

The Impact of Historical Conflicts and Cleavages on the Formation of New Political Oppositions in Latvia

A Comparison of the Party System which has emerged in the 1990s to that of the 1920s and 30s with respect to continuity and change between the two Democratic Periods in Terms of Political Contrasts and Oppositions.

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PREFACE

At the time I began my thesis in 1992 at the Institute of Political Science, Oslo University, Latvia had restored independence and the first post-Soviet national elections were coming up. My initial interest concerned the inter-war democracy and its collapse in 1934. I was advised to include the outcome of the first post-Soviet elections and draw a line between the inter-war party system and the new one. I chose it as my topic, which I resumed working with in late 2002. The fourth post-Soviet national election had been held in Latvia in autumn 2002; the same number of elections as before the subversion of democracy in 1934.

There were few sources about political history in Latvia available in Norwegian libraries in the early 1990s. Norges forskningsråd (Norwegian Research Council) sponsored a stay in Riga to look for additional sources. I received invaluable help from the staff at Riga University's newly founded Institute of Politology. I would name especially head of the institute, Einars Semanis, and professor Feliciana Rajevska, who largely arranged my stay and programme and were generally forthcoming. Directors of the Baltic Institute of Social Science (Baltijas Datu Nams) Aldis Paulins and his successor Brigita Zepa have been very helpful by providing results of post-election polls.

There are a number of people in Norway I want to thank for assisting my work in several ways; my supervisors Olav F. Knudsen, then director at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), research assistant Arne Kommisrud, and candidate for the doctorate, Herman Smith-Sivertsen, who kindly read and commented on the completed first draft in 2003. Herman generously let me use his private post-election poll material of 1998, prepared for his doctoral thesis. Thanks to Vigdis Nygaard and Torunn Hasler who carried out own research on Latvian topics in 1992 and 1993, for valuable discussions and cooperation. Not least, thanks to my girlfriend Eva Kristin Friis who has contributed with her computer-technical skills for the multivariate analysis, and I have received additionally great assistance from Suzanne Schönkopf, former director of CAMO, the developer of the "Unscrambler" statistical programme.

ABSTRACT

Latvia had a brief experience with democracy and party pluralism between 1920 and 1934 when an authoritarian regime took over. After restoration of Latvia's independence in 1991, a large number of political groups and parties emerged, some re-emerged. The restoration of independence is formally based on the proclamation of independence 18 November 1918 and the Constitution of 1922, and citizenship was restored to Latvian citizens before the Soviet occupation in 1940 and their descendants. The question is: Do cleavages and contrasts that were underlying the structure of political opposition in the 1920s and 1930s re-emerge? Has nearly 50 years of Sovietization and communism, the absence of political contestation and independent political organizations, fundamentally changed the structure of cleavages and produced new conflicts? In the 1960s, Stein Rokkan and Seymour Martin Lipset found that party systems of Western democracies reflected fundamental cleavages that emerged in the course of history, and the party systems "froze" with the full extension of the franchise, leaving a stable system of political alternatives that reflected the most important historical contrasts.

This thesis identifies the most profound political contrasts in Latvia between the wars as national-cultural identity, class and urban/rural residence/economy. The society was based for centuries on a feudal social system where language and culture served as markers of one's social class. Also, there were a distinct difference between Eastern and "Catholic" Latgale district and "Germanized" Latvia. Religion played an important political role in Latgale.

The most significant change in the current party system is the apparent *absence of the class conflict* in the aftermath of Communism. The Socialist Party is an overwhelmingly "Russian" or "Non-Latvian" party. The development of a new social pluralism and social contrasts may lead to the re-emergence of the class conflict. The salient cleavage since 1990 has a *strong 'nationality' component* and relates to the struggle for restoration of independence, the definition of citizens and the position of the Latvian language and culture. The cleavage has its roots far down in history. The urban/rural contrast is another cleavage that has re-emerged, while the regional (Latgale) contrast seems to be both less significant, and has changed. In stead of "Catholic", a stronger "Russian/Non-Latvian" component in the social structure and a poorer "Eastern" economy makes Latgale socially and politically still somewhat different from the three other districts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The sudden collapse of communist regimes in East Europe and the Soviet Union 1989-1991 gave way to re-democratization of states, and in the case of Soviet union, the reestablishment of independent states. Several of these countries have formerly been independent democracies for a period of time, before the Second World War. Does earlier patterns of political opposition repeat today in post-communist countries, or do communism, and sovietization, represent a significant break with past in terms of parties and party systems?

I have chosen Latvia as a case. I will compare Latvia's party system structure in the pre-war period (1920-1934) and after the restoration of democracy and independence (1990-2004). The huge social and demographic changes enforced upon Latvia during the Soviet annexation and occupation (1940-41/1944-1991) and Nazi occupation (1941-44) have produced a different social structure, new conflicts, as well as new kinds of political oppositions and alliances.

Last autumn, Latvia went to the polls to vote for or against membership in the European Union. 67 per cent of the voters (72.5 per cent participation) voted in support of membership. The same per cent of voters in Daugavpils, the main city of Latgale, voted against membership. Daugavpils voters were the "great exception" to the vote elsewhere in the country, Sweden's news agency Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå (TT) reported on 21 September. The voting pattern fitted into the picture of post-Soviet political contrasts in Latvia, as will be described in this paper. Latgale stood out also in the 1920s and 30s as very different from germanized Latvia.

Through four national elections since the restoration of independence in 1991, conflicts related to the *nation-building process* have dominated the political agenda – the issues of citizenship, education and language rights are the most profoundly controversial, and have divided the voters according to national identity and mother tongue.

Pre-World War II era parties, which were restored in the early 1990s, have struggled to re-gain their positions within the Latvian party system. One is the *Social Democratic Workers' Party*, which is the oldest and was the largest party in Latvia between the wars, and the most important opposition.¹ The so-called "centre-right" parties – liberal and conservative - have formed the governments after 1993, as they also did in the 1920s and early 1930s. The

¹ All political parties got prohibited after Karlis Ulmanis' coup d'etat on 15 May, 1934. He suspended the Constitution and installed an autocratic regime that lasted until the Soviet invasion in June 1940.

dominant government party in the pre-war era, the Farmers' Union, is back on the scene as well. It has been a member of several government coalitions, but not in a dominant position.

This chapter contains a brief presentation of the case and introduces some central theories and concepts regarding the study of parties and party systems. A more thorough presentation of the theory and concepts relevant for this paper is found in Chapter Two. Chapter Three describes the historical-sociological and statistical methods applied. Chapters four, five and six present the historical and socio-structural premises for the mobilization of political opposition and alignments in the Latvian area (4), political parties and conflicts (5), and the voters' perspective (6). In the analysis, Chapter Seven, figures describing the party systems of the 1920s and 1990s will be introduced for comparison, and a multivariate analysis of election survey data of 1998 (the seventh Saeima) has been carried out in order to identify significant and potential political contrasts among the voters.

Within the last page, this thesis should at least tentatively answer the following questions:

- Which conflicts and cleavages were decisive for the formation of political opposition in Latvia *in the 1920s and 1930s*?
- To what extent does conflicts and cleavages mobilized before 1934 express themselves in the formation of *new oppositions* in post-Soviet Latvian politics?
- Employing Stein Rokkan and Seymour Lipset's cleavage concept and party system theory: Which are the strengths and weaknesses when applied in the case of Latvia?

1.1 Parties and Party Systems: Theoretical Aspects

The study of party system stability originates in the pre-war era, when several competitive democratic systems collapsed. In the 1920s and 30s, the focus shifted from the party organization, and the role and functions of parties in mass democracies, towards inter-party dynamics and questions of stability and instability of party systems (Daalder, 1981). An aspect has been Stein Rokkan and Seymour Martin Lipset's occupation with stable patterns of cleavages and party system continuity, which led to their well-known hypothesis on "frozen" party systems (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967). The concern here is the question of mobilized cleavages, their translation into the party system and survival within a context of party discontinuity.

1.2 The Case

This is a case study with a comparative aspect - the comparison of a single case at different times; that of a post-Communist, post-Soviet party system with that of a pre-war democracy. The case is Latvia. My aim is to draw a few conclusions about continuity and discontinuity of political contrasts and cleavages, in a country where democratic contestation was interrupted for more than fifty years, and independent organizations were illegal.

On the renewal of independence in 1991, the pro-independence majority of the Supreme Council readopted sections of Latvia's democratic constitution (Satversme) of 1922.² On 6 July, 1993, the new national assembly (the fifth Saeima) fully reinstated the Constitution.³ The first post-Soviet, national elections in Latvia were held in June 1993. The fifth Saeima was, like the previous four, a unicameral body consisting of one hundred seats distributed by a proportional vote principle. The first Saeima got elected in 1922, the fourth in 1931. The distribution of mandates in 1993 and later has been made on the basis of five electoral districts, as in the inter-war years – the capital city Riga, the eastern district Latgale, southern Zemgale, western Kurzeme and northern Vidzeme.

Among the amendments made to the election law in 1993, one was especially important – the stipulation of a four per cent threshold (five per cent from 1995)⁴ to prevent extreme fragmentation which plagued the national assembly throughout the democratic period before Second World War (Vardys, 1978:66). With a country-wide requirement of minimum 4 and later 5 per cent of the votes, group-specific and district-specific parties are less likely to win seats in the national Saeima. Another amendment is the lowering of the voting age from 22 to 18 years. That increased the share of younger voters who are the most removed from the previous democratic period – three to four generations – and less likely to identify politically with a pre-war party.

1.2.1 *Legal and Symbolic Continuity With the Past*

The existence of the secret protocols in which Hitler “gave” the Baltic republics to Stalin in 1939 have become common knowledge. Moscow admitted the existence of the protocols in the summer of 1989 (Lieven, 1994:222), revealing that the annexation and incorporation of Latvia was illegal. By re-instating the pre-war national constitution (Satversme) and re-institutionalizing the Saeima as a direct continuation of the pre-war era, the revival of old

² According to SC President Anatolijs Gorbunovs in a meeting with him at his office in May, 1993. Janis Ikstens (www.politics.lv/en/satvars/3.1/1.htm) says the complete Satversme was reinstated on 21 August, 1991.

³ According to Edite Alksne in an e-mail from the Saeima information office, January 2004.

⁴ Article 51 in “Law on Elections of the Fifth Saeima” (English translation), Riga 20. October, 1992.

organizations, societies and parties represents a legal and symbolic continuity between the 1918 republic and “post-communist” Latvia.⁵ To some of the nationalist opposition in the 1980s and 90s the proclamation of a new, ‘*second*’, republic would mean to acknowledge the Soviet occupation and annexation as legal. The conflict between adherents of the ‘second’ republic and the ‘first’ republic was the first major issue between the independence movements in 1988-90.

Irrespective of the legal and symbolic restoration of the republic, Latvia was a different country in 1990 than in 1940. Social and demographic conditions have severely changed following five decades of heavy industrialization, migration, deportations, collectivization, russification, and planned economy. In addition, the “repatriation” of the Baltic German population in 1939-41 and the Holocaust which cost the lives of probably over 90 per cent of the Latvian Jewish population, contributed to a fundamentally different ethnic structure. Ethnic Russians constituted the largest single minority in Latvia also before 1940, but its size in terms of numbers and proportion was far smaller than today. Moreover, non-Russian minorities living in the Latvian SSR chose, or were made, to adopt a Soviet identity and the Russian language (Chapter 4.5.2).

A consequence of the Renewal of independence was the restoration of citizenship to pre-war citizens and their descendants, which left 700.000-800.000 Soviet immigrants with USSR citizenship, and with an undecided legal status when the USSR was dissolved. The first major controversial issue following the restoration of independence was that of citizenship and *naturalization*; about procedures for accepting new citizens. The overwhelming majority of Latvian citizens have family roots in the country going back before 1940. About one in four descend from non-Latvian nationalities. The majority of non-citizens are Slavs, and the majority of the Slavs are Russian.

“Ethnicity”, or “nationality”, is a strong component in the most important post-Soviet conflicts in Latvia. The word refers to the presence of minorities; diaspora; with Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian and other origin. They are not minorities in the “indigenous” meaning which is true for the Finno-Ugric-speaking Liv population. Most of Latvia’s so called “ethnic” minority groups have a reference country, for example Russians/Russia, Ukrainians/Ukraine and so on. Latvia, and the regions that were to become Latvia, have traditionally consisted of culturally mixed populations, of which the Latvian and the Liv (originally one of the tribes that were early settlers) have had no other reference country. One

⁵ Latvia was proclaimed independent on 18 November 1918. The Constituent Assembly got elected in 1920, and the Constitution (Satversme) adopted in 1922.

of many sources fuelling the “national reawakening” in the 1980s and inspired the national uprising against the USSR, was the fact that the Latvian proportion of the population was steadily shrinking, among other reasons due to migration from other Soviet republics. In 1989, just above half of the population was Latvian (Lieven, 1994:433). National-cultural conflicts have deep roots in Latvia.

National (cultural) identity became politically salient in the course of the extensive socio-structural transformations in the second half of the nineteenth century. Cultural identity was linked to social status. Social as well as cultural issues were dominant in the first years of independence (such as the Land Reform Act, Cultural Autonomy of the Minorities) (von Rauch, 1995:96). The national-cultural factor has been a predominant component within many big political issues and conflicts in Latvia in the nineties, and is linked to *ideological* contrasts and the deposed communist regime.

Traditional class conflicts seems not to play an independent political role today, although Hermann Smith-Sivertsen has found that socioeconomic contrasts are increasingly identifiable (Smith-Sivertsen, 1998:89, 105-107). The big political conflicts in the first decade following the restoration of independence have been related to Soviet rule, communism and its consequences. Trade, as well as foreign policy and defence are re-directed to the Western sphere, away from the East. This re-orientation, which was similar in the inter-war period, is expressed profoundly by Latvia’s early stated ambition for EU and NATO membership, two ambitions that materialized in 2004. The absence of a viable and multilateral security arrangement before the Second World War was an achilles’ heel to a country in a region strategically desired by two imperial powers, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.⁶ NATO membership is an issue which has identified the confrontation line between the pro-independence camp and the most staunch opposition of every government, the last-day defenders of the former regime, mostly Russian speakers.

Socio-economic and -structural realities are however different today compared with the inter-war period. Firstly, inter-war Latvia was dominantly agrarian, and industries were to large extent based on agrarian products (see von Rauch, 1995:137-138; Swettenham, 1981, Kahk/Tarvel, 1997:103-111). The majority of the population lived in the countryside, whereas

⁶ For more information about Latvia foreign politics and relations between the three Baltic states in the inter-war era: See Georg von Rauch (1970): *The Baltic States. The Years of Independence, 1918/1919-1940/1945*; I. Feldmanis, A. Stranga, M. Virsis: *Latvia’s Foreign Policy and International Relations in late 1930’s*. Riga, 1993 (in Latvian); Feldmanis, Stranga: *The Destiny of the Baltic Entente*. Riga, 1994.

today, the agrarian economy makes up only a small part of GNP. The majority of people live in urban areas, and a third of the total population in the capital Riga.

There is little left of the Latvian pre-war society, its demographic and socioeconomic structure, nor political landscape, at a glimpse. There is a methodological challenge to the comparison of two different historical periods, each having its “own” historical preconditions. The presence of new political parties, however, does not mean that (emerging) cleavages are without roots much further back than the post-Second World War era.

2. NATION-BUILDING, DEMOCRATIZATION AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION

The literature has primarily been concerned with the cases of ‘continuous’ democracies with regard to change and persistence of parties and party systems. Stein Rokkan and Seymour M. Lipset include three ‘discontinuous’ cases in their classical comparison of party systems (1967), Germany, Italy and Spain. More recent ‘discontinuous’ democracies are in Central- and Eastern Europe, including former republics of the Soviet Union.

2.1 Is the cleavage concept relevant?

Employing the cleavage concept on post-communist cases is challenging, for at least two reasons: Firstly, the cleavage concept itself implies *development over time* concerning the emergence of economic interests, socio-structural and cultural identities, the organization and mobilization of interests, as well as the formation of stable systems of alignments and opposition. In post-Communist countries this process described by Rokkan and Lipset had been going on for only 13-15 years by 2000. In the Latvian case we talk of 7 to 14 years, depending on whether one dates the beginning of the re-institutionalization of democracy back to the early environmentalist protests in 1986, to the Supreme Soviet elections in 1990 (the first and only free, competitive election to the SSR’s council), to 1991 when Latvia *de facto* restored independence, or to 1993, when the first post-communist national election was held. Whatever year chosen, the time span for mobilizing cleavages and establish a stable system of alignments and opposition is very short, and it’s even a question whether we can talk about a stable ‘party system’ at all in the Latvian case. Many parties have come and left the scene; and there are only three parties that have participated in every one of the four Saeimas since 1993.⁷ The three parties represent altogether only a very small proportion of Latvian voters.

Employing the cleavage concept on an “atypical” case like this may seem futile. On the other hand, the concept has been applied to even more difficult cases. Vicky Randall discusses the concept in relation to emerging democracies in Third World countries (Randall, 2001:242-259) where “infrequency and discontinuity of competitive party systems” represent just one of very many obstacles to the scholar. As Randall points out: there is no case of party politics without comparable tendencies (Rendall, 2001:252). Maurizio Cotta (1994:102) notes: “It must be said that Rokkan does not attempt to connect these cleavages to each

⁷ For Fatherland and Freedom (including LNNK), Concord for Latvia and the Socialist Party (/Equal Rights).

specific party but rather to categories of parties (conservative, liberal, agrarian, Christian etc.) It means that correspondence between cleavages and specific parties may be stronger or weaker. For instance, more than one socialist party could represent the workers' side of the class cleavage. In short, a cleavage may be represented by two opposing parties, but also by different parties, or clusters of parties. Individual parties may come and go, but the actual confrontation line may not change." Peter Mair (1997:28) makes a similar observation:

...when discussing the political alternatives deriving from cleavages in modern mass politics, and particularly when discussing the alternatives deriving from the class cleavage, we cannot simply speak of individual parties. Rather, we must be concerned with *blocs* or families of parties, and with the notion of parties which are cleavage allies as against those which are cleavage opponents.

2.2 Party System Perseverance and the Critics of the Freeze Proposition

A central theme to the discussion of party systems is Rokkan and Lipset's proposition that European party systems have become stable structures of political alternatives (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967:50). Western party systems of the 1960s were more or less the same as forty years before. The major party alternatives seemed to have "frozen" in the wake of the extension of the suffrage during the mass mobilization phase. Their explanation for the freezing is the narrowing of the support market (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967:51); or in the words of Cotta (1994:103): The parties that developed at the start of mass politics would leave little space for new parties at the moment when (male) suffrage was fully extended. The stabilization of oppositions, or freezing, is linked to the *party organizations* which "mobilize and integrate these new citizens (who are included in the electorate by the extension of the suffrage, B.S.) and incalculable a set of enduring political identities." (Mair, 1997:36). Giovanni Sartori interprets the freezing of the party system as almost solely a consequence of political organization, and parties as an 'independent system of channelment' (Sartori 1969:90). Challenging the proposition, scholars assert that even if it may have proved correct at the time of its formulation, the un-freezing of European party systems had already begun. A study which challenged the freeze proposition was published already before Rokkan and Lipset's "Political Parties and Voter Alignments", by Otto Kirchheimer, who in 1966 suggested that the era of the mass party was coming to an end and the 'catch-all' party was taking over. To increase its voter segment, the 'catch all' party loosen the tie to its core electorate. Media and new sources of income become more important than memberships.

The 'mass party' concept was originally used by Maurice Duverger (1954) to explain the process of mass democratization. Originally a phenomenon on the political left among the

working class, the ‘mass party’ mobilized its *numerical superiority* against the numerically weaker, but financially much stronger (cadre) parties of the old elite. Duverger predicted that other parties would have to copy the mass party model to survive. Duverger’s ‘Mass Party’ is the type of party closest to the one defined by Rokkan and Lipset . Apparently, in the late 1960s, Rokkan and Lipset described the past, while Kirchheimer looked to the future.

A premise for the emergence of the ‘catch-all’ party is the a decline of traditional class contrasts and -identities (Dalton, Scott and Flanagan 1984), as well as a de-ideologization fed by economic prosperity in the post-World War II West. The mobilizing potential of the traditional class cleavage has waned. Ronald Inglehart (1977) identifies a *value shift* among voters, from ‘materialist’ to ‘post-materialist’, and the mobilization of a *post-materialist cleavage* (Mair, 1997) consisting of several new issues (environment protection, women’s rights etc.) According to Inglehart's observations, new value conflicts have emerged alongside socio-structural determinants or even replaced the latter as motivation for party choice. At the political level, the new issues have promoted new parties alongside the old (Green parties and “the New Left”, for example) or become adopted by existing parties. A third aspect to political change is voter volatility, as the parties loose their ties to their core electorate, which entails an evaporation of party-voter loyalties.

2.3 Defending the proposition: “Continuity far outweigh Change”

An indication of de-freezing of a party system is a lower predictability of the outcome of elections and especially government negotiations, according to Peter Mair (2001:39).

Defining party systems by “their patterns of competition”, borrowed from Giovanni Sartori, Mair asserts it is at this level predictions are likely to apply (Mair, 2001:39) The crucial variable in question is the *interaction at the party system level*.

In a response to the criticism of and objection to the relevance of the freeze proposition, Mair (1997) argues that the case of the critics has not yet been made. “I contend that the freezing hypothesis remain largely valid”, he asserts in the first chapter of “Party System Change”: “The evidence of long-lasting continuities in party systems far outweigh the more striking and more immediate evidence of change” (Mair, 1997:3). The average level of aggregate volatility from 1945 till 1989 is just 8.7 (Mair, 1997:80ff), meaning that the net shift is less than one tenth of the votes from one election to the next, indicating a net stability of 91 per cent. Mair also concludes on the basis of the index that net volatility was even higher in the period studied by Rokkan and Lipset (1945-1965) than from 1966 to 1989. Much of the electoral change observed especially in the 1970s and 1980s happened *within*

blocs of parties which are allies on the same side of the relevant cleavages, and that leaves the fundamental structure more or less intact, according to Mair. New conflicts replace or add to the old, and constitute cleavages that define lasting oppositions or alignments. It means that the old left to right-dimension, which was originally based on social class contrast, in the course of time will consist of many more and different types of conflicts. Inglehart's identification of post-material values as opposed to material values is important, but the emergence of post-materialistic values does not necessarily lead to a decline, or any significant decline, in the old cleavages - or any significant change within party systems.

Seymour M. Lipset makes a similar assessment as Mair when he comments on the discussion of post-material value systems and the issue of a third, "Post-Materialistic" revolution (Lipset, 2001:6):

Given all the transformations in Western society over the twentieth century, it is noteworthy how little the formal party systems have changed, though their programmatic content is different.

Peter Mair emphasizes the significance of *party organizations' adaptability* as an important factor explaining why West-European post-war party systems have survived, mostly with only minor changes, if any. The question is whether the structure of oppositions can survive the *discontinuity of political parties*, as in Latvia.

2.4 Literature and Definitions

The organization of politics into parties, the electoral system's impact upon party systems, and the stabilizing/destabilizing effects of party systems are topics that have engaged political scientists for the last century. A political party, in the context of mass democracy, can be defined as organizations whose goal is the capture of public office in electoral contestation with one or more other parties (Kuper and Kuper, 1985). A party is, moreover, an organized group of people sharing *common policy preferences* and usually a general *ideological position* (...) that *seeks, or has, political power.*" (Robertson, 1993:370).

With the development of mass politics, the '*mass party*' emerged with the ambition to secure a maximum of votes as a product of the extension of the suffrage to all adult male citizens - meaning the inclusion of the working class. According to Duverger (1954), the mass party emerged with the political organization of the working class and the necessity to use manpower in the political struggle against the financially stronger old elites and bourgeoisie. Whether the emerging mass democracies would have two-party or multi-party systems, would depend decisively on the choice of electoral system. Majority vote would favour two-party

systems; proportional representation would favour multi-party systems. The size of the party system would have different strengths and weaknesses. A two-party system is usually seen as more stabilizing and “efficient” than a multi-party system, because it will produce majority governments, whereas multi-party systems usually would be regarded as more *representative* as the number of parties will be three or more. Jean Blondel elaborated Duverger’s two-party versus multiparty definition into a typologization in which the number of parties were added the strength of parties, their ideological position, type of organization and leadership.

The organization of mass parties and elaboration of functional voting systems have contributed to the *stabilization of the political system* in most Western democracies, as political conflict was set over issues *within* the state order, and not over the system itself. However, irrational aspects of party pluralism could de-stabilize rather than stabilize the political system. Giovanni Sartori described the destructive mechanisms of what he called ‘extreme’ or ‘atomized’ pluralism, one of seven types of party systems he identified (Sartori, 1976:125). In the case of extreme pluralism (more than five relevant parties), the number of parties does not alone decide the workings of the party system. Sartori introduced ‘ideological distance’ between parties as a measure. In the case of extreme pluralism, none of the relevant parties are dominant, and the presence of anti-system parties (anti-democratic parties) contributes to undermine the political system. The Weimar Republic is the profound “model” for the concept of atomized pluralism, where a great number of parties made governing practically impossible, and the ideological distance was the most extreme, with two anti-system parties; the national socialists and communists; at each opposing end of the ideological spectrum. The Baltic democracies made similar experiences between the wars. Party democracy was suspended one by one; in Latvia in 1934; and substituted by autocratic, nationalistic regimes. The atomization of Weimar Germany’s and the Baltic party systems was related to flaws in the electoral systems which were without defence (threshold) against the patchworks of contrasts existing in these countries.

A sociological alternative to the numerical party system theory was presented by Stein Rokkan and Seymour M. Lipset’s comparative historical-sociological approach in 1967, identifying basic conflicts and cleavages at the foundation of West-European party systems. They found a different aspect to stability; the relatively unchanged nature of the structure of oppositions as a reflection of decisive conflicts in the wake of nation-building and mass-democratization. The approach made possible comparative analyses of variations between democratic party systems related to sequences of democratization and the political relevance of certain historical conflicts and cleavages above other.

2.4.1 Cleavages

The process of *nation-building* is central to Rokkan and Lipset's discussion of the formation of *territorial and cultural cleavages* and political opposition in Europe (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967). Industrialization and economic modernization created the basis of new economic contrasts which usually cut across the established cultural and territorial cleavages, and thereby reduced potentially polarizing conflicts. According to Rokkan and Lipset, the mass party functions as a mediator between the citizens and the state, expressing contrasts in the socio-cultural structure, channelling demands and, to gain political power, force the spokesmen of contrasting interests to compromise. The political party is a 'mediator' between the state and the citizens, and between divergent interests. Rokkan and Lipset defined party system according to 'cleavages' which translated from the social structure (the voters) into the party system. Their concern was parties as 'agencies of mobilization' which aggregated and translated social and cultural conflicts along a set of dimensions rooted in critical historical conflicts. In their perspective, the stability of the political system was ensured by the crosscutting nature of cultural and economic conflict dimensions and identities, whereas the risk of extreme conflict and instability would appear in the case of parallel dimensions.

Stein Rokkan and Seymour Martin Lipset made this observation with regard to Western party systems in the 1960s:

The party systems of the 1960s reflect, with few but significant exceptions, the cleavage structures of the 1920s [...] the party alternatives, and in remarkably many cases the party organizations, are older than the majorities of the national electorates. (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967).

The basis of the continuity they observed was a fully enfranchised (male) electorate, with only few restrictions, such as age limits. The "space" that represents a possibility to mobilize new voter segments, had been exhausted. Thus, the system of cleavages represented by the parties that made up the party system was connected to social and cultural contrasts and conflicts that already existed and were mobilized in the wake of the reformation, nation-building processes and the industrial revolution.

2.4.2 Party Systems and Cleavages

Rokkan and Lipset identified historical, cultural and socioeconomic conflicts that proved critical during the development and consolidation of the nation state. These conflicts led to the formation of political oppositions, representing social cleavages. A 'cleavage' is defined as a

cluster of conflicts dividing the population: “It designates a division between groups within the society, based on some more or less fixed attribute: One can have cleavages along lines of class, religion, language, race or even, conceivably, gender. The patterns of social cleavages, their interrelationships, salience, number and nature, used to determine the battle lines of competitive politics and generally influence the stability and functioning of the political system.” (Robertson, 1993:72).

2.4.3 Centre Versus Periphery (Cultural Cleavages)

Four historically derived cleavages, two cultural and two economic; are identified by Rokkan and Lipset: A *territorial* and a *religious-secular* cleavage originates in the National-Democratic (French) revolution, and develops in the early stages of nation-building. (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967). The first cleavages represent critical conflicts between the centralizing nation-building elite and local elites in the periphery of a state in defence of their traditional local power. It is a conflict over *territorial control* and would at some point produce parties with *strong regional identity* in opposition to the nation-building centre, and/or *religious parties* and/or parties of *cultural minorities*. In Roman-Catholic countries, Catholic Parties usually formed instead of secular bourgeois parties.

