	0,721
7	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages is a type of entrepreneurial activity.	2,09	2,09	0,708
8	Mass media in the ethnic minorities' languages shows influence of other countries.	2,02	2,57	0,000

Table 7

**The role of secondary level educational establishments  
functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages in Latvian  
society (Answers according to the scale:  
1- «significant role», 3 - «non-significant role»)**

		Average evaluation among the Latvian respondents	Average evaluation among the Russian respondents	Mann - Whitney coefficient
1	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is a historic tradition in Latvia.	1,55	1,44	0,346
2	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is a proof of the weak position of the Latvian language.	2,12	2,63	0,000
3	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is inheritance from the former Soviet era.	2,17	2,57	0,016
4	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to preserve their culture and language.	1,51	1,30	0,049
5	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is a desire of ethnic minorities to create a multi-community society.	1,97	2,03	0,679

6	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is a requirement of the EC Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities	1,95	1,72	0,131
7	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities' languages is a type of entrepreneurial activity.	2,37	2,63	0,009
8	Secondary level educational establishments functioning in the ethnic minorities languages is influence from other countries.	2,33	2,54	0,021

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**Denis Hanov**

**RECOGNITION OF MINORITY RIGHTS AND LIBERAL  
PARADIGM: IS A THIRD WAY POSSIBLE?  
THE CASE OF LATVIA**

The article comprises reflections on the current discursive position of ethnic minorities in Latvian society in a broader context of European thought on ethnic diversity and ethnic communities. The article reflects the major points of current debates on universality of individual rights and vulnerability of collective representation of interests within the framework of modern pluralistic Western democracy.

There are various parallel discourses on the future development of collective rights in democratic states and there is a major academic stereotype on the isolated nature of the two paradigms – one, the so-called liberal paradigm, pleads for supremacy of individual rights guaranteed for all members of the modern nation state. The other, seemingly confronting theoretical paradigm, defines the need for collective rights of distinct social and cultural communities (ethnic, sexual and/or religious communities) in order not to repeat the tragic experience of the first half of the 20th century in Europe, which provides many horrible examples of ethnic cleansing, genocide and other forms of mass elimination of «the Other». Debates in post-Communism Europe in the early 1990-ies are transforming perpetuously and borders of theoretical frames are fading rapidly, offering new synthetic approaches to balance between collective and individual rights. Current situation in Latvia is another local example which stimulates debates on future guidelines of state policy concerning minorities -theories of balance (exit rights) can prove local incapacity to recognize and to include ethnically «the Other», as there are no discursive spaces from and to which minorities may exit and enter.

**Keywords:** nation, ethnic minority, «the Other», inclusion, recognition, nation-state, tolerance

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### **Introduction – realities of the reborn nation-state: far from academic constructions?**

Last local elections were held in Latvia on June 6, 2009 and, while writing this article, I can reflect on the content of pre-election campaigns of various right-wing political parties, among which only one, the conservative «For Fatherland and Freedom» (Latvian: *Tevzemei un Brīvībai*) offered to voters a clear formula of separating native Latvians' interests from the so-called «Russian-speaking population's interests». Despite academic incorrectness of this definition, the non-Latvians were excluded from the sphere of interests of the party and were defined in rather simplistic formulas as a threatening element of current Latvian political system.<sup>1</sup> The statement «There are more non-Latvians in Riga [the capital of Latvia] than Latvians» repeated during the pre-election campaign by the former mayor of Riga and one of the leaders of the party Mr. Birks reflects stable discursive frame of contemporary interethnic relations in Latvia after regaining independence in 1990-1991. The phenomenon of «non-citizens», long and slow process of naturalization,<sup>2</sup> discursive confrontation during the so-called education reform in the autumn 2004 are the major keywords for describing the current state of affairs in the social cohesion policy in Latvia. (Zepa, Šūpule, Krastiņa 2006, p. 159-178) Most of the phenomena mentioned above are long-lasting processes which go back to the state policy on citizenship and ethnicity in the early 1990 ies.

During the EU accession talks and shortly after joining the EU on May 1, 2004, various institutions were set up to develop institutional support for what was to be defined as «integration policy». The, by now, eight years old «Programme for Society Integration (adopted in 2001) reflected predominance of ethnic (Latvian) culture and major elements of ethnic Latvian identity, such as Latvian language, etc.<sup>3</sup> Various concepts and drafts of the updated state programme, which would introduce elements of civic society and multiculturalism failed to receive support of political parties.<sup>4</sup>

The unclear definition of the state policy of integration has provided discussions on the major principles of the goals of integration. Who is to be integrated and where? Who should make the first step and is the process of integration a two way road or simply entering into ethnic or cultural majority of Latvian society? Although, these questions are rather rhetorical and are widely used in mass media and political discourse,

presenting ethnic minorities as frustrated or frustrating «Other», as a scape goat or a discriminated group, theorization about definition of integration is the actual theme of this article.

I would now turn to an attempt to analyze the following issues which might provide additional explanation tools for the policy concerning minorities in contemporary Latvia:

Firstly, what are the major contemporary Western theories on the position and role, functions and images of ethnic minorities? Secondly – what is the state of the discursive borders between two predominant theoretical approaches concerning the necessity of collective rights and protection of individual freedoms which, according to classical liberal political theory, are freedoms provided for every single person irrespective of his or her collective characteristics? (Weinstock 2007, p. 246.) Are the borders still not to be penetrated, or are there recent theoretical approaches which might create a consensus between the two paradigms of individual and collective rights? Is a third way possible, which could reflect reality of post-Soviet societies of recently reestablished national-states?

## **1. LIBERALISM AND COLLECTIVE RIGHTS REVISITED**

The modern European democracy is still resting on the major pillars inherited from English and French political philosophy of the Enlightenment. Human rights as natural rights of a human being were combined with ideas of a political individual – a citizen, who is the supreme source of political power in the form of nation-state, which, according to Gerard Chaliand, has a built-in possibility of suppression of ethnic minorities. (Chaliand 1989, p.3)

Thus, individual capacity to govern oneself and the state affairs through representation and political consensus are not to be separated in the liberalism ideology of political individualism. Totalitarian drawbacks of various European nation-states in the first half of the 20th century were closely interlinked with suppression of various minority groups. «Wrong» ethnicity explained through various racist theories of the end of the 19th century led to establishment of ideologies and institutions of mass elimination of ethnic and social groups of the Other, which appeared on the political stage of many European countries simultaneously together with birth or rebirth of nation-states in 1918 on the relicts of former

supranational empires of the late Ancien regime in Russia, Austria and German Reich.

Shoah, genocide of Roma communities and other experiences challenging humanistic tradition during the World War II were the strongest discursive and political pressures stimulating return of European liberal thought into predominant position, thus, framing European legislative post-war culture. The Renaissance of individual freedoms after 1945 was challenged in the further decades by emancipation of various groups which claimed participation and representation rights in the Western societies. Another discursive challenge was the waves of immigration from the former colonies.

The post-colonial paradigm of ethnic diversity entered European cultural space in line with politics of recognition of the non-European cultures. (Medick-Bachmann 2007, p.190-191; Sreberny-Mohammadi 1999, p.53) Recognition of «the Other» within the frame of cultural traditions and values of the predominant culture requires policies to prevent development of various negative reactions towards the presence of «the Other» in a foreign culture.

Ethnic minorities as a group of individuals living outside of their state of kin are no doubt a constant challenge to the ideology of a nation-state, irrespective of how advanced the ideologies and practices of cohesion policies are. Debates on ethnic minorities (mainly of Islamic faith) in France<sup>9</sup> are just some examples of practical application of theories of individual and collective rights in different «old» EU Member states. (Laurence, Vaisse 2006, p.165) The policy of recognition, mainly developed in the member states of the British Commonwealth in the second half of the 20th century and in 70ies– and 80ies in Scandinavian countries and in the Netherlands refer to the idea of an individual as a member of a group, which has collective rights to build and manage communities according to ethnic, racial, religious, social, sexual and various other identities. For centuries ethnicity and religious identity have been internal European reasons for clashes and exclusions, both, within Eastern and Western Christianity<sup>5</sup>. The second half of the 20th century has witnessed rapid growth of ethnic and religious immigrants residing in a political and cultural framework, shaped by European cultural tradition. Avoiding a deeper discussion on the internal [European] transformation of cultural values and traditions after 1945, one should be stated in order to be able to explain critics on protagonists of the collective rights – European ideas

of political individuality as well as supremacy of Western paradigm of human rights are, according to Emmanuel Wallerstein, to be understood in historical perspective of relations with «the Other». (Валлерстайн, 2008, p.3-56; ) Long periods of European internal and colonial (external) oppression of various cultures and groups have become major historical experience turned into self-critical analysis of European postwar intellectuals who had to find the basis for co-existence of restored democratic paradigm of Western individuality with compensations to suppressed and eliminated minorities throughout the European continent and within its extended imaginative borders in post-colonial regions.

Trying to create profiles of those academicians who are pro and contra collective rights, I should touch upon various theoreticians. Alongside with Bryan Berry, who in his «Culture of Equality» explicitly abuses radical examples of dependency of an individual on power control exercised by the elite of the group, and John Rawls, who, in my view, highly relates to abilities of majorities and minorities to give up striving for imaginative or achievable ideal state of their rights and interests, other academicians tend to examine possibilities for theoretical synthesis, though not always clearly defined. (Berry 2001, p. 252– 256; Rawls 1971, p. 353-354.)

The first «group» of theoreticians represents the paradigm of «liberalists» who plead for individual rights to be the only source of both, individual and societal development. Robert Paul Wolff, one of the academicians close to the Frankfurter school of societal critics, in his work «Poverty of Liberalism» as far as 1968 defined three functions of tolerance towards cultural diversity. The crucial among them, according to Wolffs concept, is based on the idea of society versus individuals. According to Wolff, different societal groups are necessary for harmonious development of an individual, but this wide «spectrum» may endanger an individual's independence because various groups may claim various rights of belonging to a group. A solution proposed by Wolff would be greatly acclaimed by Brian Berry – the state policy should help a person to get rid of ethnic and other particular elements of identity. (Wolff 1969, p. 183-184) Some years earlier, a yet to become prominent philosopher of public space Juergen Habermas, in his doctoral theses which later became known as «The Structural Transformation of the Public Space» warned about the limits of the belief in strength and quality of Western individualistic public space of the modern welfare-state, which is influenced by passive public

and growing private interests, which are allowed to influence the public sphere via institutions like media, which, thus, draw the decline of public participation closer. (Habermas 2008, p.227)

If this is the case, individual rights, influenced by groups of interests may affect status of other individuals, who do not belong to various mainstream groups. This fear of being excluded from common state policy is the major thesis of the protagonists of collective rights. According to Will Kymlicka's overview of debates on collective rights and multiculturalism as a policy frame for representation of collective rights of minorities, the modern Western democracy in its national constitutional versions provides the principle of non-discrimination for all citizens. (Kymlicka 2007) This positive «blindness» of state institutions towards diversity, which for John Rawls is to be redefined according to minimal portion of compromise, if consensus is not possible (Rawls uses the definition of «overlapping» consensus, which is more realistic in the situation when majority feels exploited as constantly in debt to minorities and minorities feel under-represented), is highly criticized by those academicians whose views can be defined by the unclear common definition of supporters of collective rights of minorities. (Rawls 1971, p. 387 – 388.) Etienne Balibar is one of those critics who analyses dangers of blindness on example of French policy towards equality of citizens. In his essay «Uprisings in the Banlieues» Balibar depicts uprisings in winter 2005 in Parisian suburbs as suppressed and rhetorically ignored long-lasting underrepresentation and discrimination of ethnic minorities of immigrants. (Балибар, 2008, p.269-298.)

The borders between two approaches to the phenomenon of minorities as a group (or groups) with particular status, needs and capacities of acquiring social status in societies still dominated by European majorities and their habitus, are not and have never been strictly watched and kept. Will Kymlicka is one of those theoreticians, who tries to find a shelter from the political radicalism of ethnic majorities in various multicultural countries like the Netherlands where the nationalistic parties were rejoicing over successes in the European Parliament elections in June 2009, by avoiding taking a clear position in the argument on collective rights.<sup>6</sup> A discursive solution for synthesizing a new «third way» approach could be seen in works of Iris Marion Young who is criticizing modern multicultural society as not being able to avoid structural inequality of minorities, in spite of discursive tolerance and acceptance and Jeffrey

Stout, who tries to elaborate a new common system of civil interaction of diverse groups, which could arise when groups agree to transcend the borders of their own ethnicity (Young 2007, p. 81-82.; Crayt 2009, p.409)

To fill the theoretical overview of various paradigmatic «camps» on the meaning of individual and collective rights in contemporary Western societies with reflections to empiric practices and challenges for theoretical constructions, let me turn to discussions on multiculturalism as existing policy in different European countries.

### **Multiculturalism in policy – who promised success?**

What are the most characteristic principles of cultural diversity within the paradigm of multiculturalism? Firstly, according to Seila Benhabib, multiculturalism in different European countries has transferred the ideas of accepting ethnically «the Other» from the experience of religious tolerance in European history. Ethnicity in combination with religious identity has become a major characteristics of »the Other« in the contemporary European political culture. Still, these two basic parts of collective identity of »the Other« in Western Europe are underrepresented or scarcely known in Eastern Europe.

According to Benhabib, the Netherlands is a classical example of the ethnical «Other» who is perceived as collective identity. Diversity as manifestation of «the Otherness» is accepted and tolerated in forms of multicultural ideology. (Benhabib 2002, p.77) Benhabib states that policy of recognition in the Netherlands is closely related to traditions of religious tolerance in this protestant country.

Another element of multiculturalism as a policy frame which is being severely criticised by the representatives of liberal paradigm is that in the state policy collective rights open ways for special support from the state and, thus, principles of equal opportunities may be affected. Ideas of collective rights as a source of possible privileges in society which should preserve equality have been reflected in the political discourse of the conservative Latvian media in the last two years.

Issues of collective rights of ethnic and religious minorities have received intellectual and also rhetorical support after massive fears of terrorism and rapid islamisation in various Western democracies. (Lappin 2007, p.15)

Another example of critics towards the concept of multiculturalism comes from Sweden, where imigrants in the second half of the 20th

century, according to A. Calbom, were left alone, without any state provided tools for integration into Swedish cultural and linguistic space. As a result, self-isolation and dominance of religious identity are seen as obstacles on the way to social cohesion of diverse ethnic groups in contemporary Sweden. (Carlbon 2006, p. 248.)

There are many other examples of current critics on practical implementation of the theoretical frame of multiculturalism in Western democracies – after tragic events in metro stations in London in July 2005 the British media and politicians have started discussions to evaluate the existing policy of recognition. Norway, Germany and Austria, as well as other European democracies are facing reevaluation of strategies of social inclusion. At the same time, critics is a sign of ideology in transformation, so, multiculturalism as political reality is not easy to cancel. Reshaping multiculturalism may become a long lasting project and participation of ethnic minorities in this new «consensus» (Rawls) is vital.

An analytical frame for synthesizing theories of collective rights and individual rights was supported by new debates on multiculturalism as effective inclusion frame. The so-called exit rights paradigm sees the possibilities for ethnic minorities to choose how far they prefer to follow the framework for ethnic identities and the habitus shaped by these identities. I think, this theoretical frame is rather relevant for Western European societies where communities of ethnic minorities provide high level of cultural autonomy.

An example of Latvian modern society which follows in the final chapter of the article may provide some evidences for exit rights paradigm as irrelevant for the situation in a distinct new EU member state.

