

ETHNO-POLITICAL CONFLICTS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN LATVIA.

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Background. As conceptual guidelines for the analysis of ethno-political conflicts and national identities in our study in Latvia, we rely on the Huntington's theory of cultural identities, or "civilizations" involved in the inevitable conflicts. These conflicts have resulted in the end to the "clash of civilizations." We share the conviction that the "identity matters." Our difference consists in focus to micro ethno-political and cultural communities and identities in one region - Latvia. Our interest was caused by the way the Latvian nation and its ethnic groups, as well as forming their identities (certainly within the Western and Slavic-Orthodox civilization) constitute a clash or a tolerant coexistence.

The inevitable nature of the politization of ethnicity and ethnic conflict in multicultural ethnic societies, pointed out in his writings Horowitz, which makes the methodological foundation for understanding the causes and dynamics of ethnic and cultural relations in Latvia. From the point of view of the theory of democracy, ethnic conflict is a threat to the democratic regime, especially in the case of the dominant ethnic group of subordinated ethnic minorities.

In the current approaches to the analysis of conflicts and identities, we adhere to primordial's version of conflictology. According to this version of the ethnic studies, the type of primordial's ethnic group is the cause of the conflict, which is irrational, affective and, in principle, insoluble. "The nutritional basis" of these conflicts are "sacred symbols" of the past, religious, ethnic and cultural heritage. Primordial ethnic conflict and national identity often embodied in various forms of violence or confrontation

Despite the general instrumentalist adhered by the impact of economic factors on the mass consciousness and behavior, we do not believe that ethnic and cultural conflicts can certainly be explained only by a deficit of social and economic resources or the macro-economic crisis. Explanatory causes of ethnic conflicts priori include a number of "factors hard to explain." Therefore primordialism traditionally views "clash of civilizations" as Huntington's inevitable and non-permissive.

Field of testing primordial approach to the analysis of conflicts and identities for us is ethnic democracy in Latvia (theoretical basis which gives S.Smouha and P.Jaarve, 2005). Ethnic democracy in Latvia includes a number of features: first, the existence of institutional dominance of the titular nation and the total supply of resources for a mono-ethnic hegemony of the ruling elite, and secondly, the lack of democratic representation of ethnic minorities and inequality in the possession of civil rights and liberties.

Goal. The goal of this paper is to analyze the interaction of ethnic and cultural identities of ethnic and cultural pluralism as a catalyst or conflicts in the Latvian society. Hence, the main issues will be figuring out what are the basic models of national identity within the hierarchic ethno-political stratification in Latvia, and the conditions under which political identity and the diversity of ethnic and cultural identity of different nationalities contribute to the democratic consensus or result in mutual confrontation.

The dependent and independent variables. Ethnic and cultural identities as factors of ethnic and cultural conflicts for us act as the independent variables. Demonstration of motivational readiness and behavioral acts of a conflict between the various ethno-cultural and ethnic communities are dependent variables.

Research hypotheses.

- 1) the commitment to the conflict and its implementation in the acts of opposition to the regime in Latvia is directly connected to the ethno-political and ethno-cultural components of national identity of the dominant and subordinated titular ethnic minorities;
- 2) the crisis of liberal democratic multicultural and ethnic societies contribute to the political radicalization of ethnic and cultural minorities demands greater recognition and implementation of their cultural practices and identities.

Methods and data. The analysis of national identity and ethnic conflicts in Latvia was laid sociological survey conducted in August - September 2011 by prof.A.Gaponenko and prof.M.Rodins of the Latvian Institute of European Studies. Analysis of the ethno-political and social relations in Latvia was carried out before and after the parliamentary elections of 2010. On the background a deepening economic and institutional crisis in Latvia describes and analyzes the radicalization of ethno-political behavior and mass consciousness. Analysis of institutions and actors of the Latvian ethno-democracy is given as a result of internal and external policies.

Research methods used are a combination of quantitative analysis in the measurement of national identity and ethnic conflicts and qualitative methods to describe the characteristics of the Latvian ethno-democracy. The main intention was to conduct a one pane population studies based on a proportional representative sample of the national socio-demographic and stratification parameters (technical description of the sampling strategy is given in Appendix 1). Polling data were collected through questionnaires, formal interviews with 1,102 respondents in Latvia. Questionnaire, made by Russian and Latvian languages, contains more than 1000 variables and parameters.

The results of the study.

Political identity in the Latvian political process.

National identity can be explained as a set of internalized political and cultural norms and types of behavior that are transformed through political socialization from one generation to another within the appointed ethnic group. Structurally national identity consists of two communities: political identity and ethnic and cultural identity.

We represent the first general data measuring the political identity of the residents of Latvia. Political identity is generally regarded as the official membership in a political community (or state-territorial entities). According to the selected methodology, political identity is revealed in the process of inclusion in the political community and the internalization of state forming national symbols. In the process of

identification with national symbols is formed a collective identity and a sense of continuity. National symbols, hardly affected by the correction time and historical modifications have big ethno mobilizing role in the integration process of nation building.