2.4.4 Conflicts in the Labour and Commodity Market (Economic Cleavages)

Two cleavages emerged in the area of labour and economy in the wake of modernization and industrialization, as a consequence of the industrial revolution. Rokkan and Lipset identify two critical conflicts; one in the *commodity market* between the interests of the rural-based primary economy and the urban secondary economy, the new industries. The second conflict is in the *labour market* between owners and tenants, employers and employees. These cleavages would, usually at some time after the mobilization of the cultural/territorial cleavage, produce *bourgeois parties* representing the interests of the conservative urban bourgeoisie (usually capital owners), *labour parties* representing manual workers, and sometimes but not always; parties representing agricultural interests, expressing the conflict in the commodity market between producers and consumers, between the primary and secondary economy.

All cleavages are not mobilized with equal strength, and different types of conflict may become dominant in different parts of a country. For example, Rokkan describe the differences within Norway: South-West Norway traditionally consisted of socially egalitarian societies where the dominant conflicts were found along the territorial-cultural axis (issues

like alcohol consumption and moral values were profound). Class conflicts, between employers and employees along the functional axis, have traditionally not generated much support for the Labour party in South-West Norway. In Northern Norway, however, class contrasts have traditionally run deep and subdued the territorial-cultural cleavage. Fishermen and peasants in Northern Norway were likely to vote for the Labour party, whereas fishermen and farmers in the south and west of Norway were likely to vote for a non-socialist party, either the Christian People's Party or the Centre Party representing rural interests – both representing a so called “counter-culture” – the centre-periphery conflict.

2.5 ‘Discontinuous Democracies’: Survival of “Old” Oppositions

Discussing Rokkan and Lipset's theory of ‘frozen oppositions’ in relation to re-emerging democracies in Eastern and Central Europe, Maurizio Cotta puts forward a set of hypotheses, or premises, which may help predict the chance of survival of the old party system in a ‘discontinuous democracy’ (Cotta, 1994:99ff). In the Latvian case, an immediate conclusion, based on Cotta's listed premises, seems to be that it is unlikely to find any high degree of correspondence between the new party system and the inter-war party system. Rokkan and Lipset (1967) sees the socio-political entity as a marketplace where the voters tend to buy the goods only once. With the full extension of the suffrage; when the last segment of the population gets enfranchised; there is no space for new parties, as there are no new voting *segments* to mobilize.

The situation is different in the situation of discontinuity. Cotta is concerned with whether old or new parties will fill the new *political space* (Cotta, 1994:102). Cotta suggests that the more space *not* filled by (or possible to be filled by) the former democratic political elite/parties, the lesser the possibility that the old party system will re-emerge. Table 2-1 shows a number of factors that may give indications about Latvia's “position” with respect to the six hypotheses and the “continuity potential” of political parties:

Table 2-1: Step One of Maurizio Cotta's explanatory model "*Weight of Legacies*": Conditions affecting the probable survival of the party system of the past. The information about Latvia is added by the author of this thesis (Cotta, 1994:107-110).

HYPOTHESES	Latvia: Weaker chance of party system continuity after Soviet communism	Latvia: Greater chance of party system continuity after Soviet communism
"The less complete the extension of the suffrage and/or the less complete the mobilization of the mass electorate the greater the chances of weak continuity."		Adult suffrage from 21 years (Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, Section 2, Paragraphs 8-9), high degree of mobilization.
"The lower the degree of institutionalization of parties and the degree of partyness of political life, the weaker the chances of continuity."	Only the Farmers' Union and the Social Democrats remained of the parties of 1918-1920. The other parties dissolved or merged (von Hehn 1966:10-11 describes many of the political groups as without political goals.	
"To the extent that sections of the party system have undergone a significant decline already during the first democratic experience the chances of continuity are diminished."	The Latvian election law provided for a political system with many parties, which led to fragmentation and instability, with frequent government turnovers (14 governments in 14 years, according to Vardys 1978:67, see also von Hehn 1966:10-11). The two larger parties, in government and opposition lost support from election to election (von Rauch 1995: 93,95-97). Political parties dissolved following Karlis Ulmanis' take-over in 1934 (von Rauch 1995:146, von Hehn 1966:19).	
"The chances of revival for parties that have been involved in supporting the authoritarian take-over are weaker after the fall of this regime, and the all-over continuity of the party system is reduced."	The Latvian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), was outlawed in 1920-1940. In 1991, the Latvian Communist Party was again prohibited, but participates in the Saeima under different names – Equal Rights and The Socialist Party (Kalnins 1971:295.313; von Rauch 1995:95; Vardys 1978:67; von Hehn 1966:11; Lieven 1994:255,290-91).	
"The longer the non-democratic regime the weaker the continuity with the democratic past."	Three generations, 59 years, between Ulmanis' coup d'etat and the 1993 elections.	
"The 'stronger' the non-democratic regime, i.e. its mobilizing potential, social impact, institutionalization, the lesser the chances of continuity with the past."	Authoritarian system since 1934 until 1940, no parties, totalitarian system 1940-41, 1944-1989/91, strong social, economic, cultural and institutional control. No party contestation, one party.	

In the case of Latvia, Cotta's list of hypotheses suggest a strong 'discontinuity factor', meaning the space for new parties is large, and the chance that "old" parties will return and re-take a position in the new party system, is weak. However, Cotta does not include *social cleavages* and "*critical conflicts*" in his discussion which is solely about the survival of parties and not cleavages. Thus he does not discuss the topic of whether new parties may emerge to express cleavages that are essentially of older origin.

There is one important point to make in the case of Latvia: The elite as well as the electorate is completely renewed. The youngest person who voted for the fourth Saeima in 1931, would have been 84 years old when the 5th Saeima got elected in 1993. This may suggest that the link to pre-war party organizations, in terms of loyalty as well as identification with a "historic" party, is weak.

2.6 The Case

The Latvian pre-war parliament remained fragmented throughout the democratic period, not least due to the lack of election threshold. The Saeima's 100 seats were distributed among up to around 30 parties, none of them dominant enough to form a majority government alone. For discussing the party system structure, I will define blocks of parties according to categorizations employed in the literature (Chapter Six and Appendix A). The pre-war political landscape was dominated by a conservative agrarian party, opposed by a social democratic party, with a middle ground of national liberal parties which found support largely among Latvian intellectuals (von Rauch, 1995:91). In addition, there were a number of parties representing the nationalities; profoundly German, Russian, Jews and Poles, and there were several parties emerging from the Latgale region.

The post-Soviet Saeima has not been as fragmented as the pre-war Saeima. By 1993 an election threshold was set at four per cent and increased to five before the next election two years later. The Latvian Saeima since 1993 has consisted of Latvian parties with a dominant "nationalist" or nation-building agenda, parties with a predominantly socioeconomic agenda, and opposed by Russophone-friendly parties (Smith-Sivertsen, 1998:92). No party has been dominant enough to form a single-party government. Repeatedly, coalitions have been forged between nationalists and socioeconomic (liberal, conservative and social democratic) parties. The current (post-Soviet) parties and party structure reflects some very profound conflicts that relates to the years of sovietization and renewed independence (Smith-Sivertsen, 1998), yet some themes are not new. A struggle for independence preceded the founding of the first independent Latvian state. The former "ruling nationality" (German

Balts) had to adapt to a new social position in a society where they no longer enjoyed special privileges. Today, Latvian Russians are trying to adapt to a “minority” position, to many Russians an inferior position due to the dominant position they held as the core nationality within the Soviet empire (Hasler, 1996). Old types of conflicts and contrasts appear to have re-emerged within a different context.

2.6.1 *The Process of Democratization in the Latvian Area and Latvia: an Outline*

The processes of democratization that was involved in most of the cases studied by Rokkan and Lipset were processes of more or less gradual inclusion of new oppositions and gradual extending of the franchise. The Latvian case is a different one, concerning the pace of democratization in 1918-20 as well as in 1989-91. Within few years the old political systems collapsed (1917) or was defeated (1989-1990).

The former collapsed into a civil war between revolutionaries, nationalists; fighting for independence; and remaining German forces supporting the German Balts. Full franchise was introduced by the constituent assembly in 1920-22, as well as an election law which laid down nearly no restrictions as to participation and led to “an almost unrestricted reign by the parliament” (von Hehn, 1966:10). The democratization process had basically begun in the Baltics the 1870s with the introduction of municipal reforms which enfranchised some Latvian men, big property owners. Only 2 per cent of the Riga residents belonged to the bourgeoisie; members of the guilds; and were entitled to vote before the reforms, and the majority were German Balts (Haltzel, 1981:137-138). With the reform, instead of a city council and two guilds a municipal assembly would be elected by all male subjects of the Russian empire 25 years and older who paid taxes on property or trade and were not in arrears on tax payment. There were three categories of voting lists. The first included the wealthiest men whose taxes taken together made up one third of the total taxes. The second category included moderately wealthy men whose taxes made up another one third, and the third included all other tax payers. The size of the assemblies varied from city to city, and the assembly elected in Riga was the largest, consisting of 72 representatives (Haltzel, 1981:137).

Each category elected equal numbers of representatives, which means that the biggest taxpayers, who were numerically fewer than the second and third category, elected relatively more representatives, and similarly the second category of moderately wealthy taxpayers elected relatively more representatives than the third category. The weight of the ballot, thus, was in favour of the wealthier individuals.

The upheavals of 1905 forced the Czar to establish a representative institution, the Imperial Duma, and political parties were legalized for the first time ever in Russia, between 1905 and 1907. The Duma was a pseudo-democratic institution which had no real say, yet the very existence of the Duma, as well as the preceding municipal reforms, introduced an element of political contestation, organization and participation in the society.

The Soviet communist regime was forced to allow democratic contestation in the late 1980s as the old regime was crumbling (Lieven, 1994:222ff). Soviet leader Michail Gorbachev introduced “Glasnost”, which was an attempt to move the USSR slightly in a liberal-democratic direction, one step being an amendment of the USSR Constitution that opened up for the election of a new, representative body, the Congress of People’s Deputies, in 1989, in the first competitive elections in the USSR (since 1922). Unlike the Imperial Duma, the Congress of People’s Deputies possessed real powers, electing the new Supreme Soviet, which in turn elected the president. The same year, the Latvian Supreme Soviet replaced the Soviet constitution with national laws which then took supremacy, and the March 1990 elections to the Latvian Supreme Council were held in a democratic fashion. The Popular Front Movement, which gathered non-communist, pro-independence candidates, emerged as a majority winner. The new Supreme Council declared on 4 May a transitional period to restore independence, and a referendum on the issue of national independence in March the next year produced a considerable majority in favour of independence. De facto independence was declared immediately following the failed coup d’etat in August 1991. In June 1993 the first national elections were held, but due to restrictions on citizenship, nearly 30 per cent of the population was without the right to vote, mostly residents of non-Latvian origin. Citizenship was restored to inhabitants that were, or descended from, citizens of the pre-war republic.

In the Soviet Union, participation in elections was desired by the authorities, but as an act of symbolic confirmation of the ruling Communist party. The ‘party’ was neither “representative” nor “responsive”, which in a democratic context is a crucial role of parties (chapter two).

The transition to democracy briefly described above underlines the very different nature of democratization experienced by post- as well as pre-Soviet countries like Latvia, compared to most of Western democracies, and it is likely to have an impact upon the representativeness and responsiveness of parties, as well as the mobilization of cleavages. In most Western democracies, the formation of cleavages, their mobilization and political expression developed over a longer time. It may take a longer time for a democracy

experiencing a rapid transition to develop a stable pattern of political cleavages. Herman Smith-Sivertsen points to the problem: “..it can be argued that the short time span and the instability of the party system make possible only the observation of political divisions of temporary nature, not cleavages” (Smith-Sivertsen, 1998:89).

The Latvian party system between the World Wars reflected insufficient national integration as well as insufficiently developed political alignments. Social conflicts and personal contradictions were politically transformed into the national assembly, the Saeima, without the “filter” of a threshold. The party system must be defined by concepts covering ‘categories’ of parties reflecting socio-structural, cultural as well as ideological differences. The current party system is pluralist but not nearly as fragmented as between the wars. Less fragmentation results partly from the election thresholds of 4 and later 5 per cent. There is furthermore an assumed possibility that five decades of occupation may have effected a certain social, ethnic and territorial “integration” or “standardization”.

2.6.2 *Parties and Factions*

In the Latvian context, parties exist along with ‘factions’ which is the formal designation for the various groups and alliances *within the national assembly*, the Saeima. A ‘faction’ does not necessarily correspond to a parliamentary party group, as it may be made up by an *alliance* of two or more parties. If the membership of a faction drops beyond a certain number (5), the faction must dissolve, and its remaining members (if any) become independent deputies. The factions may change from Saeima to Saeima and even between elections (see chapter 5.5, figure 5.1).

Parties have proved to be short lived as well, and only very few have survived as organizations without any representation in the Saeima or in municipalities. Some parties appear to serve simply as “election instruments”, and it is questionable whether all the basic functions of a party, according to the definition above, is really fulfilled. Yet they qualify formally as parties according to the requirements given in the election law. When the goal of “election parties” fail; to enter or re-enter the Saeima; the party is likely to dissolve. This is an aspect to parties in Latvia and may be attributed to the “shortcut” transition to democracy which has shortened the time to establish viable parties with a firm electoral basis. The role of parties as stabilizers of the state system therefore remains an open question in this case, at the time.

3. METHOD AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 Introduction

A challenge to the study of the party system in Latvia is how to define the relevant parties. The social structure is currently in a process of change that have impact upon the voters' political preferences as well as the formation of new parties. The operationalization will have to include any group, formal party or alliance which at one point or another have become voted into the Saeima in national elections. It is the Saeima *factions* (Parliamentary Groups), i.e. the elected representation of parties, groups and alliances, which is the empirical focus, and the corresponding party organizations.

The current Latvian election law requires that a list of candidates be submitted 1) by “a legally registered political organization (party); 2) jointly by two or more legally registered political organizations (parties); 3) by a legally registered association of political organizations (parties) (The Saeima Election Law, Article 9). The Latvian Election Law thus establishes the party as the hub of political participation and democratic contestation. The law required other types of political organizations, movements such as LNNK and the Popular Front, to formally register as parties in the 1990s.

3.2 Operationalization of ‘Party’

The pre-war party-system consisted of numerous parties, which has become categorised by historians and is the point of departure for describing the important and relevant conflicts and cleavages in the inter-war party system (see Appendix A). Descriptions and categorizations are presented by Albert Zalts (1926), Alfred Bilmanis (1928 and later), Agnis Balodis (1990), Georg von Rauch (1995) and Jürgen von Hehn (1966) as the main sources concerning the inter-war years. I have also basically adopted the *ideological* categories employed by von Rauch (1995:91): The ‘Left’ (Marxist-based Social Democrats and Communist groups), the ‘Centre’ (also referred to as liberals, whereas I prefer the designation ‘radical-bourgeois’ which refers to the non-Marxist social radicalism of the urban intelligentsia), and the ‘Right’ which refers to conservative and moderate bourgeois parties.

There are other relevant categories of parties in the pre-war Saeima not reckoned separately by von Rauch: Agricultural, regional (Latgalian) and parties of other Latvian national subgroups (“minorities”). Religious parties were mostly a “sub-division” among the other categories, and did not represent a particular “front” - with exception of catholic parties in Latgale with its distinctly catholic Latvian culture. Religious parties expressed a variety of

faiths among different *national* (“*ethnic*”) *subgroups*, such as Russian Orthodox, Old Believers and Jews. I have defined confessional parties as belonging to different blocs of parties, and not separately.

A question is whether agricultural parties actually should be seen as one single bloc representing peasants and farmers, or whether the parties rather belong to different blocs, representing different cleavages, for example as opponents along the class cleavage (see von Hehn, 1966:11-12). The old gentry, the independent farmers and the peasants were socially divided by class lines, and the parties of peasants (smallholders) and farmers represented the interests of different social segments.

The relationship between the socio-structural basis and the parties/categories of parties of the first democratic period are not directly, statistically, established by surveys. The link is *presumed*, based on information by secondary sources. For example, that the party Farmers’ Union represented the interests of the landowning farmers in the pre-war party system, and the national liberal/radical parties were based on the urban Latvian intelligentsia (von Rauch, 1995:91-93).

For the post-Soviet elections, I have been able to use election survey results (1993, 1995, 1998, 2002) made available by LASOPEC (Latvian Social Research Centre)/Baltic Data House, and Herman Smith-Sivertsen (1998). The survey results indicate possible relationships between certain variables describing the voters and party preference. LASOPEC/Baltic Data House have been engaged in relation with social and socio-political projects in Latvia like the extensive “New Baltic Barometer” surveys by professor Richard Rose and the Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde. Scholars of Latvian topics at the Institute of Political Science at Oslo University have collaborated with LASOPEC/Baltic Data House on several occasions as well. The methods employed by the research centre are well established.

For the 1998 election, underlying data for the survey was made available⁸ and were used for a multivariate analysis presented in chapter seven. I will explain the method in relation to the analysis later in this chapter and also in Chapter Seven.

Regarding the years 1993 to 2002/03 the thesis focus mainly on the parties that make up a more or less stable basis of the democratic contestation or were significant within one or more of the Saeimas. Although election *alliances* are shifting and instrumental, most often

⁸ By Hermann Smith-Sivertsen, Institute of Political Science, University of Oslo.

created for one purpose only: To secure enough votes to pass the 5 per cent threshold (1993: 4 per cent), I see *alliances* as an expression of political closeness.

Finally, names of parties in the inter-war era may be different from one source to another. The reasons appear to be a) different translations of the name from Latvian or Russian to English or German, or that b) small parties frequently changed name or transformed into new parties. When there have been a problem, I have tried to identify parties by the name of the party leaders, and if possible by a mouthpiece newspaper or publication.

3.3 ‘Cleavage’

Henry Valen (1981) explain ‘cleavage’ as referring to contrasts or conflicts of the political struggle. The concept has a sociological and/or political component. The social component, or the definition employed by sociologists, describes conflicts that originate in the social structure; between different ethnic groups, between different religious groups, within the labour market between workers and employers or between agricultural and industrial interests. (Valen, 1981:12) Political scientists emphasise the political component. ‘Cleavage’ means “ideological struggles or contrasts” which are related to certain conflict issues. Valen mentions the left-right contrast as a well-known example. An ideological or political cleavage may designate certain ideologies, but more often cleavage consists of a number of conflict issues that are tied together or connect ideologically (Valen, 1981:13).

Not all conflicts mobilize cleavages. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the politization and mobilization of cleavage is related to critical conflicts. The conflicts (or ‘cluster of conflict issues’) have a profound quality, such as the conflict over territorial control expressed for example by ‘state versus church’ (secular versus religious control) or by the tug of war between a centralizing culture and peripheral cultures.

The definition of ‘cleavage’ employed in this thesis involves both the political and socio-structural level. The political level is operationalised basically as the factions within the Saeima in the years 1990-2003 and the corresponding parties, and as the parties and categories of parties within the Constitutional Assembly in 1920-22 and the Saeimas 1922-34.

The social structure is defined in two ways: As descriptive categories taken from the literature (‘peasants’, ‘farmers’/‘landowners’, ‘workers’, ‘middle class’/‘middle strata’, ‘bourgeoisie’= wealthier strata, as well as cultural designations like ‘Latgalian’, ‘Baltic German’ etc.). Secondly, the social structure is defined by the sets of variables describing voters (respondents) in the election surveys. The variables are not exhaustive, and the survey may not include all relevant variables. However, the selection of variables should be regarded

as relevant for the purpose of measuring contrasts in the population (nationality, place of residence (city/rural area), region, income, education etc.)

Words like cleavage and contrasts are used interchangeably in the literature. Intuitively, 'contrast' appear to describe differences that are not as fundamental or deep as 'cleavage'. For practical purposes, I mainly prefer 'contrast' to describe previously or presently existing differences which may represent cleavages or potential cleavages.

3.4 Sources

There are two ways for identifying a party's *policy*: a) On the basis of the party *programme* and b) On the basis of the actual *behaviour of representatives* in the Saeima. a) may not be consistent with b); actual policy may differ from stated goals and intentions. Ideally, a) and b) should both be studied, but for linguistic and other practical reasons I have had to rely primarily on party programs and secondary descriptions for this study. In addition, I rely on newspapers in English; The Baltic Independent, The Baltic Observer and The Baltic Times (a merger of the two former newspapers). Concerning the first democratic period, I have relied on secondary literary sources in English and German and their descriptions of the parties and their political agendas. Margarethe Lindemuth (1969), Albert Zalts (1926), Jürgen von Hehn (1966), Alfreds Bilmanis (1928) are central sources regarding political parties.

The study is based on mainly three kinds of sources: Written secondary sources (historical literature, articles and newspapers, copies of public information such as election results, and information, news, analyses, and post-election surveys carried out by the Baltic Data House (Baltijas Datu Nams, previously LASOPEC). Additionally, I refer to interviews carried out in Riga in 1992 and 1993.

My understanding of Latvian is restricted to making use of simple information sheets (information presented in a simplistic form), and I do not read Russian. Language restrictions is a disadvantage with respect to the selection of sources.

When I started to look into this topic in 1992, only two books were available in Norwegian libraries, to my knowledge; Georg von Rauch's "The Baltic States. The years of independence 1917-1940" and Boris Meissner: "Die Baltischen Nationen. Estland, Lettland, Litauen". Visits to Riga in 1992 and 1993 made it possible for me to collect copies of a number of other historical sources, especially regarding the inter-war period. Visits to other University libraries, such as at the University of Konstanz, were equally helpful. Naturally, not much was written about post-Soviet developments, as they were only starting. Later, the availability of second hand sources about older and recent political and social history in

Latvia has multiplied, and so has research publications which provide updated insight in the situation after the restoration of independence.

A critical comment to the historical sources concerns possibly the “motivation” by the author. Literature by Latvian writers (in English or German, or translated) may in some respect be coloured by a sense of patriotism which is often understandable – yet representing a subjective evaluation of events that must be kept in mind. The same goes with German Baltic sources. Usually, in historical methodology, sources are regarded as more reliable the closer they relate to the actual events. This may however not always be certain. With regard to events that involve conflicts, and extreme conflicts, as has been the case between nationality and class groups in Latvia, identification, sympathies and/or own experiences by an author may contribute to biases that later interpreters of events may avoid. The bulk of the historical literature appear to be reasonably objective, and written largely by recognized scholars.

Information published on the Internet may be regarded by some as less “trustworthy” than printed publications, mainly because the Internet is a new kind of medium, which in principle allows anyone to publish views, articles and so on. A basic rule apply to the use of internet publications similarly to printed sources: To check the credentials of the author (his or her credentials is often presented). I have made use of the parties’ Internet sites when in English and public sites like the Saeima’s, and various sites that publish news and articles about developments in Latvia such as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

Interviews: I carried out interviews with observers (journalists, social scientists, political scientists and historians) as well as politicians and party member and leaders in Latvia (Riga) in 1992 and 1993. While the information was useful at the time, some of the interviews have in the course of time become less applicable in the context of a thesis which in the end comprises a bigger time span and allows very little detail about developments of parties and events in 1992-93.

Secondary sources: statistics. I have used statistics regarding demographics such as ethnic distribution, urban/rural distribution etc. The literature presents a huge variety of such material. I have compiled the relevant statistical information and compared different sources, which not always give similar numbers. Sometimes statistics have been rounded off, sometimes they differed slightly. The statistic information used in Chapter Four have been cross-checked with similar information presented in different sources, and when cross-checking is not possible I have relied on the given statistics. In some cases the information was missing, and must unfortunately be left out in the tables presented.

3.4.1 Election Surveys 1993 - 2002

The sampling sizes of the different surveys are 1000 in 1993, 1025 in 1995, 1541 in 1998 and 1012 in the 2002 survey. The number of respondents that participated in elections and gave a certain answer is 593 in 1993, 558 in 1995, 830 in 2002 and 860 in 1998.

Because of the limited number of respondents some sub-groups in the survey have a small number of respondents, and the result of such groups does not ensure the necessary confidence interval. These results are thus only indicative.

The presentation of the surveys differs individually. In the 1993 survey, the actual count of respondents regarding party preference is presented. However, with regard to the response for the different variables, the actual count is not given. The result for each variable is presented as “column %”, meaning that the sum of party preference is 100%. The 1998 survey give the actual count, as “row %” and “column %” for all the variables. The 1995 and 2002 surveys state the actual count as well as “Weighted row %” and “Weighted column %” for all variables. The data are weighted according to demographic data.⁹ As small errors always appear in the result of the data collection process, the data are weighted to diminish this error and achieve more precise data. The sample mistake seems to me to be small, and only a very small difference appears between calculated percent based on the unweighted count and weighted percent.

Not all of those who participated in elections and participated in the survey have answered all the questions. ‘Party preference’ for those who did not answer a specific question is not always included in the original data set. This means that the sum of responses for a particular question is not always equal to the total number of responders in the survey.

Selected results are presented in Appendix C. The results in per cent are presented in tables (for 1995 and 2002 weighted percent) for each sub-group. This means, for example, that in the case of a plot of party preference for different nationalities, the sum of the Russian response is 100%, the sum of the Latvian response is 100% and the sum of “Other” is 100%. The results are presented in this way to make easier the comparison of ‘party preference’ of each group, particularly in cases where there is a difference in size of the different groups/categories. (As is the case for Latvians versus Russians in Latvia.)

The number of respondents is also specified. In the case where this was not shown in the data provided from LASOPEC (the 1993 survey) it has been calculated from the percentage

⁹ Information about the surveys of 1995/2002 are provided by Brigita Zepa, director of the Baltic Data House.

numbers and total number of respondents, assuming that the given percentages are not weighted.

3.4.2 A Multivariate Analysis of the 1998 Survey

The raw data of the 1998 survey was made available for this study by Hermann Smith-Sivertsen and made it possible to perform multivariate analyses. The computer program “The UnscramblerTM”,¹⁰ was used to perform the analysis, and the actual computer work was performed by Eva K. Friis. The selection and combination of variables for the analyses, and the interpretation, is my own responsibility. The multivariate analysis was made to study, illuminate and possibly confirm other findings regarding cleavages in the population, and the results are presented in chapter seven.

A PLS 2 (Partial Least Square) regression analysis was performed. PLS regression analysis has been designed to cope with fully multivariate (X- and Y-space) regression cases (Esbensen et al., 1994:274). The regression analysis reveals relations between voter (respondent) characteristics (X-variables) and party choice (Y-variables).

The program visualizes the results in plots. The X- and Y-variables are plotted in a two-dimensional figure, with the so-called PLS components as axes. A PLS component represents the variance of a phenomenon.

The following is a rough description of the nature of PLS components (and principal components, PC): Figure 3-1 shows a three-dimensional space with a swarm of data points (Esbensen et al., 1994:19-22). An “intuitive” perception would be that a central axis, called PC1, could be drawn as indicated in Figure 3-1 a), and that this line would describe *the biggest variance* of the data swarm. In Unscrambler, the PLS components are found by identifying the line that minimizes the sum of squared distances from to points to the line. The variations in X are analysed by using the variance in Y as a guide. (Esbensen et al., 1994:21-22). PC1 is positioned along the direction of *maximum* variance, and thus represents the most important phenomenon. PC2, as shown in Figure 3-1 b) describes the second largest variance. PC3 describes the third largest variance, and so on.

¹⁰ The Unscrambler is provided by CAMO ASA, Web site at: <http://www.camo.no>

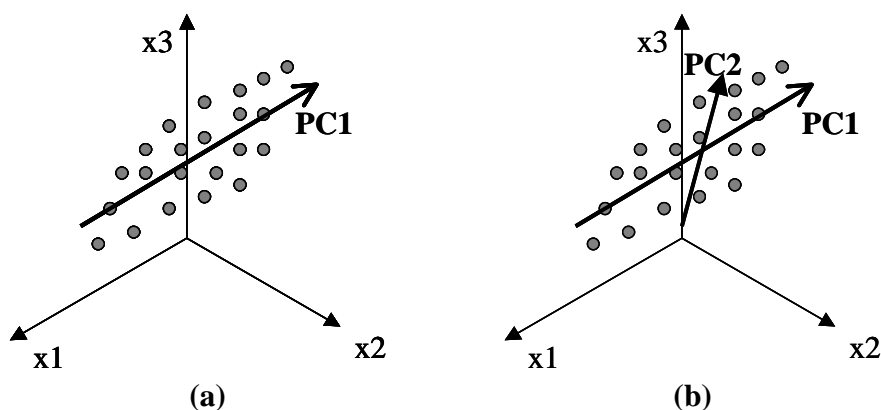


Figure 3-1: The figure shows a swarm of data points in a three- dimensional space. a) shows the first principal component and b) shows both the first and the second principal component.

3.4.3 Interpretation of the Unscrambler Plots

The plots in Figure 7-3 and Figure 7-4, in chapter 7, are called “X- and Y-loading” plots. Entering the X- and Y-loadings in the same plot makes possible a study of both the relationship between X-variables and the relationship between X- and Y-variables. In this case that means the relationship between voter characteristics (the X-variables) and party preference (Y-variables).