### **Where to «exit» in Latvia?**

Daniel Weinstock defined the paradigm of «exit rights» as a chance to reconcile liberals and protagonists of collective rights of minorities. (Weinstock 2007, p.247)

After having examined various aspects of how collective representation of minority groups is put into practice in multiculturalism paradigms, let me now conclude the article with some reflexions of the situation in my own country – Latvia. According to some domestic and foreign theoreticians, there are signs of ethnic democracy in Latvian and other post-Soviet region countries, which have in common the regained state independence after the collapse of the USSR. New ethnic elites

recruited from ethnic majorities disadvantaged during the Soviet rule are predominant in most spheres of public life and shape policy for all citizens of their countries. Svetlana Diatchkova states that «all the main features of ethnic democracy are at least partly relevant to the current situation in Latvia. The state prioritizes ethnic, cultural and political interests of the indigenous groups.. ». (Diatchkova 2005, p.112) Kumiko Haba described democratization of Eastern European societies in the 1990ies in terms of renaissance of various types of nationalism, reaching from liberal nationalism, boarding with state patriotism to its radical (chauvinistic) forms in the Balcans.(Haba 2007, p.602) Despite of debates on the negative effects of renaissance of nationalism ideology in Eastern Europe and, at the turn of the century, also in the old EU Member states, ethnic minorities in Latvia are essential parts of political discourses on human rights, representation and common values (policy of integration). The long-lasting process of accession talks created the EU a wide valid system of protection of rights of minorities.

A major document, creating until now the most detailed frame for protection of ethnic minorities, was ratified by the Parliament of Latvia in 2005 and became a part of national judicial system – The Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities. Institutional support for the implementation of the Convention, though more and more fragmented and inefficient, is still there. Debates on minority rights in Latvia take place on various levels – among academicians (rather fragmented and dependent on financial support for research projects), among politicians (mainly in rhetorical tradition of political discourse on «the Other» in Latvia) and among stakeholders – NGOs of ethnic minorities, which, as financial support from the state budget during the crisis has been diminished, are running the risk of becoming deaf participants of the discourse on minorities in Latvia. Analysis of collective ethnic identities show that the largest groups of ethnic minorities are still searching for their identities, lost during the Soviet Period. (Dribins, 2007)

I suppose, the thesis on dependency of an individual of ethnic minority is rather weak and fragmented in Latvian context. Long-lasting period of predominance of socialist supranational identity of «a Soviet person» makes belonging to ones ethnic minority group as a collective set of values rather theoretic. Recovering of ethnic identities is taking place alongside with the rhetorics of exclusion of the so-called «non-Latvians»

or «people from other folks» (cittautiesi) who are often united into anonymous group of the «Russian-speaking». Thus, the idea of collective rights is mainly used in the current political discourses in Latvia to partly recreate and preserve some elements of ethnic democracy. Redistribution of power in political discourse, representation of ethnic minorities in civil service and other institutions in labour market show that ethnic minorities are still underrepresented in the Latvian political system. (Pabriks 2002)

How can the ideas of Western theoreticians on exit rights be validated in Latvian society? If exit rights are to be defined according to Wolff, then a possibility of assimilation of minorities are often discussed in the Latvian right-wing political discourse. I suppose, for contemporary Latvia with a large number of inhabitants from different ethnic groups, there is simply no space for stable and active ethnic identities in the public space. Thus, there are no threats which would, according to liberalism traditional paradigm, hinder minorities in their rights to enjoy common neutral policy of individualistic human rights provided by the «blind» state. In Latvia, I dare say, there are no preconditions either for alarm against losing difference of minorities, or for alarm against a neutral state «loosing» its citizens for despotic elite of national minorities. There are simply no political discourses inside the Latvian ethnic majority which would provide political neutrality to the fact of ethnic identity different from the identity of the majority. Different experts comment on the ethnic identity of national minorities as a field of folklore activities managed by the elderly people as traditional cultures cannot compete with modern pop culture which attracts the youth. ( Muižnieks 2007, p.39) Thus, there are also no stable and long-lasting traditions of secluded ethnic traditional lifestyles of minorities which would clash with culture of the majority – German debates on *Leitkultur* at the turn of the 21st century are to be understood only in the local context of Muslim communities of Turkish citizens who are not enjoying the status of a minority according to the Framework Convention. There are no debates on minorities being or becoming a part of Latvian ethnic political community, in spite of predominance of ethnic tools in integration projects. Ilga Apine and Vladislavs Volkovs state that the collective identity of Latvia's biggest Russian minority is not successfully integrated into Latvian civic identity, thus, affecting the quality of life of the minority. (Apine, Volkovs 2007, p.213) Other experts state that integration policy «only states the obligations of minorities

and does not have anything to say about tolerance vis-a-vis various nationalities....». (Zepa, Šūpule, Krastiņa 2006, p.23)

Thus, I would conclude by proposing the statement on the lack of space which would be an exit into another identity space, for example, shaped by the majority culture. My long-lasting observations on the idea of a common (political) nation in Latvia gives me some arguments to conclude that the political nation is only mentioned in the Constitution, but is not present in the active political discourse. There are no spaces to exit or to enter because the majority elite, following the definition by Rawls, is not offering either consensus or compromise on conditions of participation of minorities in the common Latvian political discourse. I would also be rather sceptical about the prognosis for multiculturalism as a future scenario for interethnic relations in Latvia.<sup>7</sup> I would go further into the realm of political debates and suggest that there is no scenario in the state policy for handling the 41% of non-ethnic Latvians. The state policy until now has been strongly holding to the idea of collective memories of Latvians within premordialis-tic tradition of a nation as a community bound by *jus sanguini*.

## REFERENCES AND COMMENTS

- 1 Details on the pre-election campaign of the party «For Fatherland and Free`dom\* are available: <http://www.tb.lv/> and in You Tube (the so-called War of Advertisement Spots is also available on these sites). Analysis of the pre-election campaign of the party is available on [www.politika.lv](http://www.politika.lv) – site for political analysis.
- 2 See statistical data on the figures of non-citizens on the web site of Latvian Naturalization Board [www.np.gov.lv](http://www.np.gov.lv). Another useful site for information on naturalization process is the site of the Latvian Centre for Human Rights [www.humanrights.org.lv](http://www.humanrights.org.lv)
- 3 See the text of the Programme: [http://www.politika.lv/temas/sabiedribas\\_integracija/4106/](http://www.politika.lv/temas/sabiedribas_integracija/4106/)
- 4 Debates on the new concept of integration policy are available: [www.politika.lv](http://www.politika.lv). There are also local integration programmes, for example, in Jelgava.
- 5 One interesting literary example of social exclusion of elites from minority religious groups is fixed in the famous novel by Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966) «Brideshead Revisited\* (1945). The family of aristocratic British Catholics is declining rapidly and this decline and exclusion is linked to their self-

isolation and stigma of internal enemies of the state (Catholics in Protestant Britain).

- 6 The essay already quoted «The New Debate...» is an example of such politics of analytic self isolation.
- 7 Ilga Apine Defined Multiculturalism as a Future for Latvian Minorities Policy. – Dribins, L. (red.) (2007) *Mazākumtautības Latvijā. Vēsture un tagadne*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte. p. 24.

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**Andrius Marcinkevicius**

**ORGANIZING EDUCATION OF RUSSIANS IN LITHUANIA  
1918–1940: CHALLENGES OF IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION**

This article analyses factors that influenced the status and development of education at institutions teaching in the Russian language in Lithuania in 1918–1940. It is focused on political and social circumstances and attitudes of the ethnic majority towards these institutions, i.e. factors that had considerable influence over the perspective of Russian civil self-expression, education of the young Russian generation and its integration into Lithuanian society until 1940. It is argued that, though the Lithuanian educational system in the interwar period was fairly open to the needs of ethnic minorities, it firstly represented interests of the Lithuanian government to strengthen the Lithuanian majority and to assert its cultural and ethnic identity. These goals of the Lithuanian government did not always correspond to the expectations of other ethnic groups. This, notwithstanding the network of Russian language schools, had, for the first time in history, become effective means of fostering Russian ethnic identity and an instrument for promoting integration of Russians into Lithuanian society. Yet, material deprivation, significant discrepancy between values of different segments of the Russian community, lack of consolidation among urban intellectuals and rural communities as well as social and demographic characteristics (spatial dispersion, illiteracy, poverty, etc.) encumbered development of Russian schools and realization of their goals.

**Keywords:** organizing education, identity, construction of identity, integration, attitudes of ethnic groups

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### Introductory remarks

Main tendencies of the development of Lithuanian educational system from 1918-1940 were similar to many other countries formed in North Eastern Europe after the World War I. Setting and implementing guidelines for the development of the educational system had become a prerogative of the titular nations. Members of these nations aimed to redress the consequences of the Russian Empire's restrictions on education (especially Lithuanians, who experienced the press ban in 1864-1904 when printing in the Latin alphabet was forbidden) and to create an effective mechanism for education of young generation. Ethnic minorities which also aimed to provide proper education for their young generation and to instill professed ethno-cultural values had to accommodate the intentions of the titular nations. In Lithuania, as in other Baltic states, interaction between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities in the educational field became the epicenter of perplexed political, ideological, and social relations. Education of the young generation became a central priority, not only for ethnic Lithuanians who had tools at their disposal for achieving the set aims, but also for other ethnic groups. These groups maintained that upholding of ethnic identity, passing knowledge and traditions to upcoming generations, as well as their preparation for independent life in Lithuanian society, should be respected and tolerated by the leaders of Lithuanian society and its political institutions.

The most salient developments of citizenship in Lithuanian society could be observed in the first decade of Lithuanian independence (1918-1928), when the Government declared its adherence to principles of democracy, strove for international recognition and acceptance by the League of Nations, and pledged to protect minority rights. The commitment to guarantee minority rights led to the creation of numerous legal acts that reflected interests of ethnic minorities and that spurred these minorities to adhere to the strengthening of civil society in Lithuania. Yet, the particularity of contemporary political developments in Europe should not be forgotten. One of the fundamental features of those developments was orientation of governments towards creation of mono-ethnic states that in many European countries had generated favourable conditions for emergence of authoritarian regimes. The establishment of an authoritarian regime in Lithuania in December 1926 undermined the still weak principle of equal citizenship (particularly, as it is understood nowadays). The second decade of Lithuanian independence was marked

by adoption of decisions that infringed the rights of ethnic minorities. This, in turn, was reflected in the development of the educational system in Lithuania until 1940.

Considering the aforementioned political circumstances, efforts to organize education in the Russian language<sup>1</sup> in Lithuania from 1918-1940 should not be seen as an isolated process, but rather, a process within the context of various factors; such as characteristics of a particular ethnic group (mostly social and demographic), motivation of its members to educate their young generation, a range of priorities in social, economic, and cultural policies of the Lithuanian government, and the attitude of the ethnic majority towards the status of ethnic minorities in society and in the educational system. These factors had a significant influence on the way of establishing educational institutions that taught in the Russian language, the aims and dynamics of the development of Russian schools, and the status of Slavic and Lithuanistic disciplines (i.e. language, literature, history, and local geography) in the curriculum. Tendencies in the development of minority language education became a particular indicator of the interaction between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities. These signaled the state of civil society in Lithuania, the scope and boundaries of cultural autonomy of ethnic minorities, and the possibilities of ethnic minorities to integrate into society and to plan for the future of their children.

The aim of this article is to analyze the factors that influenced the status and development of educational institutions teaching in the Russian language in Lithuania in 1918-1940. This work is focused on political and social circumstances and attitudes of the ethnic majority towards these institutions, i.e. factors that had considerable influence over the perspective of Russian civil self-expression, education of the young Russian generation and its integration into Lithuanian society until 1940. Significantly less attention is paid to the analysis of daily activities of these institutions. These factors could be divided into two categories: (1) group characteristics (i.e. specific qualities of the Russian minority in Lithuania) and (2) State position (educational policies of the Lithuanian state and attitudes of the ethnic majority).

It is important to note that organization of Russian education from 1918-1940 has been, scarcely analyzed in Lithuanian historiography. Certain aspects of Russian primary and secondary education have been touched upon in general studies of education, but authors of these stud-

ies have mainly focused on the educational policy of the Lithuanian state and its influence on the process of education of ethnic minorities, leaving the expectations, attitudes and self-perception of these groups untouched (see Kaubrys, 2000, 231 lpp.; Shetkus 2000, 160 lpp.). These aspects were, to some extent, analyzed by several Lithuanian authors (see Ковтун 2003, pp. 145-176; Lasinskas 2006, pp. 89-95), but many important research avenues remain open for further investigation. Comprehensive investigation of this topic could be beneficial not only for local, but also for regional (i.e. for the Baltic State region) studies. Questions, like evaluation of Russian language education with respect to experiences of Russian emigrants who have left their home country after 1917, and the influence of Russian educational institutions on the development of citizenship, identity and integration capacities of the young generation, retain paramount importance in future studies.

### **Network of Russian educational institutions: structural sketch**

Network of primary and secondary Russian language schools, that existed on the Lithuanian territory before the World War I, disintegrated after the evacuation of a significant part of the Russian population, including bureaucrats and military, to the Eastern regions of Russia in 1915. During the war, the German government of occupation did not support activities of the Russian language schools, while the Lithuanian government after 1918 prevented the revival of the imperial schools' network by utilizing its assets for the development of the Lithuanian educational system. Hence, the network of Russian language schools had to be developed anew, without the possibility of using its former property or receiving support from the historical homeland, where Bolsheviks had come to power in 1917. It is worth mentioning that growth of Russian language schools in Lithuania was of a much smaller scale than in the prominent centers of Russian emigration (i.e. Czechoslovakia, France and Bulgaria) or in other Baltic States. In addition to primary, secondary, and vocational schools, universities with Russian as a language of instruction were established in most of the centers of emigration. Activities of educational institutions in the so-called Russia Abroad (*Россия Зарубежом*) depended upon a variety of factors, such as differences in governmental policies, the number and distribution of Russians in each state, the proportion

of Russian intelligentsia and the general level of education among emigrants as well as their financial capacities, notion of educational mission, and the level of association.

The situation for the development of Russian-language education in Lithuania, as in few other European states, was not favorable. Since 1920, a two-level system of Russian language education was established, consisting of more than a dozen primary schools and one secondary school at its peak period. Development of the primary schools' network can be divided into three periods: (1) *expansion* (1919-1927), (2) *stabilization* (1927-1929) and (3) *crisis* (1929-1940). In 1919, there were three primary schools with Russian-language of instruction. The number of schools increased in the subsequent years: five in 1921, nine in 1923, eleven in 1925, and fifteen in 1926. The peak of the development of Russian-language schools was reached in 1927, when the number of schools rose to sixteen. Since 1929, a reversed tendency can be observed – the number of schools had been consistently decreasing until it stabilized at a low number of three to four schools in 1933-1940: fifteen in 1929, seven in 1932, four in 1933-1935, three in 1936-1937, and four in 1938-1939 (Kaubrys 2000, p. 40).

Similar dynamics can be observed in the number of pupils studying at Russian-language schools, the peak number of pupils being reached in 1926-1927. (see Table 1). Spread of Russian language schools was most noticeable in the regions that had a relatively high concentration of the Russian speaking population (i.e. Kaunas, Siauliai, Rokiskis and Zarasai regions). However, the percentage of pupils studying in Russian schools was not consistent with the percentage of the Russian population in the Lithuanian society. In 1923, pupils of Russian schools constituted 0.49 per cent of all the pupils in Lithuania and 0.64 per cent of all the primary school pupils, in 1927 –0.70 and 0.80 per cent, in 1931 –0.26 and 0.29 per cent, in 1935 –0.17 and 0.24 per cent, and in 1939 –0.17 and 0.18 per cent (see also Kaubrys 2000, p. 46). According to the 1923 census, the percentage of Russians in Lithuanian society was 2.49 per cent (see also Picture 1).

All the Russian-language primary schools, except one private school in Kaunas, were public and funded by the Government or City Municipalities. Additionally, schools were partly funded by Russian public organizations<sup>2</sup> and by parishes of religious communities but their support was limited because of scarcity of financial resources. In 1920-1940, paid secondary education in the Russian language was provided by a private gymnasium in Kaunas<sup>3</sup>, established by the Kaunas Association of School

Teachers for Supporting Russian Schools. The establishment of this gymnasium resulted not only from the associational efforts of the Russians, but also from the interest of Jewish parents to educate their children in the Russian language. Consequently, the school was distinguished by its heterogeneous body of school children and teachers (see Table 2), while financial resources of Jewish families played an important role in establishing and maintaining the gymnasium. Efforts to establish a Russian-language secondary school in the district of Zarasai, where percentage of Russian population was the highest in the country (15.4 per cent), did not succeed as the dialogue between the community and state institutions ended in failure.