Each of the areas of political identification has a specific set of variables, which were selected after a preliminary examination and reflect the empirical values. Moreover, the research attention was focused more on the personal identification using a set of formalized relations with the political community and political symbolism. Based on previous studies of ethno-political processes in Latvia at the Institute of European Studies, as a “working” variables identification with the political community of the respondents were offered: general attachment to Latvia, Latvian independence, support, satisfaction with democracy in Latvia and in relation to the institution of citizenship. Alternative identities refer towards Russia and the European Union in related fields.

In turn, the forming of personal identity by relating to the ethno-political symbols and values makes it possible to present more clearly the boundaries and content of ethnic cohesion and integrity. To such ethno-cultural and political symbolic markers forming the collective image of the ethnic majority and ethnic minority community, are: national state symbols -national state symbols - the flag and anthem , national holidays - Independence Day (November 18) , Day of Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Latvia (May 4), Ligo (June 23), the national monuments - the Freedom Monument in Riga, Monument to the Liberator Soldier in Riga, Latgale’s Mara in Rezekne, national graveyards - Fraternal, Pokrov and Garrison. As an alternative ethno -cultural and political symbols, which reflect the social spectrum of ethnic and cultural identities, into a research instruments were included Russian political symbolism , ethnic and cultural form - the Kremlin in Moscow on Victory Day (May 9), Labor Day (May 1).

In addition to indicators of ethno-cultural and political importance of research model of political identification includes indicators of personal satisfaction and motivation to stay in Latvia: the desire to be born and live in Latvia. Similar indicators were addressed to the territorial mobility in relation to Russia.

The consistency of positive images and identifications of members of the titular nationality and ethnic minorities in selected variables, hypothetical forms an ideal model of a successful and integrated political identity in Latvia.

An overview of the political identity of the inhabitants of Latvia is presented in Table 1. The data show that more than 80 % of the population identify themselves with Latvia, which, in fact, a strong argument in favor of political integration between the ethnic majority and the ethnic minorities. However, the factors of citizenship status and ethnicity sensitivity adjust overall picture of the formal correlation with national identity. Russian and other ethnic minorities significantly lower than Latvians to identify with formal membership with the Latvian state. Moreover, the ethnic Russian almost equally self-identify as with Latvia, as well as with Russia, which, however , is not a contradiction , but only fixes the situation “imposed” identities, both because of the historical co-existence and mobility in an era of rapidly rendering national and state boundaries. The problem rather lies in how the identity of the ethnic majority, subordinated ethnic minorities, generates, or, conversely, negates the ethnic conflict in the framework of the national total.

The factors that are fundamentally different ethnic majority and ethnic minorities, is an expression of support for the independence of Latvia and the satisfaction of democracy in Latvia. As the data in the table 1, only 13.9% of Latvian

Russians support of Latvia's independence, believing that "For me, the independence of Latvia has always been one of the most important things." 18.6% of respondents are satisfied with Russian democracy in Latvia. Slightly higher rates of support of

Table 1. Political identity in Latvia by nationalities (%)*

Question: People also feel attached to their country...

Question: To what extent do you support...?

Questions: To what extent you like or do not like...

Question: Where do you wish to born/to live?

Variables	Nationalities			
	Total	Latvians	Russians	Other
Attachment to Latvia	83.3	90.1	74.4	81.3
Attachment to Russia	26.8	6.4	54.6	26.1
Attachment to the European Union	34.9	41.2	23.4	21.6
Support for Latvian independence	45.0	72.0	13.9	27.6
Satisfaction with democracy in Latvia	34.7	51.0	18.6	16.4
Satisfaction with democracy in Russia	31.6	19.7	47.8	31.4
The importance of the Latvian citizenship	62.4	60.2	64.4	65.7
The Latvian national anthem	83.0	97.5	67.8	68.6
The Latvian national flag	85.3	92.6	74.6	70.9
The Russian national anthem	13.6	2.4	27.6	17.1
The Russian national flag	13.0	2.8	25.4	27.0
Monument of Freedom in Riga	71.6	93.9	47.5	52.2
Monument to the Liberator Soldier	48.9	26.0	78.3	53.7
Latgal Mara in Rezekne	25.2	34.1	13.5	24.7
The Kremlin in Moscow	21.3	11.9	34.5	38.1
Independence Day (18November)	58.6	86.6	31.2	34.3
Day of Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Latvia (May 4)	44.4	72.2	15.1	17.9
Ligo (June 23)	84.4	92.4	76.6	74.7
Victory Day (May 9)	47.3	15.5	82.4	72.4
Labor Day (May 1)	21.3	15.6	25.6	31.3
Legionnaires' Day (March 16)	25.9	29.2	2.2	2.2
Fraternal Cemetery in Riga	64.1	81.5	48.1	46.3
Pocrov Cemetery in Riga	14.0	7.2	20.5	23.2
Garrison Cemetery in Riga	9.9	6.4	12.1	17.1
Salaspils memorial	39.3	34.2	45.8	41.0
Fraternal Cemetery in Lestene	26.5	41.6	9.5	15.6
Wish to be born in Latvia	52.3	68.5	34.9	38.1
Wish to live in Latvia	17.2	56.8	33.7	35.8
Wish to be born in Russia	8.4	1.3	18.0	9.0
Wish to live in Russia	30.0	1.8	22.2	9.7

* This table contains only positive responses ("very attached" and "more attached", "totally agree" and agree").

independence and satisfaction with democracy in Latvia the rest ethnic minorities.