Variables that are close to each other in the plot will have a *high positive correlation*. The same counts for variables *in the same quadrant* lying close to a straight line through the origin (centre). Variables lying in *diagonally opposed quadrants* will have a tendency to be negatively correlated. The same applies for variables lying on or close to a PLS component, on each side of the origin. A variable with a large value (far away from the origin) contribute much to the PLS components. Variables lying close to the centre are poorly explained by the plotted PLS components. Each variable can contribute to more than one PLS component.

Interpretation of the “phenomena” described by the PLS components is, in this study, a key to identify possible (potential) cleavages related to any of the X-variables. The interpretation of the loading plot profits from beforehand knowledge about the population, which is based on information from a variety of other sources.

A “score plot” is presented in Figure 7-6 in chapter 7. This plot is *complementary* to the loading plot, and gives valuable information about the objects and the variables together (Esbensen et al., 30-31). The score plot shows the location of each individual respondent in the same two-dimensional space defined by the PLS-components (as in the loading plot). Score plots may for example be used for identification of groups and similarities.

4. THE TRANSFORMATION OF CLASS SOCIETIES INTO A NATION-STATE

4.1 Introduction

Nation-building and democratization is related to economic modernization and the impact of ideas of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the Latvian area, it meant the transformation of traditional, feudal societies into modern, industrial societies characterized by demographic and social mobility, urbanization and industrialization within a time span of less than hundred years, from about 1817 with the so-called liberation of the serfs, until the beginning of the 20th century. The traditional structures were at the same time kept in place in the Western provinces of Russia, including Courland and Livonia, and created extreme social tensions and conflicts. The contrasts of the traditional society remained while new contrasts, created by modernization, grew. Social status was inseparable from cultural features, profoundly language, in the old society. With modernization, the doubled-faced structure got mobilized along “National” and “Class” lines that partially re-inforced each other as social status, cultural identity and language were largely the same. Latvian found themselves socially and culturally dominated by the Baltic Germans, a consciousness that grew out of the so-called “national awakening” in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A national-liberal¹¹ and a radical-revolutionary “national” opposition emerged, but were mutually opposed along the class cleavage (Lindemuth, 1976:77) .

4.1.1 *Modernization in the Baltic Provinces*

The beginning of modernization in Livonia and Courland can be related to the abolishment of serfdom in 1817-19 which marked the beginning of the “emancipation” of the Latvian-speaking peasantry, which was no real emancipation as the landowners took possession of all the peasant land. The reform preconditioned demographic mobility, followed by social mobility (education and economic improvement), social improvement for a few members of the peasant population, and increasing migration into the cities. Decades later, peasants were allowed to buy land, and a new strata of independent Latvian farmers came into being (Kahk/Tarvel, 1997:53, 85). Two directions of political mobilization happened: One, the making of the peasant culture and language as expression of a separate *nation* (Gert von Pistohlkors, 1993). Upward social mobility usually meant *germanization* as German language and culture were expressions of higher social status. German was confined to the landowning

¹¹ Liberal and National-Liberal are difficult concepts in the Latvian context. It should be understood as an idea that is anti-privilege, anti-revolutionary and demanding political and social reforms that will improve the social, economic and cultural position of Latvians in a society dominated by an elite of German-speaking Balts.

nobility and the educated and commercial classes (Kirby, 1995:54-55). Members of a new generation of Latvian intellectuals became the nucleus of a native intelligentsia whose national idea would be adopted by an emerging urban Latvian middle strata as a political ideology against the class privileges enjoyed by the Baltic German elite. The era is usually referred to as the first “national awakening.”¹²

Second, the corporate privileges and monopolies which secured the local dominance of the Baltic German aristocracy, merchants and artisans were kept in place until the 1880s. With russification in the late nineteenth century, the decline of the Baltic German local autonomy and privileged status began, as revolutionary ideas inspired a new generation of students and intellectuals. The revolutionary movement directed their antagonisms against Russian absolutism, the Baltic Germans and the Latvian bourgeoisie, including the new class of independent Latvian landowners (farmers). The 1890s saw the politization of a new class conflict in the cities and in the countryside.

4.2 A Double-Faced Stratification System

A medieval stratification system based on rigid class segmentation remained in place while industrialization and social mobility led to a parallel social structure. The old stratification system was created and controlled by the Baltic German aristocracy and put limitations upon the new. According to Tõnu Parming, the *double-faced stratification system* contributes to explain the complexity of social conflict in the Baltic area (Parming, 1982:1). The privileges and monopolies controlled by the aristocratic institutions and reserved for members of the German knighthoods (Ritterschaften) put restrictions on the social and economic progress of the middle classes. In the countryside, the most important limitation was *land*, which was owned almost entirely by the nobility before the revolution. The re-interpretation of the old class-based antagonistic relationship as a class-nation conflict in the late nineteenth century, changed the scope of confrontation. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Baltic Germans constituted 7 per cent of the population in the Latvian territories. The majority, 35.000 (out of 60.000), inhabited Courland (8,4 per cent) (Dribins, 2000). By 1897, the Baltic German proportion was down to 6.2 per cent, and decreasing. Michael Haltzel (1981:151) describes the demographic map of Courland and Livonia:

¹² The circulation of the first Latvian-edited and –written newspaper from 1856, the weekly *Majas Viesis* (“house guest”) – signalled the start of a general Latvian national awakening, according to Zigurds L. Zile (1982). See p. 74 in Ezergailis and von Pistohlkors: *The Russian Baltic Provinces between the 1905/1917 Revolutions*.

By 1897 the rural Baltic Germans – that is the nobility, the relatively few burgher manor owners, country pastors, doctors and foresters – were isolated islands in a sea of non-Germans. In that year the rural population of Kurland, for every German there were 32.9 Latvians, 1.7 Russians, and 1.5 Jews. In Livland the ratio on the land was 27.0 Latvians, 29.3 Estonians and 1.05 Jews for every German.

The 1905 revolution in Latvia was a revolt firstly by Latvian peasants against the Baltic German landowners (Parming, 1982:1-2, Blodnieks, 1960). The native population and thereby most of the total population “[...] was overwhelmingly rural, and the pressing issue for this native groups was social justice through land reform, and full abolishment of the feudal privileges of the old aristocracy of Baltic German land owners,” according to Parming (1982:2).¹³ Moreover, it was not just a class confrontation, but also a confrontation along national/ethnic lines, as the manor owners were German Balts and the rural workers were almost all Latvian (Parming, 1982:2). Agnis Balodis says the 1905 revolution in the Baltic area had not alone primarily social causes, as in Russia proper, but contained also “strong national and political causes” (Blodis, 1990:141). A general strike among 50.000-60.000 Riga workers in January 1905, organized by the Latvian Social Democrats and the Jewish Bund, “help(ed) sustain a rising campaign of political unrest in the countryside of Kurland and southern Livonia throughout the summer” (Kirby, 1995:201). The civil war in the Latvia territories 1918-1920, in the wake of the “empire-crushing” First World War and the Russian revolution in 1917, was a war along the dimensions of class and nation/ territorial control, between revolutionaries who would keep the imperial territory under a socialist regime, the Baltic German nobility supported by German forces not yet demobilized, whose aim was to make the territory a Germany dutchy; and finally Latvians mobilized in favour of a democratic nation-state.¹⁴ The national cause was promoted by intellectuals who in many cases earned their first political experience as revolutionary agitators and activists at the beginning of the century. Adolfs Blodnieks, himself a young Latvian revolutionary who became an ardent supporter and advocate of Latvian national aspirations, and later founder of a smallholders’ party and prime minister of Latvia, describes the demands put forward by the Latvian Social Democracy in the underground press before 1905: “We were asking for a wide

¹³ Adolf Blodnieks writes: “The historic significance of the 1905 revolution was the fact that the Latvian people did assert themselves as an independent factor that after 700 years of subjugation to aliens was still capable to fight for their national and political freedom and better social conditions.” [...] “The revolution of 1905 was a Latvian revolution, and with respect to this it must be said that the German press of that time was right when speaking of a “Latvian republic”.” (Blodnieks 1960:66)

¹⁴ The idea of an independent nation matured in certain Latvian circles during the First World War and was not adopted as a goal by national-liberals before the summer of 1917.

political and economic autonomy for all provinces. We demanded also that the local language should be taught in the schools” (Blodnieks, 1960:19).

4.2.1 *Industrialization and Urbanization*

While the old stratification more or less prevailed in the countryside, the cities grew into centres of a much more diverse ethnic and social mix. The German urban elites (“burghers”) remained in power but not as a numerically dominant segment. 63 per cent of Riga inhabitants were German-speakers by 1800 (Handrack, 1932), a number that fell to 22.4 per cent by 1897. Around 1800, the number of inhabitants in Riga, the administrative, intellectual and merchant centre and capital of southern Livonia, was estimated at 29.500. Between 1863 and 1914 the population increased from 77.500 to 517.500. The urban population growth turned the ethnic structure upside-down. By 1897, a hundred thousand Latvians lived in Riga and had become the single largest nationality (42 per cent of the population) compared to 24.000 thirty years earlier (24 per cent) (von Pistohlkors, 1993). A non-German middle strata emerged, as well as an industrial working class. The Latvian territory was among the empire’s most industrialized regions by the turn of the century.

In 1863, only 14.8 per cent of the population in Courland and southern Livonia lived in towns. By 1897, the proportion had increased to 29.4 per cent, and to 40,3 per cent at the start of the First World War (Zile, 1982:74). Most city dwellers (70 per cent) lived in the three biggest cities: Riga, Liepaja (Libau) and Daugavpils (Dünaburg, Dvinsk) (Blodis, 1990:139).

Andrew Ezergailis (1983) points to the political radicalization among Latvians about a decade later: “If any sector of the Russian empire’s population can be designated as a vanguard of Bolshevism, it seems the Latvians would qualify” (Ezergailis, 1983:12). Differently from Parming’s description of the 1905 revolution, Ezergailis asserts that in 1917 “there was not much anti-baronial, anti-German opinion.” According to Ezergailis, the anger among the socialists was directed against the “grey barons”, i.e. Latvian independent farmers and bourgeoisie. (Ezergailis, 1983:16, 283-286) The Latvian intelligentsia at the time was split. Also, in 1917, the Social Democratic Party split along Bolshevik/Menshevik lines, the Mensheviks were influenced by the Austro-Marxists’ idea of a democratic federation of autonomous states (Ezergailis, 1983:70). After the defeat of the German forces and the Red Army in 1920, the Bolshevik (Communist) party was prohibited, while the “Menshevik” Social Democratic party became the dominant opposition party in the 1920s.

4.2.2 *Between Great Powers*

There is an “international dimension” which has always been a crucial factor in the history of the Baltics. The Latvian territory was inhabited by ethnically and linguistically different tribes whose names are reflected in the names of the districts that constitutes modern Latvia:

Livland (Vidzeme), Courland (Kurzeme), Zemgale and Latgale.¹⁵ The tribes were gradually defeated during the conquests and colonization by the crusaders and merchants of the German Order (the Baltic branch of the German Order was the Livonian Order) and catholic bishoprics from the twelfth century. Today’s Latvians speak a language that belongs to the Baltic family, a branch on the Indo-European language tree shared with Lithuanian. The first independent (germanized) Livonian state existed until 1561 (von Pistohlkors, 1994:166).

Most of the non-German and non-Latvian nationalities in independent Latvia reflected the region’s strategically and economically vital position situated between the imperial powers of Sweden, Russia and Poland. Russian, Jewish, Polish and Lithuanian settlements began in earnest during the rule of one or another great power (Jewish immigration during the “Polish era”). The western region (Courland) became a dutchy protected by Poland (-Lithuania) until the third partition of Poland in 1795 when Courland was made a Russian province. The north-western region (Livonia/Livland) came under Poland in 1561 with its local autonomy guaranteed similarly to Courland. Livonia (minus Latgale) came under Sweden 1629 and Russia in 1710-21.

Latvia has, wholly or partly, been occupied five times since the proclamation of independence in November 1918: By Bolshevik forces in 1919 who established the first Latvian Soviet Republic (the Iskolat republic), later by German forces who remained after the German capitulation in 1918 and assisted the Baltic German aristocrats in their annexation attempt; by Soviet forces in 1940-41, by Nazi-German forces in 1941, and returning Soviet forces in 1944 (until 1991/94¹⁶).

4.2.3 *Latgale: A Dominantly Catholic and Multiethnic Region*

Whereas most of the territory inhabited by a Latvian-speaking peasant population experienced a relatively similar history dominated by a Lutheran (after the reformation) German ruling elite, the south-eastern part of the old Livonian state (Latgale) is in 1561 placed under direct rule of catholic Poland. The territory that was conquered by Russia between 1710/21 and

¹⁵ A few hundred descendants of the Liv tribe resides on the coast of Kurzeme by the Bay of Riga. Their language is Finno-Ugric.

¹⁶ The remaining Red Army troops left Latvia in 1994.

1795 is made into three provinces – Estonia to the north, Livonia and Courland, whereas Latgale is incorporated in the Russian province of Vitebsk at the partition of Poland in 1772.

At the unification with the rest of the independent Latvian territory in 1918-20, Latgale differed socio-structurally and culturally from the other Latvian provinces by a more complex ethnic composition and a dominant catholic religious culture. The district was far less industrialized than the rest of Latvia, economic development was slower, and farming units were smaller. The Germans in Latgale had become “Polonized” and the local ruling strata consisted of Polish and Russian gentry. The emancipation of serfs happened only 1861, at a time when the “national awakening” was already underway among Latvian-speaking intellectuals in Livland and Courland. The language spoken by Latgalian Latvians was – and is - distinctly different from the Latvian spoken in Courland and Livland. A separate Latgalian “awakening” led by members of the catholic clergy started at a time when the revolutionary movement was beginning to organize in the two other provinces. The separate historical and cultural experience of Latgale inspired a *national separatist movement* in the first decades of the twentieth century (von Hehn, 1966:6).

4.3 Ethnic- and Social Structure in the Interwar Period and Present¹⁷

By 1920, the Latvians constituted around three fourth of the total population (Handrack, 1932:28; von Rauch, 1995:82; Garleff, 1978:81), the national minorities constituted 26.6 per cent in 1925, and the Latvian majority was 75.5 per cent by 1930. Latvians totally dominated Kurzeme (Courland, Western Latvia) and Vidzeme (Southern Livland) – 93.8 per cent of the Vidzeme population was Latvian, and 85.5 per cent of the population in Courland in the 1920s¹⁸ (Handrack, 1932:28) but not as much Latgale (56.9 per cent). There were also a high concentration of minority nationalities in Riga, which traditionally had been dominated by Baltic Germans. The Latvian proportion of the Riga population in the 1920s was 60 per cent. The German presence in Latvia largely came to and end in 1939-41. Only around 400 individuals identify as Baltic Germans in Latvia today (Dribins, 2000a).

The largest minority nationality in the 1920s was Russian (7.8 per cent – 10.6 per cent in 1935, according to von Rauch; 12.5 per cent according to Handrack who also include Byelorussians). The presence of the Russian minority nationality was related to the annexation by imperial Russia (Volkovs, 2000¹⁹). The largest number of Russians lived in

¹⁷ The literature refer somewhat different numbers with respect to “ethnic” distribution.

¹⁸ Hans Handrack does not make clear which year (1920, 1925 or 1930).

¹⁹ Volkovs, 2000: www.li.lv/old/n_minorities/russians.htm

Latgale (30 per cent) and secondly in Riga. Over half of the Russians were peasants, a third belonged to the urban middle strata and a small segment belonged to the Latgalian aristocracy. A significant religious minority in Latgale were Old Believers, schismatic congregations that opposed reforms in the 1650s, left the Russian Orthodox church and became persecuted. Many fled, and some settled the Baltic provinces.

The Russians did not develop a concept of a local identity separate from that of the people of Russia, according to Volkovs. The perception of a “Great Russian” identity was related to the position of the Russians as a core nation of a multinational empire. The result was an absence of a local national-cultural self-consciousness. Another, or an additional explanation to the lack of coherence among the Russian minority was social differentiation, especially between farmers and a small elite of officials and merchants (Garleff, 1978:82).

Jews were permitted by the Russian government to register in Riga in 1841 (Dribins, 2000b). Most Jewish immigrants came from Germany. A separate Jewish immigration came from Poland, Russia and other eastern countries to Latgale. Many Jews moved to Riga after independence to find employment or worked in the industry. The ethnic differentiation in Latvia by 1920, 1935 and 1989 is shown in Table 4-1:

Table 4-1: Ethnic differentiation in Latvia by 1920, 1935 and 1989*

Nationality**	1920 (numbers)	%	1935 (numbers)	%	1989 (numbers)	%	2000 %
Latvian	1, 35 mill	75.6	1,47 mill	75.5	1,39 mill	52	57.7
Russian	124,746	7.8	206,499	10.6	905,515	34	29.6
Byelorussians	75,630	4.7	26,867	1.4	119,702	4.5	4.1
Ukranian	--	--	--	--	--	(Other)	2.7
Jews	58,133	5.2	93,479	5.0	22,897	0.9	(Other)
Germans	--	3.6	62,144	3.7	400	--	(Other)
Poles	52,244	2.8	48,949	3.1	60,388	2.3	2.5
Lithuanians	--	1.6	22,900	1.4	34,630	1.3	1.4
Estonians	--	0.6	7,000	0.4	3,312	0.1	(Other)
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.0
Totally	1,60 mill		1,95 mill.		2,67 mill.		

*The survey of 1920 is incomplete (due to the war situation).

**Identified by first language; Jews by confession.

The numbers are compiled from a number of different sources, including Hans Handrack (1932), John Fitzmaurice (1992), Agnis Balodis (1990), Georg von Rauch (1995), Wilfried Schlau (Boris Meissner, 1991) and The Latvian Institute.

4.3.1 *The Impact of Religion*

The religious map of Latvia reflects the variety of nationalities and cultural backgrounds among inhabitants. The first influence may have been Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the

ninth century (Plakans, 1997: 130-131). Western Christianity arrived with the German crusaders three centuries later, about a century after the schism that in 1054 divided the Byzantine church into Greek (Orthodox) and Latin (Roman Catholic) churches. The institutions of the “Western” church were well established in the medieval Livonian state, and all the Baltic people had been (nominally) Christianized, according to Plakans. The Western church in the Baltic region adopted Lutheranism following the reformation, except for Eastern Livonia that became part of Poland - Latgalians remained catholic (Garleff, 1978:83).

The control of the Lutheran church over the peasant (Latvian) population met challenges from two different quarters in the eighteenth and nineteenth century: the pietistic Herrnhut movement (Moravian Brethren), that originated in Germany, and attracted an estimated 5,000 Latvian peasants away from the Lutheran church between 1730 and 1800 (Plakans, 1997:115-116, 131). The Herrnhut movement left a strong pietistic tradition in Latvian religiosity, according to Plakans (1997), and the movement was important to the Latvian peasant as it inspired literacy and improved self-consciousness. Some regard the Herrnhut congregations as the first Latvian “national” movement.” (Plakans, 1997:116).²⁰

A different challenge was presented by the Russian Orthodox conversion movement in the 1840s, when thousands of peasant families accepted to become Orthodox Christians, due to rumours that they would be granted land in Russia. A few decades later, new attempts to make the Baltic peasants turn to Orthodoxy was carried out as part of a broader Russification policy (von Pistohlkors, 1993:187). German Lutheranism and Russian Orthodoxy were “competing religions” in the Baltic regions ruled by Russia and dominated by a German elite (Haltzel, 1981:161). The majority of Latvians remained Lutheran at the turn of the twentieth century, and only 10 per cent of the population in the Baltic provinces (Estland, Livland and Courland) were Orthodox; one quarter of them were Russian (Haltzel, 1981:162).

By 1920, 57.2 per cent of the population were Lutheran, Catholics 22.6 per cent, Orthodox 14 per cent, Jews 5.2 and other faiths about 2 per cent (Plakans, 1997:131).

4.3.2 *Ethnic Cultural Autonomy*

The local elites were traditionally German Balts who took care of local government, while the Russians belonged to the “ruling race” (von Rauch, 1995:135). Following 1918, the two national groups had to come to terms with being cultural minorities within a new, democratic

²⁰For more details there is a paper posted on the Internet by Anna Munson (2001): “[The Moravian Brethren in the Baltic And Their Influence on the Rise of Cultural Nationalism](http://depts.washington.edu/baltic/papers/moravian.html)”, Washington University, at <http://depts.washington.edu/baltic/papers/moravian.html>

nation-state. The Baltic Germans mobilized their political potential by collaboration within a single election alliance, while the Russians, and the Jews, remained politically fragmented. The Latvian constitution guaranteed the minorities equality before the law, as well as the right to political participation. The Baltic Germans managed in 1919 to secure school autonomy that was made into a general minority school autonomy law, but the minorities did not achieve an extensive cultural autonomy as in neighbouring Estonia (Garleff, 1976:82-83, 85, 89). The staunchest opposition came from the nationalistic, urban-based “democrats” and Latgalian representatives, while the right²¹ and the left supported the proposition (Garleff, 1976:88). The debate on the protection of minorities’ schools included the question of language of instruction. Other important cultural issues were the struggle about the ownership to (Baltic German) Lutheran churches, the buildings of the local feudal Ritterschaften (Knights’) institutions and other buildings. The school autonomy law came increasingly under attack in the late 1920s and early 1930s, as the ideological climate became increasingly polarized and acute, but the law remained in place throughout the democratic years.

The new Latvian nationalism grew within a context of economic crisis, political crisis and external pressure from the Soviet Union and developments in Germany. The political climate in the 1930s was marked by social, ethnic, political and ideological polarization. A consequence was the formation of a nationalist government in Latvia in 1931 and attempts to remove the school autonomy law (von Rauch, 1995:144, Garleff, 1978:94).

4.3.3 *Ethnic Socio-economic Differentiation*

Agriculture was the dominant economic sector in the inter-war years, and industry was based upon agricultural resources. Latvians dominated agriculture, the army and civil services compared to their share of the population, and much less represented in the free professions and trade. Russians and Byelorussians were employed mainly in agriculture. Baltic Germans were heavily found in the free professions and trade, as were Jews. Poles dominated in industry and transport relative to their share of the population.

²¹ “Right” here means conservatives. The Latvian nationalists made up the “centre” of the political spectrum.

Table 4-2: Distribution of professions for different ethnic groups (Bilmanis 1925).²²

Sector 1925	Agri-culture	Industry	Trade	Tran- sport	Army	Civil service	Free Professions	Total % Population
Totally Employed %	60.99	12.61	6.13	3.52	1.24	1.54	2.92	
Latvians	80.2	65.9	37.47	71.99	81.14	83.4	53.66	75.6
Russians*	15.34	8.10	4.85	8.87	8.21	5.43	9.4	12.3
Jews	0.08	11.0	40.71	4.01	2.79	0.42	13.11	4.5
Germans	0.98	7.98	12.24	4.65	3.03	6.0	18.95	3.3
Poles	1.85	4.19	1.97	6.32	3.43	2.85	2.66	2.5

*Russians and Byelorussians.

4.4 Occupations, Annexation and a New Demographic Structure

The Russian proportion of the population increased 3.5 times between 1935 and 1989, mainly a result of the Soviet industrialization and migration policies. The social differentiation among Russians changed as well. Russians made up a significant proportion employed in the large agricultural sector before 1934, but following the Soviet occupation more than a third of the Russians were employed in the industry and only 7 per cent in agriculture (Volkovs, 2000).²³

The Soviet occupation and annexation in June 1940, the occupation by the Nazi army in July 1941, and re-occupation by the Soviet Union in 1944 for the next four decades drastically changed the ethnic and social structure. There were three waves of deportations of mostly Latvians. Totally, 150,000 people were lost in deportations, executions and guerrilla warfare (1940-50) (Misiunas and Taagepera, 1993:42, 47, 99, 129) and also significant numbers emigrated to the West (Plakans, 1997:64). Migration from Russia and other Soviet republics was initiated to increase the industrial workforce after the deportations, and served also to neutralize the ‘national’ element in non-Russian republics. Migration to Latvia was forced during the Stalin regime. Later people came voluntary, often motivated by the relatively “better” economic and social conditions in the western republics (Misiunas and Taagepera, 1993:108,111-112,194). Another aspect to the changed ethnic differentiation was the devastating consequences of the Holocaust, near-extirmination of the Jews in systematic massacres following the Nazi invasion in July 1941.²⁴ Over 90 per cent of the Latvian Jewish

²²Free professions comprises intellectual work, science, journalism and self-employment, for example artisans.

²³ The corresponding Latvian figures were 25 and 22 per cent.

²⁴ One detailed description is written by Ezergailis (1996). Local participation in the massacres of Jews remains a sensitive and disputed issue. Different authors states different numbers of Jews in Latvia in 1939. According to Ezergailis, there were 86,422 by 1939 and by 1943 their numbers were 12,964 (table p. 58). According to Rein Taagepera and Romuald Misiunas (1993) 93,000 Jews lived in Latvia by 1939. Thousands of Jews were killed or deported by the Soviet regime before the German invasion. Of about 70,000 left in 1941 at the Soviet retreat, only 4,000 survived.

population was killed by the Nazis and local henchmen. Today, the Jewish community consists of 14,000-15,000 individuals, some of them are Soviet immigrants.

In the late 1980s, the Latvians made up only 52 per cent of the population. While the number of Russians in Latvia increased by nearly 50 per cent before 1979, residents who considered Russian their mother tongue increased by nearly 80 per cent. Among them were Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Poles, Jews and other who moved to the Latvian SSR (Volkovs, 2000). By 1989, Russian speakers outnumbered ethnic Latvians in Latvia's six biggest cities, including Riga. In Latvia's second biggest city, south-eastern Daugavpils, only 15 per cent of the city's inhabitants were ethnic Latvians. Riga was made the headquarter of the regional Soviet military district and home of a large number of Soviet military personnel. By 1991, about one third of Riga's population were ethnic Latvians.

4.4.1 *Bolshevization and Russification*

An important aspect to the "internationalization" or "Sovietization" of the Latvian population, was russification. The Soviet communists, like the tsars who adopted the slavophile agenda in the late nineteenth century, made Russian the common and official language of their multinational empire, with Russians as its core nation, to the effect that "Russian" became synonymous with the communist regime and "occupier". The goal of the Soviet nationality policy was to create "a single nation with a single language" – Russian - which was "the language of the socialist culture" as expressed by the Latvian Communist General Secretary August Voss in 1960 (Misiunas and Taagepera, 1993:174). The displacement of the Latvian as the dominant language increased the awareness among Latvians of their subordinate status in their homeland, according to Jubulis (2001:51). The politics of economic and social 'bolshevization' (heavy industrialization and planned economy) and cultural 'russification' became a target of the national, liberal, pro-democratic, environmental and human rights' movements in the late 1980s.

A simplistic description of the social structure resulting from sovietization is one of manual unskilled workers, skilled workers, intellectuals, party and state bureaucrats, and collective farmers, with private lots. The emphasis was on labour- and resource intensive industrial production. The pollution and indiscriminate use of energy and other resources led to the first political mobilization in Latvia against the plans of a hydroelectric plant at the Daugava river (Misiunas and Taagepera, 1993:304, Lieven, 1994:293). Lacking a sanctioned political arena of opposition, public demonstrations became the channel of frustration and anger against environment damages, human rights abuse as well as national manifestations.

Confrontations in 1988-1990 were between defenders of the Soviet Union and communism, and a growing majority of people who wanted national independence or, at least, changes.²⁵ There were all nationalities in both camps, but a solid majority of Russians among the pro-communists and a solid majority of Latvians among the supporters of independence.

4.5 New Nation-Building Conflicts

Two major non-economic conflict issues have become dominant since 1991, concerning citizenship, and language. Whereas citizenship was not an issue in 1920, language and education was, as part of the cultural autonomy struggle.

4.5.1 *Language and Education*

A law adopted in 1989 made Latvian the official language. The revised law which took effect in May 1992 states:

Latvia shall be the only ethnic territory in the world which is inhabited by the Latvian nation. One of the main prerequisites for the existence of the Latvian nation and for the preservation and development of the Latvian nation shall be the Latvian language.

Latvian held a secondary status during the Soviet regime. Education was conducted in both Latvian and Russian in separate schools. In schools with mixed language instructions, Latvian-speakers and Russian-speakers attended separate classes. Latvians and non-Russian minorities became bilingual whereas few Russian-speakers learned the local language, Latvian. This has led to a new conflict related to the policy of national integration and defence of Latvian as the national language. Language as mother tongue and second language shows that the Latvian society was a bi-lingual society (Latvian and Russian) by 1989 (Kolstø, 1999:158)²⁶. 97.4 per cent of Latvians regarded Latvian as their mother tongue, whereas only 1.1 per cent of Russians in Latvia regarded Latvian their mother tongue. 2.6 per cent of Latvians regarded Russian as their mother tongue, and 98.8 per cent of Latvian Russians regarded Russian their mother tongue. 21.1 per cent of Latvian Russians spoke Latvian fluently, while 65.7 per cent of Latvians spoke Russian fluently.