Russian gymnasium in Kaunas was not only a pre-eminent Russian educational institution, but also the central hub of Russian culture in Lithuania. The building of the gymnasium, finished in 1925, became the *Russian House* (*Русский дом*) that enabled the Russian community to implement various cultural and educational initiatives as well as to provide a regular meeting space for most of the Russian public organizations. (see Ковтун 2003, pp. 145-176; Lasinskas 2006, pp. 89-95) The gymnasium served as a venue for two congresses of Russian teachers and education officers (December 26-28, 1926 and April 17-19, 1927), where aims of Russian education in Lithuania and their implementation were discussed (Тыминский 1927, 15 лрр; Тыминский 1927-1928, 13 лрр.). In addition to education of the young generation, the gymnasium also served as an adult education centre, providing adults with an opportunity to earn a secondary school diploma in the Russian language (adult education courses were offered in 1926-1931). Courses on Co-operation and Accounting (1926-1928) were also quite popular among adults, but were discontinued due to financial problems. Since 1931 the gymnasium offered basic and advanced courses in the Lithuanian and Russian language. Courses in Orthodox theology (1930-1932) and courses for Pastors of Old Believers (1931-1933) prepared the new generation of parish priests and played an important role in maintaining Russian identity (Marcinkevičius, Kaubrys 2003, p. 194-200). All of the aforementioned courses, as well as primary schools and the gymnasium, were following curricula approved by the Ministry of Education; hence, the position of Lithuanian state officers had a big impact on the content of the courses.

It seems likely that the idea of a Russian higher educational establishment – the Russian People’s University – was mooted among activists of

Russian education in 1926. The academic staff of the new university was to be formed from the professoriate of Kaunas Vytautas Magnus University, where several emigrants from the Soviet Russia (the Soviet Union) were already teaching (Pavel Gronsij, Platon Jankovskij, Aleksandr Jashchenko, Nikolaj Pokrovskij, etc.) («Русский народный университет» 1926). Plans to teach history, literature, philosophy and other disciplines were discussed, but the idea of the university was never realized, most likely due to financial difficulties. The Lithuanian Government was not inclined to support such initiatives of ethnic minorities by providing state funding, while the financial resources of Russian activists were not sufficient to establish and maintain such an institution. Finally, only some lectures of professors of Kaunas Vytautas Magnus University were organized in the Russian gymnasium. The failed plans to establish a Russian university in Lithuania meant that graduates of the gymnasium had no possibilities to continue their education in the Russian language on a higher educational level, while the entrance of Russian students to Lithuanian universities was often hindered by difficulties of meeting the entrance requirement in the Lithuanian language<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. COLLISIONS OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION: EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

Considerable qualitative and quantitative transformations of the Lithuanian Russian community since 1918 led to significant revisions of their ethnic, cultural and religious identity. These transformations were evident not only in changes of the demographic characteristics, but also in the radical change of the social status since Russians (involuntarily) had become one of many ethnic minorities in the state. Moreover, these transformations were taking place in the region which most Russians identified as a province of the huge empire, not as a territorial unit with the ethnonym *Lithuania*. Understandably, the declaration of independence of Lithuania on February 16, 1918 marked the beginning of an unfolding drama in the public and private life of Russians who had to identify themselves in a radically transformed political, social and cultural arena. The dilemma of dualistic self-understanding as *insiders* (*свои*) and *outsiders* (*чужаки*) was manifested among Russians who had to construct their identity within the ethnically and confessionally homogeneous<sup>5</sup> population of the state, where control over social and political decision-

making fell into the hands of Lithuanians. In this new situation, such social institutes as churches and schools became increasingly important in the consolidation of ethnic identity and delineation of the social status of the Russians, many of whom were not just immigrants, but had deep roots in the country and considered it their homeland.

Sense of civil insecurity, caused by their unconscious need to justify their stay in the country, became an important feature of Russian self-awareness. This insecurity was a reaction to the deeply held notion of Russians as political immigrants (imperial bureaucrats, military and colonist peasants) in Lithuanian society. Russians tried to overcome this image by presenting themselves as a traditional and loyal ethnic group. Educational institutions with Russian language of instruction could have strengthened the sense of civil security and improved relations with the majority society, but development of Russian schools' network was often met with controversial reactions. Although, high-principled officers of Lithuanian state institutions were rarely unsettled by the prospect of being named agents of Russification (*rusifikatoriai*), i.e. for granting permissions to open Russian-language schools, it must be acknowledged that not all the officers demonstrated this level of integrity (see Šetkus 2000, 160 p.).

The status of ethnic minorities and the perspective of education in a minority language was largely dependant on the interests and readiness of Lithuanian society to provide space for the self-expression of ethnic minorities. After the years of oppression by the Russian empire, the Lithuanian educational system was orientated towards the creation of national (i.e. Lithuanian) schools and national (i.e. Lithuanian) upbringing. This tendency was common in many new nation-states that emerged through disintegration of empires. In Lithuania organizing the network of education in the Russian language depended on the educational system that represented values of the majority and that gradually started to limit possibilities of self-expression for other ethnic groups, especially after the 1926 coup d'état. The Third Seimas of Lithuania, dominated by left-wing parties, was exceptional in its liberality towards the development of ethnic minorities' schools<sup>6</sup>, but its short period of governance (June 2 – December 30, 1926) was abruptly ended by the nationalist regime.

Russian civic education in Lithuania, unlike in many important centers of Russian emigration, was not oriented solely towards preservation of national identity. Although, maintenance of ethnic, confessional and cultural identity was essential in the Russian education, the notion of

integration into Lithuanian society was also emphasized. In this respect, educational system in Lithuania differed from such systems in the main centers of emigration, where émigrés from Soviet Russia (the Soviet Union) considered themselves to be temporary refugees and therefore did not deem it necessary to integrate into the host society. Governments of several receiving states (i.e. France, the *Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes*) considered the émigrés from Soviet Russia an exceptional ethno-social group and offered them financial support. The Russian Action (or *Action russe*) in Czechoslovakia that started in 1922 provided for the creation of a broad network of primary, secondary and higher education schools (see Paev 1994, 292 lpp.; Петрушева 1997, 496 lpp.). Dissimilarly, Lithuania had not become an important centre of Russian émigrés and their educational needs were often underrepresented<sup>7</sup>. Lithuanians had a vague notion about the situation of the émigrés and often considered their stay as an additional financial burden to the state and worried about increased competition in the labor market. Consequently, since the early 1920s, the Ministry of Interior attempted to limit the number of incoming émigrés by refusing to issue permissions for residence and work (see Skipitis 1967, 477 lpp.).

Most Russians in Lithuania favored the vision of being integrated citizens while maintaining high ethnic identity. An autonomous educational system was considered to be better disposed to implementing these ideals in the education of the young generation than mainstream schools; therefore, entry of Russian children to Lithuanian schools was discouraged. The concept of citizenship, held by Russians in Lithuania, was tied to active participation in the mainstream society, not to preparation of future cadres for a non-Bolshevik Russia. Hence, fostering active citizenship among the young Russian generation in Lithuania, pedagogues usually stressed the common history of the two nations, reaching back to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This period (especially until Union of Lublin in 1569) was seen as an epoch of multicultural and multi-confessional society when Slavic culture as well as other languages and religions were tolerated and generally encouraged (*though this vision was not always historically correct – A.M.*). This «discovery» of Russians (the three martyrs (Anthony, John and Eustathios) of Vilnius, the duke Andrej Kurbsky, communities of Old-Believers, etc) in Lithuanian history had to testify to the longevity of relations between the two nations. The union of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Kingdom of Poland was

considered as a breaking point in the Lithuanian and Russian relations, while integration of the Uniats into Orthodox Church in 1839 was interpreted as restoration of historical justice (Шопец 1938, pp. 44-46). It can be presumed that such approaches to history were often conveyed during history and religion classes in Russian schools.

Successful integration into society depends not only on the intentions of ethnic minority groups, but also on attitudes and openness of the society. Although, adherence of the Lithuanian Government to democratic values (until 1926) and its international commitment to protect the rights of ethnic and religious minorities were beneficial to Russian community, practical implementation of various declarations should be examined separately. The main document on the Lithuanian state's commitment to protect the rights of ethnic minorities was the Declaration of Equality of all Lithuanian Citizens, ratified in 1922<sup>8</sup> and presented to the League of Nations. The declaration, a prerequisite for entry to the League of Nations, inter alia guaranteed the rights of ethnic minorities to establish private schools with native languages of instruction and to receive state support for primary schools in regions where non-Lithuanians constituted a significant proportion of the population (Поташенко 2001, pp. 46-47). Provisions of this declaration were added to the Constitution on August 1, 1922 (§ 73 and § 74<sup>9</sup>) and reiterated in all subsequent constitutions except for the one of 1938. Although, adoption of these provisions marked a positive development in the legal system of Lithuania, the two articles included in the Constitution were rightly criticized as «vague, ambiguous and imprecise» (Тыминский 1922). Aleksandr Timinskij<sup>10</sup> (Александр Тыминский), a great supporter of civil society, argued that the two articles of the Constitution would fail to provide a solid ground for the development of cultural autonomy of ethnic minorities. He pointed out that, despite of claims to equality of all citizens constitutionally, ethnic minorities were equated with private organizations while the Lithuanian majority gained the enshrined public status (Тыминский 1922). These qualms were well-founded as the cultural autonomy of ethnic minorities was never actually granted *de jure*, and the issue was abandoned altogether after the 1926 coup d'état.

Naturally, some expectations of ethnic minorities were probably higher than what the situation then could provide (e.g. establishing a Ministry for Ethnic Affairs). To a certain extent, the success of the claims of ethnic minorities depended on their relative proportion in the total

population. In Lithuania, equality in education was often understood as allocating proportional state subsidies to each of the ethnic groups. However, the same principle was not applied to developing the network of primary, secondary and vocational schools that was primarily developed in the interest of the ethnic majority. Lithuanian educational system was firstly oriented towards raising the level of education of Lithuanians and preparation of new cadres for state institutions. The government of the state rarely gave the same attention to the development of minority schools and the number of minority schools never grew to represent the proportion of ethnic minorities in the total population<sup>11</sup>.

Necessity to defend the interests of ethnic minorities in the educational system became increasingly important after the 1926 coup d'état, when the Government turned to one-sided promotion of Lithuanian culture. Since 1925, a number of disadvantageous decisions for ethnic minorities were made: in 1925 Lithuanian pupils were forbidden to attend non-Lithuanian schools and since 1927 children were admitted to schools according to records of identity in their parents' passports. Since 1936 the composition of ethnic minority schools had to be mono-ethnic, but the same rule did not apply to Lithuanian schools. Children from mixed families (where one parent was Lithuanian) had to attend Lithuanians schools. By the end of 1930s, the Government had significantly limited the freedom of establishing new ethnic minority schools by increasing the minimum number of attending schoolchildren to up to 50 (in 1922 the minimum number was 32). Lithuanian language requirements were also introduced in minority schools. Initially, pedagogues were only required to learn Lithuanian, yet later all school documents had to be written in the official language and some of the schools' courses had to be taught in Lithuanian (Šetkus 2000, p. 24).

The aforementioned measures were directed not only towards improving the educational process, but also towards disseminating Lithuanian culture in the regions where ethnic minorities constituted a significant proportion of the local population. Arguments that civic education should be based on the rights of all ethnic groups to education in their native language<sup>12</sup> became increasingly irrelevant as the Government announced that regions of North Eastern Lithuania (with significant Russian and Polish populations) surrounding the Vilnius region had to be «re-Lithuanianised»<sup>13</sup>. Establishment of new non-Lithuanian schools was practically stopped while Lithuanian teachers, working in this ethnically

mixed region, were lauded as heroes. Most Lithuanian schools in this region were staffed with experienced teachers, who, in the opinion of government officials, were best fitted to work in the interest of the state. Polish historian Krzysztof Buchowski, who studied the condition of Polish education in the region, came to somewhat categorical, yet compelling conclusion that «the Lithuanian Government, acting in the interest of the Lithuanian nation, had consistently thwarted the development of all educational institutions of ethnic minorities» (Buchowski 2004, p. 78).

Instances of ethnic discrimination, such as decisions to assign children to schools according to their ethnicity, were emotionally distressful to Russian community. Russians in Lithuania had often formed mixed marriages and new regulations meant that their children were not allowed to be educated in their native language. A. Sokolskij (*A. Сокольский*), who witnessed changes in the educational system, asserted that during the authoritarian nationalist regime (1927-1940) most of the Russian schools were basically transformed into Lithuanian schools. He described discriminatory practices of state officials: «an inspector would hold a parents' conference at school and ask parents to bring their passports. There were two records in the passports – one for ethnicity and one for religion. Russians, especially the ones living in villages, rarely knew Lithuanian and were often written down as Lithuanians in their passports. And here – on the basis of these records Russian schools were transformed into Lithuanian ones. Protests of Russian cultural and educational institutions had no effect» (Сокольский 1985). Aleksandr Timinskij, when analyzing political tendencies in Europe, regretfully observed that in most countries nationalist movements had gained a dominant position, whilst other political, social and economic issues were abandoned. He predicted that radical changes in development of civil societies could only occur after the fall of authoritarian regimes. At the time of his writing such prospects were barely imaginable, yet Timinskij demonstrated unshakeable optimism stating that «authoritarian nationalist regimes are undoubtedly temporary, spontaneous, and turbulent periods of our times. They will have to be substituted by the rule of law that defends the rights of all humans and all nations, so that the threat to world peace can be avoided» (Тыминский 1936).

### 3. EXPECTATIONS OF RUSSIANS IN EDUCATIONAL SECTOR: BETWEEN VISIONS AND REALITY

During 1918-1940 a fairly wide network of educational publications and newspapers was created in Lithuania, yet most of them focused on education in the Lithuanian language and rarely addressed issues of education of other ethnic groups. These issues were discussed mainly in non-Lithuanian publications that had a considerably smaller audience. Consequently, analysis of problems and discussions of visions and goals of Russian-language education in Lithuania remained limited to a narrow intellectual and activist circle and never became part of the national education policy. Issues of ethnic minorities' education were addressed only in communication between Russian pedagogues and government officials and were never part of public discussion. In Lithuanian mass media such questions were mostly discussed as political, not educational issues, while minority education activists published their articles in specialized newspapers, intended to foster ethnic, confessional and cultural identity.

The main priority of Russian education activists was to provide education in the native language for the young generation. Native language was considered a crucial element of ethnic identity and great attention was paid to its instruction at schools. It was rightly argued that qualified instruction in the Russian language could be provided by trained native Russian-speaking pedagogues, while the development of Russian school network should encompass all regions with significant Russian population thereby enrolling the maximum number of Russian children in Russian schools. Although, the development of the Russian primary schools' network was financially supported by the Ministry of Education and municipalities, the scope of support was rather narrow and often did not meet the expectations of Russian education activists. Participants of the First Congress of Russian Teachers and Education Officers (1926) argued that «*objectively*, Russian community needs at least 30 additional schools in order to have the number of schoolchildren and schools proportional to the Russian percentage within the total population» (Тыминский 1927-1928, p. 3). Although, some problems of Russian education were caused by the lack of association among the Russian community, the Government's attitude towards establishment of new Russian schools was also not very favorable. Before 1926, fifteen petitions to open new schools were dismissed by local municipalities, although, as it was stated, «all legal requirements for opening new schools were fulfilled»

(Тыминский 1927-1928, p. 3). Frustrated by the reluctance of state institutions to conform to their expectations, participants of the congress adopted a joint-statement in which they expressed their hope that «the needs of Russian schools would be addressed *justly* in the next school-year» (Тыминский 1927-1928, p. 3).