Among ethnic minorities is extremely low territorial identity with Latvia. The proportion of those expressed a desire to be born and live in Latvia is in the range of 30%, the "territorial linkage" which is the age and family level. Among the representatives of the Latvian nationality, personal satisfaction and motivation to stay in Latvia does not exceed 70%, and the migration motivation to live in the countries of Western Europe, the USA and Canada exceed similar interest among members of ethnic minorities.

The data of personal identification with national symbols performs an important role in the successful political integration and national homogenization. In

fact, it is the personification of the national symbols of social groups creates a “nation-state”, having signs of stability and sustainability. As can be seen from Table 1, there are striking differences in the level of identity with the national symbols among the respondents. On these discrepancies in the distribution of identification besides ethnicity play a civilian, age and educational factors.

If the response to a question about his personal attachment to the characters such as the national anthem, the flag of Latvia and the Latvian Freedom Monument among Latvians a third higher than the same position among the minorities, in respect of other identifying factors forming the picture is even more dramatic.

Data in our research allows speaking that the most important national symbols, such as national monuments, holidays and cemeteries are grouped and acting as a form of ethnic reproduction a strictly separated groups of the ethnic majority and the ethnic minorities. Orientation Latvian Russian and other ethnic minorities on Russian and Soviet national symbols, strengthens their multi-layered political identity and security strategy from the institutional hegemony of the ethnic majority. The principal differences between the titular nation and ethnic minorities in the political process of symbolic identification fix “negative identity” as a result of the integration of pseudo ethnic politics. The separation, unresolved ethnic conflicts, and acquired the status of peripheral social formations of ethnic minorities - such are the results of ethnic politics and political socialization of the population of Latvia.

In the study, our hypothesis about the political model of Latvia confirmed the existence of a bi-communal divided society: Latvians are focused on the restoration and support of the nation-state and ethnic minorities (mainly Russians) are more focused on achieving political equality and democratic representation.

Ethno-cultural identity in the Latvian political process.

According to our research, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2011-ies, the institutional dominance of the Latvian nation, with its characteristic resources protection and internal cohesion, combined with the practice of ethnic and linguistic “narcissism” and cultural revanchist. At the same time, the development of ethnic and cultural minorities in Latvia took place in a strictly subordinated the assimilative policy.

Our conceptual model of ethnic and cultural identity in Latvia includes dimensions ethnic, linguistic, cultural identities and cultural inter-ethnic relations.

Let us turn to the analysis of ethnic identification. According to the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia in 2011, the population of Latvia was 62.1 % Latvians, 26.9 % Russians, and 11.0 % of other nationalities. In our study, we used demographic data prior to publication of the results of the national census, so the total number of Latvians was 57.7%, Russian 30%, and 12.3% of other nationalities. Statistical data as well as data from mass surveys show convincingly by numerically superior group of ethnic Latvians, the total number of which increased by 4% in 2011 and makes more than two thirds of the population. Ethnic identification, according to our research, is not fundamentally different from statistics on ethnicity. More fractional indicators of ethnic identity can clarify the picture. On the question: “Representatives of what ethnic group is in your family?” 94.1% of Latvians indicated the persons Latvians and 12.2% - for other ethnic groups. The situation is similar among non-titular nation. In Russian members of their family and friends 78.5% are ethnic Russian, and 2.7% - Latvians. Representatives of other ethnic entities also make up the majority of the members of their family and friends.

Sufficiently cohesive ethnic identity in Latvia is akin a strict differentiation status of ethnic minorities. The question: "Do you think you belong to an ethnic minority?" 6.8% of Latvians are willing to accept the status of ethnic minorities, 33.7% - Russian and 55.5% - persons of other groups (Table 2).

Inextricably from ethnic identification appears linguistic identity, serving as one of the most important preconditions for nation building. And the possession and use of the language of the titular nation's ethnic minorities is not only an expression of loyalty to the nation, but also serves as one of the key factors in the integrative processes. Use of national languages zone was tested by reference to the linguistic situation in the family. The question: "What language do you speak at home?" 92.7% of Latvians are used in their native language family, 7.3% - 13.4% and the Russian people of other ethnic groups also use the Latvian language in the family. Conversely, 5.6% of Latvians speak in his family in Russian, Russian 91.2%, and 80.6% use the Russian language in the family.

On the contrary, the use of Latgal language in the family - does not significant (less than 0.6%). Among the representatives of the Latgal nation of amount of use of the language does not exceed 3%. It should be noted that ethnic minorities in contrast to the Russian demonstrate a greater degree of assimilation into the Latvian society through the Latvian language than the other groups. According to our data, the representatives of all ethnic minority groups highly appreciate significance of the Latvian language in the community and actively express their motivation to learn and use the language of the titular nation. The differences relate to a significant reduction in the use of the Russian language area of Latvians (despite their high level of proficiency in Russian). Also slightly higher the quota use of European languages among ethnic minority groups, especially among the younger generation.