In 1999, The Latvian government adopted in a national integration program that defines the nation state on the basis of shared basic values and the use of the Latvian language as the main indicator. The government recognized that Latvia historically has “never been an

²⁵ There may be structural, cultural and political differences between Soviet migrants and non-Latvians with a background spanning over several generations in Latvia, but to my knowledge no such surveys have been published in English.

²⁶ Kolstø's sources are public statistics (USSR census).

ethnically homogenous society” and acknowledge the right of ethnic non-Latvians to preserve their ethnic identity (Jubulis, 2001:228-129). Liberal-centrist Latvian parties recognize Latvia as a multicultural state, in which bilingualism and multilingualism exists with Latvian as the common denominator and state language. The acceptance of multiculturalism is partly motivated by a recognition that other non-Russian minorities in Latvia suffered equally and even more under the Soviet Russification policies, and have become “Russian speakers” (Jubulis, 2001:132).

Pål Kolstø (1999) regards the official categorization of *ethnic groups* as artificial: “Linguistically, the great majority of non-Latvians functions as one group. A great majority of the minorities commands Russian far better than their supposed mother tongue, in many cases they do not know their ethnic language at all” (Kolstø, 1999:158). Few members of the non-Russian minority population regarded Latvian as their mother tongue in 1991. A larger proportion regarded their nationality’s language as their mother tongue.

Statistics presented by Kolstø may also be looked at differently: Despite the Soviet Union’s russification policies; the promotion of Russian as a superior language, with socioeconomic advantages related to using Russian; the Latvian society remained largely multi-linguistic in 1989. Even among Byelorussians and Ukrainians whose own traditional language is close to Russian, 64.8 per cent and 49.4 per cent, respectively, regard Russian their first language. Among Jews, nearly one in four actually regard Hebrew their mother tongue (22.5 per cent). The language issue has a *potential* for mobilizing a Russian-speaking opposition and pushing a bilingual agenda – depending, perhaps, on the naturalization process and to which extent permanent residents opt for citizenship.

4.5.2 Citizenship

The first major conflict issue following independence was the decision on citizenship. With the restoration of independence, the Supreme Council (formerly the Supreme Soviet) re-adopted the 1922 Constitution²⁷ and restored citizenship to all inhabitants who could verify having had citizenship before June 17, 1940, or being direct descendants of pre-war citizens. A significant number of the population, around 40 per cent, remained Soviet citizens until the USSR ceased to exist in December 1991. A majority were Russians and other non-Latvians (see Chapter Five). A majority of citizens were ethnic Latvians, about 75 per cent. A decision on the legal status of USSR citizens was left to be decided by the first post-Soviet national

²⁷ In 1991 the Supreme Council readopted the Constitution, but leaving out some sections. On 6 July, 1993, the newly elected Parliament (5th Saeima) fully re-instated the Constitution in the Saeima’s first meeting.

assembly, the 5th Saeima, elected in June 1993. The Naturalization²⁸ Law adopted by the Saeima introduced a quota system that strictly limited the number of applicants. The system got substituted in 1994 by a different system consisting of so called “age windows” which opened up to new age groups each year. The restrictions got altogether abolished in 1998, after severe criticism from international bodies like the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union. The decision to abolish technical restrictions was made on the basis of a referendum. Automatic citizenship were granted to children born by parents who were residents by 4 May 1990, if the parents wished. By 1999, the citizenship issue and the Naturalization Law were fading as a political issue, while the language issue emerged as an offshoot and directly related to the “independence” cleavage.

4.6 Non-Latvian Cities, Latvian Countryside

The Latvian proportion of the population decreases with urbanization. Russians and other non-Latvians numerically dominate the urban areas, while Latvians dominate the countryside and smaller urban centres (Aasland, 1996). The numerically stronger positions of Russian-speakers in the cities have been politically “neutralized” through the citizenship policy, but this may change.

73 per cent of the total population were citizens by 1994. 98 per cent of ethnic Latvians were citizens, only 40 per cent of Russians and 31 per cent of other minorities were citizens. The largest proportion of Russian non-citizens is in Riga (29 per cent, and 23 per cent of other minorities). The proportion of Russian Latvian *citizens* is bigger in other large cities (40 per cent) and even more in towns (more than 50 per cent) and in rural areas (nearly 70 per cent). This information seems to reveal a different pattern of settlement between Soviet Russian migrants and Latvian Russians with a longer history in Latvia. The newcomers tend to live in the cities, and profoundly Riga.

4.6.1 Effects of the Economic and Social Transition

Whereas social and economic differences and unemployment did not, officially, exist in the Soviet society, post-Soviet Latvia experiences a rapid economic transition involving the development of a civic society, privatization of properties and companies, market economy, a reorientation of trade and EU membership within close range. The costs of the transition are unemployment and social problems related to poverty. A new social differentiation is

²⁸ Naturalization: The procedure for being granted citizenship.

developing: A well-to-do elite²⁹, a relatively large well-off urban middle strata and a large poorer strata. The new Latvian economy emerged within a Soviet economy already in recession. With independence, Latvia lost its (Soviet) markets for the offset of goods as well as supplies of raw materials, facing “chaos” on the post-Soviet market (Nørgaard, 1994:125). The result was a steep fall in GDP (Latvia 1992: 44 per cent) and production, rising unemployment and decreasing standards of living. The NORBALT Living Conditions project (1996) identified illiterate people, people without education or lower education, and pensioners as the most vulnerable groups in the transitional society (Aasland, 1996:210-212). The report found that living conditions were worse in Latgale than in other regions, and women were worse off than men. According to Aasland; ethnic affiliation and citizenship status appeared irrelevant as an explanation to vulnerability (Aasland, 1996:212). This finding indicates that a political mobilization along a socioeconomic “class” dimension may cut across the Nation-Building ethnic-cultural dimension.

A question is whether there is emerging, or would emerge, a urban-rural economic dimension, between a relatively well-off urban population and a rural population experiencing poverty, or even an “Eastern” versus “Western” dimension with eastern Latgale and partly southern Zemgale as less economically developed areas in contrast to the more affluent north-western Vidzeme and western Kurzeme.

²⁹ Aasland (1996:213) identified 19 per cent of the total population with living conditions above average.

5. POLITICAL PARTIES

5.1 Introduction

The bases of the first Latvian political parties were institutions like the bourgeois Riga Latvian Association (1868) and the social democratic Latvian Union (1902). Political parties developed in basically four phases up to 1922: **(1)** 1902-1905 when Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party (1904) and other social democratic parties were organized, **(2)** between 1905 and 1907 when the majority of non-socialist (liberal, democratic and conservative) parties were formed, **(3)** in the course of the early 1900s, when farming organizations won greater independence and founded the rural Farmers' Union party in 1917, and **(4)** the formation of a large number of new parties, including ethnic and regional, after 1918. Many Latvian parties emerged from refugee- and relief organizations established in exile during the First World War (See Henriksson, 1983: 83ff; Pulkis, 1982:115-116; Lindemuth, 1969/1976; Ronis, 1990; Wittram, 1954: 250). An additional **fifth** phase following independence include the formation of smallholders' parties in the wake of the Land Reform in 1922; a reform that created a new social segment of small rural landowners, many formerly belonging to the rural proletariat, whose political affiliation had recently been with the revolutionary movement. There was a process of social differentiation among rural Latvians in the latter half of the Nineteenth century (Loit, 1985:68-69) with a new strata of landowners and a lower class of landless peasant workers. According to Loit, the landless population stood at 60-70 per cent in the 1890s (Loit, 1985:69). In the 1920s, the new smallholders did not find common ground with the old "class enemy", the farmers. Nor did they associate with the social democrats, and the new smallholders' parties would mostly collaborate with the liberals and democrats – the Latvian nationalistic "centre" (von Hehn, 1966:11,13).

New parties were formed and disappeared with rather high frequency during the democratic years in the 1920s and 30s, but the basic structure of oppositions was in place by 1925: Social Democrats versus non-socialist radical parties (the liberal and democratic "centre") and conservatives (including German and confessional), farmers' parties and new smallholders' parties, minorities' parties and Latgalian.

Most post-Soviet parties emerged from the struggle for independence, the movements formed in 1987/1988 and the Supreme Council factions 1990-1993. Three parties got re-established as successors of pre-war parties, the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, the Farmers'

Union and the Democratic Centre Party. Each party was the dominant one of the ideological 'left', 'right' and 'centre', respectively, in the democratic period between the wars. This chapter focuses on the development of parties, the main differences, origins and ideological "identity". I will start with the most recent development of oppositions and parties.

5.2 Parties and Political Conflicts in the 1990s

The main line of confrontation in the last Soviet Latvian election in 1990; the only free and competitive election to the Latvian Supreme Soviet; was between defenders of the Soviet empire and people who would re-establish Latvia's independence (1988-91). The former were primarily hardliners within the Latvian Communist party, organized within the Supreme Council in the "Equal Rights" faction and in the Interfront movement. Pro-independence forces gathered in the Latvian Peoples' Front (Latvijas Tautas Fronte – LTF), the smaller Latvian National Independence Movement (Latvijas Nacionāla Neatkarība Kustība – LNNK) and the environment protection club (Vides Aizsardzības Klubs - VAK). LTF represented the pro-independence forces in the Supreme Soviet elections in March 1990.

5.2.1 *The Citizenship Issue*

The Supreme Council (Soviet) made a decision 4 May 1990 on the transition to independence, which was de facto declared on 23 August 1991. The most immediate question was how to define the country's citizenry before elections to the independent national assembly, the fifth Saeima, in June 1993. The Law on Citizenship adopted 15 October 1991 re-established approximately the pre-war proportion of ethnic Latvians and minorities (75:25) among the citizenry.

The decision opened up a conflict which would often be described as an "ethnic" conflict between Latvians and Russians.³⁰ While there was a strong "ethnic" (national-cultural) component, the conflict was rather about the political status of Soviet migrants and related to the Soviet occupation of Latvia in 1940 (Lieven, 1994:222). 38 per cent of Russians living in Latvia (278,087 persons) received automatic citizenship as citizens of the Latvian republic before 1940, or as direct descendants of citizens. 90 per cent of the Roma population and 62 per cent of the Poles in Latvia received automatic citizenship. Between 30,000 and

³⁰ "The Latvians are divided between at least three different confessions. But the reason why we do not have big conflicts like in Moldova or Ngorno-Karabakh is a good tradition of national co-existence. We have not had very serious ethnic conflicts. Now we are beginning to see some signs of such conflicts. The new russophobia is a reaction against the (communist, bs) regime. The Russians and the system get mixed up". The statement was made by professor Ilga Apine during a lecture ("The peculiarities of Latvian ethnic structure") in Riga, 1993.

40,000 “ethnic” Latvians who were *not* citizens of the pre-war republic did not receive automatic citizenship. (Jubulis, 2001:25). The ‘First Republic’ was formally revived by the readoption of the 1922 Constitution, and by returning pre-war citizenships. The opposite position, held mainly by Russians, other non-Latvians and some Latvians, most related to the Latvian Communist Party, was the ‘Zero Option’ which was to grant citizenship to all inhabitants as of 4 May 1990. This position implied the establishment of a “Second Republic” and seen by many Latvians as accepting the earlier Soviet claim that the incorporation of Latvia in the USSR was voluntary and legal.

Following the definition of the citizenry, the debate concerned the law on naturalization. The “nationalists” (LNNK, Fatherland, 11th November Union and other groups) feared that the inclusion of all Soviet migrants would continue to erode the basis of the Latvian nation as the proportion of Latvians was down to 52 per cent in 1989 (see 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.7). The “pragmatics”, between the two extremes, worried that denying several hundred thousand residents citizenship rights would increase tensions domestically and discredit Latvia’s image internationally. By 1992 the parties of the Soviet-elected Supreme Council was divided into roughly three groups along the ‘Citizenship’ issue dimension (Lieven, 1994).

A difference between the “nationalists” and “moderates” (or “pragmatists”) – an important political subdivision – originated in the different goals and strategies chosen by the Latvian National Independence Movement (founded in June 1988) and the Latvian Popular Front (October 1988) (Fitzmaurice, 1992:124): The Popular Front would work *within* the Supreme Soviet (Council) and *negotiate* the terms for independence. The LNNK, including the radical part of the Popular Front, *in principle* rejected the Supreme Soviet’s legitimacy. Only a representative body elected by Latvia’s legitimate citizens could speak and decide on behalf of the people. In reality, both LNNK and LTF placed their bets on two horses; leaning officially to different strategies while also supporting the other. The Popular Front sponsored the Citizens’ Committees, that were to elect the Citizens’ Congress; a shadow Parliament; while running candidates for the Supreme Council elections. LNNK put its own candidates on the Popular Front ticket for the Supreme Soviet elections. Several people were members of both movements (Fitzmaurice, 1992).

The Popular Front movement at first aimed at national autonomy within the USSR (see 7.3.1. Latvian Liberalism and “The Federative Idea”). The second LTF Congress in 1989 adopted independence as the goal, and the Zero-Option. After independence, the LTF

organization adopted the modified “First Republic” position, saying Soviet migrants must live in the country for minimum 10 years (later 16) to apply for citizenship.³¹

5.3 Supreme Council Factions

A group of reformists, mostly Latvians and led by Ivars Kezbers,³² left the Communist Party at its 25th Congress. The “pinks”, as the reformed communists were nicknamed, formed an independent party which in September was named the Latvian Democratic Labour Party (Latvijas Demokratiska Darba Partija – LDDP) and headed by Jurijs Bojars.³³ LDDP merged with the Social Democratic Labour Party in 1999.

Alfred Rubiks was First Secretary of the Latvian Communist party during the violent attacks against the pro-independence Latvian SSR government in January 1991 and during the failed coup d’etat later that year. He headed the Salvation Front, an anti-independence organization, which tried to take control of the Latvian state apparatus in January. Rubiks was sentenced to eight years in prison for treachery against the state of Latvia,³⁴ but returned to the Socialist Party as their leader in 2002. The Socialist Party (founded in 1994) emerged from the “Equal Rights” movement and faction; the former Communist Party.

The Popular Front captured 131 of 201 mandates in the Supreme Council elections in March 1990 (Butenschön, 1992: 161). The block included pro-reform liberals, reformed communists, members of the Latvian Social Democratic Labour Party, the Farmers’ Union, LNNK and the Green Party. The “Equal Rights” faction (59) included members of Interfront, the Agrarian Union and the Communist Party. Between the blocks was a mixed group of 11 “independent” deputies whose political affiliation was with the Communist Party as well as the reformed communists and LNNK (Butenschön, 1992:161.162)³⁵.

A crucial decision by the democratically elected Supreme Council was the resolution “On the renewal of Republic of Latvia’s citizens’ rights and fundamental principles of naturalization” 15 October 1991. Residents who did not qualify for automatic citizenship could not participate in Saeima elections. Privatization and withdrawal of Soviet troops were

³¹ Lieven (1994) claims that the LTF politicians who argued in favour of the Zero Option did so “with rare exception”(....)”simply out of fear of a local Russian revolt, invasion by Moscow or isolation from a critical West.” pp. 276-277.

³² Ivars Kezbers later became a deputy of DP “Saimnieks” (1995-96).

³³ Current (2003) chairman of the Latvians Social Democratic Labour Party.

³⁴ Rubiks served six years. Vigdis Nygaard writes in a footnote in her thesis that it became clear that OMON forces which attacked Riga in January 1991 acted on orders from Rubiks and not the minister of interior in Moscow, Boriss Pugo. (Nygaard, 1993:64)

³⁵ Handbook: Latvijas Republikas Augstaka Padome 1991 and other written information collected at the Saeima’s information office in 1992

equally urgent domestic issues, and privatization depended partly on the resolution of the citizenship issue. Privatization issues did not divide the factions along traditional positions with respect to state or private ownership. Among **liberals** and **conservatives**, who held majority, there was no question about privatizing, but differences over procedures and forms of privatization slowed down the process.

5.3.1 Political-Ideological Designations

A complicated question with regard to Latvian politics is the use of, and usefulness of, ideological designations. I will return to the issue in Chapter Seven. Here, I will address the issue briefly and preliminary, as I have already made use of ideological designations.

A problem with the conservative designation in relation to Latvian political parties concern the Latvian parties' *oppositional nature of origin*, whether as a bourgeois or socialist opposition to Russian and German rule and dominance, or opposition to the Soviet regime and communism, with the aim to restore independence. With regard to Latvian liberals; their main concern have traditionally been national autonomy, and the term 'liberal' has actually hardly been used (Ezergailis, 1971), neither in the early twentieth century nor in the 1980s and 1990s. 'Liberal' parties are (traditionally) parties whose political programmes underline individuals' freedoms and responsibilities, respect and tolerance of diversity, and advocate reforms in the economic and social sphere.³⁶ 'Conservative' designates parties that share conservative values; that is; an inclination to preserve and protect existing values and traditions inherited from ancestors, and resistance to change that can threaten these values³⁷. Liberal political thoughts grew in *Baltic German* circles in the late 19th century along with modernization in the Baltic provinces. Under pressure from imperial reforms from "above" and demands for political and social rights from "below", Baltic German liberal bourgeoisie settled for institutional and political reforms in order to modernize and prevail. The traditional, conservative elite resisted change which could threat their privileges.

Around 1990, the *local hardline Soviet communists* were in principle in a "conservative" position, going against change and reforms. While reforms were put forward from "above" (Perestroika and Glasnost), further reforms were demanded from "below". The *conservative forces* were those who sought to upheld and preserve the Bolshevik revolution; but ideologically they were the very opposite of what is regarded "conservative" in a common

³⁶ Aschehoug og Gyldendals Store Norske Leksikon, bind 9.

³⁷ Ibid.

political terms. The successors of the hardline communists today remain marxist and constitute an *ideological opposition* to the ‘national’ conservative and liberal parties.

Conservative and liberal programmes today contain few if any real differences with regard to important issues. However, a “non-negotiable” attitude with respect to the reinvigoration of the First republic and rejection of a “mass incorporation” of Soviet migrants as Latvian citizens have become the most important defining elements to the conception here of “conservative” in the present-day Latvian context (see 5.4.1.). A second element that distinguishes between ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ is the *priority* given to *economic* issues, business and development above national-cultural issues (liberal), or national-cultural issues above economic issues (conservative). A third element that I consider relevant but not necessary when identifying conservative Latvian parties, is the incorporation of religion or religious ethics in the party programme. Last but not least; in the course of the 1990s, several parties have adopted liberal or conservative designations in their programmes and identifies themselves as belonging to one or another ideological families – and have become members of European “party families”. I will elaborate and discuss ideological designations in Chapter Seven.

5.4 The Popular Front Faction Disintegrates

New issues following independence created tensions within the LTF faction. In late 1991, 31 deputies formed a right wing faction called “Constitution” (“Satversme”), led by Janis Vaivads. “Constitution” was more “resolute in questions concerning citizenship and restoring property rights” (The Baltic Observer, 5/1992). A second splintergroup, “Country” (“Lauku” – 20 deputies) was formed in 1992 by LTF deputies and members of the Farmers’ Union who considered farming interests neglected by the existing factions. In addition, a left-leaning group called “Centre” (“Centrs”) broke away from LTF in early 1992, in response to the radicalization of LTF politics on the citizenship issue. The ‘Centre’ was too small to form a faction and joined the group of independent deputies. From July 1992 the independents also included the remaining members of the “Equal Rights” faction after 15 “Equal Rights” deputies got expelled from the Supreme Council. Another split happened between the Popular Front *organization* and the LTF and “Constitution” factions which refused to follow the party line imposed by the organization. Popular Front’s 5th congress declared that neither of the two factions anymore represented LTF (Osipovs, 1993). In fact, the role of the LTF had been played out. In the 1993 elections, the Popular Front that had played such an important role at a crucial time became decimated at the polls with only 2,6 per cent of the votes. The LNNK

movement transformed successfully into a national conservative party in 1994. A reason why the Popular Front movement failed may be a fall in popularity during two years in government. According to Anatol Lieven, the population experienced a severe decline in living standards (Lieven, 1984:297). Besides, the most popular figures joined other parties, not least Latvia's Way. In 1996, the remaining LTF was renamed the Christian Peoples' Party, which merged in 2002 with the conservative Christian Democratic Union into Latvia's First Party (Latvijas Pirma Partija, LPP).

5.4.1 *Popular Front's "Offspring"*

The primary "heir" of the LTF faction was Latvia's Way. Jubulis (1991) consider the party as the successor of the LTF also in terms of policies. More than half of LC's 36 deputies in the 5th Saeima came from the original LTF faction.³⁸ Most 'Constitution' faction deputies belonged to LNNK, some to the Green Party which emerged from the Environmental Club. The left wing of the LTF faction grew into the Democratic Centre Party headed by Aivars Kreituss³⁹ and Concord for Latvia headed by Janis Jurkans, an LTF foreign minister.

Jurkans claims his Concord Party (1995: Tautas Saskana Partija – TSP) is the real descendant of the original LTF, which included all national groups and supported the zero option settlement of the citizenship issue.

Most of the parties of the post-Soviet Saeima are linked to the Popular Front. Exceptions are the factions and parties ascending from the anti-independence wing of the Supreme Council, "Equal Rights" and the Socialist Party, and their counterpart, For Fatherland and Freedom (Tevzemei un Brīvībai –TB), which is linked to the Citizens' Congress.

5.4.2 *Contrasts Between Nationalist Parties: Defining the 'Nation'*

The fifth Saeima adopted the Law on citizenship and naturalization in 1994. Mark A. Jubulis (2001:7) distinguishes two policy directions among the nationalists with respect to citizenship and naturalization in the fifth Saeima by employing concepts of 'ethnic' and 'cultural' nationalism. The concepts correspond to concepts of 'principled' and 'pragmatic' (see 5.2.2). The disagreement between the pro-independence parties remains important. 'Ethnic' nation refers to a static concept of nation based on blood relationship, whereas 'Cultural' nation

³⁸ 17 SC representatives, and additionally three LTF government ministers, according to information collected at the Saeima Information Office following the elections in June 1993. See also Hermann Smith-Sivertsen (2001).

³⁹ Economics minister in the LTF government. He joined "Landlord" in 1995 but left the party in 1996 and organized the Latvian Labour Party (Latvijas Darba Partija – LDP) together with his wife, Ilga Kreituse. The LDP joined the Christian Democrats and the Green Party to form a new faction in July 1998 (seventh Saeima).

means the citizenry making up the ‘nation’ may have different ethnic identities but is part of the ‘nation’ by learning the state language and accepting the norms of the nation-state. The most important difference is the will to include ‘non-ethnic nationals’ by way of naturalization, which is a choice ethnic minorities may accept or reject. In the case of rejection, it means a rejection of citizenship. The introduction of naturalization “windows” (which opened up for one and one age group at a time) in 1995 was intended to limit the number of individuals for naturalization, to preserve the about 75 per cent ethnic Latvian majority among the citizenry.⁴⁰ The system failed, simply because the number of naturalization applicants did not even fill the yearly quota. Instead, the big proportion of non-citizens became a hurdle for Latvia’s integration into EU and NATO. Naturalization became an option for all residential non-citizens in 1998. TB/LNNK forced a referendum to stop the liberalization, but lost.

5.4.3 *New Nation-Building Conflicts: Language and Education*

According to TB/LNNK, the automatic citizenship for non-citizens’ children “would not be contingent on passing a state language examination” and therefore fail to check Latvian language proficiency among new citizens (The Baltic Times, Vol. 3 #113, 1998). Latvia’s Way, Democratic Party “Saimnieks” and other supporters of liberalization argued that naturalization procedures were wrong means for securing proficiency in Latvian - which they said must be the task of the education system. Since the adoption of a new education law in 1995. The law stipulated autumn 2004 as the time when all public schools in Latvia, including minority schools, should use Latvian as the primary language of instruction, and education and language has emerged as a battlefield between Latvian-speakers and Russian-speakers.⁴¹

⁴⁰ 690,461 non-citizens were registered as of January 1994.

⁴¹ Based on concepts borrowed from Hermann Smith-Sivertsen (1998) Heidi Bottolfs argue that an ethnic cleavage has emerged through three stages, from materialising as an independence cleavage (1989-91), via the citizenship debate (inclusion-exclusion debate) until 1998 and shifting to issues of a more clearly ethnic character “such as language, education and social integration.”

5.5 Development of Parties 1990-2003

The development of party representation in parliament from 1990 to 2003 is illustrated in Figure 5-1 to Figure 5-3. (The 1990-1993 facts are based on documents and other information collected at the Saeima and the Saeima Information Office in 1992-93.)

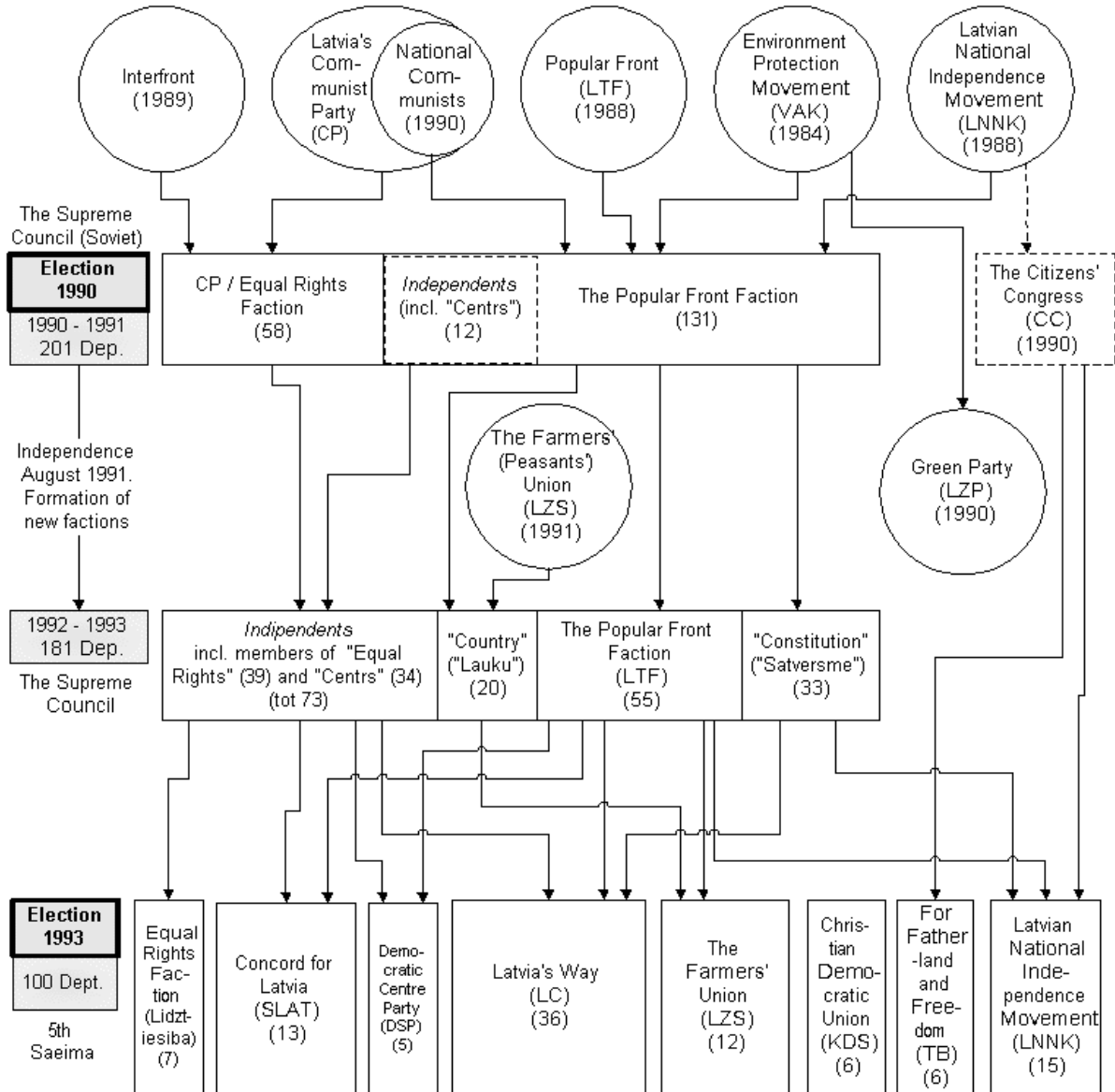


Figure 5-1: Figure showing the development of factions and party representation in the parliament 1990 – 1993.