The low qualification of teachers, especially in rural areas, posed another serious problem to Russian education officials. Most of Russian intelligentsia was concentrated in urban centers, while Russian teachers in rural primary schools often lacked the minimum teaching qualifications and many of them had to sooner or later resign. Until early 1920s the Ministry of Education tolerated the lack of competencies among Russian teachers, because the number of trained and qualified teachers was not sufficient to meet the needs of Russian education. The issue became irrelevant as many Russian primary schools were closed and some of the teachers lost their jobs in late 1930s. Schools in the North Eastern districts of Lithuania were often dominated by Old Believer's children, but most of the teachers were Lithuanians. Although, Lithuanian pedagogues knew the Russian language, they used it as the language of instruction only during the first school year as a temporary measure, because most children did not understand any Lithuanian. Yet, the transition to Lithuanian language was not easy and affected the low educational attainment of Russian children. Only the Kaunas Russian gymnasium had a highly qualified team of teachers, many of whom were graduates of prewar Russian as well as Lithuanian and European universities.

Thus, one of the expectations of Russian activists in educational sector was to establish an institution dedicated to preparation and professional development of Russian teachers. In 1926, Aleksandr Timinskij, the principal of Kaunas Russian gymnasium, suggested that the Ministry of Education should organize teachers' preparation courses or parallel classes in the gymnasium. The ministry rejected his proposal<sup>14</sup>.

Although enrollment in Lithuanian pedagogical courses was important for the professional development of Russian teachers, the courses did not offer a possibility to study Slavic disciplines. The thwarted growth of the network of Russian schools had affected language skills of Russian children. Participants of the First Congress of Russian teachers and education officers (1926) regrettably observed that children were often unable to write (more seldom – to read) in Russian. They concluded that bilingual environment had negative effects on the Russian language

skills – children's speech contained many pronunciation errors, they had very limited vocabulary, used poor grammar and often mixed Lithuanian and Russian grammar rules. Instances when a child with a Russian name (e.g. Ivanas Jermolajevas) could not speak or poorly understood Russian language, were disconcerting to the Russian intellectual community (ТЪМИНСКИЙ 1927-1928, p. 3). Remarks about poor Russian language skills were made when the network of Russian language schools was still being developed, so it can only be speculated what discussion would have taken place if a similar congress had been held in 1930s, when the number of students in Russian schools was steadily decreasing<sup>15</sup>. Children attending Lithuanian schools were offered Russian language classes only if there was a group of at least 20 (since 1936) and later – of 32 students (since 1939) (Šetkus 2000, p. 23).

Another core element of Russian identity construction was religious education. School and church were closely connected in Lithuania. Unlike other European centers of emigration where all religious education fell into the hands of Orthodox Church, Russians in Lithuania formed two religious communities – Old Believers and the Orthodox<sup>16</sup>. Religious leaders of these two confessional groups frequently expressed their opinions on education of youngsters and actively supported educational initiatives of secular Russian organizations<sup>17</sup>. In 1924, Lithuanian Orthodox Eparchy (of Moscow Patriarchate) obliged priests to attract more children to schools and to educate schoolchildren on the teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church («Протоколы и резолюции ...» 1924). Religious classes of Russian Orthodox and Old Believers were tolerated in Lithuanian schools, because they conformed to the official position on the role of religion in an individual's life. Yet, the increase of minimum requirements for classes meant that religious education could not be offered to all Russian students, especially at schools where number of Russian children was low<sup>18</sup>. For this reason, Orthodox priests maintained that genuine religious education could only be provided in Russian schools which granted sufficient number of teaching hours per week. Occasional work with large groups of children was considered ineffective<sup>19</sup>.

It should be noted that Orthodox believers' and Old Believers' children were officially allowed to miss classes during religious festivals. In general, the Lithuanian Government maintained a more liberal position towards religion classes than towards language classes. School inspectors were at times concerned about the relatively large number of Russian

religious festivals (especially of Old Believers), therefore the Ministry of Education and both Russian churches agreed to compile a list of the most important festivals.

Although the limited development of the Russian language schools did not allow meeting all expectations of religious education, religion classes became an important element of Russian identity construction. Clergy of Lithuanian Orthodox Eparchy maintained that children should be taught the Church Slavonic language and skills of church singing, yet these disciplines were not included into the curriculum of Russian primary schools due to regulations imposed by the Lithuanian Government. Protopresbyter Eustathios Kalisskij (*Евстафий Калисский*) regretted that involvement of the young generation in church life was decreasing and predicted that «the number of parishioners able to read in the Church Slavonic would decline severely, while the meaning of prayers and hymns would be lost to people unable to understand the language» («Съезд русских учителей» 1928). In 1930s Russian children already encountered difficulties in churches due to their insufficient knowledge of the native and Church Slavonic languages. Reacting to manifestations of decline in confessional identity, the Lithuanian Orthodox Eparchy published a special prayer book, prepared by a priest Gerasim Shorets (*Герасим Шорец*), which included Russian alphabet, Russian reading exercises and prayers translated into Lithuanian language («Уроки Закона Божия для начальных училищъ» 1936).

Participants of the two congresses of Russian teachers and education officers (in 1926 and 1928) asserted that Russian traditions and knowledge of history were losing their importance among the young Russian generation and it was suggested that immediate measures should be taken to prevent their further decline. Among other propositions, it was also suggested that pedagogues should introduce disciplines of Russian history and geography and organize Russian national festivals in schools. Participants of the Second Congress in 1928 suggested that readings of Russian classical literature should be introduced in primary schools and that special attention should be paid to improving elocution and writing skills. Since 1926 special attention was paid to events of Russian Culture Day. On this day school festivals and evenings of literature and music were organized as well as school plays performed in Kaunas Russian gymnasium and Russian primary schools. Aleksander Timinskij maintained that the main aim of the celebration of this day was to foster Rus-

sian identity and to encourage Russian parents to take care of the future of their children (Тиминский 1927-1928, p. 10; Тиминский 1937).

One of the greatest disappointments for Russian pedagogues and education officers was the failed attempt to establish an institutional representation of Russian education in the Ministry of Education. Such an institution – the Department for Issues of Russian Education – was operating in the Latvian Ministry of Education until 1934. The prospect of having a representative in the Ministry of Education was attractive to Russians in Lithuania (Съезд русских учителей Литвы 1928); yet such institutional representation was never established for any ethnic group in the Lithuanian Ministry of Education<sup>20</sup>. Although, the Lithuanian Government was responsible for several important shortcomings of policy of civic education, the level of consolidation of the Russian group in Lithuania had also influenced successful construction of ethnic identity.

Development of Russian-language schools' network was the result of work by a nucleus of Russian education activists, formed from the urban Russian intelligentsia and clergy living in Lithuanian towns and cities. Yet, the other segment of the Russian population in Lithuania – peasants, that formed the majority of rural Russian population, – remained largely unresponsive to efforts of educational activists. Petty artisans and peasants were more concerned about passing of craft skills than the formal education of their children. Hence, the failure of expansion of the Russian-language schools' network could be partly ascribed to *peasant inertia* and lack of consolidation within the Russian community.

Another important reason for the failure of the Russian education activists was the lack of bureaucratic communication skills among leaders of rural Russian communities. Success of establishment of Russian-language schools depended not only on the efforts of Kaunas intelligentsia, but also on initiatives of local communities. By the middle of the 1920s, literacy and communication in the official state language was becoming increasingly important in Lithuania, and poor command of the Lithuanian language, particularly written language, became an important constraint in establishing and maintaining Russian schools in rural areas. The Ministry of Education and local municipalities, responsible for the funding of schools, could refuse to accept applications written in non-Lithuanian language or filled in with spelling or grammar mistakes. Archival documents show that various requests and petitions were often handed in by people who had good Lithuanian language skills and knew

the regulations for official correspondence. The official authors of these documents only signed the prepared texts in Cyrillic.

According to the 1923 census, only 38.4 per cent of Russians (older than 10 years) were literate. The literacy rate was higher only in such urban centers as Kaunas (69 per cent), Šiauliai (64.1 per cent), Panevėžys (52.4 per cent) and Ukmergė (59.5 per cent) as well as in the administrative districts of Vilkaviškis (68 per cent) and Marijampolė (64.4 per cent). The Regions in North Eastern Lithuania, densely populated by Old Believers, had the lowest rate of Russian literacy – 27 per cent in Rokiškis and 24 per cent in Zarasai districts (calculated from data provided in *Lietuvos gyventojai* 1925, pp. 124-131). The literacy rate of other ethnic groups in Lithuania was considerably higher than that of Russians (see Picture 2). *Differences in literacy rates for men and women* were also much higher among Russians than among other ethnic groups – men's literacy rate among Russians was 48.7 per cent, while women's literacy rate did not exceed 28.6 per cent. *Difference between men's and women's literacy rate* among other ethnic groups usually did not exceed 10 per cent (except for Belarusians, who demonstrated similar literacy rates as Russians).

The low literacy rate, ignorance and poverty were often emphasized by Russian education activists in their dialogues with Lithuanian state institutions. The Image of Russians as a poor, culturally backward and illiterate community was consciously constructed by Russian education activists who hoped that it would appeal to the sympathy of state institutions and mainstream society and encourage greater support to the needs of Russian community. On September 2, 1926, in the appeal of Kaunas Association of School Teachers for Supporting Russian Schools and educational organization *Mokslas-Šviesa* to the Ministry of Education, it was stated that «hopefully, the educational and cultural needs of Russians would be no less respected than those of other Lithuanian citizens and the illiteracy, reigning in Russian community, would soon be overcome by children's education, while the Government would earn respect of these educated citizens»<sup>21</sup>.

Although, Russian education activists often criticized the educational policy of Lithuanian government, they remained self-critical and objective, stressing the responsibility of members of the Russian ethnic group in the education of young generation. Timinskij argued that «illiterate and uneducated Russians were partly responsible for their marginalized position in the society, because they did not promote and defend their rights»

(Тиминский 1931: 117-120).<sup>22</sup> Since 1928 the number of Russian children in schools was consistently increasing, yet the chance to provide education in the Russian language was already lost and most Russian children had to enroll in Lithuanian or mixed bilingual schools (see Table 1).

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dynamic and complex political and social circumstances of the interwar period influenced the development of Russian education in Lithuania. The essence of these developments can be highlighted through evolution of the Russian schools' network. The increase of the number of Russian schools during the first decades of independence was followed by a rapid decline in 1930s, which led to the pessimistic assessments by Russian intelligentsia of the future of civic education and prospects of fostering the ethnic identity. History of Russian education in the interwar period is far more complex than it is often presented in earlier researches. It represents a case when a research on issues of ethnicity in a historical perspective cannot be colored by the mythologized stories of particular historical periods or processes. In order to provide an unbiased interpretation it is necessary to analyze these historical developments from a civic, not an ethnocentric position. Attitudes and expectations of all the ethnic groups that constituted society should be analyzed. In Lithuanian historiography it is often emphasized that Russians in Lithuania had a constitutional right to establish Russian-language schools and to educate children in their native language according to the curriculum, approved by Lithuanian Government. By doing so, Russians had (although limited) possibilities to construct an ethnic, confessional and cultural identity for their children. It is less often demonstrated that the perspective of maintaining the Russian ethnic identity was largely influenced by the social environment, interests of the majority in society, political and ideological trajectories of Lithuanian Government.

Prioritization of Lithuanian ethnic interests over promotion of civic values resulted in the restraint of autonomy of ethnic minorities in the educational system. The sharp decrease of all ethnic minority schools in 1930s deprived members of many ethnic groups, including Russians, of the possibility to receive primary and secondary education in their own native language. Although, the Lithuanian educational system in the interwar period was fairly open to the needs of ethnic minorities, it

firstly represented intentions of Lithuanian government to strengthen the Lithuanian majority and to assert its cultural and ethnic identity. These goals of Lithuanian government did not always correspond to the expectations of other ethnic groups in Lithuania. Even if some of these aspirations were hardly achievable, a more liberal policy of the Government could have strengthened its position among ethnic groups. Yet, the Government paid little attention to specific situation (i.e. demographic characteristics, material deprivation, regional distribution, etc.) of each ethnic group and remained inflexible in its policies.

It should be noted that during the interwar period the network of Russian-language schools had, for the first time, become an effective means of fostering Russian ethnic identity and an instrument for promoting the integration of Russians into Lithuanian society. Although, one part of Russian intelligentsia critically assessed the perspective of education in Lithuanian language, their vision of Russian education actively promoted Russian integration into Lithuanian society. Russian-language schools were primarily aimed at maintaining ethnic, confessional and cultural identity, yet forging ties with the Lithuanian community was considered no less important. Accomplishing these goals meant that education of active Lithuanian citizens enabled them to keep their different ethnic and cultural identities. However, the Lithuanian educational system that represented interests of ethnic majority was more susceptible to assimilation, or even marginalization, rather than to integration of Russians. Yet, the actual long-term consequences of Lithuanian educational policies cannot be evaluated, because the situation changed radically after the Soviet occupation in 1940 and deportations of many active Russian intellectuals.

The educational policy of the Lithuanian government was not the only barrier that thwarted successful development of the Russian-language schools' network. Material deprivation, significant discrepancy between values of different segments of the Russian community, lack of consolidation among urban intellectuals and rural communities as well as social and demographic characteristics (spatial dispersion, illiteracy, poverty, etc.) were other factors that encumbered development of Russian schools. Efforts of Russian educational activists and clergy were often unrewarded as many Russian peasants were indifferent to the new educational opportunities. A higher level of association among different segments of the Russian community and public organizations would have eased organizing of the Russian schools' network that could have become an instru-

ment for developing authentic self-identity. The network of schools could have promoted processes of integration – not assimilation – of Russians and could have encouraged formation of a citizens' group, identified as «Lithuanian Russians», not «Russians in Lithuania». This way, Russians, living on Lithuanian territory, might not have been identified only as colonists or political migrants, but seen as equal and integrated citizens of the Lithuanian state. Successful integration processes might have helped to avoid such gaps in historical memory, when Soviet repressions and deportation of ethnic Russians (Lithuanian citizens) were not considered as a loss to the whole society of Lithuanian historiography.

The analysis, presented in this article, is important for several reasons. Firstly, by scrutinizing the development of Russian schools in Lithuania, it provides an example of the interaction between ethnic minorities and the majority in the Lithuanian educational system in the interwar period (1918-1940). This analysis not only illuminates the important developments of minority-majority relations in changing the social and political environment, but also helps to identify major factors that affect educational interests of ethnic minorities when society shifts from a civic to a mono-ethnic system or vice versa. It should be noted that the activity of the Russian schools' network was the first, even though not complete, attempt to foster ties between the two communities by finding common cultural, civic and social ground through education of the young generation. Thus, the results of this research can be useful not only for historical analysis of ethnic groups in the educational sector, but also for the comparative study of contemporary tendencies in education of ethnic minorities in Lithuania. This study also provides data for comparative historical analysis of Russian education in other Baltic States and centers of Russian emigration (after 1917). Such analysis would allow for full consideration of the significance of efforts of Russian educational activists and for a more comprehensive picture of the majority's tolerance towards autonomy of ethnic minorities in the Lithuanian educational system.