Linguistic diversity in multicultural and ethnic societies inevitably leads to certain social barriers to communication and discriminatory policies. Linguistic discrimination as a social problem causes anxiety in 27.6% Latvians, 74.9% Russians, and 56.8% in the rest of the ethnic groups. However, the threat of extinction of the Latvian nation and the Latvian language as the catalysts of ethnic conflict does not exceed 20% of all respondents regardless of nationality. In general, the institutional hegemony of the Latvian language and linguistic assimilation causes a sense of concern among members of ethnic minorities and serve as the reason of ethnic conflicts and migration. Cultural identity as an ethnic identity in Latvia has a distinctly conservative character. Multicultural identity has a significant level of homogenization, internal cohesion and self- defense for distancing itself from other social groups. According to our research, the ethnic groups in Latvia have a high degree of cultural identity, while cross-cultural communication is scarce nature of cultural pluralism and social dialogue. Moreover, the dominant ethno-cultural community of the titular nation has all the institutional and ideological resources for ethnic and cultural hegemony and assimilation. According to the prevailing number of Latvian respondents ethnic minorities must send children to Latvian schools and kindergartens, to support the Latvian cultural organizations, to accept Latvian traditions and other cultural values. Moreover, teaching in schools should be conducted in Latvian. In this regard, it is revealing the attitudes of respondents to the prospect of future development of the culture of ethnic minorities. 26.0% Latvians, 4.9% Russians and 10.4% of other minorities believe that the culture of Russian and other national minorities in Latvia in the future dissolve in the Latvian culture.

Appeal to the analysis of attitudes and the division of social and ethnic groups and significant cultural symbols are also allows to give a fractional picture of a

divided ethnic and cultural identity in Latvia. On the questions: “Who is your national

Table 2. Ethnocultural identity in Latvia by nationalities (%)*

Question: What language do you speak at home?

Question: Is there a threat of extinction in the Latvian nation and the national language?

Question: To what extent are you concerned about the problem of language discrimination in Latvia?

Question: Do you think that Latvians want to take revenge from Russian and other ethnic groups?

Question: What, in your opinion, the social characteristics of a person are crucial in Latvia?

Question: What will happen in the future with the culture of ethnic minorities in Latvia?

Question: Who are your national hero and a writer?

Question: What, in your opinion, it is necessary to make the non-Latvians to improve inter-ethnic relations in Latvia?

Variables	Nationalities			
	Total	Latvians	Russians	Other
Speaks Latvian in family	51.3	92.7	7.3	13.4
Speaks Russian in family	46.6	5.6	91.2	80.6
Speaks Latgal in family	0.6	0.4	0.2	3.0
The threat of extinction of the Latvian nation	16.7	15.6	19.0	14.2
The threat of extinction Latvian language	18.2	16.3	21.7	15.7
The threat of extinction of the people of Latgale	36.6	28.3	35.3	44.8
The threat of extinction of Latgal language	33.5	35.8	51.2	52.7
Language discrimination	48.7	27.6	74.9	56.8
The dominance of ethnicity	61.4	58.0	66.6	59.0
ethnic revenge	44.7	24.9	67.3	57.5
Culture ethno-minorities in the future dissolve in Latvian culture	16.2	26.0	4.9	10.4
Learn the Latvian language	86.6	96.6	75.6	78.4
Send children to Latvian schools and kindergartens	46.1	63.1	28.8	27.6
Teaching in schools in the Latvian language	35.9	64.7	5.4	11.9
Support the Latvian cultural organizations	38.9	58.8	16.6	24.6
Follow Latvian traditions and cultural values	55.4	72.8	33.6	50.0
Lachplešis	49.0	75.4	20.2	26.1
K.Ulmanis	26.0	43.0	7.1	13.4
Vladimir Lenin	4.5	2.0	7.6	5.2
I.Stalin	2.8	1.1	5.3	2.0
V Putin	17.2	2.7	33.7	27.6
D. Medvedev	18.8	2.1	26.3	24.0
J.Rainis	52.0	76.4	23.4	38.1
F.Trasun	5.4	6.7	3.4	6.7
A. Pushkin	43.6	13.5	79.8	58.2
T.Shevchenko	8.3	3.4	11.4	18.7
A.Mickiewicz	4.2	2.5	3.7	12.6
J. Kolas	3.9	2.7	3.1	11.2
Sh.Aleyhm	3.9	2.0	4.6	9.7
Sh.Aleyhm	3.9	2.0	4.6	9.7

* This table contains only positive responses (“very attached” and “more attached”, “totally agree” and “agree”).

hero?” (Lachplešis, Karlis Ulmanis, Vladimir Lenin, Vladimir Putin, Medvedev), and “Who is your national writer?” (J.Rainis, F.Trasuns, A. Pushkin, T.Shevchenko, Adam Mickiewicz, J.Kolas, Sh.Aleyhm) replies were received, demonstrating the fundamental differences in the existing ethno-cultural communities.

Cultural and value-based separation, the sharp demarcation of the ethno-

cultural identities in Latvia are obstacles to the conciliation and tolerant of ethnic policy. Based on our research, it can be concluded that in Latvia there is a strong cultural divide between the ethnic majority and the minorities with mutually repelling orientation to multicultural integration.

Ethnic conflict: causes and extent of leakage.