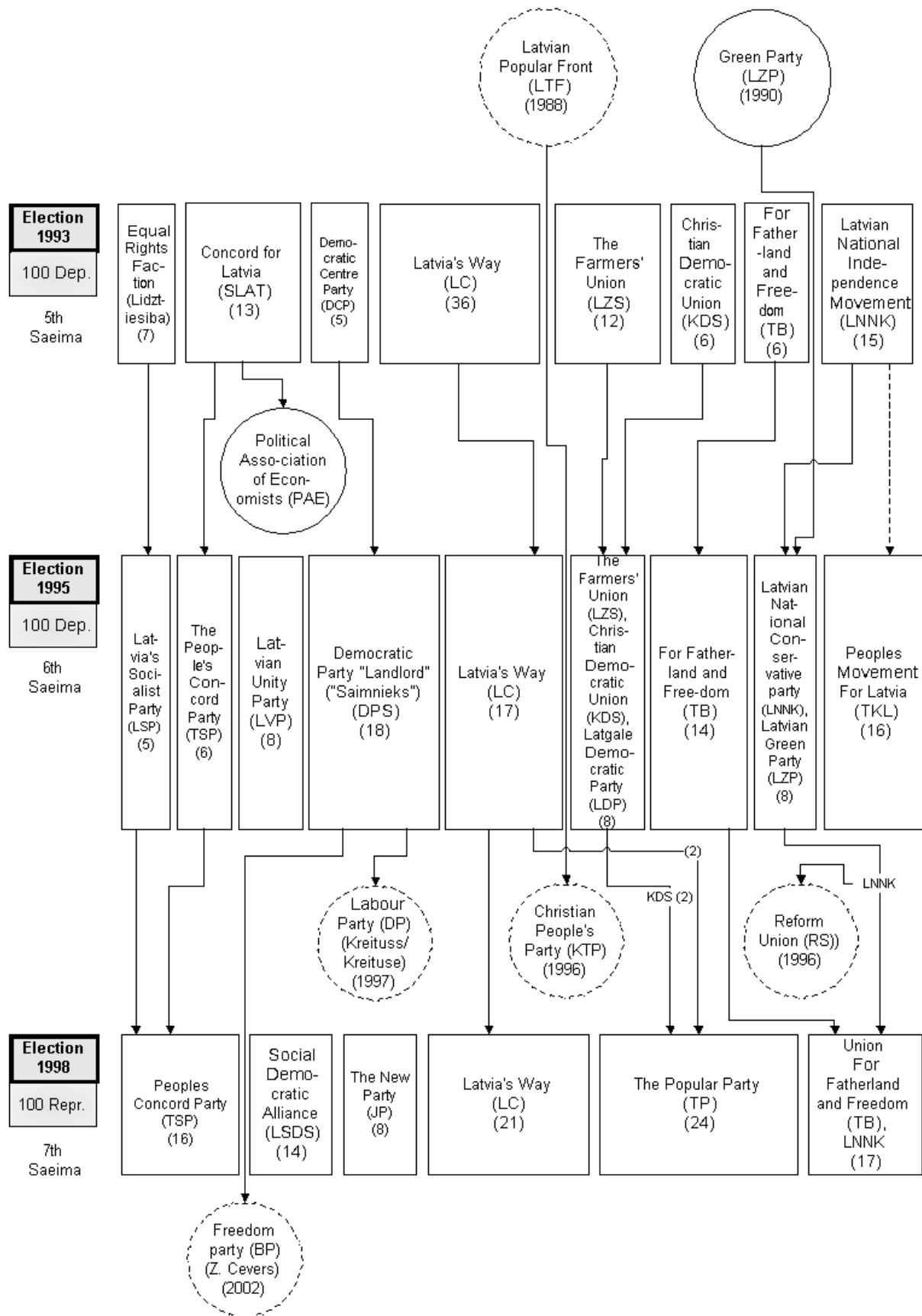
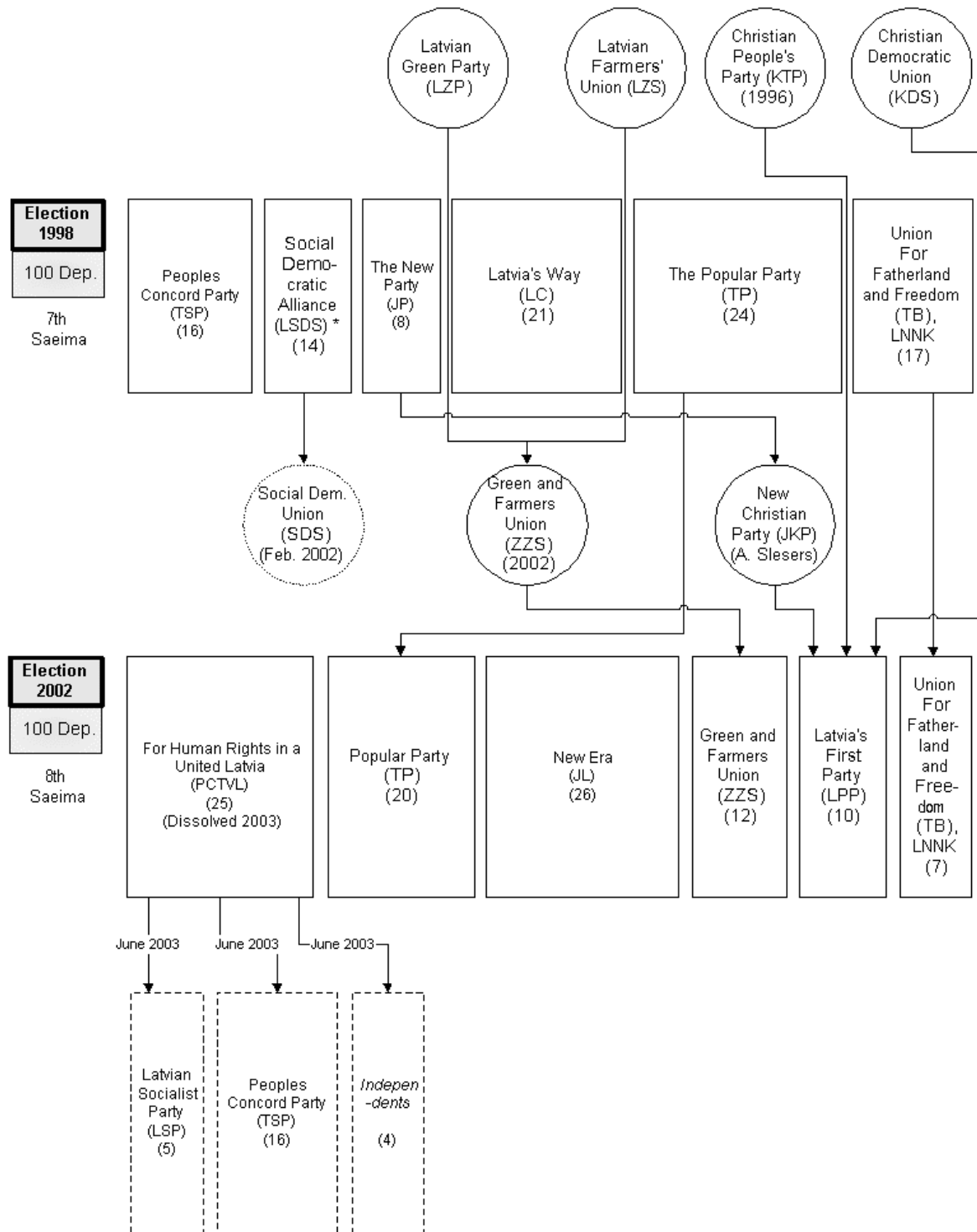


Figure 5-2: Figure showing the development of factions and party representation in the parliament 1993 – 1998.



* 1999: Merger of the Latvian Social Democratic Party and Latvian Social Democratic Labour Party (LSDSP). LSDSP is kept as party name.

Figure 5-3 Figure showing the development of factions and party representation in the parliament 1998 – 2003.

5.6 The Saeima 1993-2002

A new party has won each of the first four Saeima elections. A common feature, at least regarding Latvia's Way, The People's Party and New Era, is a primary concern with economic policies and reform, European integration and NATO membership. The main differences seem to be a greater priority to economic integration in the European Common Market by Latvia's Way. Another difference between Latvia's Way and the latest three winners is organizational, as the latter parties were/are all centred around the party leader (Ziedonis Ceveris, Andris Skele, Einars Repse) whereas Latvia's Way was founded by exiles, state officials, politicians and local businessmen who joined behind a program for the transformation of Latvia's economy, called "Latvia 2000". The People's Party have apparently become independent of its founder and former leader, Skele, who left politics in 2002.⁴² The following section describes existing and formerly relevant parties and factions according to characteristics that join them along different branches of a "party family tree".

5.6.1 *The Centre*

Three parties are related to the left wing of the Popular Front faction: 1) The Democratic Centre Party (DCP – 1992-1995), emerged from the Supreme Council 'Centre', also called 'independent' group, and sent five deputies to the 5th Saeima (Bara, 1992). DCP claimed to be a successor of the pre-war party, but did not renew the Democratic Centre's statutes. The relationship was rather symbolic (Purs, 1993, 2002:70). DCP called for a full restoration of the 1918 republic and 10 years' settlement as requirement for naturalization, and a reorientation of the economy towards Western markets. DCP supported the use of minorities' languages in non-Latvian schools, and integration of the non-Latvian nationalities. DCP merged with the left-of-centre Democratic Party "Landlord" in 1995.⁴³

Democratic Party "Landlord" ("Saimnieks" – DPS) won the 1995 elections and participated in three liberal-conservative governments between 1995 and 1998. Party leader Ziedonis Ceveris was a minister of interior in the Popular Front government, and formerly leader of the Communist Youth, Komsomol. "Landlord" was formed on the basis of Ceveris' private foundation "Drosiba" (Security). Among "Landlord"'s deputies were former Popular Front members Ilmars Bisers (an LTF deputy prime minister in 1991), Juris Celmins and Alfreds Cepanis (independent). The party was organised by business people and so-called

⁴² Janis Ikstens (<http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/11.htm>): " (The People's Party Manifesto and Action Programme) can be described as the joining of economic liberalism with conservative social policies, which, at times, turns into authoritarian populism."

⁴³ DCP leader Aivars Kreituss joined "Landlord" but left in 1996 and formed Latvia's Labour Party (Latvijas Darba Partija – LDP) together with his wife and colleague politician Ilga Kreituse.

technocrats, but the programme focused on social issues. “Landlord” was wiped out in the 1998 election. Political scientist Nils Muiznieks sees the defeat in light of the success of the social democrats (The Baltic Times vol. 2 #50, 1997)

Another left-of-centre party is Concord for Latvia – Revival of the Economy (Saskana Latvijai – Atdzimsanas Tautsaimniecība – SLAT, 1993, in 1995 renamed the People’s Concord Party, Tautas Saskana Partija (TSP) which moved more to the left).⁴⁴ SLAT was formed by Janis Jurkans who left DCP early in 1993⁴⁵ (Lieven, 1994:300). SLAT is related to the Popular Front’s SC independent group, and the reformed communists, LDDP.⁴⁶ Party leader Janis Jurkans served as foreign minister for two years in the LTF government. The party was closely related to local business (Lieven, 1994:300), however, its main concern was that of social harmony, ethnic concord and “civil conciliation”.⁴⁷ SLAT supported the Zero Option and was in favour of agricultural subsidies and economic protectionism. Its support for EU membership and a “Western” political orientation complicated the collaboration from 1998 with the pro-Russian Socialists Party. SLAT’s business-oriented faction left in 1994 to form the Political Association of Economists (PAE). SLAT then focused on “reconciliation, solidarity and improvement of relations with Russia”⁴⁸ and was renamed the People’s Concord Party (TSP). Several deputies left TSP and joined the “Landlord” faction in 1996 after a proposal to merge with the latter was voted down. SLAT found its main electoral basis in Latgale and Riga in the 1993 election (36.7 per cent of the party’s support was in Latgale; 31.1 per cent in Riga⁴⁹). Renamed TSP, the party entered an alliance with the extreme left Socialist Party and the Russian List in 1998 in an attempt to maximize election outcome, but the alliance (faction) broke up in early 2003.

⁴⁴ Janis Ikstens uses the “social-liberalist” as an ideological designation for TSP’s centre-left position (politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/16.htm).

⁴⁵ Participants were The Latvian Support Foundation (Janis Jurkans), The Latvian Youth For Progress Union (Andris Ameriks), The Farmers Union (Vilnis Edvins Bresis, LTF/independent/LDDP), The Fishermen’s Union (M. Pese), The Economy League (Janis Lucans, LTF) (Purs, 1995)

⁴⁶ Four candidates on Concord for Latvia’s list in the 1993 elections were members of the SC independent group, one was member of the LTF faction. Totally four were members of the Latvian Democratic Labour Party.

⁴⁷ From the 1993 party programme, translated into English from Russian by students at the English faculty, University of Latvia.

⁴⁸ Ikstens at “politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/16.htm”

⁴⁹ Latvijas Republikas 5. Saeimas Vešanasas. Results.

5.6.2 *The Left*

The ‘left’ is made up by a “Latvian” and Western-oriented Social Democrats (LSDSP) and two Russian-oriented parties: The Peoples’ Concord Party (TSP – presented above) and the Latvian Socialist Party (LSP).

5.6.2.1 *The “Russian” Left*

The Political Organization “For Human Rights in a United Latvia” (Politisko Organizaciju “Par Cilveka Tiesibam Vienota Latvija” - PCTVL) is originally an alliance between the anti-independence wing of the Supreme Council (Interfront, the Communist Party/Equal Rights/Latvia’s Socialist Party and the Russian List), and pro-Russian forces among the supporters of independence, TSP. LSP (since 1994) and Equal Rights (since 1991) have been advocates of the migrant population and citizens among the Russian minority. The TSP (1998) and PCTVL (2002) alliance was an attempt to unite the spokesmen of the diaspora; the national minorities, and maximize the election outcome. The PCTVL alliance mobilized a majority of non-Latvian voters in 2002 and captured one in four Saeima seats (25).

LSP’s and TSP’s electorate differs in many respects. The 1993 election survey indicate that *young people* voted for SLAT (TSP) but not for Equal Rights (LSP); people with *higher education* preferred SLAT, while people with *lower education* preferred Equal Rights; voters in the *higher income* category preferred SLAT, while Equal Rights attracted *lower income* groups.

The nationality variable has been the most profound for identifying the basis of support for both SLAT/TSP and Equal Rights/LSP. The Baltic Data House’s post-election poll after the 6th Saeima election in 1995⁵⁰ shows that the support for The Socialist Party was practically all Russian (20.5 per cent of all Russian votes, zero of non-Russian minorities’ votes), whereas 9.2 per cent of all non-Russian minorities voted for TSP (21.3 per cent of the Russian voters). A significant number of non-Russian minorities voted for the TSP/LSP alliance in 1998 and 2002, but around two thirds of the non-Russian minorities’ votes were distributed among the other Saeima parties - except for TB and LNNK.

LSP and TSP disagree on important issues like language (TSP supports Latvian as the only state language, LSP says Russian should be the second state language) and EU membership (which TSP supports, not LSP). Both parties are against Latvian NATO membership. The break-up of the PCTVL alliance early in 2003 suggests that important

⁵⁰ The first year “other” nationalities were measured separately from Russians, and the last year so far the Equal Rights/LSP ran a ticket separately from TSP)

differences remained important. The PCTVL *faction* was re-established in the autumn of 2003 in addition to the TSP and LSP factions.⁵¹ By September 2003, the “Russian Left” comprised the TSP (15 deputies), LSP (5), and PCTVL (5) factions.

Latvia’s Socialist Party (Latvijas Socialistiska Partija – LSP) originates in the hardline communist movement “Equal Rights”.⁵² The party aims at re-establishing Latvia according to Marxist principles and to make Latvia a “unitary multi-national state”.

In 1993, the opinions among *Russians* in Latvia fell into mainly four positions, according to Boris Tsilevich:⁵³ **1)** “Latvia is our common state and, traditionally, a multiethnic society,” which is the position of *Concord for Latvia* (SLAT/TSP). **2)** Another, large segment favoured the Soviet and communist ideologies, and to re-establish the USSR, an attitude Tsilevich asserted was relatively widespread among Russian residents. These “Soviet internationalists” were also against Russian independence. This is the position of the “Equal Rights” Movement (and the Latvian Socialist Party). **3)** A third segment are imperialists and supporters of “Great Russia”. This is the position of the Russian List. **4)** Tsilevich suggested about 5 per cent of Russians in Latvia felt guilty towards the Latvian nation and were willing to accept “being deprived of certain rights” or “move to Russia”. This category found no political expression.

5.6.2.2 *The “Latvian” Left (Social Democrats)*

Latvia’s Social Democratic Workers’ Party (Latvijas Social Demokratiska Stradnieku Partija - LSDSP) was founded in 1904 and revived in Latvia 1989. The party existed as an exile organization during communism.⁵⁴ LSDSP sent four deputies to the Supreme Council. Another party of the Latvian left was the Latvian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP – renamed the Latvian Social Democratic Party, LSDP), based on the pro-independence faction of the Latvian Communist Party. LSDSP and LDDP forged a loose alliance before the 1995 elections and again before the municipal election in 1997 when they captured both Riga and Daugavpils⁵⁵. After success also in the 7th Saeima election, the two parties merged in May 1999. The new party kept the LSDSP name, with LDDP’s leader Juris Bojars as party leader.

⁵¹ http://www.saeima.lv/deputati_eng/1deputati_frakcijas.html (The Saeima Internet homepage)

⁵² The Communist Party got prohibited in 1991.

⁵³ Member of SLAT/TSP, later Member of Parliament in Latvia and Riga City Council, in an interview with me on 29 May 1993.

⁵⁴ “Since 1945, the Latvian Social Democratic Party has been working in exile. In 1949, the party elected a foreign committee, with its seat in Stockholm. The party issued a monthly newsletter, Briviba (Freedom). Source: Briviba. <http://www.briviba.lv/LSDSP%2050%20gadi/English.htm>

⁵⁵ The Social Democratic Alliance won 13 of 15 deputies in Daugavpils, and 11 of 60 seats in the Riga municipality.

The leadership of the former LSDSP left.⁵⁶ In 2002, a faction left the new LSDSP to form the Social Democratic Union (Socialdemokratiska Savieniba - SDS). Bojars has uses the term “patriotic left” about the social democrats as different from the “Russian” left which he calls “pro-Soviet forces” (TBT, vol. 2 #50, 1997). LSDSP was in favour of Latvian EU and NATO memberships, but has shared the socialists’ criticism of the governments’ pursuit of free market reforms (TBT, vol. 3 #108, 1998; TBT vol. 2 #50, 1997). LSDSP is against privatization of vital state utilities like energy and transportation sectors, but support privatization of smaller enterprises. The success in the local elections in 1997 and national elections in 1998 followed a series of protests organized by Bojars’ LSDP (1996) who mobilized mainly factory workers and pensioners against the government’s economic policies. The new LSDSP failed to pass the five per cent threshold in the 2002 election and was not represented in the 8th Saeima.

5.6.3 *The Right*

Parties at the right; national-conservative, conservative and liberal parties; have repeatedly formed governments. The right consist of liberals with a pragmatic-moderate attitude to issues like naturalization (centre-right) and conservatives that are less inclined to compromise on national issues (conservatives), or not at all (national-conservatives).

5.6.3.1 *Liberal and Conservative Parties*

Latvia’s Way (Latvijas Cels - LC) was a great winner in the 1993 election, but less than half of its mandates were returned in 1995. According to Janis Ikstens, LC’s failure in 1995 was a consequence of its unbridled will to let loose the forces of market economy without paying respect to painful social consequences. The party was eliminated from the Saeima in the 2002 election. Latvia’s Way has been the most important in the Saeima for nearly ten years and was the only party that has participated in all governments since 1993.

Latvia’s Way was founded by members of a club of businessmen and bureaucrats, Club 21, and the World Federation of Free Latvians, in 1993.⁵⁷ LC members were mostly former Soviet reformist nomenklatura who embraced Perestroika and liberalization. The party presented an ambitious programme for Latvia’s economic transition from communism into a

⁵⁶ LSDSP leader Jānis Dinevics remained an LTF deputy in 1992 after the disintegration of the LTF majority. Juris Bojars belonged to the group of (left) independent deputies.

⁵⁷ The Farmers’ Union, LTF and LNNK was involved in the exploratory talks. The Farmers’ Union would eventually chose to defend farming interests, the Popular Front decided to go it alone, while the activities of the German Joachim Siegerist of LNNK would rule out further collaboration with LNNK, according to Andris Kadeģis, board member of Latvia’s Way in 1993.

free market, “Latvia 2000”, which projected Latvia in a classical role as a bridge between East and West.⁵⁸ Latvia’s Way and TB/LNNK have become *adversaries on the right* with respect to national-cultural and –economic priorities. The referendum on amendments to the Law on Naturalization in October 1998 was initiated by TB/LNNK, while Latvia’s Way advised voters not to vote against the amendments.

TB/LNNK define its *national conservative ideology* according to the principle of the Latvian nation state as a “legal succession of the Republic of Latvia proclaimed on the 18th of November 1918 and the Constitution of 1922” (Party Programme). TB’s slogan before the 1993 election was “De-occupation, De-bolshevization, De-colonization”, as maintained in the current (2003) programme: “...(to) enhance the overcoming of the heritage of occupation, colonization and totalitarian regime...”. TB/LNNK supports economic reforms but worries that unrestricted economic liberalism will increase social contrasts and lead to unrest and social disturbances “that is a natural ground for leftist ideas”. Paulis Apinis attribute the decline in support for the national-conservative parties to their exclusive focus on nationalistic issues, which left economic and other issues to the other parties.⁵⁹

Between TB/LNNK and Latvia’s Way is the conservative People’s Party (TP) which won the 1998 election with promises of balanced budgets, low inflation, continuing economic reforms, pursuit of EU and NATO membership – and fighting corruption. TP defines itself as a conservative party in traditional sense, expressed by its emphasis on the protection of community, the family institution and the nation as basic elements of society - in contrast to liberal ideology’s emphasis on the individual. TP’s concept of the nation-state include minorities: “...the existence of diverse ethnic cultures and identities is an advantage for Latvia’s society and for the Latvian nation,” the programme states.

TB/LNNK also defines the nation-state as a multicultural state, but more reluctantly: “The stability of the Latvian state is guaranteed by equality between all Latvian citizens, by the right of minorities, that carry on (“continues”) the traditions accepted in Latvia before the World War II.”⁶⁰ The latter statement is ambiguous, because the time before the war consisted of two different regimes in Latvia - a democratic regime that guaranteed national minorities’ cultural rights, and an authoritarian which did not.

Among the liberal/conservative parties is the confessional Latvia’s First Party (Latvijas Pirma Partija – LPP), resulting from a merger in 2002 of the Christian Democratic

⁵⁸ The new party gathered people with a certain public standing. Notably, Ivars Godmanis was not invited after three years as the head of LTF governments through a very difficult period. He joined the LC later.

⁵⁹ 1.kas.de/publikationen/2000/ai/03_apinis.pdf (published by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung)

⁶⁰ TB/LNNK’s programme, English version, p. 3

Union (established in 1993), the Christian People's Party (established in 1996 - formerly the Popular Front organization) and the New Christian Party (Jauna Kristogo Partija – JKP).⁶¹ The LPP describes itself as a *centre-based* political party which “acknowledges individual freedom and personal responsibility, supports socially responsible free market and entrepreneurship”, and based on christian values. Party leader Eriks Jekabsons (2004) is a priest and former kickboxer. The party was part of the Repse government (2002), along with the Centrist Party Farmers' Union (Centriskā Partija Zemnieku Savinieba – CPZS). The Farmers' Union forged an election alliance with the Green Party (Latvijas Zāla Partija – LZP) before the 2002 elections called the Green and Farmers' Union (Latvijas Zāla un Zemnieku Savinieba – ZZS). Both parties have a conservative heritage: CPZS in its rural pre-war roots (Latvia's Farmers' Union) and the LZP in the pro-national independence movement in the mid-80s, VAK. The environment movement started its public protests against Moscow's plans to build a power station along the Daugava river and a Riga metro. But environment issues have hardly been politically mobilizing after the restoration of independence.

The Farmers' Union was not represented in the 7th Saeima, but captured 12 mandates with the Green Party in 2002. The new ‘centrist’ orientation is intended to broaden the party's electoral basis to all of the countryside and not simply farming interests.⁶² The Farmers' Union has backed Latvian EU membership as well as the liberal and conservative governments' reform policies. CPZS is against privatization of the large hydroelectric power stations and the railway, and wants state-owned forests to remain state ownership. CPZS wants Latvian to be the language of instruction in all public secondary schools, but is also supporting the protection and development of the smaller minorities' culture and language. “We are against the post-Soviet endeavours to make all small national minorities into a unity of Russian-speaking inhabitants,” says party leader Aivars Berkis.⁶³

The Farmers' Union is related to the “Country” faction of the Supreme Council.⁶⁴ Agricultural interests have been of roughly two kinds; the independent farmers and smallholders (national-liberal) and the former collective workers and officials (leftist). The Latvian Unity Party (LVP), represented in the 6th Saeima, was a left-wing agricultural party (European Forum, 1999). Party Leader Albert Kauls was a director of a Soviet model farm in

⁶¹ The Christian Democratic Union (KDS) still exists as a party organization: <http://www.kds.lv/>

⁶² “We consider rural area and small town development as the cornerstone of the nation's development” (party programme).

⁶³ E-mail 27.5. 2003.

⁶⁴ Aivars Berkis was a member of the “Country” SC faction along with four other LZS members.

Latvia. The party was founded before the 1993 Saeima elections.⁶⁵ All Unity's sixth Saeima deputies defected to other parties. By the end of February 1997 the faction ceased to exist.⁶⁶

The 2002 election brought forward a new election winner, New Era (Jaunais Laiks). Party leader Einars Repse was a leading member of the LNNK movement and a LTF deputy.⁶⁷ He left politics to serve as the central bank director and earned a reputation internationally when he successfully re-introduced the national currency, the Lat, in 1993.⁶⁸ New Era's government coalition was formed in November 2002 by the First Party, Green and Farmers Union and TB/LNNK. The People's Party, third in the 2002 election, was excluded although TP together with New Era and Latvia's First Party belongs to the group of European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament. The coalition agreed to continue economic reforms and lead Latvia into the EU. Repse resigned in February 2004. Since then, two liberal/conservative coalition governments have been in charge.

5.7 The Early Formation of Political Opposition in Latvia

The October Manifesto in 1905 legalized political parties for the first time in Russia. The Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries were already organized, and different political groups existed among the Latvian bourgeoisie. The differences between the Latvian bourgeois parties were rather of a "formal and tactical kind" (Lindemuth, 1969:75ff). There were German liberals and Russian constitutional-democratic groups (Ronis, 1990).

5.7.1 *Latvian Bourgeois Parties*

Members of the Latvian bourgeoisie established a cultural society, the Riga Latvian Association (RLA), in 1868. It became "a hotbed for political debate".⁶⁹ The Association was a by-product of the socioeconomic transformations and rural-urban migration experienced by the Latvians in the nineteenth century (Plakans, 1997:133, 1981:225). Parties formed within the organization, and each party published, or was supported by, a newspaper or publication,

⁶⁵ The Monthly Survey of Baltic and Post-Soviet Politics, October 1995, p.50-51. Tallinn Panor-Press Sakala Center.

⁶⁶ See for example the Saeima's list of factions in the 6th Saeima published at http://www.saeima.lv/Lapas/s6_frakc_a.html and European Forum (<http://www.europeanforum.bot-consult.se/cup/latvia/parties.htm>)

⁶⁷ Repse was one of two LTF/LNNK members who belonged to the big group of independent deputies in the Supreme Council after the disintegration of the LTF majority. Source: Latvijas Republikas Tautas Deputati Piederiba Frakcijam 5.11.92 (Public list over the Supreme Council factions). The other LNNK-independent was Andrejs Krastins.

⁶⁸ However, only 5,3 per cent of respondents who voted for New Era in 2002 said they voted for "the list that contained my favourite candidate". Baltic Data House, 2002.

⁶⁹ The RLA had 230 members after a few years ,and "some 1,000" by the end of the century (Plakans 1997:134)

usually related to one or more leading figures. Personal contrasts and rivalry prevented the formation of a larger, united Latvian bourgeois party (Lindemuth, 1976:77).

Opinion among the Latvian bourgeoisie fell into three main positions. Their political programmes differed basically in terms of *extent of reforms* demanded. The democrats presented the most far-reaching and radical demands, the conservative least radical.⁷⁰ A common goal was constitutional reform and free elections.

Three Latvian bourgeois parties were formed in 1905: The Latvian People's Party, a conservative party headed by a monarchist, Friedrichs Veinbergs; the Latvian Constitutional Democratic Party, a liberal party headed by F. Grosvalds, and the Latvian Democratic Party (radical) headed by Arveds Bergs.⁷¹ Two democratic parties formed in 1906 on the ruins of Bergs' party, one based on LDP's newspaper *The Baltic Messenger* (*Baltijas Vestnesis*), the other called The Progressives, with its newspaper *the New Daily Paper* (*Jauna Dienas Lapa*) (Lindemuth, 1969, 1976, Ronis, 1990).

The Latvian Democratic Party (radical) called for the unification of Latvian-speaking areas, cultural autonomy, extensive land reform, a social security system and eight hours' workday. The People's Party (conservative) called for unification of the *Germanized* Latvian-speaking areas, and a limited land reform. The conservative party was apparently primarily concerned with Latvian-cultural issues such as education and language, rather than social reforms, which were the concern of the radical parties. The Latvian Constitutional-Democratic Party was soon replaced by the conservative Latvian Reform Party. Both parties represented the interests of the wealthiest layer among the urban Latvian bourgeoisie (Ronis, 1990:153).