Table 1

**The number of Russian and ethnically mixed (Lithuanian-Russian) schools and the number of Russian classes in Lithuanian schools (1920-1940)**

	Russian schools			Russian-Lithuanian schools		Russian classes in Lithuanian schools
	School-children	Schools	Classes	Schools	Classes	
1920 I 1	220	2	n. d.	-	-	-
1921 I 1	323	3	n. d.	-	-	-
1922 I 1	452	5	6	-	-	-
1923 I 1	636	9	12	-	-	-
1924 I 1	725	11	15	-	-	-
1925 I 1	738	11	16	-	-	-
1926 I 1	800	11	16	-	-	-
1927 I 1	822	16	22	-	-	-
1928 I 1	738	15	20	-	-	-
1929 I 1	790	15	19	-	-	-
1930 I 1	714	13	16	-	-	-
1931 I 1	536	6	10	n.d	n.d.	8
1932 I 1	576	7	11	1	2	8
1933 I 1	504	4	9	1	2	7
1934 I 1	501	4	9	6	10	10
1935 I 1	561	4	10	6	15	10
1936 I 1	453	3	9	6	10	10
1937 I 1	514	3	11	6	11	10
1938 I 1	475	4	12	6	13	7
1939 I 1	507	4	12	8	20	7
1940 I 1	490	5	12	?	?	7

**Source:** Šetkus, B. (2000) *Tautinių mažumų mokykla Lietuvoje 1918-1940 metais [Rankraštis]: daktaro disertacija: socialiniai mokslai, edukologija (07 S). Vilnius. P. 131.*

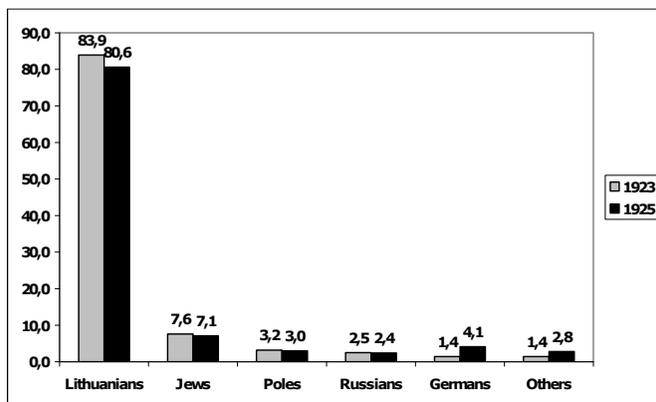
**Note.** Russian classes were established in Lithuanian primary schools from 1931 instead of closed Russian schools. Additionally, there was a noticeable spread of ethnically mixed primary schools (Lithuanian and Russian) in some regions of Lithuania in 1930s, but the language of instruction there was Lithuanian (in spite of the fact that Russians made up more than 50-60 per cent of all pupils in some schools of this type).

Table 2  
**Schoolchildren of Kaunas Russian gymnasium by ethnicity, confession and citizenship (1921-1939)**

	Total	Ethnicity			Religion			Citizenship			
		Russians	Jews	Lithuanians	Others	Orthodox and Old Believers	Jews	Catholics	Others	Lithuanian	Others
1921	191	70	104	6	11	71	104	12	4	?	?
1922	425	110	285	27	3	110	285	27	3	425	0
1923	462	119	298	41	4	115	298	39	10	461	1
1924	478	160	269	36	13	160	269	35	14	473	5
1925	431	164	226	33	8	163	226	28	14	420	11
1926	389	176	179	21	13	165	179	27	18	362	27
1927	310	155	123	20	12	145	123	23	19	291	19
1928	302	154	115	10	23	149	115	15	23	270	32
1929	246	143	83	8	12	136	83	9	18	209	37
1930	222	132	70	5	15	129	71	7	15	202	20
1931	204	117	66	10	11	113	66	13	12	178	26
1932	185	110	55	5	15	107	55	13	10	166	19
1933	177	119	44	7	7	92	44	8	6	162	15
1934	175	115	48	7	5	88	48	12	2	156	19
1935	166	123	36	4	3	105	36	7	1	154	12
1936	135	106	22	6	1	89	22	6	1	117	18
1937	130	99	25	6	-	86	25	6	-	118	12
1938	99	72	15	12	-	?	?	?	?	92	7
1939	33	26	3	4	-	23	3	4	-	32	1

**Source:** Annual reports of Kaunas Russian gymnasium (1921-1939) // LCVA, f. 391, ap. 3, b. 508, l. 24-25; b. 509, l. 168; b. 510, l. 175; b. 512, l. 99; b. 513, l. 108; b. 514, l. 59; b. 515, l. 109; b. 517, l. 95; b. 518, l. 23, b. 521, l. 14,16; b. 522, l. 11, 42; b. 2499, l.10, 12.

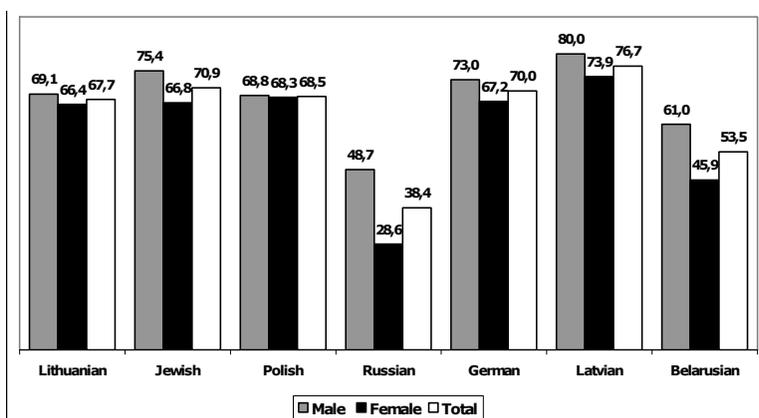
Picture 1: Ethnic composition of population of the Republic of Lithuania, 1923 (Klaipėda region excluded) and 1925 (Klaipėda region included) (percent):



Sources: *Lietuvos gyventojai: pirmojo 1923 m. rugsėjo 17 d. visuotinio gyventojų surašymo duomenys [1925] Kaunas: Lietuvos Respublika. Finansų ministerija. P. XXXVI; Lietuvos statistikos metraštis 1932 m. (1933). Kaunas. P. 9.*

Note: The category «others» (total 40,075) included respondents of ethnicities not mentioned here and 34,337 respondents, who called themselves «Klaipėdians» (residents of Klaipėda) (1925).

Picture 2: Ethnic groups by literacy rate in Lithuania in 1923 (%)



Source: *Lietuvos gyventojai: pirmojo 1923 m. rugsėjo 17 d. visuotinio gyventojų surašymo duomenys [1925] Kaunas: Lietuvos Respublika. Finansų ministerija. P. L.*

*Photo 1*

**Primary school children celebrating New Year  
in Kaunas Russian Gymnasium (late 1920s)**



Source: *Pedagogical Museum of Kaunas County*

*Photo 2*

**The alliance of school and church: metropolitan Eleutherius with teachers  
and children of Russian primary school (No. 33) in Kaunas (1937)**



Source: *Pedagogical Museum of Kaunas County*

## REFERENCES AND COMMENTS

- <sup>1</sup> *Russian schools, Russian language schools, Russian educational institutions* are used as synonyms in the article and define primary schools where language of instruction was Russian. It is also important to mention that several Russian classes have been established in Lithuanian primary schools since 1931 instead of the closed Russian schools. Additionally, there was a noticeable spread of ethnically mixed primary schools (Lithuanian-Russian) in some regions of Lithuania in 1930s, yet the language of instruction there was Lithuanian (in spite of the fact that Russians made up more than 50-60 per cent of all pupils in some schools of this type).
- <sup>2</sup> The most prominent among them was Kaunas Association of School Teachers for Supporting Russian Schools [Kauno mokytojų draugija rusų mokykloms laikyti] and Pedagogical Bureau [Pedagoginis biuras].
- <sup>3</sup> During 1919-1927 Panevėžys city gymnasium had parallel classes with Russian as a language of instruction, yet, unlike in Kaunas, the majority of students were Jewish children whose parents had returned from emigration in Russia. For them it was easier to continue their education in Russian. On January 1, 1923 these classes had 279 children of whom 251 were Jews, 11 Russians, 10 Lithuanians, 4 Germans and 3 students of other ethnicities (*1923 m. Švietimo ministerijos ... 1925*).
- <sup>4</sup> In 1923-1940, the percentage of Russian students at Kaunas Vytautas Magnus University was fluctuating between 1-1.7 per cent. Their number was steadily growing until 1931 (fifteen students in 1924, twenty nine in 1926, sixty seven in 1931), yet, since 1933 a reversed tendency could be observed (sixty six in 1933, thirty eight in 1935, thirty two in 1938) (Mačianskas 1996, p. 169).
- <sup>5</sup> According to 1923 census, ethnic Lithuanians constituted 83.9 percents, while Catholic percentage was even higher – 85.7 percents (*Lietuvos gyventojai 1925*, p. XL).
- <sup>6</sup> By 1938, no more than 144 primary schools of ethnic minorities were open (6.21 per cent of all primary schools), compared to 275 primary schools (11.95 per cent) in 1927. In 1927, the Jews had 135 schools, the Poles – 95, the Germans – 22, the Latvians – 10, and the Russians – 16. In 1938, the number of schools dropped significantly for some ethnic groups, while for others (i.e. Latvians) increased – the Jews had 107 schools, the Germans – 10, the Latvians – 13, and the Russians – 4. During the same period the number of Lithuanian schools increased from 1,997 in 1927 to 2,173 in 1938 (from 86.6 to 93.1 per cent) (calculated from the data provided by Kaubrys 2000, p. 37).
- <sup>7</sup> Statistics of emigrants from Soviet Russia that came to Lithuania after the October Revolution in 1917 remains highly unreliable. Russian cultural historian Marc Raeff estimated that the number of migrants could range from 4,000 to

5,000 people (Раев 1994, p. 294). On September 22, 1922, Lithuanian government, in response to request of the Advisory Committee of Russian Refugees at the League of Nations, provided that 2,337 Russian refugees (1,589 adults and 748 children under 17 years) resided in Lithuania. It was indicated that legally they were regarded as foreigners and were not entitled to any form of social support (Lithuanian Central State Archive (thereinafter – LCVA) f. 394, ap. 4, b. 43, l. 226). Estimation, provided by Raeff, most probably shows the maximum possible number, while estimation of Lithuanian government – the minimum number of Russian refugees. It is likely that the actual number of refugees ranged from 2000 to 4000 people, because many members of this group were not sedentary and the actual size of this group varied.

<sup>8</sup> The Declaration of Lithuanian Government to the League of Nations on the Equality of All Lithuanian Citizens was ratified on May 12, 1922 by the Government and on December 4, 1922 by the Seimas of Lithuanian Republic.

<sup>9</sup> The content of these articles:

§ 73. Ethnic minority groups, that constitute a significant proportion of Lithuanian citizens, have the right to legally defined autonomy in matters of their national culture – education, charity and mutual assistance – and the right to elect officers, responsible for co-ordination of these matters.

§ 74. The ethnic minorities, defined in § 73, have the right to tax their members and the revenue can be used for educational or cultural needs. They also have the right to use a just part of funds, distributed by the state and municipalities for matters of education and charity, if these matters are not addressed by state and municipal institutions (Valančius 2001, p. 30).

<sup>10</sup> Aleksandr Timinskij (1884-1959) – Russian educator and public activist, the principal of Kaunas Russian gymnasium (1920-1940), Kaunas City councillor (1920-1921), council member of Kaunas Orthodox Parish of Christ Resurrection and member of various Russian public organizations in Lithuania. He was the founder and longtime leader of two educational associations, Kaunas Association of School Teachers for Supporting Russian Schools and *Mokslas-Šviesa*. In 1930s, he became the head of the *Nansen* International Office for *Refugees* in Lithuania.

<sup>11</sup> In 1923 primary schools of ethnic minorities constituted 9.63 per cent of all the primary schools in Lithuania, in 1928 – 9.83 per cent, in 1933 – 6.49 per cent, and in 1938 – 6.21 per cent (calculated from the data provided by Kaubrys 2000, p. 37). To compare, according to the 1923 census, ethnic minorities constituted 16.1 per cent of the total population in Lithuania (no other census undertaken in the interwar period).

<sup>12</sup> Aleksandr Timinskij admitted that «Lithuanian nation is well-disposed towards Russian schools and Russian schools are favorably received», yet he suggested that the importance of civic education should not be forgotten:

«The rights of minorities! Aren't they the spark of the big truth? Truth that does not rely on force, but on the whiff of freedom. Won't a child, who feels insider, not an outsider, although he speaks his native language and attends a school of his ethnic group, become a loyal citizen of his state? («Съезд русских учителей» 1928).

- <sup>13</sup> Officers of Lithuanian state institutions and public activists, who often understood integration of non-Lithuanians as assimilation at least on language level, started constructing the identity of ethnic minorities themselves. For example, the Polish were often identified as «polonized Lithuanians», while in the 1925 census a part of Germans, living in Klaipėda region, were identified as «klaipėdiečiai» ( i.e. residents of Klaipėda region), although both groups refuted such labeling.
- <sup>14</sup> The Report of the Ministry of Education to A. Timinskij, the principal of Kaunas Russian gymnasium, No. 7941, July 23, 1926. LCVA, f. 391, ap. 2, b. 513, l. 192.
- <sup>15</sup> In 1920, 36.8 per cent of all Russian schoolchildren (81 of 220) were enrolled in Russian language schools, in 1924 – already 52.2 per cent (725 of 1338) (*Švietimo ministerijos...* 1921; *Statistikos žinios...* 1925). In 1932-1940 the proportion of Russian schoolchildren in Russian schools had steadily decreased, although, the general number of Russian children in schools had increased: in 1932 9.4 per cent of all Russian students attended Russian schools (537 of 5,717), in 1936 – 5.9 per cent (453 of 7,619).
- <sup>16</sup> In the census of 1923, 78.6 per cent of Orthodox believers and 98.8 per cent of Old Believers identified themselves as Russians. Old Believers constituted 63.0 per cent of Russians in Lithuania while Orthodox believers – 35.7 per cent.
- <sup>17</sup> In March, 1929 Eleutherius (*Елевферий*), the metropolitan bishop of Lithuanian Orthodox Eparchy stated in one of his resolutions: «pain fills my heart when I see that the number of Russian schools is very small compared to the proportion of Russians and other ethnic groups in Lithuania. I bless the Pedagogical Bureau that strives for increase of numbers of Russian schools in the Ministry of Education – this work is just and useful to the welfare of state and church. The diocesan council will support its [Pedagogical Bureau's – A.M.] activity in every possible way in this important work («Епархиальное собрание» 1929).
- <sup>18</sup> Since 1926 the Ministry of Education has increased the minimum number of attending students (in 1925, a weekly class could take place if there were at least 2 attending students, in 1926 – at least 6-12 students and in 1927 – 9-15 students (*The Request of Lithuanian Orthodox Diocesan Council to the Ministry of Education*, No. 722, December 29, 1927. LCVA, f. 391, ap.4, b. 690, l. 50).

- <sup>19</sup> The protopresbyter Eustathios Kalisskij observed that «children in religion classes where the teacher must work with two classes for only 40 minutes, can understand and remember little. It is even worse, when a teacher must work with three classes (of children of different ages) at the same time. It is suggested that teachers would attend services at churches together with children where adults could show an example of religious and moral behavior» («Съезд русских учителей» 1928).
- <sup>20</sup> In 1928, a member of Kaunas community of Old Believers A. Yefremov (А. *Ефремов*) marvelled the work of Russian public associations in the country that had 222 primary schools, pedagogical courses, summer courses for teachers, a pedagogical institute as well as an agrarian school with vocational classes («Русская жизнь» 1928). Such impression was strengthened by the active cultural life of Russians in Latvia. A Russian priest, Aleksandr Chernaj (Александр *Чернай*), who visited Riga in 1938, regretted that Russian cultural life in Lithuania was lifeless compared to the situation in Latvia and argued that one of the reasons for such a difference was the lack of Russian intellectuals in Lithuania («Русские деятели из Литвы ...» 1938).
- <sup>21</sup> The Letter of Kaunas Association of School Teachers for Supporting Russian Schools and educational organization *Mokslas-Šviesa* to the Ministry of Education, September 2, 1926. LCVA, f. 391, ap.2, b.513, l. 169.
- <sup>22</sup> From an article by Timinskij (1937): «Russians are weakly organized in their ethnic group. The lack of consolidating national institution, constant struggle between separate groups and individuals weakens the ethnic work of Russian activists and makes it vulnerable to various vicissitudes. Legally, a significant part of Russians (three quarters of the total community) are peasants who possess a small piece of land and do not have stable and firm positions in towns. Their economic situation, because of the current economic crisis, is difficult. This can explain the current difficult situation of Russian family and Russian school, where only a small part of Russian children are enrolled. Yet, if the Russians are poorly organized and polarized now, it does not mean that the same situation will persist into future. Life is a teacher and it will lead the Russians to solidarity and teach them to take care of their national goals, language, culture, and religion» (Тыминский 1937).