An important attribute of the analysis of inter-ethnic conflict relations is to identify the sources and causes of these conflicts. However, tracking the causes of ethnic conflicts methods of sociology faces a number of difficulties due to their species diversity, and the absence of clear boundaries between a number visible on the surface and the deeper reasons, rooted in the sphere of mentality and cultural attributes. Each conflict (or a series of conflicts) is unique, and it is characterized by its intrinsic set of components and their specific combination. Hence, any attempt to introduce an explanatory diagram of the ethnic conflict on the basis of a number of hypothetical causal statements or, on the contrary, verified findings will initially be inaccurate and incomplete.

Thus, the typical causes of ethnic conflicts among experts and representatives of the mass consciousness in Latvia indicate ethnic origin and language of the titular nation, the attitudes to the historical past and its interpretation, the fear of modern

Table 3. Ethno-political conflicts in Latvia (in%).

Question: Today in Latvia there are different ethnic groups. What is your opinion about a possible confrontation between the two groups? Please identify on a scale of 1 to 5 the extent to which this confrontation possible *.

The confrontation is possible

confrontation is unlikely

3.2	11.7	26.1	28.0	29.8
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* Presented only positive answers: “The confrontation is possible,” “Confrontation in unlikely.”

Russia. In order to determine possible causes and degree of the flow of ethnic conflicts in Latvia, there have been several questions to the respondents, providing a formalization of the responses. The question: “To what extent are you concerned about ...“ ethnic conflicts in Latvia, 27.8% responded positively Latvians, 36.6% and 41.0% Russian members of other groups. Table 3 shows the possible confrontation between the ethnic majority and the ethnic minorities. If the question on ethnic conflicts in general are concerned, only a quarter of the respondents, the opinion of a possible confrontation between the two groups have expressed about 15% of the respondents. As is seen, the majority of respondents do not consider it possible ethnic confrontation.

As the data in Table 3, in the case of a possible confrontation is only a small part of the 7.7% of respondents (mainly from the non-titular nation), oriented to overt physical collision. Basically, according to the respondents, in case of a possible confrontation will only acute oral exchange (43.3%).

Table 4. The causes of ethnic confrontation (in %).

Question: In your opinion, what are the reasons for this confrontation, to what extent? Please use a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means - to a large extent, and “5” means - in a small extent. (One answer in each row) *.

Variables	To a great extent			To a small extent	
Economic inequality groups	20.6	21.7	24.8	16.3	16.6
Political group inequality	27.5	24.3	24.9	11.6	11.7
Economic crisis	21.9	24.0	23.1	14.0	17.1
The threat of assimilation	12.7	22.2	29.0	19.9	16.2
The power struggle between the elites of ethnic groups	25.6	24.1	21.5	14.8	14.0
lack of citizenship	23.6	19.0	24.3	18.6	14.5
The influence of Russia	16.3	17.4	27.4	16.6	22.2

* Presented only positive answers: “To a great extent,” “To a small extent.”

Analysis of the causes of ethnic conflict in Latvia dedicated to table 4. Among the causes of ethnic conflicts in Latvia, creating the widest medium for manifestation of active of interethnic interaction may include: economic and political inequalities of ethnic groups, economic crisis, and the threat of assimilation, the power struggle between the elites of ethnic groups, lack of citizenship, and the impact of Russia. The data show that the hypothetical set of causes of ethnic conflicts sufficient to express the position of half of the respondents. Moreover, the lack of citizenship and the influence of Russia as the causes of ethnic conflicts indicated twice as much Russian and other ethnic minorities, which was to be expected.

The discussions and conclusions.

Ethnic stratification and inequality in Latvia.

The peculiarity of ethnic politics in a multiethnic Latvia since independence is a constant search for effective ways and means of incorporation of ethnic group's titular nation. Formally proclaimed ideology of equality and social integration by Latvian ruling elite (the largest interest in which is detected sporadically in times of national and regional elections) completely discredited through assimilation processes by 2013. The failure of integration policies and the dominance of the processes of assimilation, as well as the rise of ethnic hierarchy in Latvia as a whole shared as power circles, quite heterogeneous expert community and the mass consciousness.

Ethno-political inequality and subordination in the distribution of power, privilege and resources resulted in modern ethnic stratification. Note that the borders and internal structure of ethno stratification in Latvia so far not completely finished and significantly concede the passed democratic transition by the end of the 90s. Ethno-stratification based on an ethnic hierarchy and inequality of different ethnic and social groups, and includes a variety of ways their reproduction (usually conservative) and legitimating. Ethnic stratification is given all the variety of ethnic and cultural spheres of national development and continuity, first of all denominated in a national culture, language and traditions. Obviously, the recognition and evaluation of the existing unequal forms of ethno-political relations presented in the government, the areas of employment, wealth, education, culture, etc. are the main causes of ethnic

conflicts in Latvia.

In turn, evaluative aspect of ethnic stratification, as well as a demonstration of various forms of relationship to it by the ethnic and social groups is the subject of current research of ethno-sociology and other related humanities. However, despite the impressive amount of research carried out and accumulated knowledge in the field of ethnic politics in the Baltic region by local researchers (Apine I., Muiznieks N. Volkov V., Zepa, B., Gaponenko A. and et al.) and foreign experts, the actual theme of ethnic stratification is presented insufficiently. From here, picture of explanations of ethnic conflict and their types in Latvia often results in sociolinguistic and broad cultural consciousness and behavior and behavior of interacting ethnic groups.