5.7.2 Russian and German Reform Parties

Liberal oppositions among Baltic Germans and Russians called for various political and social reforms. Russian liberals wanted the integration of all nationalities into Great Russia but were against the use of force. They believed economic liberalization would entail social improvement and voluntary integration into the Great Russian nation and break the power of the German nobility (Misiunas, 1985:86,88). The liberals were distinctly different from Russian conservatives (monarchists) on the right and socialist-revolutionaries on the left. In

⁷⁰ The first (illegal) conservative party, the National Party, was founded by Friedrichs Veinbergs already in 1883, according to Margarethe Lindemuth.

⁷¹ Bergs served as interior minister in the provisional government 1918-21, as member of the Constituent assembly and the Saeima. In 1921 he founded the National Centre Party and became a leading figure on the nationalist right (Plakans, 1997).

Latvia, three Russian parties called for a democratic constitution - the Liberal Constitutional Party (Liberali Konstitucionala Partija) – or a *constitutional monarchy* – the Monarchist Constitutional Party (Monarhistu Konstitucionala Partija). A third was the Russian Constitutional Democratic Party, a branch of the “Kadets”, the leading liberal party in Russia, whose aim was a constitutional monarchy and limited land reforms. Liberal Germans formed the Baltic Constitutional Party (Baltijas Konstitucionala Partija).⁷²

5.7.3 The Revolutionary Movement and the Social Democratic Party

The mobilization of the urban working class and landless peasants was led by radicalized students of the “New Current” movement (“Jauna Strava”) in the 1890s.⁷³ Social democratic organizations merged in 1904 into the Latvian Social Democratic Labour Party. Participation among rural workers was very high, about 60 per cent by the end of 1905. The class contrasts in rural Vidzeme (Livland) and Kurzeme (Courland and Zemgale) were acute (Pulkis, 1982:115-116).

LSDPS collaborated with the Jewish *Bund* (Algemayne Bund fun Yidishe Arbeter in Rusland Poyln un Lite – General Association of Jewish Workers in Russia, Poland and Lithuania) and the Russian Social Democrats. In 1906, LSDSP became a branch of the Russian party and was re-named the Latvian Social Democracy. The Latvian Social Democrats split along Bolshevik and Menshevik lines in 1917. Latvian Mensheviks (inspired by the Austro-marxists Karl Renner and Otto Bauer) wanted an independent Latvian state, whereas the Bolsheviks attempted to establish a Soviet republic (1919).

Other social democratic groups emerged from a literary society established in 1902, the Riga Latvian Society, and the newspaper *Dienas Lapa* (“Today”).

5.7.4 The Farmers

The Social Democrats recruited the rural proletariat – the agricultural workers (Pulkis, 1982). No bourgeois agricultural party existed before the 1917 revolution. The Farmers’ Union (LZS) grew out of farming cooperatives and organizations, and the publication “Lidums” (“Clearing”) (Ronis, 1990:155; Plakans, 1997:17, 88). After the 1917 revolution, LZS was the main counterpart to the social democrats in the countryside (Ezergailis, 1974; Ziemelis, 1982:257). The Bolsheviks became the number one challenge to Latvian liberals (Ezergailis,

⁷² The list may not be complete.

⁷³ Among the leaders were the poet Rainis, lawyer Peteris Stucka and journalist J. Jakobsons. Stucka would become the leading figure of the Latvian communist party.

1983:15-17).⁷⁴ The main political contrast among Latvians by 1917-18 reflected the conflict that emerged in the 1890's between the national-liberal, culturally-oriented members of the Riga Latvian Union; the Latvian urban bourgeoisie; and the socially-oriented radicals of the "New Current" (see 5.7.1. and 5.7.4.). In the elections to an All-Russian Constituent Assembly in 1917, Latvian anti-Bolshevik nationalism was expressed also in the rural regions by the party of Latvian independent farmers, the Farmers' Union, the only significant challenger to the Bolsheviks in the countryside.⁷⁵ The most pressing questions were the social situation and the distribution of land, and the national question. The Farmers' Union comprised "a broad political spectrum, from agrarian socialists to advocates of free enterprise" (Ezergailis, 1983:34, 69-70).

5.7.5 *Civil War: A Three-Party Struggle*

The five years 1915 to approximately 1920 were extremely complex and chaotic, with a world war, revolution and civil war. Three main forces struggled for regional power: the Bolsheviks, the broad alliance between native conservatives, liberals and Menshevik Socialists who strived for a democratic nation state, supported by the Entente powers; and thirdly, the Baltic Germans who relied on military support from German invasion troops remaining in the region to establish a German protectorate or dutchy, at the expense of both Bolshevism and democratic solutions (Pistohlkors, 1993:197). Totally 700,000 Latvians fled Courland, Riga and Livland to Russia (Pistohlkors, 1993:195). Latvians were allowed to organize refugee aid within *the Central Committee for Latvian Refugees* in St. Petersburg (Petrograd) in 1915. The Committee became a "national centre" (von Rauch, 1995:26,37) and instigated the establishment of a democratic Latvian assembly, *the Provisional National Council*, in November 1917 in Valga at the new border between Livland and Estonia (Germanis, 1971:62-63).⁷⁶ According to Wittram (1954:251), it was a "national-democratic bourgeois assembly". The Bolsheviks refused to participate, the Social Revolutionaries arrived late and the Mensheviks sent an observer (Germanis, 1971:63). A goal was to convoke a Latvian constituent assembly and create an independent state comprising the regions inhabited by Latvians (Kurzeme, Zemgale, Vidzeme and Latgale) (Blodnieks, 1960:143-144, Wittram, 1954:251). Blodnieks (1960:143) quotes a description of the Provisional National Council by

⁷⁴ Latvian liberals, mainly the non-Marxist intelligentsia, were the champions of Latvian autonomy, later independent statehood. Latvian refugee organizations in exile (St. Petersburg, Moscow) became important recruiting instruments for the struggle for independence.

⁷⁵ The Latvian Social Democracy split in 1917 along Bolshevik and Menshevik lines.

⁷⁶ The borders were changed according to linguistic (Latvian/Estonian) borders following the February Revolution.

an American historian, M. W. Graham, as “the principal agency for the constructive expression of Latvian nationalism”. There was a hope to work with Kerenski’s Liberal Constitutional government to transform the Russian empire into a federation of autonomous republics, a scope that began to change in the autumn of 1917 and was definitely gone with the Bolshevik coup and the declaration in 1918 of a Soviet (“Iskolat”) republic in the areas not yet occupied by German troops. A clandestine Latvian pro-independence organization formed in Riga under German occupation in spring 1918; The Democratic Block, which rejected the “German-friendly politics of the bourgeois groups” (Wittram, 1954:253).⁷⁷ The Democratic Bloc was an alliance between bourgeois and Menshevik leaders. Bolsheviks and the most conservative (“reactionary”) Latvian People’s Party was excluded (Germanis, 1971:44-45). The People’s Council was set up by bourgeois and social democrats in November 1918 and declared Latvia an independent republic.⁷⁸

The Farmers’ Union worked within the Provisional National Council as well as the Democratic Bloc in Riga (Ezergailis, 1983:74), just the way pro-independence people and parties would work within the Popular Front as well as LNNK seven decades later.⁷⁹ Ezergailis describes how national and social issues went hand-in-hand in their political program, aiming at Latvian autonomy, social reforms, equal rights for women, improving the life of workers, “restoration of Kurzeme” from German occupation, and appealing to all Riflemen “who desire undivided Latvia” (Ezergailis, 1983:77). A decisive task for the non-Bolshevik Latvian intelligentsia after the revolution was to gather support among the population for an autonomous Latvian state, and to limit the Bolshevik influence among Latvian soldiers (*Riflemen – “Strelki”*) and peasants (Ezergailis, 1983:73; Blodnieks, 1960:105-116). Yet, the Bolsheviks won a crushing victory in Riga as well as Livland (Ezergailis, 1983, Germanis, 1971:48). Riga was however about to be occupied by German forces (Ezergailis, 1983:75-76).

Latvians participated both in the Imperial Army (and formed for the first time a separate battalion), in the Red Army after the Revolution, and fought with German troops against the Bolsheviks in the Baltic (-German) Defence Forces. As the liberal Russian government was overthrown, the German troops advanced in the Baltic. A year later, when

⁷⁷ The collaboration started in autumn 1917 when German forces were about to conquer Riga (Germanis, 1971)

⁷⁸ Several sources say the People’s Council resulted from a merger between the Provisional National Council and the Democratic Block. Bruno Kalnins (1971:309-311) claims that there was no agreement between the two, and that the Democratic Block founded the People’s Council as a representative body. The PC accepted only members who belonged to political parties, no independent members.

⁷⁹ Riga Dome elections and elections to the Vidzeme Land Council. Ezergailis uses the name Radical Labour Bloc for the alliance.

Germany collapsed, the Bolsheviks advanced. The Baltic lands should serve as a bridgehead for the socialist revolution into Europe (von Rauch, 1995:51). The ambition failed. In the late summer of 1920, a peace treaty was signed that recognised Latvia's borders along ethnological lines, including Latgale (von Rauch, 1995:74-75).

5.8 Independent Latvia: New Conflicts, New Oppositions

Early Latvian conservative parties played little role in the new nation-state, as the German party did. 'Conservative' in post-revolution Latvia was associated mainly with the Baltic nobility and monarchists. A Latvian conservative party, Friedrich Veinbergs' Latvian People's Party, was excluded from the Constituent Assembly in 1920 along with the Bolsheviks, as both opposed national independence (Blodis, 1990:163).⁸⁰ The Baltic Germans eventually chose to work within the new democratic institutions and chose collaboration in the pursuit of cultural autonomy rights as a minority. A School autonomy law was granted by the provisional government in 1919, but no extensive cultural autonomy (Garleff, 1991:92-93, von Pistohlkors, 1993:202).

Several German parties were founded between 1917 and 1920. The parties coordinated their activities within the *Committee of Baltic German Parties* (1922), also called the Baltic German Party of Latvia. The German achieved representation proportionally larger than the minority's population size, while other nationalities were deeply divided (von Hehn, 1966:13).

The largest national minority, the Russians, showed least social and political cohesion. The divide was deep especially between the large groups of farmers and a small "upper class" of civil servants and merchants. There were six parties among the Russians, seven in 1928 (Garleff, 1978:82), supported by two thirds of the Russian voters (Balodis, 1990:199).

There were several parties also among the Jews. Garleff makes the distinction mainly between Zionists and non-Zionists, but the social-democratic Bund (Jewish Workers' League) should count as well, along the socio-structural cleavage. The Jewish voters were divided additionally by different cultural identities – Kurzeme Jews identified mainly with the German culture, other Jews associated with the Russian and East-/Central-European culture. There were a Hebrew-speaking Zionist culture and the Yiddish-speakers – all reflecting different waves of Jewish immigration from the West (Germany) and East (Russia, the Pale of

⁸⁰Veinbergs defended, as long as it was realistic to do so, the rights of the tsarist government in the Baltic. After the revolution he switched his support for the tsar with the idea that the Baltic provinces should become a duchy or protectorate affiliated with Germany. (Plakans, 1997:157-158).

Settlement etc.). There were religious Jews (and religious differences) and secular Jews, nationalists (Zionists) and socialists. The Jews lived mainly in the cities, but also in the countryside. Steimanis (2002:62) points to the entrepreneurial character of the Jewish population: 41 per cent of all industrial, commercial and craftsmen's enterprises in the country belonged to Jews, who made up 5 per cent of the population (1924).⁸¹ In contrast, 38 per cent of all industrial enterprises belonged to Latvians who made up 75 per cent of the population. Jews and Germans, two small nationalities, dominated in the field of enterprise. According to Steimanis, this dominance was used by anti-semites to rouse hate against Jews "in right-wing circles".

5.8.1 *Latgale*

The constitution and the election law emphasized the representative aspect of democracy, at the expense of the efficiency of governing. There was no election threshold that would prevent parties with support only in concentrated areas to enter the 100-seat legislature. The inclusion of Latgale added a regional dimension to the fabric of political contrasts. Some saw the Latgalians as a "separate nation" (von Hehn, 1966:7).

As *election districts* more or less corresponded to administrative and historical borders, Latgale's distinct historical and cultural differentness could translate into the sphere of politics. Both Latgalian Latvian and minorities' parties contributed strongly to party system fragmentation. The district's contribution was clerical and multiethnic, and there was a tendency to establish separate Latgalian parties even when similar parties existed on the national level, such as peasants' parties. The Latgalian peasant parties were predominantly catholic.

The Latvian Social Democrats was the only nation-wide party able to capture a mandate in Latgale. A Latvian Catholic Party which won votes in the other four election districts did not get any in the one region where Catholicism dominated (Zalts, 1926:54-55). The largest Latgalian party was the Party of Christian Peasants and Catholics, which gained foothold also in Zemgale and Kurzeme (von Rauch, 1995:95; von Hehn, 1966:13).

5.8.2 *A Sketch of the Political Blocks*

The main features of the pre-war Latvian party system existed within the Constituent Assembly elected in 1920: two larger parties; agrarian (the Farmers' Union) and socialist (The Social Democrats). In addition were cultural/ethnic and confessional parties, radical bourgeois

⁸¹ The information is taken by Steimanis from Adolf Silde (1976:562-563)

parties and a small conservative block (von Hehn, 1966:9). The Constituent assembly had 150 seats. Citizens from 21 years had the right to vote, 24 parties participated in the election in April 1920 and the turnout was high – 84,9 per cent (Blodis, 1990:189-190).

In 1917, the Bolsheviks was supported by up to 70 per cent of the voters. In April 1920, the Social Democrat Mensheviks came first with 39 per cent (57 seats), but the bourgeois parties won 76 seats. The Farmers' Union was the largest non-socialist party with 17.8 per cent of the votes (von Hehn, 1966:9). Georg von Rauch describe the party system as consisting of a dominant agrarian party, opposed by a social democratic party, and a “middle ground” occupied by one or more National Liberal parties, which represented the views of the indigenous intellectuals.” (von Rauch, 1995:91). In addition there were a not insignificant representation of Latgalians (15.4 per cent) and minorities (10.3 per cent).

Table 5-1: Each blocks numbers of representatives in the four first Saeimas, the numbers of parties in each block, in brackets. Source: Alfred Bilmanis (1928), Albert Zalts (1926) a.o.⁸²

Blocks	Mandates (number of parties in brackets)			
	1 st Saeima 1922	2 nd Saeima 1925	3 rd Saeima 1928	4 th Saeima 1931
Socialists	38 (3)	37 (4)	36 (6)	28 (3)
Farmers	25 (5)	28 (6)	29 (4)	34 (4)
Centre block (radical bourgeois)	12 (3)	10 (5)	9 (5)	13 (5)
Conservatives	9 (3)	9 (5)	8 (4)	8 (3)
Minorities	15 (8)	16 (8)	18 (8)	17 (8)
Total	99 (22)	100 (28)	100 (27)	100 (23)

The central role of the Farmers' Union seems to reflect the importance of agriculture in Latvian economy. Most of the industry processed raw materials from the countryside; timber, food products or textiles. The Social Democrats remained the largest single Saeima party, but the non-socialists held majority. A challenge to governing came from within; the fragmentation of the national-liberal centre “block”, Latgalian and minorities' parties which often had only one or two mandates (von Hehn, 1966:10-11, von Rauch, 1995:146-147).

5.9 The Agrarian Reform and New Peasant Parties

A new social “class” of smallholders was created in the countryside with the Land Reform. The Land Reform became a catalyst for a re-politization of the old class conflict in the countryside, between large farmers and landless peasants who became owners of small plots of land following the Reform. A faction led by Otto Nonacs left the Farmers Union during the

⁸² The table does not specify Latgalian parties, which are found behind other designations. It is significant also that confessional parties are not counted separately. The reason may be that religion had very little political significance in Latvia except in Latgale and among the minorities.

Constituent Assembly because of disagreement over the Land Reform Act. Nonacs “defended the interests of the peasants and would not accept any compromises with the estate owners” (Zalts, 1926:16). The New Farmers’ Union, as Nonacs’ party was named, appealed to the new strata of smallholders.⁸³ The smallholders were recruited primarily among the rural workers (“Unbemittelten Ständen aus den Kreisen der Arbeiterschaft”) (Zalts, 1926:16). Some of these often radicalized rural workers turned away from the Social Democrats; but not towards the Farmers’ Union – the party of their former “class enemy” - but to the new smallholders’ parties such as Nonacs’ New Farmers’ Union. Another party appealing to the new rural segment was Alfreds Blodnieks’ New Farmers’ and Smallholders’ Party (1924). Blodnieks was former pro-independence Social Democrat. The smallholders’ parties would not form a rural block with the Farmers’ Union; Blodnieks’ New Settlers’ and Smallholders’ party was closer to the political “centre”, which became more and more powerful by holding the balance between the two dominant parties (von Hehn, 1966:13).

5.10 The “Centre” – Radical Bourgeois, National-Democratic, National-Liberal?

The concept ‘radical bourgeois’ comprises the parties usually called the ‘centre’ of Latvian pre-war war politics. They were the most significant bloc balancing the dominant Farmers’ Union and the social democratic opposition. To find a defining political concept for the “middle ground” is difficult for at least two reasons: The parties of the political centre had no common ideological superstructure. The term liberal, democratic and other terms are used to distinguish the parties that based their support mainly on the urban Latvian bourgeoisie and intelligentsia from other blocs:

During the 1917 there was no party that adopted it (liberal, B.S.) as a party designation, while words such as democratic, progressive, and radical were used in many combinations. Yet it seems that we can speak about liberalism in 1917 Latvia, if for no other reason than only because a category is needed to delineate the opinion that was non-Marxist, non-Social Democratic, and non-Bolshevik.” (Ezergailis, 1971:1)

Ezergailis says that Latvian liberalism as of 1917 “had several peculiarities and therefore in its analysis one must avoid the conceptualizations used in analyzing Anglo-Saxon politics or French politics of the nineteenth century which are predicated on the existence of a right to left political spectrum.” (Ezergailis, 1971). In Latvia, he goes on, “there was no right wing to

⁸³ The number of smallholdings differs in the literature. Fitzmaurice (1992:100) says the reform created 220.000 new farmers. Swettenham (1981:53) says 250.000 smallholdings were created, while Plakans (1997:16) says 144.000 *persons* received a piece of 3.3 million hectares of confiscated land (landless persons and veterans of the Independence war).

speak of. There were only competing views of progress, change and social transformation (...) Somewhere, at some times the right wing may outweigh the left, but this fine counterbalancing did not occur in Latvia.” Liberal opposition were expressed in the 19th century by members of the Latvian bourgeoisie, a new socio-cultural strata, as the few Latvians who earlier had achieved social advancement became germanized. The new Latvian liberal bourgeoisie owed their “ideology” to the formulation of a national identity which began in the 1840s. According to Margarethe Lindemuth, there were three “directions”, or organized groups, among the Latvian bourgeoisie: Conservatives, liberals and democrats (Lindemuth, 1969:75, 1976:23ff). The political programmes of these groups showed rather little difference; the differences were rather “of formal and tactical than fundamental nature” and antagonisms were often personal (Lindemuth, 1976:25). Their three most important goals were a united, autonomous Latvia within Russia, local rule by Latvians and an agrarian reform that would reshape ownership to land and power-structures in the countryside.

Ezergailis define the liberals as “those individuals and groups who believed in constitutional government, land reforms, Latvian autonomy, free press, speech and assembly, and open, frequent and un-coerced elections” (Ezergailis, 1971). After independence, when constitutional government, land reform, freedom of press, speech and assembly, and a democratic system with free elections were achieved, there was no clear ideological platform for the groups and parties which the literature describe as the political ‘centre’, except for defending narrow interests as well as the main achievement: national independence, being “masters in their own house.”

The ‘centre’ comprised most of the groups Ezergailis categorised as ‘liberal’ in 1917, based on narrow, mainly urban financial and economic interests, and intellectuals (von Hehn 1966:10-11). The single most important party was the Democratic Centre after the merger in 1922 of the Democratic Party, the Radical Democratic Party and the People’s Party (von Rauch, 1995:94, von Hehn, 1966:12).⁸⁴ The Democratic Centre was fiercely against the idea of class struggle and endeavoured to unite the Latvians as a nation (von Hehn, 1966:13, von Rauch, 1995:94). In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Democratic Centre turned into a party of strong Latvian nationalism and anti-minority policies. Ilga Apine sees the anti-minority

⁸⁴ Daina Bara calls the third party not the People’s Party but the Latvian National-Democratic Party, based in Moscow, and having among its leaders K. Upits, J. Bankavs and L. Laicens of the newspaper “Dzimtenes Atbalss” (“The Fatherland Echo”). “Dzimtenes Atbalss” was the first newspaper to state the goal in 1917 for national independence rather than autonomy within Russia (source: Ilga Apine). Further leading members of the National Democratic Party was J. Akuraters, E. Blanks, Staprans and Julija Cesis of “Brīva Latvija” (“Free Latvia”). The writer Janis Akuraters was one of the founders of the Latvian Provisional National Council in 1917. (Ilga Apine: <http://www.politics.lv/en/vesture/1918/5.htm>)

policies of the 1930s as carrying “the features of ethnocracy.”⁸⁵ Nationalism, with “anti-class struggle” as a feature, appears to have been an ideological common ground of the “centre”.⁸⁶ Jürgen von Hehn attributes the Democratic Centre’s relatively strong influence - in spite of its size (the party captured six seats in the last pre-war Saeima) - to the support from the largest daily, “Jaunakas Zinas” (“The Latest News”). He describes DCP as “a bearer of strong Latvian nationalism”. Another exponent of Latvian national chauvinism was the Progressive Union led by Margers Skujenieks, a former Social Democrat. In 1931, Skujenieks formed a government with the Democratic Centre Party and other Latvian non-socialist factions, with the aim of creating a “homogenous Latvian culture” (“lettischen Einheitskultur”) (von Hehn, 1966:17).

‘Liberal’ had a different meaning to a Latvian, German or Russian in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Ezergailis (1971) writes that the group (among Latvians) who could be compared to the Russian Octobrists was “pitifully small”. The Octobrists was the Russian moderate right opposition to the tsarist government. Russian liberals were opposed to autocracy but also to the German dominance in the Baltic provinces. German liberalism in the Baltics at the time “stood squarely in the mainstream liberalist thought in Europe,” while Latvian liberals/democrats were pre-occupied with national emancipation.

⁸⁵ politics.lv/en/vesture/1940/4.htm

⁸⁶ „Verfechter eines überspitzten lettischen Selbstbewusstsein und eines übersteigerten Nationalismus.“ (von Hehn, 1966:13)

6. THE VOTERS

6.1 Introduction

Does divisions at the party level correspond to certain contrasts among the voters? This chapter concern party preferences with respect to a number of background variables employed in election surveys in 1993 (fifth Saeima), 1995 (sixth Saeima), 1998 (seventh Saeima) and 2002 (eight Saeima).⁸⁷ A feature of the first four post-Soviet elections is the victory of a *new* party at each election (see chapter five): In 1993: Latvia's Way, 1995: Democratic Party "Landlord" ("Saimnieks"), 1998: The People's Party, 2002: New Era. A possible explanation may be a confidence in the competence of the candidates and a willingness to try a new crew, or/and possibly disappointment with the last election winner and the government(s). To find out, we will look at the voters' (respondents') motivation for party preference, and the priority given by voters with respect to issues of concern.

6.1.1 *Voter Motivation*

A 1993 election survey showed that 28,4 per cent of the voters who supported Latvia's Way (LC), said they *preferred* LC (to the other parties). 10,1 per cent said they participated in the election to express their opinion (and voted for LC), whereas more than half of the respondents (55,8) said they participated to fulfil their duty as a citizen (Lasopec, 1993).

In 1998, totally 24,1 per cent of *all* respondents said they voted "for the electoral list I believe represents the best candidates, ideas and programme" (BDN, 1998).⁸⁸ 30,4 per cent of the respondents gave that response, said they voted for the election winner, the People's Party (TP), whereas 7,8 per cent of the People's Party's voters said they "don't have much confidence in those I voted for, but I voted for them because I was dissatisfied with the incumbent politicians". 13,8 per cent of *TP's voters* said they "voted for the list with the most professional and competent candidates" (person-focused). A third (33,5 per cent) of the *TP voters* responded "I voted for the electoral list that I believe represents the best candidates, ideas and programme." Roughly one-fifth (21,1 per cent) of those who voted tactically for a list "with real chances to enter the 7th Saeima" voted for The People's Party. The findings do not leave any clear conclusion, but the tendency is towards confidence in a new crew.

⁸⁷ 1993 survey was carried out in July that year by Latvia Social Research Center (Lasopec). The 1995, 1998 and 2002 carried out in October both years by the Baltic Data House (BDN - Baltijas Datu Nams).

⁸⁸ The response alternatives (1998) was formulated by Hermann Smith-Sivertsen who had the survey made by the Baltic Data House for his doctorate thesis at the University of Oslo.

Other indications are stronger in the 2002 election. As much as 62,7 per cent of respondents who said they “voted for them (the list) because I was dissatisfied with incumbent politicians”, voted for New Era (BDN, 2002). Nearly one-third (29,6 per cent) of the respondents who voted for New Era gave that answer. Only 11,7 per cent of the respondents who voted for JL, said they “voted for the electoral list that I believe represents the best candidates, ideas and programme”. 22,1 per cent of the respondents who gave that answer, voted for JL. It means that nearly 80 per cent of the voters who voted by confidence (130) voted for another party than the election winner. 18,2 per cent of the respondents who voted for New Era said they “voted for the list that contained my favourite candidate”, who was probably Einars Repse, the former national bank director. The “dissatisfaction” component seems to have played a significant part in New Eras victory.

Anton Steen (1997) points to what he calls “the elite network state” where stable connections among elites and personal relations play a more important role than that of formal institutions. This structure fills a vacuum left by the old regime institutions. The “instability” with regard to voting patterns and even among Saeima factions during the parliamentary terms may be at least partly related to an apparent “elite orientation” that may jeopardize the responsiveness of the democratic system. “Elite control through interconnecting informal structures and a high degree of consensus [...] may be disruptive to democratic stability in the long run” (Steen, 1997:362).

6.2 Socio-Structural and Cultural Factors

The most clear divide structuring the post-Soviet Latvian political landscape is between “Latvian” and “pro-Russian” parties, but the tendency has declined (Smith-Sivertsen, 1989:98,102). The surveys leave a clear indication that “nationality” is a significant factor behind party preference. We must also discuss the possible presence of regional and *urban-rural* contrasts with respect to party preference. Moreover, economic and social issues have become more important since 1995, as the socioeconomic differentiation has progressed.⁸⁹ People in the countryside experiences a socio-structural transition which may be just as hard as the one experienced by urban dwellers, and an economic gap has re-developed between the south-eastern and western regions, profoundly between Kurzeme and Latgale. A study shows there is co-relation between lower education, lower income and higher risk of unemployment

⁸⁹ A Latvian journalist explained (1997) that even people who may not be actually worse off than they were, would experience their situation worse by comparing their situation to that of better-off people, and by the look of all the new goods offered in stores which were not there in the 1980s. The new situation has created different economic and material opportunities, and the possibility to compare one’s situation to others.

(Aasland, 1996). We will look at socio-structural variables as education, income and unemployment for whether they indicate contrasts related to party preference (6.2.4).

6.2.1 *The Russian-Latvian Contrast*

There is a profound difference between ethnic Latvians and Russians with respect to party preference. 92.9 per cent of those who said they voted for Tevzemei un Brīvībai (For Fatherland and Freedom) and 93.8 of those voting for the LNNK (Latvian National Independence Movement) in the 1993 elections were “ethnic” Latvian.⁹⁰ 78.9 per cent of those who voted for the Equal Rights’ list were non-Latvian. Non-Latvian voters also preferred *Saskana Latvījai/Tautas Saskana Partija* (SLAT/TSP). 53.4 per cent of SLAT’s voters had a non-Latvian background. The higher percentage of Latvian voters for *Saskana*, compared to Equal Rights, may be explained by Equal Rights’ relation to the former Communist Party and the anti-independence movement. SLAT’s origin in the pro-independence movement seems to leave a certain legitimacy among Latvian voters.