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**RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL ETHNIC MINORITIES  
IN RUSSIA: THE PECULIARITIES OF POLICY OF LAW  
IN THE CONTEXT OF CHANGING THE SUBJECT  
STRUCTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

The article investigates formative legal approaches to the provision of rights of traditional ethnic minorities in the process of creation of the new Federation subjects in the structure of Russia and abolition of Autonomous areas as forms of state autonomy of these minorities. A comparison between the official legal ideology (federal and regional laws) and the existing international standards for regulating the rights of national minorities and native indigenous nations has been carried out.

**Keywords:** traditional ethnic minorities, indigenous nations, minorities' rights, autonomy, adaptation, integration, legitimate interests, subjective public rights.

Creation of new subjects in the structure of the Russian Federation (Perm, Krasnoyarsk, Zabaykalsk and Kamchatka territories of the single Irkutsk region) has become an instrument for solving a legal anomaly of entering one subject of the Federation into the structure of another i.e. autonomous areas into the structure of Territories and Regions<sup>1</sup>.

Besides national and regional interests this state-territorial process affected social groups which were not direct participants of federal relationships. They are those national minorities and indigenous peoples whose original names have become a part of the name of the respective subjects of the Federation. For example, in Komi Permyak Autonomous Area they are the Komis; in Ust-Orda Buryat and Agin Buryat Autonomous Areas –

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the Buryats; in Evenk Autonomous Areas – the Evenks, etc. Such ethnic groups as well as ethnoses which have given the names to the republics in the structure of the Russian Federation are called *title ethnoses* in Russian jurisprudence and political science.

National Areas (since 1977 – Autonomous Areas) as a form of administrative autonomy of «small nations» in the structure of Regions and Territories of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic were founded in the 1920s-1940s of the last century. In December 1990 they were granted the legal opportunity to directly transfer from a Territory (Region) to enter the structure of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic<sup>2</sup>; out of ten Autonomous Areas only Chukotka Area used this right. The Federative Treaty (March 31, 2002) defined the new status of the Autonomous Areas on the basis of the total of substantial features – the status of legal political autonomies, thereby the traditional scheme of the spread of Territory or Region's jurisdiction over the territory of Autonomous Area in their structure was in general preserved. However, the elites of the Autonomous Areas perceived the fact of their participation in signing the Federative Treaty as recognition of their status of subjects of the forming federation.

A fundamentally different situation emerged when the new Constitution of the Russian Federation came into effect in 1993. Firstly, the Autonomous Areas were officially recognized as subjects of the Russian Federation. Secondly, the Constitution of the Russian Federation established the principle of equality of the subjects of the Federation in their relationships with bodies of federal government (part 4, article 5 of the Constitution) and a single treatment of the subjects of jurisdiction. However, the new constitutive act *did not lead the Autonomous Areas from the structure of Territories and Regions*. Competing claims of the Autonomous Areas and Territories which were parts of regions, for the same authority – the authority of the subjects of the Federation within the subjects of joint jurisdiction with the Federation jurisdiction performed on the territory of the Autonomous Area resulted in an insoluble legal conflict. Its solution suggested a choice between two alternatives: either return to the model of administrative autonomies in the structure of the subjects of the Federation, or direct admission of the Autonomous Areas as subjects of the Federation into the structure of Russia. The first of the denoted opportunities was implemented in the process of the reform of the subject structure of the Federation (from 2004 till 2008). The federal legislator regulated the procedure of uniting the subjects of the Russian Federa-

tion<sup>3</sup>, and in every four cases out of five «uniting» federal constitutional laws provided a special administrative status of the territory of Autonomous Area which ceased to be the subject of the Russian Federation.

In general, reorganization of the subject structure of the Russian Federation affected interests of six title ethnic minorities: they were the Buryats, the Dolgans, the Komis, the Koryaks, the Nenets and the Evenks. Only in two regions (the Agin Buryat and Komi Permyak Autonomous Areas) the size of the prevailing ethnic groups by the beginning of the process of uniting was approximately 60% of the population of the Areas<sup>4</sup>. Both national minorities were the title ones in other subjects of the Russian Federation – the Buryat Republic and the Komi Republic. In the Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Area of Irkutsk Region approximately 40% of the population was constituted by Buryats. But a more typical situation was when the representatives of the traditional minorities constituted from 20% to 30% of the demographic structure of Areas.

In the three cases of uniting (Perm territory, Irkutsk region and Zabaykalsk territory) interests of national minorities – the Buryats and the Komis, which did not fall into the category «indigenous», were affected. In the two other cases (Krasnoyarsk and Kamchatka territories) the «title» in the Autonomous areas was indigenous small peoples of Northern Russia, Siberia and the Far East. They were the Koryaks, the Evenks, the Dolgans and the Nenets (Evenk Autonomous area, Taymyr (Dolgan-Nenets) Autonomous area, Koryak Autonomous area). Excluding the Nenets, they did not possess any other state formations in Russia in which they could claim similar status, but the areas of their habitation were much wider than the corresponding areas. Thus, the Koryaks also lived in Chukotka Autonomous area and Magadan region, the Evenks – in Yakutia, the Khabarovsk territory, Amur, Tyumen, Tomsk regions and other subjects of the Federation, the Dolgans – in Yakutia. The Nenets lived in the Nenets and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous areas (where they were the title) by which they preserved the status of the subjects of the Federation and also in Yakutia, in Arkhangelsk region.

Excluding the Buryats and the Komis, the above mentioned ethnic minorities are referred to as indigenous smaller peoples of Northern Russian, Siberia and the Far East. It means that they possess a special legal status consolidated by the article 69 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation: «The Russian Federation shall guarantee the rights of the indigenous small peoples according to the universally recognized principles

and norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation». In relation to other ethnic minorities (named in the Constitution as peoples) the size of the state commitment of Russia is much more modest: The Russian Federation guarantees them the rights to preserve their native language and to create conditions to study and to develop it (part of article 68), and, at the same time, in the republics (and only in the republics) languages of the title ethnic minorities can be granted a status of the state language along with the Russian language (part 2 of article 68). The characteristic peculiarity of the Russian Constitution – consolidation of the peoples' rights not in chapter 2 («Rights and Freedoms of a Man and Citizen») but in chapter 3 («The Federal Structure»), in the context of constitutional norms which regulate the terms and conditions for implementation of the sovereign state authority. Thus, defining the authority of the Russian state as a guarantor of the peoples' rights, at the same time, means establishing borders for peoples' *self-identification*, in admissibility of their political and territorial self-identification in a form of establishment of the sovereign statehood.

Notwithstanding the existing differences in the social nature and legal state, all the minorities involved in the process of establishing new subjects of the Russian Federation are accepted as *traditional ethnic minorities*. As opposed to so-called «new» (migratory) minorities which are protected only by a universal legal ban on discrimination of a person on the grounds of ethnic origin, both, the ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples possess collective legal subjectivity. Besides the special rights of the people who belong to these communities, the international and the national law recognizes the rights of these communities as special collective participants of public legal relationships.

In the doctrine of International Law (particularly by the UN experts) two models for providing collective rights of traditional minorities are substantiated. For national (and for any other) minorities such provision is based on the principle of *integration* and creation of additional mechanisms for political participation. For example, they are special norms of electoral and parliamentary legislation which guarantee representation of their interests. For the indigenous peoples – this is the mechanism of *adaptation* which presupposes self-government, preserving autonomy and isolation in all the spheres of living activity. The UN work groups suggested these models for providing the rights of traditional ethnic minorities motivated by various claims of respective social groups. In Erika-

Irena Daes's opinion, the chairperson of the Work Group on Indigenous Population, the ideal type of «minority» emphasizes the experience of discrimination, which is why the international law should enable their free, unimpeded integration into a public sphere. The ideal type of indigenous people, vice versa, is interested in preserving its isolation from the majority and that is why it needs the guarantees for autonomy (Eide A., Daes E.-I., 2000). But no matter how fairly it is underlined by the experts, this simple approach is frequently disputed in practice (Kymlicka, 2008). On the one hand, national minorities are often interested in autonomy but not integration (the Catalans and the Basques in Spain, the Kurds in Turkey, the Scottish in Great Britain, etc.). On the other hand, this claim for new independent states has become the most significant factor of geopolitical instability. The events in Georgia in August 2008 are a convincing argument for restricting the rights of autonomy of ethnic minorities in order to preserve the territorial unity of the state. Apparently, the fundamental difference of historic and cultural context in establishing national statehood in Western Europe and the New World on the one hand, and in Eastern Europe and post-Soviet environment on the other, should be taken into consideration. «In the West almost always *the minority* demands apologies and compensations from the state which historically has been unfair to it... However, in the post-communist countries *the majority* usually feels itself a victim of oppression, and this oppression often comes from minorities which have collaborated with a foreign enemy...» (Кимличка 2008, с. 34). Collective attitudes of the state participants of The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) formulated by them in the mid-1990s (the period of formation of a new statehood and aggravation of inter-ethnic conflicts) lay in *ignoring of ethnic minorities as independent subjects of the law*. This approach is reflected in «The Convention on Provision with the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities»<sup>5</sup>. Firstly, persons belonging to minorities are recognized as subjects of law but not minorities themselves: the right to participate in public and state life is provided to «persons belonging to national minorities» (article 5); secondly, the states preserve a monopoly for defining the parameters of their national policy, they just «take into account the legitimate interests of minorities in their policy» (article 4 of the Convention). It is characteristic that the term «legitimate interests» but not «subjective (public) rights» is used in the document: according to the prevailing concept in Russian legal consciousness, subjective rights

are provided by corresponding commitments (including commitment of the state), but legitimate interests are not. They are the claims which are recognized by the state as «not contradicting the general legal order, but do not require any direct commitments from the state to satisfy them. «If the essence of a subjective right lies in the opportunity which is legally guaranteed and provided by other persons' commitments or obligations, the essence of legitimate interests – in mere allowability of certain behaviour» (Малько А., 1999, с.67).

In the circumstances of Russian reality, attitudes towards the claims of traditional minorities are even more contradictory. Firstly, the official (presented by the federal centre) and the unofficial (especially in republics) legal consciousness and order is based on antipodal guidelines with regards to the status of minorities. Whereas the federal legislation records significant differences in the status of national minorities and indigenous small peoples, the regional elites insist on their identity. «It was historically established,» R.Vagizov states, «that the structure of the Russian state entered (voluntarily or by the way of forced joining) the peoples who have had their statehood, which is *indigenous* (underlined by myself – N.F), state-forming nations and peoples...» (Vagizov, 2006, p. 389). Secondly, both official and unofficial ideas about the minorities' rights do not correspond in full to the denoted above international standards. Thus, the generally accepted term «autonomy» (excluding acquisition of sovereignty of a territory on the basis of ethnic features) everywhere is replaced by the archaic and extremely narrow context of application of the term «self-determination». (We would like to remind you that it is accepted to speak about self-determination in the international law only with regards to establishing new states on the territory of former colonies).

Besides that, even with regards to indigenous small peoples, the Russian legal doctrine excludes the model of autonomy, replacing it with the paternalistic conception of defence. That is why in the process of changing the subject structure of the Russian Federation, the traditional ethnic minorities are not granted any special rights which make them different from the whole population of Autonomous Areas. The international law (in particular the Convention No 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>6</sup>) requires consultations to be held with those peoples «in particular, through their representative institutes» every time when legislative or administrative measures concerning their interests are approved. A similar requirement is designated by the United Nations Declaration

on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (article 19): «states shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them»<sup>7</sup>.

Thus, generally accepted is the right of the indigenous peoples to *participation* in making decisions which may affect their interests. Their participation is conducted «through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures» (article 18). The most widely-spread formula for adopting public decisions in the Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples is: «states shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples...». At the same time, the native peoples (not the state) have the right to independently determine priorities and strategies for their own development (article 32 of the Declaration). The Russian Federation has a different interpretation of its commitments towards the indigenous small peoples (it did not support the above mentioned international legal acts). The most exact formula reflecting the position of Russia regarding them is the formula of «consideration of interests», «state aid» but not the commitment or prior public agreements with the natives and their representatives about important authoritarian decisions. In accordance with the regulation of the preamble, articles 1 and 4 of the Federal Law from April 30, 1999 No 82-ФЗ «On the Guarantees of the Rights of the Indigenous Smaller Peoples of the Russian Federation»<sup>8</sup>, the state provides the original development for these peoples in the socio-economic and cultural spheres. Representation of their interests is of a private-law character (clause 5 of article 1 of the Federal Law «On the Guarantees of the Rights...»), or it is viewed as a form of public self-government (clause 4 of article 1). Persons who belong to the indigenous small peoples have the right to establish territorial public self-governments, but their communities and associations of communities may be granted certain authority of the institutions of local government. The subjects of the Russian Federation have the right but not the obligation to establish quotas on the representation of the indigenous small peoples in the regional parliaments. The latest legislative decisions in this sphere are symptomatic, too. In accordance with the Concepts of Sustainable Development of the Indigenous Small Peoples of the Northern Russian, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, participation of representatives and associations of the small peoples in making decisions affecting their rights and interests is required. But sphere of such participa-

tion is restricted by the agreement of interests when developing natural resources in the places of traditional habitation and traditional economic activity (paragraph 9 of section III)<sup>9</sup>, and the legal forms of participation are not determined. Among the seven tasks of the state policy, the task of assistance for the development of communities and other forms of the natives' self-government was the sixth; more important is considered the task of *modernization* of traditional economic activity (the second on the list of tasks). Whether, in this case, the nation (ethnos), whose unique existence is stipulated by the traditional type of activity, will be preserved is an open question.

In the situation where federal regulations of the rights of traditional ethnic minorities are conceptually restricted, the process of laws creating newly formed subjects of the Russian Federation, who are forced to provide protection to those ethnoses which are losing their statehood, are of special interest. The divergence between standards of the federal «uniting» laws and those obligations towards minorities, which have been denoted by the new regions in the later Charters adopted by them, is also of great interest. In this context, we have analyzed five federal constitutional laws which regulate the creation of new subjects of the Russian Federation<sup>10</sup> and five new regional founding laws (regulations)<sup>11</sup>. The models of providing the rights of traditional ethnic minorities offered by the federal and regional legislator have become the subject for analysis.

The peculiarities of these models are the following:

1. *In the federal legislator's opinion, the interests of ethnic minorities are not affected by the process of change in the subject structure of the Russian Federation. The regional legislator in the majority of the cases follows the standards of the CIS Convention, views interests of ethnic minorities as the legitimate interests or even indirectly recognizes their subjective public rights.*

According to clause 2 article 3 of the Federal constitutional law from December 17, 2001 No 6-ΦКЗ «On the Order of Admission to the Russian Federation» and the creation in it of a «New Subject of the Russian Federation», in the process of change of the subject structure of the Russian Federation «the state interests of the Russian Federation should be observed». However, in every «uniting» federal constitutional law the federal legislator has defined the observance of *the rights and freedoms of a man and a citizen* but not the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, *a fortiori* – rights and legislative interests of minorities as spe-

cific subjects of public legal relationship as an imperative condition for creation of a new subject of the Federation. With the exception of Krasnoyarsk Territory, the legislation of newly created subjects of the Russian Federation demonstrates a different approach to the problem of minorities. According to the Charter of Irkutsk Region, the establishment of a special status of the Ust-Ordyn Buryat Autonomous Area is stipulated by the aim to preserve and develop the unique national identity of the peoples traditionally living there (sub-clause 1 of part 1 article 15 of the Charter). In the Charter of Zabaykalsk Region establishment of special institutions providing protection of «legitimate interests of peoples living on the territory of Aginsk Butyat Autonomous Area, their rights to preserve their unique identity, culture, language, customs and traditions» are specified (part 3 of article 106 of the Charter). In the Charter of Perm Region there is a special article 42 «Provision of Preservation of Ethnic Identity of the Komi-Permyatsk People». The Charter of Kamchatka Region guarantees provision of the rights and interests of the indigenous small peoples of Northern Russian (part 2 of article 30).