Ethno-democratic regime in Latvia has two equally important and relatively independent dimensions: social (or vertical) and the culture-political (or horizontal). The first dimension reflects the hierarchical structure of society. On its base are allocated social classes with different levels of different social status, the scale of the use of resources, mechanisms of influence on the political process and socio-political and cultural characteristics. The basis of the same groups formed by the second dimension is common belief, culture and interests. This community is expressed in actions, consciously directed or indirectly contributing to different scenarios of social development. Combining these communities “horizontal” gives social strata, and “vertical” - the main political forces of differing resource capacity. “Intersection” of mentioned analytical dimensions allows allocating social groups that act as hierarchical actors in the political process (in particular, the dominant ethnic majority or mono-ethnic political elite). Such an approach to the identification of the real actors of modern social process is productive, as it enables to evaluate the strength of the social base of the main social forces and their possible consolidation with each other, the nature and extent of resources available to them to achieve their goals. Thus, the scholars of contemporary ethno-political process yield reliable methodological apparatus, with which to more soundly judge the probable scenarios of social development.

It should be noted that the understanding of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of ethnic stratification as research tools differ significantly among political scientists. In this respect description and analysis of ethno-political conflicts and their classification also vary widely. Thus, representatives of the school of pluralistic ethnic and cultural communities traditionally describe the effect of “institutional pluralism” on the processes of ethnic politics, the result in ethnic cohesion and democratic pluralism.

In contrast, in ethnically divided societies, Horowitz proposes to distinguish between vertically separated from society horizontally stratified (Horowitz 1985). Based on historical examples of ethnic exclusion and segmentation, Jung offers an introduction into scientific model of “the only dominant groups and minorities” or “leading culture with the central institutions of different ethnic groups on the periphery” (Young 1976). A related concept is the ethnic stratification in Rothschild, considering the existence of ethnically divided societies most dominant and subordinate ethnic minority or peripheral segments, and to stabilize the multicultural and ethnically segmented society allowed the achievement of a bipolar balance of ethnic, marginalized minorities (Rothschild 1981). By classifying the different modes of ethno-democratic regimes Rothschild highlights the model of vertical hierarchy, parallel segmentation and reticular mixed model. If the vertical hierarchy pyramid structure is present a rigid subordination and ethnic mobilization, and the parallel segmentation of the various ethnic groups are also quite asymmetric and scattered on

its resource component, then the reticular mixed model all floors social structures include representatives of all significant ethnic groups. It is assumed that on reaching reticular mixed model of multi-national society being created prerequisites for gradual and peaceful resolution of ethnic conflicts (Rothschild, J., 1982).

Search for the causes of ethnic conflicts, the factors of influence and the types of ethnic stratification is based among the Baltic expert on classical models of explanation by J. Rothschild and J. Horowitz. However, the borders of application and interpretation look quite problematic and not always fit into frame case. We may well agree with the finding of the Latvian researchers led by B.Zepa that it would be wrong to consider the ethnic situation in Latvia stable and unchanging. This finding made by them as a result of the study “ethno-political tensions in Latvia: the search for ways to resolve the conflict” (Zepa, 2005).

Objection may cause ascription of reticular mixed model towards Latvian ethnic stratification, whereby the general conclusions about the ethno-political situation in Latvia shifted from conflict potential and vertical ethno-stratification to slurred asymmetric form of the Latvian society with the prerequisites for a “gradual and peaceful resolution of ethnic conflicts”.

The empirical basis for these conclusions is general demographic data, the study of labor based on the CSB and data polls. According to the authors, in Latvia there are certain areas where more busy Latvians (public administration, education, agriculture), and there are areas where a higher proportion of non-Latvians (transport, industry, construction). However, significant differences in the incomes of Latvians, Russians and other nationalities are not observed. By attenuating the risk factors of ethnic conflict, as suggested by Zepa should be attributed the fact that in Latvia ethnic groups are not concentrated homogeneously in concrete regions and economic industries. These groups are represented in various fields and scattered across different regions, forming a reticular mixed model.

The final conclusion the research team of B.Zepa is that in the case of Latvia, the situation where every ethnic group is represented in various activities and there are no significant differences in income by ethnicity, is estimated as a factor that reduces the possibility of an escalation of the ethnic conflict. Recognition of ethnic conflict and its inclusion into scientific and political rhetoric in most cases cause extremely hostile reactions, criticisms of being unscientific and lack of loyalty to the regime. It seems that the above estimate (and reticulation mixed ethno-stratificational model by Rothschild) rather justified in relation to the middle and lower strata of the pyramid of Latvian society. There is no default the most important in terms of sources and risk of ethnic conflict - the analysis of power and, in particular, mono-ethnic political elite, concentrated in its hands the power and economic resources (Stan A., 1997, 2003; Rodins M. 2012). Latvian political elite, demographically, socially and intellectually not representing the Latvian society is only less than one percent of the total population, possessing all the resource capabilities of ethnic mobilization, and building a dominant policy of ethnic renaissance and ethno-political revenge. Absolute ethnic hegemony (over 90%) characterizes the bureaucratic class, national authorities and regional government. For the maintenance of the Latvian bureaucracy allocated not comparable to other socio-professional groups, a significant portion of the national budget. The lack of political representation of ethnic minorities in power and control are not only a barrier to expression and the protection of their interests, but also is the reason for the deficit of representative democracy in Latvia.