Many Latvians have repeatedly voted for the parties that have defended a restrictive citizenship and nationalist agenda - For Fatherland and Freedom, LNNK, the Farmers’ Union and the Christian Democratic Party. However, *national or nationality issues* were not stated by many respondents as the decisive factor behind party choice (See 6.6.). The weight of the nationalist issues appears to be far less important than economic, social and other, which may explain the relatively moderate support for the parties with a predominantly nationalist agenda. A question is whether national issues or the “ethnic variable” is more mobilizing for non-Latvian voters in support of the so-called “pro-Russian” parties, than for Latvian voters in support of so-called “Latvian” parties. The “Motivation of Choice” survey 2002 does not confirm that ethnic-political identity is *the primary* motivating factor among people who voted for PCTVL. Only 2.8 per cent of PCTVL’s voters say they “voted in support of the ethnic group I belong to” (BDN, 2002). Among the respondents who voted for the national-conservative party TB/LNNK 2,5 per cent reported ‘support for ethnic group’ as the motivation behind their vote in 2002.⁹¹ This result does not exclude ethnic-national identity as one of more factors, if not the most important, or not consciously. Nor do we know if “ethnic group” is perceived as difficult to state as the decisive factor. If we look at the nationality variable, however, it shows that TB/LNNK - unlike any other Latvian party - has

⁹⁰ The 1993 survey used only the Latvian/non-Latvian dichotomy. The 1995, 1998 and 2002 surveys divided between Latvian, Russian and “other” ethnic background

⁹¹ The survey subgroup is very small, only 39 respondents. The 2.5 per cent motivated by ethnic identity corresponds to one respondent.

almost exclusively Latvian support, and *none* of the “other nationality” respondents voted for TB/LNNK. Similarly, very few Latvians vote for Equal Rights and the Socialist Party. Less than one per cent of Latvian respondents said they voted for Equal Rights in 1993, and only 1.1 per cent for the Socialist Party in 1995. 7.1 per cent of the Latvian respondents said they voted for SLAT in 1993, but only 1.5 per cent in 1995 (when the “economists” had quit). 2.7 and 3.6 per cent of Latvian respondents said they voted for the united list of TSP and LSP (1998) and PCTVL (2002). The *proportion* of Latvian votes has decreased (1998: 19.4 per cent, 2002: 15.7 per cent) as a consequence of the increased total support for the TSP/PCTVL, possibly also from new, naturalized voters.

The election survey indicates that ethnic identity *is* a significant variable in the 2002 election as it was in 1993, 1995 and 1998, although it is not stated as a primary motivation. The naturalization of more and more residents, who are mostly Russian or of another non-Latvian origin, will show if the nationality contrasts are becoming a permanent post-Soviet cleavage.⁹² The majority of Russian-speaking *citizens*, before 1998, have a family history in Latvia. Many may feel integrated as Latvian Russians, but may also feel alienated by contemporary nation-building policies. There may be distinct political differences between “rooted” Latvian Russians or Slavs, and Soviet migrants, a topic that call for more research.

6.2.2 Urban – Rural Contrasts?

Like in most Western countries, the agricultural economy has lost its formerly dominant position and currently makes up only about a third of the Latvian GDP. Industry, trade and services; mostly urban sectors, constitute the bulk of the national economy. A third of the population is living in the capital, Riga, which is a political, cultural, financial and economic centre. Is there any pattern in the distribution of urban and rural votes that reflects the new urban/rural differentiation? Are Riga voters different from other voters?

The surveys employ a variety of categories under the “Size of populated place” question (which is called “Place of residence” here). The 2002 survey employs five categories (Riga, 6 bigger cities, District centre, Other city and Village/Countryside). The 1998 survey employs three (Riga, Other city and Town/Village/Countryside). The 1995 survey employs six categories (Riga, 6 bigger cities, District centre, Other city, Village and Countryside). The 1993 survey employs three values similar to the 1998 survey, but Rural area instead of Village/Countryside. The 1995 survey does not explain what is meant by “District centre” (as

⁹² Heidi Bottolfs suggest that ethnic contrasts may grow into a permanent cleavage as more non-Latvians become citizens and the political questions become more purely cultural - issues like official language and language in schools and so on (Bottolfs, 2000:83-86).

different from village, town or other city). I will look primarily at the latter values in each survey as ‘rural’ (rural area, village, countryside). Let us look at which parties the rural voters preferred, shown in Table 6-1. (See also Appendix C):

Table 6-1: The table shows which parties the rural voters preferred in 2002.

Rural Respondents 2002 (n=296)	% of the Rural Voters	Rural % of the Party's Votes
New Era (JL)	27.1	31.6
The People's Party (TP)	19.4	41.2
Green and Farmers' Union (ZZS)	17.6	57.7
Latvia's First Party (LPP)	13.0	49.1
LNNK/For Fatherland and Freedom	5.7	44.9
Other	2.0	

New Era (election winner) captured a large number of votes all-over, including the countryside. TP, ZZS and LNNK/TB also seem to have a significant basis of support in the rural areas. LNNK/TB used to have a more “urban” electoral profile. The party was reduced by more than half from 1998 to 2002, and most of the decrease seems to have been among the urban electorate. Two of the parties above did not exist during previous elections. However, one of the parties that became part of Latvia's First Party (LLP), the Christian Democratic Union, participated in the fifth Saeima and was in a coalition in the sixth Saeima with the Farmers' Union and Latgale Democratic Party. For the previous elections (1998, 1995 and 1993) the rural distribution is shown in Table 6-2 - Table 6-4.

Table 6-2: The table shows which parties the rural voters preferred in 1998.

Rural Respondents 1998 (n=331)	% of the Rural Voters	Rural % of the Party's Votes
The People's Party (TP)	29.3	43.9
Latvia's Way (LC)	19.9	45.8
Social Democratic Alliance (SDA)	15.1	41.7
LNNK/For Fatherland and Freedom	13.3	31.0
The New Party (JP)	5.7	29.7
Other	12.1	

The bulk of The New Party transformed into a christian party which is part of the LPP (2002), a member of the group of conservative European parties, along with The People's Party and New Era.⁹³) TP gathered nearly half of its support in rural areas in 1998. LC experienced an increase in the party's proportion of rural support (the total support for LC increased slightly from 1995 to 1998), and, interestingly, the Social Democratic Alliance actually had a larger basis of support in the countryside than in either Riga or “other cities”.

⁹³ <http://www.cge.org.uk/sisterparties.html>

Table 6-3: The table shows which parties the rural voters preferred in 1995.

Rural Respondents 1995	% of the Rural Voters	Rural % of the Party's Votes
Democratic Party "Landlord" (DPS)	17.8 (Countryside) 12.3 (Village)	28.0 3.7
Latvia's Unity Party (LVP)	16.8 (Countryside) 4.9 (Village)	66.6 3.7
People's Movement "For Latvia" (TKL)*	16.5 (Countryside) 23.3 (Village)	47.6 12.8
Latvia's Way (LC)	14.8 (Countryside) 15.1 (Village)	35.1 6.8
Christian Democrats, Farmers' Union and Latgale Democrats (KDS, LZS, LDP)	7.9 (Countryside) 20.4 (Village)	47.9 23.5

*Joachim Siegerist's party, which dissolved during the sixth Saeima.

The 1995 election winner "Landlord" collected a good share of the rural votes, but was not a profoundly "rural" party. In 1993 and after, the rural vote was distributed among a number of parties. The data shows first of all that there is no distinct "agricultural" party preference, but the People's Party, the Farmers Union/ZZS, the KDS/LPP and partly Latvia's Way have or did have a significant basis in the countryside. A large share of the rural vote is taken by the election winner irrespective of any "rural profile", except in 1995, when a good share of the rural vote was distributed among three new parties.

Table 6-4: The table shows which parties the rural voters preferred in 1993.

Rural Respondents 1993	% of the Rural Voters	Rural % of the Party's Votes
Latvia's Way (LC)	41.9	41.7
Farmers' Union (LZS)	14.3	48.4
Concord for Latvia (SLAT)	9.0	26.0
Christian Democratic Union (KDS)	7.1	38.5

When looking at **Riga** voters, a slightly different picture can be observed. (See Table 6-5 - Table 6-8).

The Farmers' Union/ZZS, Latvia's First Party/Christian Democrats, the People's Party and also "Landlord" do (or did) not have any firm basis in Riga. The relatively strong support in Riga for TB, LNNK and SLAT/TSP/PCTVL seems to reflect the ethnic composition, as more Russian and other non-Latvian citizens live there (compared to the countryside which is predominantly Latvian). The Latvian national-conservatives did well in Riga until 2002 when the support fell sharply. The support for "Russian" parties (notably PCTVL) rose dramatically from 1998 to 2002,⁹⁴ while New Era won significant support among Latvian voters (35.0 per cent – 91.1 of New Era's constituency) and 'Other nationalities' (24.8 – 4.7 of New Era's

⁹⁴ Survey data.

constituency).⁹⁵ The Social Democrats and Latvia's Way did not pass the election threshold in 2002, while the Riga support for TP was weak (7.8 per cent).

Table 6-5: The table shows which parties the Riga voters preferred in 2002.

Riga Respondents 2002	% of the Riga Voters	% of the Party's Votes
New Era (JL)	38.6	35.5
PCTVL	30.7	47.5
TB/LNNK	2.5	15.4

Table 6-6: The table shows which parties the Riga voters preferred in 1998.

Riga Respondents 1998	% of the Riga Voters	% of the Party's Votes
TB/LNNK	22.1	31.7
The People's Party (TP)	21.1	19.5
The Social Democrats (SDA)	17.2	29.2
The Peoples Concord Party (TSP, incl. Socialists)	14.2	29.6

Table 6-7: The table shows which parties the Riga voters preferred in 1995.

Riga Respondents 1995	% of the Riga Voters	% of the Party's Votes
For Fatherland and Freedom (TB)	20.0	40.5
DP "Landlord" (DPS)	19.5	25.0
LNNK/Green Party (LZP)	13.6	46.4
People's Concord Party	6.9	37.8
Latvia's Socialist Party (LSP)	6.8	44.9

Table 6-8: The table shows which parties the Riga voters preferred in 1993.

Riga Respondents 1993	% of the Riga Voters	% of the Party's Votes
Latvia's Way (LC)	29.7	--
Concord for Latvia (SLAT)	17.1	--
LNNK	12.0	--
Equal Rights	5.7	--

The distribution of votes in 'Other Cities'/'6 Bigger Cities'/'District Centre' and 'Other Town' is shown in appendix 3. In 2002, PCTVL and New Era captured a major portion of the votes in '6 Bigger Cities', New Era and the People's Party in 'District Centre', New Era and the People's Party in 'Other Town'. It appears that there is a "continuum of change" with respect to party preference with 'Rural Voters' at the one end and 'Riga' at the other. A further discussion of an urban/rural contrast will follow in chapter seven.

6.2.3 Regional Contrasts?

What has happened to the regional contrast? The district-based *election results* of 2002 shows one immediate difference between Latgale, Riga and the other three districts, Vidzeme, Kurzeme and Zemgale: PCTVL won the election in Latgale (nine of 17 mandates, 36.8 of the votes) and Riga (ten of 28 mandates, 30.5 per cent of the votes) but barely passed the five per cent threshold in Kurzeme and did only slightly better in Vidzeme and Zemgale. A party

⁹⁵ N (nationality)=640/77.6 per cent of all respondents).

called *Latgale's Light* (Latgales Gaisma) won almost one-tenth of the votes in Latgale but none in any other district.⁹⁶ (With a 5 per cent threshold nationwide the chance for local parties or lists to gain representation in the Saeima is very small). The surveys show a relatively strong support for New Era and the People's Party in Vidzeme and Kurzeme, and for New Era and Latvia's First Party in Zemgale. The findings seem to confirm differences between regions that have a higher non-Latvian population (Riga and Latgale) and the overwhelmingly "Latvian" rural regions. Except for the support for LZZ in Latgale, the parties with a strong rural component (LPP and TP) have a weaker basis in the districts that has a higher ethnic mix, Latgale and Riga. In the districts with a very dominant Latvian citizenry, the distribution of votes between different "Latvian" parties seems to increase.

6.2.4 *Socio-structural Differences*

The income variable in the 2002 survey reveals that New Era, the Popular Party, Latvia's Way (which is not represented in the 8th Saeima), and earlier TB (TB/LNNK), are preferred by high income voters, but the high income respondents are few and the explanatory strength related to the highest income groups is low. The People's Party has its highest proportion of votes among the richer *and* poorer groups in 2002. It is difficult to explain this "U" curve without more data. It may be coincidental. The proportion of low-income voters who supported TP was 18.4 per cent in 2002, down from 23.8 per cent in the previous Saeima election. The proportion of TP voters in the "middle" income groups fell even more.

LC scored well among the group of respondents with the highest income (income above 400 Lats a month) but few,⁹⁷ and the party lost much of the support among all the other income segments. The support for New Era shows an increasing tendency in the higher income groups. It is yet to see whether New Era will consolidate its position and which basis will remain sources of support in the 2006 election.

The 1998 survey shows that nearly 23 per cent of the respondents with incomplete primary education voted for Latvia's Way, corresponding to 16 per cent of the party's support. 45 per cent of the people who voted for LC had completed only secondary school, while 13 per cent have completed university. Nor does the People's Party appear as an "academic's" party but attracted votes from *all* educational levels, except "Primary education incomplete". 53 per

⁹⁶ 60 per cent of the respondents who said they voted for Latgale's Light, were Russian (five of sixteen respondents), two were of Latvian nationality and one of other nationality.

⁹⁷ In the survey a total of four persons, one of whom voted for LC, one voted for TP and two voted for New Era. The category is too small to have explanatory value.

cent of the voters in the 1998 elections had completed secondary education.⁹⁸ Nearly 13 per cent had been or were university students (incomplete), and 10 per cent had a university degree.⁹⁹ The national conservative party, TB/LNNK caught votes among all educational categories including university level¹⁰⁰ and post-graduate level.¹⁰¹ The score among 'Primary incomplete' and 'Secondary incomplete' is very small. The common TB/LNNK voter has completed secondary education, which is the largest subgroup. TB/LNNK's "share" of this group is less than 10 per cent. The 'Secondary completed' group constituted more than 60 per cent of the People's Concord's electorate, less than 8 per cent of the total subgroup. Education alone does not seem to represent a significant factor with respect to party preference in 1998.

In 1993, Equal Rights found a relatively higher support among the voters aged 25 to 34 years (52.6 of its electorate), and more than half of the Socialist Party's voters in 1995 were aged 25-49. If we look at *occupation* (1995), 6.6 per cent of the unemployed respondents said they voted for the Socialist Party (19.5 per cent of the party's voters), 4.8 per cent of the respondents who identified as "workers" voted for the Socialist Party (36.8 of the party's voters), whereas 3.9 per cent of respondents who identified as "retired" voted for the Socialist Party (27.5 per cent of the party's voters). Only 6.1 per cent of the Socialist Party voters in the survey identified as "self-employed" (3.8 per cent of all respondents identified as "self-employed"), 5.8 per cent of the LSP voters identified as "specialists" (2 per cent of the category), among "Managers" there were none, among students there were none, while 4.2 per cent of the party's voters identified as "Housewife" (3.4 per cent of the category voted for LSP). We may include *education*, which consist of three categories in the 1995 survey (Primary School, Secondary School and Higher Education). 20.6 per cent of the Socialist Party's voters had primary education (3.9 per cent of the respondents with primary education voted for the LSP), 69.3 per cent of LSP's voters had secondary education (4.4 per cent of the category) and 10 per cent had higher education (1.8 per cent of the total category). The data suggest that the LSP finds its core electorate among (non-Latvian) young unskilled workers, unemployed and retired people, most of them with secondary or primary school education. In 1993, 68.4 per cent of the respondent who voted for Equal Rights had secondary education

⁹⁸ Completed secondary education was the largest education subgroup with 792 respondents. Nearly 15 per cent of the respondents with secondary education voted for TP, whereas 8.2 voted for LC. TP was the single largest receiver of votes from this subgroup, however, the largest proportion – more than one in four – did not have the right to vote.

⁹⁹ These are small subgroups, respectively 28 of 101 and 22 of 169 respondents.

¹⁰⁰ 12 per cent of respondents with university education voted for TB/LNNK, a total of 21 individuals, which constituted 15 per cent of the TB/LNNK voters in the 1998 survey.

¹⁰¹ One-fourth of the respondents with higher education than university degree ('post-university completed') voted for TB/LNNK, however the subgroup is very small, with only four respondents.

only (3.5 per cent of the total category), 21.1 per cent of the Equal Rights voters had primary education only (3.6 of the total category) and only 10.5 per cent of the party's voters had higher education (1.7 per cent of the total). Over 90 per cent of the Equal Rights voters reported an income of less than 50 lats a month. Occupation was not included in the survey. On the basis of the two surveys together, it is possible to assume that the Equal Rights/Socialist Party's voters may be primarily disadvantaged groups among mainly non-Latvian voters. However, the Socialist Party cannot be considered *the* party of the economically and socially disadvantaged since several other parties have collected more votes than LSP among these groups. In 1993, Latvia's Way received 41.6 per cent of the votes among respondents whose monthly income per family member was less than 15 lats, and 35.6 per cent of the votes among respondents who earned 15 to 25 lats. In 1995, People's Movement "For Latvia" (of Joachim Ziegerist) received 20.8 per cent of the votes among respondents who earned less than 10 lats per month, whereas "Landlord" got 16.7 per cent of the votes among the respondents who earned 11 to 25 lats per month. The Christian Democrats similarly found nearly all its voters in less than 50 lats category in the 1993 election, according to the survey.

Joining the People's Concord list (TSP) before the 1998 election, LSP entered an alliance that reached a larger spectrum of voters in terms of income and education. In 1998, TSP got 9.2 per cent of the votes among respondents who earned more than 81 lats per month (the highest income category in the survey) and 9.6 per cent in the income category of 51 to 80 lats. In 2002, PCTVL got 22.6 per cent of the votes in the '101 to 250 lats per month' category, and 2.5 per cent of the votes in the category 'Above 250 lats' which was the highest income category in the survey. The 1998 survey shows, however, that 'workers', 'unemployed' and 'retirees' were the dominant answers in the occupation category among the TSP (with LSP) electorate, as in 1995 (when 60 per cent of the party's voters were 'unemployed' or 'retired'). In 1998, 12.4 per cent of TSP's voters had completed University education (7.1 per cent of the total category).

We should look briefly at the same variables for Social Democratic voters. LSDSP collected relatively equal shares of votes in *every income category* (8.2 per cent to 9.4 per cent.) In the highest income category (81 lats or more), LSDSP got 9.3 per cent of the votes. It is the smallest segment of the party's support and a small income category (N=109, total N=860). The occupational profile of LSDSP's voter is somewhat similar to that of LSP. 41.5 per cent of LSDSP's voters were 'Employees' (8.3 per cent of the 'Employee' category), 34.7 of the party's voters identified as retired (8.5 per cent of the 'Retired' category), whereas 13.1

per cent of the party's voters identified as 'Responsible for home/Not employed') and 13.3 per cent (3.4 per cent of the category) were on maternity leave. 10.2 per cent of the LSDSP's voters were unemployed/between jobs (6.5 per cent of the total category). 55.8 per cent of LSDSP's voters had completed secondary education (8.5 per cent of the category), and 8.3 per cent had completed University (5.9 per cent of the total category). 87.5 per cent of the party's voters were 'Latvian', 7.5 per cent 'Russian' and 5 per cent 'Other Nationality' (12.5 per cent non-Latvian voters), which support the assumption that LSDSP and LSP appeals to different electorates along the nationality variable. Signs of an emerging socio-structural cleavage are weak, however there is a noticeable *indication* that social variables like income and education have a say, and may cut across the nationality variable (Smith-Sivertsen, 1998:92-93).

According to Smith-Sivertsen, empirical research at the mass level can provide different impressions than at the elite level, as the "masses" would be more severely affected by the socioeconomic difficulties that have been part of the economic restructuring of the Latvian society. Heidi Bottolfs (2000:77-78) asserts that the masses are far more concerned with economic and social issues than reflected in the elite which "seems to prefer ethnic issues before economic issues (...) rendering an impression of overemphasis on ethnic issues on part of the elite at the cost of a more advanced discussion about economic issues." Bottolfs asserts that an elite-driven policy-making process has politicised the ethnic dimension out of proportion, and the true cleavage of Latvian contemporary politics (2000) is that between the rulers and the ruled. Does any evidence support this observation?

Elections since 1993 suggests that the majority of the voters indeed are more concerned about economic, social issues, crime and corruption, than ethnic issues. Most Latvian voters, according to election surveys, prefer parties that appear to present a solution to the problems they are most concerned about. In 1993, the number one concern among voters was increasing crime (96.7 per cent) and secondly, the concern about decreasing living standard (95.9). On third place was a demand for higher pensions, and on fourth, concern for rising unemployment. In comparison, 63.9 of the voters were concerned with returning property to its former owners, and 69.2 per cent found it important to remove the former nomenclature from power. The Popular Front and most of the successive parties – with Latvia's Way as number one included many members of the former nomenclature (Pabriks and Purs, 2002:68, Lieven, 1994:301), but it was far from damaging.

On the political level, there has not been any significant *disagreement* about the broad lines and direction of economic policy, which may rather be ascribed to realpolitik rather than a real state of agreement. People may largely have agreed to economic change away from the

command economy, and although they react with disappointment upon the negative effects of transition, there is not a single party that manages to significantly mobilize the disadvantaged and disappointed. Latvia's northern neighbour Estonia pursued a much more rapid and even more liberal economic policy, but economic issues were "conspicuously missing" from the political debate in the period after independence, according to Hans Petter Svege and Christer D. Daatland (Svege and Daatland, 2000:67):

There was a general agreement that the command economy left over from Soviet times had to be replaced by market economy, although there was little discussion on what this would entail.

In the 1993 post-election poll by Latvia Social Research Centre, 84.2 of the voters thought the development of a social security system was important.¹⁰² In 1995, 74 per cent of Latvians and 83 per cent of Russians in Latvia described their household's economic situation as unsatisfactory (Rose, 1995).¹⁰³ In 1996, the same proportion of Latvians and about the same proportion of non-Latvian (82 per cent) gave this answer (Rose, 1997:14). Significantly, in 1996, 57 per cent of Latvian respondents and 69 per cent of the non-Latvian respondents gave a positive evaluation of the socialist economic system and a "non-positive" evaluation of the current economic system (Rose, 1997:11).¹⁰⁴

A possible indication of support for Bottolf's suggestion, may be the voters' punishment at each election of the incumbent government parties and preference for newcomers. The existence of an "elite cleavage" between the population and the political elite may not be ruled out. After all, Latvia has historically been a highly stratified society, and the people has not been used to chose who to be govern by. The function of *responsiveness* vis à vis an electorate may have a weak foundation.

¹⁰² Respondents who answered "very important" and "rather important".

¹⁰³ Answers "not very satisfactory" and "very unsatisfactory".

¹⁰⁴ "Reaction to economic change".

7. ANALYSIS

7.1 Introduction: Different Political Climate, Different Political Processes

“The most striking – and most ominous – impression is the prevalence and intensity of hatred: ideological, ethnic, social. The monarchists despised the liberals and socialists. The radicals hated the “bourgeoisie”. The peasants loathed those who had left the commune to set in private farms, (...) Latvians were ready to pounce on their German landlords. All these passions were held in check only by the forces of the army, the gendarmerie and police – who themselves were under constant assault from the left. Since political institutions and processes capable of peacefully resolving these conflicts had failed to emerge, the chances were that sooner or later resort would again be had to violence.” (Pipes, 1997:194)

(...) Latvia in 1917 was a socialist country which, considering the circumstances, also meant that it was a Marxist country. (Ezergailis, 1971)

The above sentences describe the political climate and moods in various parts of Imperial Russia shortly before the Revolution. It was the climate in which the new Latvian democratic state and multiparty system was founded. Cultural, religious, territorial, social and ideological conflicts all pulled in different directions. Modernization in Latvia had intensified the existing class conflicts and created new social conflicts upon the old. The proclamation of the nation-state mobilized even new cultural contrasts.

The level of conflict in Latvia in the 1980s and 1990s cannot compare. The re-democratization of Latvia was marked by *pragmatic steps and acts*. The democratic and national opposition proceeded by peaceful means, avoiding to give the Soviet authorities a pretext to resort to force. The authorities did attempt to regain control by military force in January, 1991, when the Western world’s attention was at Kuwait and Iraq, but failed.

The most important contrasts in the 1980s were cultural and ideological rather than social. In 1920, the most urgent issue was social (the Land Reform) and aimed at defusing tensions resulting from centuries of social inequality. In practical policy it meant measures of economic and social levelling. In the 1990s, a political priority has been to create the conditions necessary for a development *towards greater social and economic differentiation*; as part of the development of a civil society independently from the state and government. This development will probably be accompanied by new types of conflicts, and the development of a more complex conflict structure. In this chapter, the pre-war and post-Soviet party systems will be compared with respect to continuation and change in terms of individual *parties*, the structure of political opposition and possible cleavages.

The questions asked initially were: 1) which conflicts and cleavages were decisive for the formation of political opposition in Latvia in the 1920s and 1930s? 2) To what extent does conflicts and cleavages mobilized before 1934 express themselves in the formation of *new oppositions* in post-Soviet Latvian politics? To answer these questions I will discuss the structure of oppositions on the basis of a sub-divided two-dimensional figure which employs a traditional left to right-axis ('Economic-ideological') and a cultural axis which is called the 'Nation-building' axis. I have found that the concepts of 'Class' and 'Nation' describe the most fundamental conflict dimensions in pre-war Latvia. 3) Thirdly, how to interpret *changes* in new party system structure compared to the 1920s and 30s? Can changes in the structure of political opposition be explained by changes in the voter population and new socio-structural contrasts since the 1940s?

7.2 The Structure of Oppositions in the 1920s and 1930s

The party system that existed between the wars (1920-1934) was dominated by the Social Democrats (left), the Farmers' Union (centre-right) and radical bourgeois/liberal parties (centre) which were based on urban electoral groups. The 'centre' was added a rural component when joined by new smallholders' parties. The influence of the centre parties was not due to size or coherence, but due to the fragmentation which made any government dependent on the support of the centre (von Rauch 1995:95). The 'Left', 'Farmers' and 'Centre' represented class contrasts in the cities and in the countryside, and a (re-)emerging contrast within the countryside and between the countryside and the cities as the new smallholders' abandoned the left, and the Social Democrats increasingly depended on the urban working class votes. Table 2-1 sketches the main divisions in the Saeima 1922-1931.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ The table is based on information given by several sources: Albert Zalts (1926), Alfreds Bilmanis (1928:24-28, 1934:76ff), Jürgen von Hehn (1966), Georg von Rauch (1995:91ff), Josifs Steimanis (2002:77-94) a.o. The differentiation between Smallholders and Farmers is made by me on the basis that the traditional contrast between the farming class established in the nineteenth century and the rural proletariat remained politically salient after the implementation of the 1922 Land Reform Act. I also prefer to use the designation "Radical Bourgeois" about the parties that based their support upon the urban Latvian petty-bourgeoisie, dominant among them were the "educated class" of intellectuals. Their dominant common feature appears to be "national protectionism".

Table 7-1: A sketch of the Saeima, 1922-31: ideological contrasts, farming, Latgale and minorities.