Thus, not determining the distinct legislative strategy (adaptation or integration), the regional legislator in four cases out of five refers interests of traditional ethnic minorities to the interests which are protected by the state. And, thus, the requisites for recognition of legal subjectivity of minorities are created.

2. *The native peoples are not viewed as independent participants of the state-territorial processes.*

As it has been underlined earlier, Russian legislation does not stipulate participation of the indigenous small peoples as independent subjects of the law in the process of reorganization of the subject structure, whereas the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (2007) finds it necessary. The paradigm of the state «guardianship» in relation to them does not foresee any prior consultations in the process of creation of a new subject of the Russian Federation even in the cases when after uniting they lose their status of title ethnic minorities, and, along with this, also the special legal position, which is, as a rule, guaranteed by the Charters of their «own» autonomous areas. Only territorial (multi-national) groups of joining subjects of the Federation are recognized as independent participants of the process of creation of a new subject of the Russian Federation.

3. *In the process of creation of a new subject of the Russian Federation (during the transition period and till the moment of adopting the Char-*

*ter of the newly created subject of the Russian Federation) separate constitutive authority of the subjects of the Federation are substituted with a federal authority, some authority of their state government bodies is restricted. The indigenous small peoples are not viewed as subjects of the law for self-determination (autonomy), freely establishing «their political status». The position of the Russian Federation is exclusive if not monopolistic.*

The Federal constitutional law on the creation of a new subject of the Russian Federation defines:

- name, status and structure of the state territory of a newly formed subject of the Russian Federation (on the basis of the treaty between bodies of state authorities of the subjects of the Federation and a referendums which legitimizes these treaties);
- name, order of creation and term of authority of legislative (representative) state government body of the newly formed subject of the Russian Federation (these parameters can be changed only in the process of adopting the Charters on Territories (Regions) that is not earlier than the second term of office);
- term of office of the first head of the newly formed subject of the Federation;

The Federal Constitutional laws on the new subjects of the Russian Federation also stipulate restrictions of authority of the legislative (representative) state government body of the subject of the Russian Federation as well as the head of the subject of the Federation. The authority can be restricted in the way of exception of some separate authority as well as by the way of the change (more often – reduction) of the terms of its implementation.

Yet, the Federal Constitutional law from December 17, 2001 No 6-ФКЗ «On the Order of Admission...» stipulates neither obligatory submission to referendum of the issue on the status of autonomous areas as new territorial units in the structure of the established subject of the Russian Federation, nor obligatory reflection of this status in the «uniting» law. In practice, a number of issues submitted to referendums have been issues about the new status of autonomous areas because the administrative-territorial structure of the subjects of the Russian Federation traditionally referred to the subjects of their own jurisdiction (article 73 of the Constitution), but the political elites of these practically abolished autonomous areas saw this special status as a guarantee of their further existence.

Hereby, in every «uniting» act the federal legislator independently solved the problem of areas formally using the constitutional prerogative of the clause «c» Article 71 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (on referring the regulating of the rights of national minorities to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federation). The competition of authorities, in our opinion, is stipulated by the substitution of the subjects of jurisdiction – the task of the federal regulation should have been guaranteeing the rights and legitimate interests of the indigenous small peoples of the Northern Russian, Siberia and the Far East in the circumstances of changing state-territorial organization but not this change itself. Such substitution is a result of a paternalistic but not a subsidiary model of representation of minorities' interests.

Meanwhile, circumstances of regionalization of public rights of minorities in the state-territorial processes should be provided by additional guarantees. For example, in the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany there is a provision for such a variant of development of events when the change of boundaries in the interests of a minority of inhabitants (including ethnic minority) is not approved by the majority of country's inhabitants. According to paragraph 3 article 29.3 of the Basic Law, if in one of the Lands on the territory of which there has been a referendum, the population is against creation of a new Land (redefined boundaries of the Land), but the population the territory of which might be changed, has approved the change (by a qualified two thirds majority and more), the opinion of the population of the whole Land is ignored in general. The decision will be made on the assumption of the interests of a compact minority.

In the Russian Federation such legal model would be actual, let's say, for the Buryat ethnos, who previously were divided among three subjects of the Russian Federation, but in the process of uniting two of them ceased to exist – the Ust-Ordin Buryat Autonomous Area in the structure of Irkutsk Region and the Aginsk Buryat Atonomous Area in Chita Region (now Zabaykalsk Territory). Why was the dynamically developing Aginsk Buryat Autonomous Area integrated into the depressive Chita Region but not into the neighbouring Republic of Buryatia? In N. Zubarevich's opinion, «social situation in rural areas in Chita Region is much worse than in Buryat areas because the aging of the population and depopulation has started long ago, and the processes of marginalization have acquired an irreversible character» (Зубаревич, 2006). Taking into consideration the long-term social effects, such uniting has more

«minuses» than «pluses». Not surprisingly, the abolition of the Ust-Ordin Buryat Area, which happened a little earlier, drew even an international response – an appeal was issued from the President of the World Association of Mongol People to the President of the Russian Federation to preserve the area (Терентьева, 2006). The Adyghes (the Cherkesses) are in a similar situation as they are divided between six subjects of the Russian Federation. This ethnos is striving to establish a single republic. The initiative for establishing the Cherkess Republic has not yet received the federal approval (Дерябин, Бондаренко, 2008).

4. *The interests of traditional ethnic minorities and the interests of the population of autonomous areas, on the agreed opinion of the federal and regional legislator, are provided by a special legal order of the territory of their inhabitation, but in the period of work of the first convocation of the new parliament – by a corporate representation of the area's population in the regional parliament.*

In the parliament of Perm and Krasnoyarsk Territories this quota is 2 deputies from the area, in the parliament of Irkutsk Region – 4, in the parliaments of Zabaykalsk and Kamchatka Territories – already 10 deputies from every autonomous area.

But, how can such different quotas be explained? The comparison of these quotas with the number of the area's population indicates that the principle of proportional representation is not observed. Thus, the number of the area's population for one representative from the autonomous area in the regional parliament varies from 2.4 thousand in Koryak Autonomous Area to 67 thousand in Komi-Permyak (see table 1). The share of representation of autonomous areas in the parliament of a newly formed subject of the Russian Federation is also not the same: from 20% in Kamchatka Territory to 3% in Perm Territory.

How to establish balance of the corporate representation? Calculation of representation of autonomous areas on the basis of the «cubic root» rule (from the population of a territorial unit) cannot be applied because the number of regional parliaments in Russia is understated everywhere – in the newly formed subjects of the Russian Federation it is not high either. In Zabaykalsk, Kamchatka Territories and in Irkutsk Region the size of the parliaments is only 50 deputies; in Krasnoyarsk Territory – 52; in Perm Territory – 60<sup>12</sup>. It is difficult to imagine that in the parliament 51 deputies out of 60 represent an autonomous area (proceed from the number of population of Komi-Permyak autonomous area of 134 thousand people).

Table 1

**Numerical indices of the corporate representation of population of autonomous areas in parliaments of the newly formed subjects of the Russian Federation<sup>13</sup>**

Autonomous Area	Area population, thousand of people	Quota of representation	Number of area population for 1 representative, thousand people.	Share of the corporate representation in the parliament, %	Share of autonomous area population within the population of a new subject of the Federation, %
Komi-Permyak Autonomous Area (Perm Territory)	134	2	67	3,3	5
Taimyr Autonomous Area (Karsnoyarsk Territory)	39	2	19,5	3,8	1,3
Evenki Autonomous Area (Karsnoyarsk Territory)	18	2	9	3,8	0,6
Ust-Ordin Buryat Autonomous Area (Irkutsk Region)	135	4	33,75	8	5
Aginsk Buryat Autonomous Area (Zabaykalsk Territory)	73	5	14,6	10	6
Koryak Autonomous Area (Kamchatka Territory)	24	10	2,4	20	7

The use of the average rate of representation which is used while establishing single-member constituencies during the elections of representative (legislative) state government bodies of the new subjects of the Russian Federation seems to be more realistic. It is essential to underline that from

the point of view of the federal legislator, calculation of the rate of representation for an area, a territory or a region (excluding a territory of a certain area) should be performed separately. The rate of representation in areas is lower – they have an advantage of representation of the interests of their population. For example, in 2006 in Perm Territory the rate of representation for the electors of the former region was approximately 70 thousand electors per mandate<sup>14</sup>, but for the area's electors – approximately 47 thousand. Deviation from the norm of representation was about 33% in the favour of area's representation. In Kamchatka Territory in 2007 the norms of representation were: in the region – 19 thousand electors per mandate; in Koryak Autonomous Area – 1760 electors per mandate<sup>15</sup>. It means that the deviation from the norm of representation in the area is more than 90% from that in the region!

Firstly, special norms of representation for autonomous areas established by «joining» Federal constitutional laws created collisions in the federal legislation. According to the general rule, the deviation of the number of area's electors from the average norm should not exceed 10%, in a remote and difficult to access region -30%, but in the places of living of the indigenous smaller peoples of the Northern Russia, Siberia and the Far East – 40%<sup>16</sup>.

Secondly, there is no balanced representation even among autonomous areas themselves: interests of Koryak Autonomous Area's population in the parliament of a newly established territory are represented better than interests of Komi-Permyak area's population.

But the high share of representation of the area's population in the parliament of transitional period is not that important at all (although it is the subject of fierce haggles) because later this panel of representatives cannot influence significantly the content of the Charter of a newly established subject of the Federation. The norms on the quota of representation of the area's population disappeared completely from the new Charters of Kamchatka Territory, Zabykalsk Territory and Irkutsk Region. The corporate interests of the deputy corps turned out to be better protected than the public interests of territorial groups.

Thirdly, the interests of the area's territorial groups and the interests of the ethnic minorities in the area's population cannot be provided with the help of the same legislative instruments. They should not be identified because only national minorities and the indigenous peoples are granted a special constitutional-legislative and international-legislative status. The

Federal law should define those legislative characteristics of the special status of territorial units which lost the status of the subjects of the Russian Federation which *are stipulated by the protection of the interests of traditional ethnic minorities living there*. It, first of all, concerns the additional guarantees for their participation in exercising state authority, which is required by the already defined standards of international law. For example, in Poland a public association or political party representing interests of the national minorities in a simplified order registers its lists and goes into the national parliament even if it does not overcome the obstructive barrier. (However, not any ethnic group is recognized as such ethnic minority which is why the groundless use of the election privileges is impossible<sup>17</sup>). H. Gerken indicates the established practice of cutting constituencies which provide the representation of national minorities (Gerken, 2005). (Implementation of these rules, however, is impeded by the archaic state of home elective right. It is just enough to remember that Russian public associations can become participants of the election process only at the municipal elections as a part of the alliance with a federal political party).

Different models for construction of the special status of the former autonomous areas which are realized in the Charters of newly established subjects of the Russian Federation coincide in the following:

1. The word «autonomous» is excluded from the names of the corresponding territorial units, but from the Charter of Krasnoyarsk Territory, from their definition as area also. Taimyr Dolgano-Nenets and Evenki regions belong to this Territory. The most widely-spread legislative definition is «area of the territory» or «area in the structure of the territory (region)».
2. In the Charters of all the new subjects of the Federation it is emphasized that the state authority in these territorial units is exercised by the state governmental bodies of the territories (regions).
3. The new areas (regions) have a guarantee of the territorial immutability within the borders prior to joining. Taking into consideration that both, the territory of a municipal formation and the territory of the subject of the Federation can change, the declared norm seems to be incorrect and declarative. In the case of redefining the boundaries between the subjects of the Federation, the border of the areas (regions) abutting it will also be changed. It would be more logical to admit the possibility for changing borders of the areas (regions) by the approval of the people of this territorial unity.

4. In all the five Charters a *special status* of a new administrative-territorial unit is declared. But only the *subjects of the legal subject*, territorial group can be granted the *status*, which means public rights and obligations. The fundamental feature of the subject of law (and participant of legal relationships) is autonomy (self-activity or freedom of will). Depending on how the borders of self-activity of a group which is a part of a nation or population of the subject of the Federation, are defined, the autonomies are divided into administrative (local) or political. In other words, without recognizing a special legal status of a territorial group there is no (and there cannot be) «special status» of a territorial unit.

It is this last circumstance which can explain the different models for institutionalization of new territorial units in the subjects of the Russian Federation. Some difficulty is in the fact that regional models frequently combine features of opposite approaches to the definition of the legal nature of these territories.

*The first model: administrative-territorial unit with a special legal regime of the state administration management.*

Within the frames of this model, area is an administrative-territorial unit created whereunder specific tasks of the territorial (regional) public administration on the newly developed territory are stipulated by a complex ethnic structure of the population. For its implementation, this model does not require recognition of the area's population or ethnic minorities in its structure as isolated subjects – participants of public-legal relations. The most adequate instrument for its implementation is including *the new territory affairs ministry* into the structure of the executive authority of the territory (region). The clause of the Charter on the special status of the area as an administrative-territorial unit in the structure of the subject of the Federation is a mere constitutional fiction. There are no institutions which provide self-activity of territorial or ethnic groups, there is only an institute which provides the state interests of a territory or a region.

In «its pure form» this model appeared **in Kamchatka and Irkutsk Region**. (the later Administration of Ust-Ordyn Buryat Area is included in the structure of executive bodies of the government of Irkutsk Region). But its elements can be traced in all newly established subjects of the Russian Federation, excluding Krasnoyarsk Territory. From the point

of view of the effective structuring of executive authority, the experience of **Perm Territory** seems to be very interesting. The «head» of Komi-Permyak Area is a minister of Perm Territory, the head of the Ministry of the Affairs of Komi-Permyak Area. From the point of view of the substantially formulated tasks for the public administration of the territories where national minorities live, the experience of **Irkutsk Region** deserves special attention. In the Charter of Irkutsk Region there is article 17 «Provision of preservation and development of national unique identity of the Buryat people and other peoples traditionally living on the territory of the Ust Ordyn Buryat Area».

*The second model: administrative-territorial unit with special status of its territorial group (territorial autonomy as one of the forms of such status).*

This model is presented in the regions only fragmentarily. Certain norms of international (European) laws serve as its basis. Thus, the Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities (1995 r.)<sup>18</sup> insists on granting the minorities the right to publicly use their national language in the places of their traditional inhabitation (article 10), including, in the names of topographical and geographical objects (article 11), although, it does not mention territorial autonomy as a form of the minorities' realization of rights. It was spoken about the rights for autonomy and special legal status of persons belonging to national minorities but constituting a majority on a certain territory in the recommendation of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) 1201 (1993 r.)<sup>19</sup>. However, later European organizations refused from the normative consolidation of the requirements for self-governments of national minorities granting the rights to choose the forms of implementation of the minorities' right to the national legislators. Only the native peoples possess the internationally-recognized rights for autonomy (article 3 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous peoples).

From this point of view, the area's population is recognized as an isolated subject of the legal relationships owing to its specific ethnic structure. The public use of the language of the corresponding national minorities (along with the Russian language) (**Perm Territory, Zabaykalsk Territory**), the rights for district symbols reflecting national traditions (**Perm Territory, Irkutsk Region**), the rights for the quota of representation in the parliament of the territory (**Perm Territory, Krasnoyarsk**

**Territory**) are permitted. An area can be reorganized into a single municipal formation (**Perm Territory, Krasnoyarsk Territory**). Finally, representation of interests of national minorities included in the structure of a territorial group is possible in the form of deliberative democracy. A unique example of such an approach is the norm of part 3 article 106 of **Zabaykalsk Territory**: the Legislative Assembly of Zabaykalsk Territory for the term of its authority forms an advisory-deliberative body – Assembly of representatives of Aginsk Buryat area, which provides formation of suggestions for protection of the legislative interests of the peoples who live on the territory of Aginsk Buryat area, their rights to protect their unique identity, culture, language, customs and traditions.