The existence of vertical ethnic stratification in Latvia, as well as having a close and cohesive elite and corporate composition of the Latvian society allows

coming to a conclusion about imitative and functionality for the ruling circles of ethno-political conflicts as instruments of cohesion and reproduction of the Latvian ethno-democracy.

National identity as a conflict-generating resource in Latvia.

At the first approach to the phenomenon of ethnic and cultural identity in Latvia, there is confusion about the need for any new empirical data, the detection and assessment of what is happening. At the same time, the need for constant monitoring of the Latvian ethno-political relations and dynamics of growing ethno-conflicts in intensive European territorial mobility and the crisis of European multiculturalism is clearly relevant and needs.

“Sleeping” conflicts and ethnic “frozen” ethnic relations, with their inherent oppositional oral historical memory in Soviet Latvia, transformed into an open confrontation in the post-Soviet period. At present Latvia steadily formed the dominant ethno-cultural identity of the titular nationality and ethnic minorities. Intense and painful period of searching and finding new regime identities to the mid-90s is over, but the political formula of Latvian statehood has become – “ethno-cultural and ethnic plurality in a single whole.” However, these multicultural and ethnic communities, and the practice of their relationship did not turn the liberalization of ethnic relations. None of the existing democratic institutions of the Republic of Latvia and could not lead to any noticeable leveling socially significant cultural differences and ethnic boundaries, as well as connecting the rich experience of the relationships of previous generations.

Russian ethno-cultural continuity and other Latvian ethnic minorities, which proceeded the period of Awakening, uniquely treated as junk, pro-Soviet and causing various forms of ostracism. The image of “matryoshka, dried fish and vodka” studiously “affixed” for ethno-cultural component of the ethnic Russian, the most quantitatively represented in the Latvian society. Despite the proclaimed democratic principles and the public rhetoric of ethno-cultural tolerance and integration of the power elite, ethnic minorities have been effectively “deduced” from the role of policy-making positions. Tracking content and the regulatory changes in the Latvian ethnic policies, one can argue about their introduction and implementation as a result of the expectations and influences (and sometimes sanctions) external structures and political actors, in particular the European Union and Russia. Counteraction to the recommendations of the OSCE and other international human rights organizations about protecting and expanding individual rights and freedoms of ethnic minorities are systematically ran into pathos of their unfitness due to the existence of “national specific”.

According to the Canadian political scientist W. Kymlicka, the problem of ethnic discriminated groups against is the requirement is larger than the individual rights and freedoms. Ethno-cultural minorities in modern communities not only want civil rights, but also of the special rights that would allow them to recognize specific ethno-cultural practices and identity (Kymlicka, 2004). Ignoring the rights of ethnic minorities, discriminatory policies against their claims, as well as the idea of the identity of minorities as a zone of cultural anomalies becomes a hot issue and a catalyst for the revision of democratic norms and values.

In the case of the Baltic countries, the existence of the Baltic Russians and other ethnic groups, and established their particular ethno-cultural identities are

sufficient reason for a recognition of their special rights, as well as a natural condition for the democratic development of these political regimes.

A major finding of our study is that ethnic majority and subordinated ethnic minorities in Latvia identify themselves with the identities of “different worlds” that the resulting in the ethno-political and cultural conflict. On the basis of factor analysis have been identified the existence of a sustainable and high correlations between the variables of ethnicity, language, culture and national symbols. High ethno-cultural self-identity of national and ethnic groups in Latvia is also characterized by stable ethnic relations and group cohesion. Survey data generally show a decline of ethnic bias and prejudice, hostile attitudes towards ethnic minorities. Respondents' perceptions about the disappearance of the Latvian nation, culture and language, as well as national revenge as commonplaces of stereotypes are not statistically significant, and contrary to the assertions of the power elite.

Despite the presence of positive conditions for national consolidation, the Latvian state is not interested and does not have effective tools for solving ethnic and cultural conflicts and develop their political, ethnic and cultural identity.

Conclusion.

The general conclusion as the result of conceptual approaches and empirical findings of our study, as well as in the detection of civil involvement in social and political life, gives evidence of the existence of two fundamentally divided political and ethno-cultural communities in the institutional dominance of the titular nation. Integrative resource in society completely exhausted, and the rhetoric of social integration itself (imposed from the outside as one of the conditions of European integration) causes irritation and only vague associations. Perceptions of political community (otherwise, relating to the state), rather optimistic shared by the majority of Latvia's population by the end of the 90's, completely devalued in 2013. Attributes of the Latvian state and its recognizable markers, as well as the ideology of independence, is rapidly leveled out in one pot of market relations, European integration and uncontrolled migration. In the context of the primordial approach of national identity and ethnic conflict, the titular identity is conservative and capsulated. A margin of safety Latvian identity significantly is fueled by historical, cultural and linguistic symbols of the past. The dominant Latvian national identity, built-in vertical hierarchic ethnic stratification is the main moderator in ethnic relations. Mobilized ethnicity in the top positions of ethnic stratification leads to the concentration of elitarian and hegemonic tools for creating boundaries and sustainability of national identity and effective protection against outside pressure. The “right” ethnicity as a determining factor has the largest resource of competitiveness in comparison with other personal, professional and business skills. Multiplied by status and role, and ethnicity is the most important building material for the ethno-nationalism. Ethnic nationalism in Latvia is a functional tool for the ruling elite to preservation of ethno-political stratification and inequality, as well as a necessary means of maintaining the peripheral European economic hierarchical inequalities during the economic crisis.

Overall ethnic situation in Latvia conflictogenic, but ethnic conflict is not in the phase of the open manifestation and is not focused on violent forms of conflict. Orientation to the resistance to the regime and other forms of oppositional struggle to protect their own interests by ethnic minorities is related to the constitutional norms of individual and collective self-expression. The political protest as an expression of

democratic values and civic responsibility does not possess resource legitimacy of the ruling elite and, in general, is realized only by ethnic minorities. However, one can readily admit provocative local directing of mass ethnic confrontations in order to disguise the social confusion and the ongoing economic crisis. Focus on the resistance to the regime and other forms of oppositional struggle to protect their own interests by ethnic minorities, is related to the constitutional norms of individual and collective self-expression. The political protest as an expression of democratic values and civic responsibility has no resource legitimacy of the ruling elite and, in general, is realized only by ethnic minorities. However, one can readily admit provocative local directing of mass ethnic confrontations in order to disguise the social of disorder and the ongoing economic crisis.

Contrary to the popular mythologems of the structural looseness of the Latvian ethnic minorities, the inability to articulating their interests, lack of political leaders who can take charge, and the cultivation by the power elite purely cultural mission of the non-titular population, ethnic minorities have become an effective political actor. The political aspirations of ethnic minorities in Latvia for the redistribution of power in order to build a consensual representative democracy, has constitutional and legitimate character, which in turn causes the ethnic mobilization of the titular nation and the a splash of radical ethnic nationalism.

The practice of economic and political exclusion of ethnic minorities in Latvia is closely linked to their cultural alienation and cultural status hierarchy. Separation of Russian and other ethnic minorities, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, ethnic homeland, cause from the Latvian government agencies accusations of disloyalty, and leads to a limitation of their political rights and the suppression of ethnic minority cultures. This fact is an obstacle to the democratic development of ethnic and cultural diversity in Latvia through culturally inclusive policies.

Latvian ruling elite having all resources of the institutional and ideological hegemony is the principal designer and conductor of ethnic politics. The content of the Latvian ethnic policy is actually a political and socio-economic revenge of the titular nation and the protection of the Latvian language. National ethnic policy is probably the most consistent and unchanging set out strategy and foreign policy of Latvia.

The outcome of the Latvian ethnic policy is applicable for the Latvian political system known ideas of Samuel Huntington's clash of civilizations with the cultural vacuum of ethnic tolerance and cultural manifestation of the conflict. The former focus on the development of national and multicultural forms of international communication (often - in the form of intentions, rare - in acts of social policy) as a result of long-term ethno-political conflict and inequality embodied in the existence of a rigid line of demarcation between the dominant ethnic majority and subordinated ethnic minorities. The political formula of "us and them", former being journalist metaphor has become the new Latvian political reality.

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Appendix 1.

Technical information model of the sample study in 2011 *.

Regions	Demographics (%) (from 18 years)	Total number of respondents to the survey (%)	Total number of survey respondents (%)
Total	100	100	100
1. Riga	34.0	34.6	34.8
2. Vidzeme	22.0	22.3	25.2
-Jurmala			
-Riga region			
- Limbazhi			
- Valmiera			
- Cesis			
- Gulbene			
- Aluksne			
- Valka			
- Madonna			
- Ogre			
3. Kurzeme	11.0	10.8	16.5
- Liepaja			
- Tulsi			
- Ventspils			
- Kuldiga			
- Saldus			
4. Zemgale	17.0	16.8	12.5
- Dobeles			
- Tukums			
- Jelgava			
- Bauska			
- Ekabpils			
- Ajzkraukle			
5. Latgale	16.0	15.5	10.8
- Prejli			
- Daugavpils			
- Rezekne			
- Ludzas			
- Balvi			
- Kraslava			

Stratification parameters	Demographics (%) (from 18 years)	Total number of respondents to the survey (%)	Total number of survey respondents (%)
Male/Female			
Total	100	100	100
Man	46.3	46.3	42.1
Woman	53.7	53.7	57.9
nationality			
Total	100	100	100
Latvians	57.7	57.7	50.6
Russians	30.0	30.0	37.2
Others	12.3	12.3	12.2

Age of respondents			
Total	100	100	100
18-24 y.	16.4	17.4	15.6
25-34	18.8	18.0	25.6
35-44	21.5	21.2	19.9
45-54	18.1	18.6	18.1
more than 55	24.2	24.7	20.8
Status			
Total	100	100	100
working	63.5	63.6	69.4
unemployed	36.5	36.4	30.6
Education			
Total	100	100	100
Elementary	11.6	11.5	2.0
Average	69.5	69.6	51.0
High School	18.9	18.9	46.2
Citizenship			
Total	100	100	100
Citizens of Latvia	74.2	73.8	82.2
Non-citizens	25.8	26.2	17.8

*The table shows only the positive data.