Thus, the choice of effective measures for implementation of the rights of traditional ethnic minorities in the new territorial units (areas and regions) is stipulated by: 1) their demographic presence; 2) their level of claims; 3) the nature of minority: whether it is a national minority which requires some additional guarantees for representation of its interests, or the indigenous people, for whom it is more important to provide auto-ethnic existence, to implement their rights for territories of traditional nature management and to preserve traditional (communal) way of life.

Unfortunately, the federal legislator has not settled this complicated issue. The legitimate, supported by the international legal commitments of Russia, claims of national minorities are, as usual, interpreted in the style of the «theory of plot». For example, commenting the joining of Irkutsk Region and Ust-Ordyn Buryat Autonomous area V.Ivanov claims: «...for the first time the title nation of the merged area was really tried to be shaken up by the nationalistic counter-company, there is reliable information that it was managed from Buryatia...» (ИВАНОВ, 2008, с.174).

The regional legislative authority in Russia is by far more pragmatic. It strives to institutionalize the participation of traditional ethnic minorities in the implementation of the regional state policy. However, opportunities for legislative provision of the interests of these minorities are restricted by the quality of the federal law which regulates the federative relations, elections, local governments and the state of national minorities and the indigenous peoples.

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- <sup>2</sup> On the amendment and additions to The Constitution (Basic Law) of the RSFSR: Закон РСФСР от 15 декабря 1990 г. № 423-1 // Ведомости СНД РФ и ВС РФ. 1990. № 29. Ст.395.
- <sup>3</sup> On the Order of Admission to the Russian Federation and the Creation in its Structure of a New Subject of the Russian Federation: the Federal Constitutional Law from December 17, 2001 No 6-ФКЗ (with amendments from October 31, 2005) (Собрание законодательства РФ, 2001).
- <sup>4</sup> Here and further the statistical data are provided from the article by N. Zubarevich (Зубаревич, 2006).
- <sup>5</sup> The CIS countries' Convention on Provision with the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities, October 21, 1994 (**Информационный вестник, 1994**).
- <sup>6</sup> On the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries: ILO Convention No 169, June 27, 1989 (Конвенции и рекомендации, 1991).
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- <sup>11</sup> The Charter of Perm Territory from April 27, 2007 No 32-ПК (*Собрание законодательства Пермского края*, 2007); The Charter of Kamchatka Territory from November 14, 2007 No 131 (*Портал исполнительных органов государственной власти Камчатского края*, 2007); the Charter of Krasnoyarsk Territory from June 5, 2008 No 5-1777 (*Ведомости высших органов государственной власти Красноярского края*, 2008); the Charter of Zabaykalsk Territory from February 11, 2009 No 125-33К (*Справочная информационная система «Гарант»*, 2009); the Charter of Irkutsk Region from April 15, 2009 No 9/5-3С (*Официальный сайт Законодательного собрания Иркутской области*, 2009).
- <sup>12</sup> By using the «cubic root» rule, for example, to determine the size of the parliament of Perm Territory, we get, at least, 140 deputies – it is twice as big as its legal number.
- <sup>13</sup> The data on the number of population of autonomous areas are taken from the article by N.Zubarevich (*Зубаревич*, 2006).
- <sup>14</sup> In 2006 there were 1.991.816 electors registered in the territory of the former region, 28 single member constituencies were formed; in the territory of the autonomous area – 94.230 electors per 2 mandates. (See: *Кынев*, 2006).
- <sup>15</sup> In 2007 there were 250528 electors registered in the territory of Kamchatka Region, who chose 13 deputies in single– member constituencies; in Koryak Autonomous Area – 17.647 electors by the quota for representation – 10 mandates (see: *Полуостров Камчатка*, 2007).
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- <sup>17</sup> European Court of Human Rights. The case of Gorzelic and others . Poland (complaint No 44158/98). Court decision from February 17, 2004. (Бюллетень Европейского Суда, 2004).
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## BOOK REVIEW

**Janis Taurens**

### **THE 600-YEAR-OLD HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE BALTICS**

The book «The Jews in the Baltics. From the beginning of their arrival until the Holocaust. The 14th century – 1945» by Professor and Head of the Department of Latvian History of the University of Latvia, Aivars Stranga, was published with the help funding of the journal «Latvijas Vesture» («History of Latvia») in Riga in 2008. This significant statement of the issue should be observed in a wide context. The author of the book is one of the most competent scientists who studies the Latvian history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the range of his interests is wide and diverse. Professor Stranga conducted research on the history of the social-democratic party of the Republic of Latvia in the period of parliamentarism. Within the context of the given problem the professor touched upon the main issues of the development of the Latvian domestic policy, such as the emergence of authoritarianism and the reasons for the failure of democracy in Latvia and other Baltic states, and identified a wide range of reasons which caused these problems. Among these, one should mention the social structure of a society which was not ready to adopt democracy, the peculiarities of mentality and thinking as well as ambitions and characteristic features of the founders of authoritarian regimes. The Latvian foreign policy in the 20s-30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and its failures in implementing the main task of preserving the national independence is another important subject of the research. The professor comes to the conclusion that the Latvian and Baltic diplomacy made some serious mistakes and errors, although, in that crucial period in the international politics, it is hardly possible to imagine any strategy of foreign policy which could prevent the loss of independence of the Baltic states. The third significant direction of the professor's interests is the history of the Jewish people in the Baltics. (Stranga 2002) In the professor's previous

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works the situation of the Jewish community in the Baltic States in the period of their independence, the characteristics of the attitude of the state and society towards the Jews, as well as the place and importance of the Jewish community in the Baltic States have been investigated. The professor has also analysed the Holocaust in the Baltic States; since 1998 he has been in charge of a work group of the Latvian History Committee «The Holocaust in Latvia in the period 1941-1944» and has contributed significantly to the process of recognition and analysis of historiographic problems of the Holocaust.

It is also important to note another constituent part in the context of general historiography, that is, the boom of ethnic history in Latvia after the restoration of independence and the study of ethnic problems by social sciences.

Several monographs published after 1990 were devoted to the history of several significant ethnic groups, special attention was paid to the interwar period. Many times relationships between the Latvian state and national minorities have been analysed within the framework of the original dichotomy «conflict of interests – integration», and the issue of responsibilities of a corresponding ethnic community in the Latvian society has been put forward. The authors of the research observed relationships between the state and ethnic groups as well as the inner processes taking place within a corresponding group. The history of ethnic groups is analysed in the international context – for example, the Jews in Latvia and the problem of Palestine, or the Baltic Germans in Latvia and the German factor.

Among the published studies, the monograph «The German Factor in Latvia (1918-1939): Political and Inter-ethnic Aspects» by Raimonds Ceruzis, a docent of the University of Latvia, published in 2004 should be mentioned. R. Ceruzis evaluated versatile aspects of the Baltic Germans' life and activity in the period between the wars. The historian evaluates the Baltic German minority as well-organised and, therefore, possessing a high competitiveness, notwithstanding such steps of the young state as land reform and the loss of a dominant position which the Baltic Germans used to have in the period of the Russian Empire. It is significant that R. Ceruzis considers the problem of competitiveness to be conceptually crucial. Similar questions are put forward by other authors who deal with the study of ethnic minorities in Latvia. Docent Ceruzis investigating the relationships between the Baltic Germans and the Latvian state undoubtedly takes the

state's side supporting the steps of economic unification undertaken not only by the parliamentary republic but, to a certain extent, also by the authoritarian regime.

The monograph «The Latvian Russians' Identity: Historic and Sociological Essay» by Vladislavs Volkovs and Ilga Apine was published in 2007. Speaking about the Russian community in Latvia in the period between the wars the authors set a question: how did the Russians in Latvia assert themselves by means of their potential in completely new historic circumstances? (Apine, Volkovs 2007) In general, giving the answer to this question, the authors positively assess a successful integration of the Russian community, and the development of the Russian culture, media, and social organizations. A sufficiently big contribution to the study of the ethnic history of Latvia has been made by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia. With its support monographs by Ilga Apine «The Byelorussians in Latvia», Leo Dribins «The Ukrainians in Latvia», as well as works by Eriks Jekabsons, a professor of the University of Latvia, «The Poles in Latvia» and «The Lithuanians in Latvia» were published. Speaking about the situation with the Lithuanians in the Republic of Latvia in the period between the wars, E. Jekabsons emphasises that this period should be recognized as the most active period in the life of the Latvian Lithuanians, and he summarizes that economic and cultural achievements, and political freedoms of independent Latvia resulted in a great number of people «with a highest degree of patriotism towards the state». (Jekabsons 2003, 91., 98. lpp.)

Ethnic problems are comprehensively discussed in a number of summarizing academic essays, for example, in the fundamental work of the Institute of the Latvian History of the University of Latvia «Latvian History of the 20<sup>th</sup> century II. The Independent State, 1918-1940». In the second volume of the edition the whole part «*National Relationships*» is devoted to these problems. The authors are well-known historians, such as Dr. Renate Blumberga, professors Eriks Jekabsons, Helena Shimkuva and Vita Zelche. The national state policy is very positively reflected in this part of the work, and, in fact, the whole problem of national relationships is evaluated from the viewpoint of the national interests of the Latvians, underlining with a certain degree of criticism that national minorities were looking for political support outside Latvia and, paying attention to the fact, that the Latvian nation and ethnic minorities had different ideas about the future of the state and the tasks of its national

policy, probably, because of the lack of discussions about the tasks of the state. (20. gadsimta Latvijas vesture 2003, 306.-307. lpp.) The necessity of loyalty of minorities towards the Latvian state is strongly emphasized. Some aspects of the national minorities' life are observed in the book, and special attention is paid to the political life; participation in elections, and questions of political interest for some communities. However, some economic and cultural issues are touched upon as well as the social structure of ethnic groups.

The work of Professor Stranga is highly ranked among his previous investigations as well as within the context of research into the history of ethnic groups in Latvia. It covers a chronologically long period and is devoted to the history of the Jews in the territory of the Baltic States. Certainly, the most attention is paid to the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The history of the Jews in Lithuania is given special attention, too. The author underlines that Lithuania, unlike «rarely any other state in the European history, gave a name to the whole Jewish civilization, emphasizing that «Litvaks, the Lithuanian Jews «created the whole Jewish world (Stranga 2008, 9. lpp.). The professor puts a special emphasis on the significance of Lithuania as a center of cultural and intellectual life of the Jews. The main development tendencies of the Jewish history in all three Baltic States, in general, are very similar, and, to a great extent, they are determined by similar aspects in the history of the Baltic States. The Baltic Jews in the period before the independent states were established attract most of professor's interest, however, problems of the history of the Jews in the Baltic states in the period of independence are of great significance.

Regarding the period of independence of the Baltic States the professor examines the stages of parliamentarism and authoritarianism. The period of parliamentarism in Latvia is connected with a varied range of issues in the political, economic and cultural life of the Jews. The work considers the activity and the main aims of the Jewish political parties, indicating the existing differences in viewpoints and political struggle. The Left Bundists and the Conservative Agudists (from the name of the political party *Agudā*) used to have absolutely opposite views; nevertheless, Latvia was their «native land and fatherland», and the Zionists who were active in Latvia were also loyal to it. All the Jewish parties participated in the elections to the Saeima, they received a number of places in the parliament which corresponded to the proportion of the Jews in Latvia (about 5%) and they actively took part in the parliamentary processes. The main contribution of

the Jews to the development and growth of the Latvian state was their economic activity, creating enterprises and banks; they promoted prosperity of the state, and, in its turn, the social structure of the Jews was also changed, the proportion of entrepreneurs getting higher.

The status of the Jews under the conditions of authoritarianism can be characterized as contradictory. The regime of Antanas Smetona as well as the authoritarian government of Karlis Ulmanis tried to suppress the right-wing radical movements, an integral part of ideologies of which was anti-Semitism. Thus, for example, the Lithuanian president A. Smetona whilst he did not condemn anti-Semitism publicly, he never hesitated to suppress «radical anti-Semitism» with police measures, as it was alien to him as well as to the majority of the patriarchal and rural population of Lithuania (p.109). The authoritarian regime in Latvia also struggled with the anti-Semitic radical organization «Perkonkrustis» («Thunder Cross»). This organization rejected K. Ulmanis' regime as not sufficiently anti-Semitic and «was unceasingly pursued till the last days of Ulmanis' regime» (Stranga 2008, p.495). On the other hand, the steps undertaken by the regime restricted the Jewish community by the closure of the Jewish schools which did not conform to the political provisions of the regime, by closing down some influential Jewish newspapers, and by nationalization of companies which belonged to the Jews.

Approaching the decline of the independent statehood of the Baltic States in 1939-1940 they, nevertheless, remained «the last citadel of a quiet life for the Jews in Eastern Europe». (Stranga 2008, p.129) The professor notes that, for example, Lithuania, in spite of economic difficulties, allowed into the country the Jewish refugees from Poland occupied by Germany, whereas the Soviet borders used to meet them with «Alsatian dogs or machine-gun fire».

Professor Stranga also deals with such historically significant subjects as activity of the Baltic Jews in the Communist Party and collaboration with the Soviet occupation regime. This topic was actively exploited by the Nazi propaganda in the period of World War II. The professor pointed at the growing sympathies for the USSR and the Communist Party on the eve of the war. Nevertheless, their spread should not be overstated. The situation was rather contradictory; among Lithuanians the conviction of a significant role of the Jews in the Soviet occupation was created not by real belonging of the Jews to the weak and insignificant Communist Party but by the demonstrative exultation expressed by the Jewish youth on the entry

of the Soviet occupation forces. In its turn, for example, regular speeches of six Jewish party organizers at the University of Latvia, which made students and professors angry, would create an overstated impression of the influence of the Jewish communists, although, the Latvian communists undoubtedly said the same things. In reality, establishing of the Soviet occupation regime in Latvia signified a blow for the traditional Jewish culture, and the left-wing youth participated in this. A. Stranga paints a colourful picture of a «majestic» Jewish club which normally gathered «decent civil people» and was overcrowded with hundreds of left-wing young people who came to listen to panegyrics to Stalin and attacks on «almost all Jewish movements». The Soviet occupation meant the end of the whole century of the Russian-Jewish culture, and the symbolic end of it was signified by the closure of the prominent newspaper «Segodnya» («Today»).

Observing the Holocaust processes in the Baltic States, Professor Stranga emphasizes the necessity to answer a number of questions, which refer to the painful pages in the history of the Baltic States. These questions deal with the role of local population of the Baltic States in the Holocaust. The work examines the degree of guilt and responsibility of various collaborators for their participation in the Holocaust in the Baltic States. The German occupation authorities benefitted from «spontaneous pogroms» of the local population and actively marked them out; nevertheless, «the role of Germans does not make the guilt of the Lithuanian butchers any smaller» for the massacre in Kaunas on June 25-26. (Stranga 2008, p.163) The professor considers several thousands of people, the immediate killers as well as escort to the place of execution in Rumbula, as direct or indirect implementors of the Holocaust in Latvia.

Speaking about technical issues, I would like to include a detailed content into the future editions of the work, which will come out very soon, because in the present edition there are only titles of the main parts. Titles of subsections would make orientation in the work much easier.

The work of Professor Aivars Stranga deals with the history of the Jews in the Baltics in all its variety and wide context, observing the relationships with other local people, especially with the indigenous nations, examining events in the international context, and depicting the unique aspects of the Jewish culture, which required a profound study. The history and culture of the Baltic Jews are not only an integral part of the history of the Baltic States but also a significant factor in the history of the Jews in Europe and the world.

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