<u>Latgale's Social Democratic Workers' and Peasants' Party</u>	<u>Latgalian Social Democrats</u>	<u>Latgale's Progressive People's Party</u>	<u>Latgalian Democratic Farmers</u>	<u>Latgalian Catholic and Christian Farmers</u>	<u>Latgale's Farmers' Party, Latgalian Letts</u>	LATGALE
COM-MUNISTS (Komintern) ('Left')	SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ('Left')	RADICAL BOURGEOIS/RADICAL DEMOCRATS ('Centre')	NEW SETTLERS/ SMALL-HOLDERS ('Centre'/'Farmers')	FARMERS/ MODERATE BOURGEOIS ('Liberal Right')	CONSERVATIVE ('Right')	MAIN CATEGORIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN LATVIA 1920-1934
Dominant Parties: <u>Left Trade Union</u>	Dominant Party: <u>Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party</u>	Dominant Parties: <u>Democratic Centre, Progressive Union</u>	Dominant Parties: <u>New Farmers Union, New Settlers' and Smallholders' Party</u>	Dominant Parties: <u>The Farmers' Union, National Union/ Independent Bloc</u>	Dominant Parties: <u>Christian National Union</u> (Lutheran), <u>The National Union</u> ("The National Block") ¹⁰⁶ (<u>The National Farmers' Union</u>)	
Basis: Blue Collar Workers	Basis: Blue Collar Workers, Intellectuals, Artists	Basis: "Urban Middle Class" ("liberals"), the educated elite, Officials, Professionals	Basis: Former Rural Proletariat, Soldiers-turned-peasants, participants in the War of Liberation	Basis: Latvian Rural landowners, originating in the 1850's agrarian reform	Basis: Upper Middle Class, Christians, Industrialists, Big Traders	
	<u>Jewish (Bund)</u>	<u>Russian (Old Believers)</u> <u>Jewish (Zeire Zion)</u>		<u>Jewish (Misrachi)</u> <u>Russian (Municipal Employees)</u>	<u>The Baltic German Party</u> , <u>Russian Orthodox</u> , <u>Jewish religious (Agudas Israel)</u> <u>Polish Party</u>	MINORITIES

The position of the smallholders' parties within the party system is difficult to define. They belong among the farming parties' category according to their rural character, yet

¹⁰⁶ Bilmanis 1928:25.

ideologically and politically they were closer to the national-radical bourgeois parties of the “centre”. The new peasant parties embody the amalgamation of social radicalism of the former rural working class, and the new nationalism. The dominant bourgeois party in the 1920s, the Farmers’ Union, was a radical party from the outset but gradually modified its policies following independence (Zalts, 1926:11,13). A *conservative* rural party, The National Farmers’ Union, formed in 1923 following the Land Reform. The party was fiercely anti-socialist, in favour of collaboration with the estate owners; the old nobility; and adhered to nationalism and christian culture as the foundation of the state. While it appears contradictory, the Latvian conservatives’ amalgamation of nationalism and supportive association with the Baltic German estate owners, the impression is that it should be seen firstly in terms of class: Nationalism as the antithesis of socialist revolution (Plakans, 1997:119). With Socialists and Conservatives as the extreme counterparts, a third and dominant position is held by the moderate right and radical bourgeois parties. The main theme dividing the bourgeoisie into different camps was the question of whether or not collaborate with the former elite, the estate owners (Zalts 1926:14). One important issue that drew the line between the conservative and moderate right/radical bourgeoisie following independence was the Land Reform which allowed the confiscation of land from the estate owners for redistribution among soldiers and landless peasants. The conservative Latvian parties were against any revolutionary or radical measures against the formerly privileged class, while to the majority of the non-socialist parties the Land Reform was a measure that was necessary to stem the “land hunger” and stem the radicalization of the poorer population (von Hehn, 1966:7).¹⁰⁷ However, among the bourgeois supporters of the land reform there were disagreement. To some, the position held by the Farmers’ Union was seen as too lenient towards the estate owners, and in 1922 a shoot-off; The New Farmers’ Union; was founded (Zalts, 1926:16-17).¹⁰⁸ The new party announced: “The new peasantry is recruited mainly from the classes without means, from labour circles.”¹⁰⁹ The new peasant party would represent the interests of a new rural strata created by the Land Reform, while the core electorate of Farmers’ Union were the Latvian farming strata emerging after the imperial land reform in the mid-nineteenth century (“Altbauern”). The New Settlers’ and Smallholders’ Party, founded by Alfreds Blodnieks in 1925, targeted the same social segment. Apparently, the peasant strata was a relatively large and attractive electoral source to tap into. The reform created nearly 100,000 new smallholdings (Blodnieks,

¹⁰⁷ Landlessness became a problem in the second half of the nineteenth century because of population growth and the limited access to land because of the estate structure (Plakans 1997:93)

¹⁰⁸ The party was headed by Otto Nonacs, previously a leading member of the Farmers’ Union.

¹⁰⁹ My translation from German in Zalts, 1926:16.

1960:196). 144,000 persons who were landless or considered deserving, mainly war veterans, received land (Plakans 1997:16). The creation of a new peasant strata based on the Social Democrats' rural basis, reduced the Social Democratic support in the countryside. The party more and more depended on its urban electorate. The Social Democratic party was also challenged by internal splits. Towards the end of the 1920s, a marxist wing left to form a new communist party, The Left Trade Unions. The Bolshevik party in Latvia was prohibited.

There were more or less parallel sets of parties of the minorities and Latgale (Smith-Sivertsen 1998:90). Except for the Poles and the Germans, the minorities can hardly be seen as a single segment; the number of parties expressed a high degree of differentiation and disunity between and among the various nationalities. The German and the Polish parties basically defended the interests of the former social elites respectively in the "germanized" Latvian territories and "Polish" Latvia (Latgale). It was the old class conflict transformed into political defence of their cultural identity, and social and economic interests.

7.2.1 *Different Ideological Positions of the "Deposed Regime" Parties*

An immediate problem arises when trying to compare the structure of political oppositions of the 1920s and 1990s because of the fundamentally different *ideological positions* of the two "deposed regime" parties - the Baltic German and the former Communist Party (Latvian Socialist Party) which is dominated by Russians. The Baltic Germans politically transformed their identity from high social status to that of a national minority in 1917-22. The conflict between the Baltic Germans and Latvians prevailed along the territorial-cultural dimension. Today, the picture is somewhat more complex, because the main representative of "the deposed regime" is in opposition both along the ideological left-to-right dimension (socialism, state ownership versus capitalism, private property rights and the free market) and along the national-cultural dimension as a representative of 'Russian' ("minority") interests. In principle, the Communist Party nomenklatura was a privileged social class which may be seen in principle as a structural parallel to the privileged Baltic German elite – none were interested in changing the system. Despite the ideologically different positions, the privileged classes of both the "deposed regimes" were fundamentally *conservative*, and both were replaced by mass democracy and national-liberal governments. In the purely political-ideological context, the Baltic German "party" (Committee of Baltic German Parties) was rightist (liberals and conservatives) while the current Socialist Party is leftist (marxist) in terms of its past and

present political program and ideological orientation.¹¹⁰ A possible approach to the comparative analysis of apparently very different party systems, therefore, is to discuss the *fundamental conflicts* involved.

A point of departure is the events between 1917 and 1920 which *defined* the fundamental conflicts of the time: a deep social and economic (class) conflict turned into revolution, and a territorial-cultural struggle about the future of the Eastern Baltic territories as the First World War and the revolution turned into a civil war between Bolsheviks, the local German nobility supported by the German Army, and Latvian “patriots”. The political forces that eventually participated in the build-up of the Latvian nation-state within the Constituent Assembly and Saeima all stood behind the nation-state or at least accepted the formation of the independent republic, which logically was a premise for participation. The territorial-cultural conflict surfaced again and mobilized the independence cleavage in the 1980s. The socio-economic conflict finds some expression too, but not in a decisive way. Rather, the economic conflict became part of the independence cleavage due to the ideological nature of the Communist regime. Differentiation became a more important issue than levelling class contrasts.

As mentioned earlier, a parallel notion to the political concept of “discontinuous democracy” is “discontinuous nation-building process”, which is central to an analysis of political contrasts in Latvia. The process of developing and defining a national identity started before the mid-Nineteenth century with the so-called New Latvians and the National Awakening, while the process of nation-building began at the time of the formation of the independent republic. The process involved integration of a culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse population. There was not much of a common “national” history, nor a common “national” culture. *Language* (of the “indigenous” population) defined the borders of the territory. The new nation-state inherited a partly medieval class-based social stratification, with extreme social contrasts. The main political opponent of the Baltic German Saeima faction was the Latvian Social Democrats, which was the biggest party and still adhered to marxist principles (v. Hehn 1966:12). The LSDSP remained in opposition most of the time also vis á vis the Latvian bourgeois parties. After the radical Land Reform, the largest non-socialist party, the Farmers’ Union, entered a moderate, pragmatic liberal-conservative political course and was losing support by 1931 due to ideological polarization and a strong anti-minority climate (Zalts 1926:13-14, v. Hehn 1966:17).

¹¹⁰ LSP’s programme (in English) as of 2002 states: “SPL supports creation of a socially protected society on the basis of the Marxism theory.” (SPL=Socialist Party of Latvia)

The school autonomy law came under attack in the late 1920s by the fourth political force, the ‘centre’ parties. The Democratic Centre and the Progressive Union were leading forces behind the new anti-minority policies within the Latvian Saeima in the beginning of the 1930s (v. Hehn 1966:16-17) . The growing extremism of the early 1930s grew out of the three “fronts” that were involved in the civil war and reflected the hegemonic rivalry between Bolshevik (then Soviet) Russia and Germany in the Baltic area, and the new Latvian radical nationalists. The moderate nationalism, represented by the Farmers’ Union before 1931, was losing, as were conservatives like the National Union. Since the late 1980s a similar distinction has existed between moderate and radical nationalists, expressed profoundly by the adherents of ‘ethnic nation’ and ‘civic nation’ where the former has opposed the large-scale integration of Soviet migrants and the latter has chosen a more pragmatic approach to the new nation-building. An emphasis has been on Latvian integration into European and Western institutions for the sake of security and economic reorientation and development. The ‘pragmatists’ promote the use of Latvian *language* in the public sphere and education as a means for integration of the culturally diverse population. The cleavage that divided the ‘centre’ and the ‘moderate right/right’ has a parallel in the contrasts dividing the adherents of ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ nation. It may be called the ‘exclusion’/’inclusion’ cleavage (see Smith-Sivertsen, 1998:98-102).

7.2.2 The structure of oppositions along basic dimensions 1920-1934

I will introduce a simplistic two-dimensional figure, *Figure 7-1*, that shows the basic ideological conflicts and oppositions. A similar figure will be presented later in the chapter for the structure of the post-Soviet party system. Georg von Rauch describes the pre-war party system in terms of a three-party structure, consisting of the Farmers’ Union (conservative), the Social Democrats and the National Liberals (Rauch, 1995:91). I will add the German party as the ‘old regime’ party and the most influential among those of the minorities, as well as representing the formerly dominant social strata.

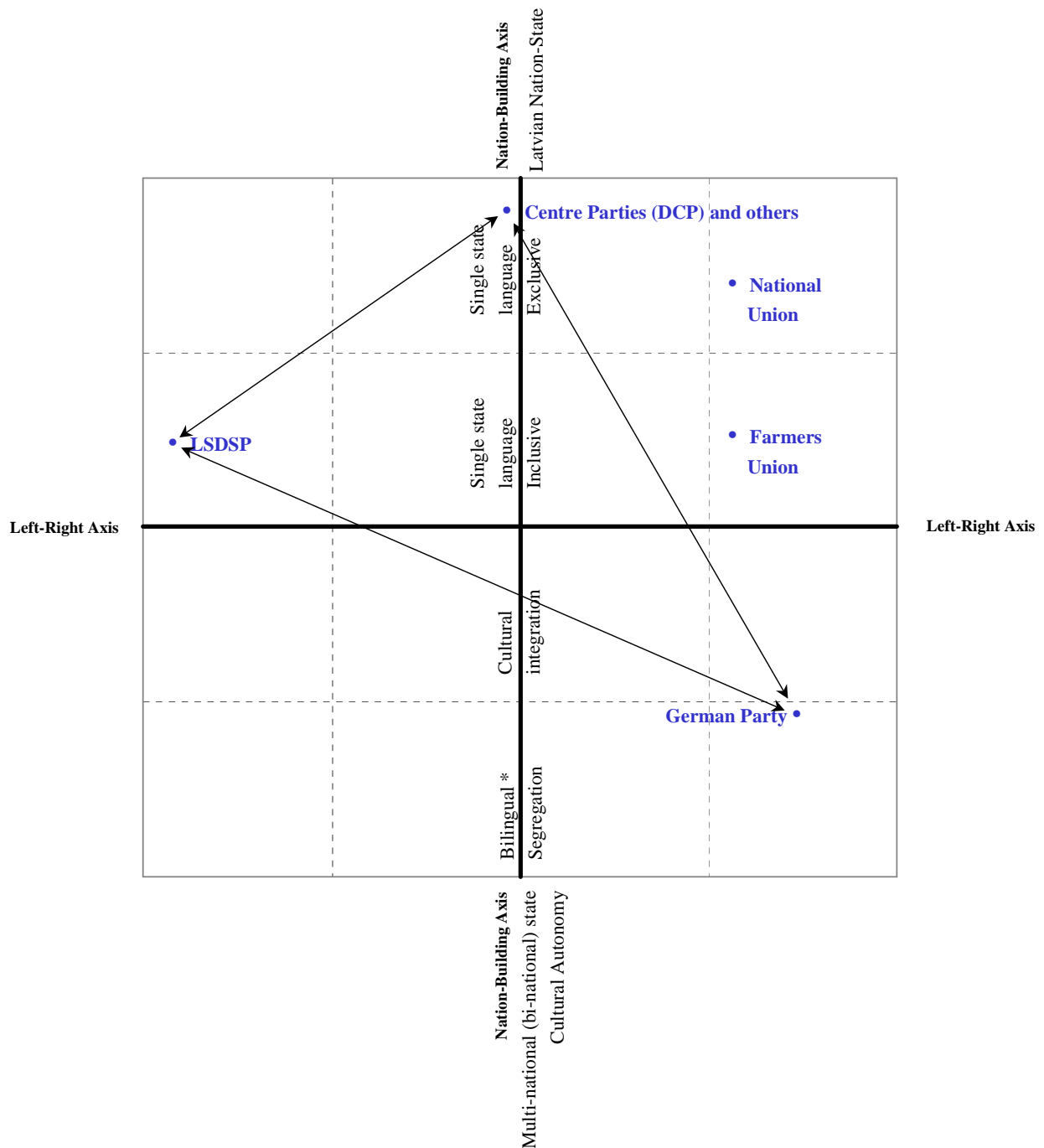


Figure 7-1: Illustration of the part system's main counterparts 1920- 1934. The arrows define the extreme oppositions. A dominant role was played by the Farmers' Union.

A comparison of the figures follows the figure of the post-Soviet oppositions in Chapter 7.2.4.

As mentioned, in the inter-war period, the economic nation-building element concerned measures that would reduce the sharp social and economic contrasts; at present it means measures that will lead to a differentiated economy independent of the state. In both cases, the measures were/are intended to break down the economic structure of the 'old

regime' – in the 1920s it was the estate structure with few very large owners occupying most of the land; in the 1990s it was the state possessing most of the land – the purpose: to create an economically viable nation-state based on independent citizens.

7.2.3 *The structure of oppositions along basic dimensions 1993-2002*

The economic-ideological dimension of the following figure assumes that the space between the centre and the left pole comprise some degree of state involvement/control up to full state involvement/control. The space between the centre and the right pole comprises the position of some state involvement/control (centre) up to minimal state involvement/control. The economic dimension includes a very important economic and ideological foreign policy issue too, that of EU membership (fulfilled in 2004).

The non-economic nation-building axis that cuts across the economic dimension concerns mainly socio-cultural issues including the definition of the state's citizenry, and an important defence issue, NATO membership. The attitudes regarding the issues of EU and/or NATO membership is strongly related to the country's historical position between East and West, and concern the question of whether Latvia should chose a profoundly Eastern or Western orientation in matters of culture, economy, trade and security.

The punctuated line through the centre from the lower left end to the upper right end represents a post-Soviet transition contrast within agriculture, between independent farmers (upper-right) and representatives of Soviet-related collective farming (lower left). (The figure shows the main political contrasts on the party-system level only.)

The subdivisions are meant to explain the main differences among parties that usually are considered "similar" along a one-dimensional left-to-right axis, and may contribute to identify differences especially among the so-called Latvian parties (liberal, conservative and national-conservative), but also among the so-called "Russian" parties. The first, single dimension used to describe the structure of opposition in Latvia in the 1990s derives from the conflict between pro-Soviet regime defenders (communists) and pro-independence democrats and nationalists in the 1980s (Smith-Sivertsen 1998:94).¹¹¹ The conflict consisted of a number of issues – ideological (communists versus democrats), political (one-party versus a multi-party system), economic (planned economy versus market economy) and social (state/public ownership versus private ownership). A 'cultural' component was added by the overwhelmingly (if not exclusively) Slavic and mostly Russian representation on the 'left', and overwhelmingly native Latvian on the 'right', which Smith-Sivertsen calls the 'Ethnic

¹¹¹ Smith-Sivertsen (1998: 94) uses the concept 'Independence Cleavage'.

Cleavage' (Smith-Sivertsen 1998:95-102). The core conflict of the single-dimensional structure of oppositions (in the fifth Saeima) was that of citizenship and naturalization. The Ethnic Cleavage reflects the presence of 'Baltic German and other nationalities' parties in the 1920s and early 1930s, but in a different way. The Baltic German representation was coherent and dominant as a conservative and liberal element in the inter-war years, while today the Ethnic cleavage is dominantly Russian, reflecting the migration policies of the Soviet regime and a much larger Russian minority. The German and the Jewish components have practically disappeared in political terms, along the Ethnic Cleavage, and the opposition to 'Latvian' is 'Russian' and 'other national minorities'. A corresponding feature of the new Ethnic Cleavage to the former is the issue of a dominant minority (then Baltic German, now Russian) to come to terms with its new minority status in a society where the mentioned national minorities belonged to a more or less privileged cultural group. A significant difference compared with the inter-war years is the absence today of the huge political fragmentation among the minorities, which may be explained both by cultural sovietization as well as the election law threshold that discourages political particularisation.

7.2.4 Towards a More Complex Structure of Oppositions

Around 1995, the original left to right dimension was inadequate as the effects of the economic transformation had hit large numbers of the population negatively, regardless of their ethnic identity or being citizens or not. The victory of the left-liberal party "Saimnieks" in the national elections in 1995, the subsequent victory of the Social Democrats in local elections in 1997 and success in the national elections in 1998, made relevant another and more classic type of economic dimension with a left social opposition which was also pro-Latvian and West-oriented (Smith-Sivertsen 1998:105-106). Although the Social Democrats lost in the eight Saeima elections in 2002, the existence of a profoundly socially oriented Latvian opposition is accommodated by a two-dimensional figure that includes another two-dimensional sub-division. This is presented in Figure 7-2. The left to right (horizontal) dimension comprises economic principles and ideologies (Marxism and state ownership, public welfare at the left end; liberalism, privatization and minimal state role in affairs at the right end). A crosscutting dimension consists of many of the original conflict issues;

citizenship (zero option versus “First Republic”/naturalization), nation-state versus an ‘international’¹¹² state, linguistic issues (including education) and other cultural issues.

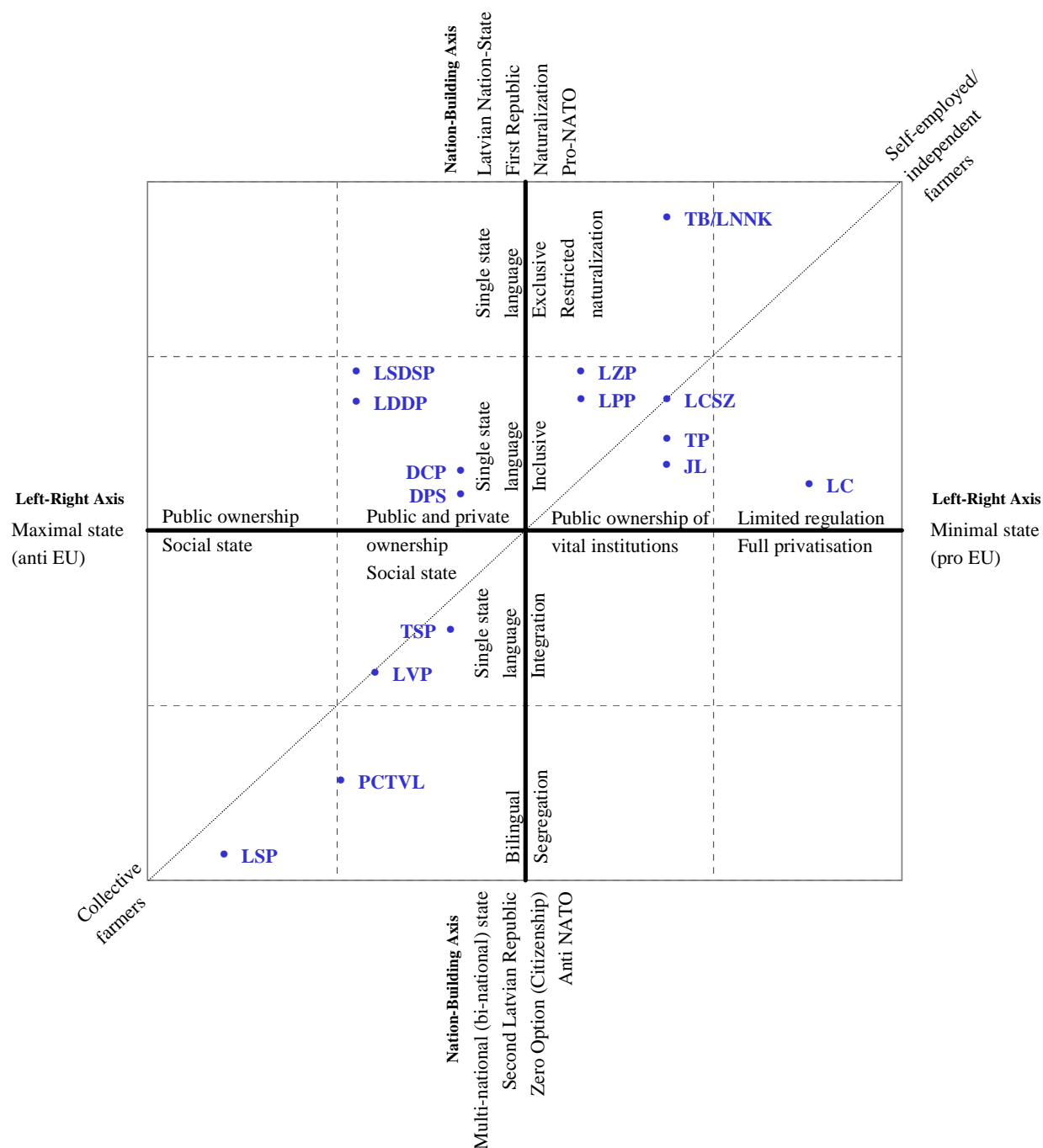


Figure 7-2: The figure is a sub-divided two-dimensional model of the post-Soviet party system, showing the structure of opposition of the main parties. **TB/LNNK**=Fatherland and Freedom/The National Independence Movement, **LZP**=The Green Part, **LCSZ**=Latvias Center Party Farmers' Union, **LPP**=First Party,

¹¹² The reason why I use ‘international’ in stead of multinational is because the former relates to the former regime’s ideology, to which Russian was the primary expression of the international state, and the party/parties representing this view wants Russian to have the same status as Latvian.

LC=Latvia's Way,¹¹³ TP=The People's Party, JL=New Era, LSDSP=Latvia's Social Democratic Labour Party, LDDP=Latvia's Democratic Labour Party, DCP=The Democratic Centre Party, DPS=Democratic Party "Saimnieks"¹¹⁴, TSP=People's Concord Party, LVP=Unity Party, PCTVL=The Party for Equal Rights in a United Latvia, LSP=Latvia's Socialist Party. The positioning of the parties are approximate and based primarily upon party programmes, Janis Ikstens' articles "Political Parties" at www.politics.lv, and responses to sets of (similar) questions via e-mail to the respective parties with regard to the major issues (citizenship, naturalization, language, EU membership, NATO membership, state regulation and interference in the economy vs. free market). See also Nørgaard et al. 1999:84/1996:102.

The figures of the pre-war and post-Soviet structure of oppositions represent "mirror-images" along two main conflict dimensions. The descriptions of issues along the dimensions are slightly different, but represent similar types of issues. In the pre-war figure, the Baltic German opposition, which included liberals and conservatives, is in the opposite position of the current Equal Rights/Socialist Party and Concord for Latvia, in the lower right quadrant.

TB/LNNK's position vis á vis LSP/TSP reflects a mirror-image parallel contrast to LSDSP's pre-war position vis á vis the German party (socialist versus conservative/liberal). The latter contrast expressed mainly the old class conflict, whereas TB/LNNK's position vis á vis Equal Rights/the Socialist Party (and even TSP) is based on complex contrasts of ideology and national-cultural issues related to the deposed regime. *The national-conservative TB/LNNK fills a space corresponding to that of the pre-war radical bourgeois "Centre" (and the Democratic Centre/Progressive Union) with an 'ethnic' nationalistic ideology.*

The slightly different position of the three main conservative-liberal parties, Latvia's Way, New Era and the People's Party concern the emphasis on liberal economic issues and EU integration by Latvia's Way (until a shift in the late 1990's when the party began paying attention to social issues) whereas the People's Party's programme emphasize traditional values and the role of the family more profoundly than economic issues, although the party's economic position is liberalist. New Era, too, represents liberalist pro-market views. However, the issue focused by the party founder and leader, the former Central Bank director, Einars Repse, before the 2002 elections was the fight against corruption and the need for a bureaucratic "clean-up" (Auers, 2002). The party defines itself as conservative, and is a member of the European People's Party (along with the party of Repse's rival Andris Skele, the People's Party) which comprises conservative and christian democratic parties in Europe.

The role of Latvia's Way in the 1990s bears similarities to that of the Farmers' Union in the 1920s as the backbone of several governments. Latvia's Way failed to pass the five per

¹¹³ Latvia's Way modified its political programme in a social direction after 1995, calling for a "responsible market economy"-type of welfare system, and may become more of a centrist party. (Ikstens <http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/9.htm>)

¹¹⁴ Ikstens says "Saimnieks" used left-centrist slogans but in practical activities realized right-centrist policies (<http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/5.htm>).

cent threshold in the 2002 election, the fourth national election since the restoration of independence (support for the Farmers' Union was waning after the third national election in 1928, due to the ideological polarization which brought the centre parties to power, headed by Margers Skujenieks of the Progressive Union in 1931 and by Adolfs Blodnieks of the New Settlers' and Smallholders' Party in 1933). An important difference between then and now is the absence of polarization. The role of Latvia's Way has been taken over by other ideologically moderate parties of a conservative-liberal brand, the People's Party and New Era. Despite several government shifts, the governments have all been of more or less same brand and colour – national conservative with a liberalist economic agenda. Thus, the elimination of Latvia's Way in the 2002 election apparently did not happen because the voters preferred a different political course, as with the Farmers' Union the late 1920s when the climate of insecurity and economic depression increased the support for national radicalism.

The emerging, cross-cutting structure of the economic and cultural dimensions suggests a possibly integrating effect, but there is also a risk of polarization between parties of the “Russian-Left” and “National-Right”. The main reason why such polarization has not happened is the much stronger support for the parties closer to the centre (mainly along the nation-building dimension) who are willing to compromise on fundamental issues such as naturalization, protection of the minorities' cultural rights - and agree on EU integration and Latvian as the single state language – this include the People's Concord Party, which has a not insignificant Latvian electorate (47 per cent in 1993, 25 per cent in 1995).

7.2.5 *The National Right: Different Strategies of 'National Survival'*

The most important contrast between the parties of the national 'right' since 1993 is the “strategy for national survival”. Two strategies with a shared aim ('national survival') reflect the differences between the Latvian Popular Front and the LNNK in the late 1980s, and is expressed in present liberal-conservative policies: One, the 'strategy of integration' that puts economic issues and international relations, primarily membership in EU and NATO, first, represented first and foremost by Latvia's Way and New Era, and less decisively by the People's Party (Jubulis, 2002:131).¹¹⁵ This strategy is meant to secure Latvia's survival within a broader European context by making compromises with respect to the “ethnic purity” of the nation-state. Latvia's Way and other 'rightist' parties have followed recommendations by European institutions, such as EU, the Organization of Cooperation and Security in Europe, and the Baltic Sea States Council.

¹¹⁵ The People's Party called for a referendum on EU membership issue.

Another strategy is represented by the national-conservative TB/LNNK who sees the question of ‘national survival’ from within the country. The party agrees on Latvian EU membership but not by trading the principles established vis-à-vis the history of Soviet occupation and its consequences.¹¹⁶ This party follows a ‘strategy of exclusion’ with respect to “state membership”, which makes the question of national survival first and foremost one of ethnic re-construction by excluding or at least severely restricting the possibility of naturalization for immigrants who arrived during the Soviet occupation. The ‘right’ is thus distinguished internally by two opposing strategies that share the ultimate goal of prevailing national independence, the national conservatives (TB/LNNK) versus national-liberals (profoundly Latvia’s Way) with an in-between group of conservative and conservative-liberal parties which may be seen as a buffer as well as a glue between the “exclusionists” and “integrationists”.

7.2.6 *The Left*

In seventh Saeima (1998-2002) another pier was added to the Left with the entry of the Social Democratic Alliance (SDA), which became a “Latvian left” as opposed to both the “Russian/Non-Latvian” left, and the “Latvian right”. The distance between the “Latvian” and “Russian” left is underscored by the fact that the left parties did not join forces.¹¹⁷ Instead, LSDSP agreed to support Vilis Kristopans’ LC coalition government in 1998-99 to save it, even when the “anti-left” TB/LNNK refused to accept the Social Democrats as a formal member of the coalition.¹¹⁸ Adding to a “pro-Russian” and “Latvian” left, the collapse in 2003 of the PCTVL alliance suggest that that the left consists of three “piers” or branches; split not just between the “Latvian” and “Russian/minorities” interests but also along the ‘independence cleavage’ (See Smith-Sivertsen, 1998:95,104-108, also Heidi Bottolfs, 2000:96 and Pabriks/Purs, 2002:83-84). The “Soviet left” (the Latvian Socialist Party) and the “pro-Russian, anti-Soviet left” (TSP) harbour fundamentally different political goals and does not speak for the same non-Latvian electorate. TSP has collaborated with the national government on a number of decisions which enhances the interests of the minorities and the Latvian state alike, such as the liberalization of the law on naturalization (Jubulis 2000:118,121). The People’s Concord Party went through a split in 1995. A group of

¹¹⁶ See for example Ikstens: <http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/8.htm>

¹¹⁷ The picture is different on the municipal level where the left-of-centre parties collaborated in the Riga City Council after 1997.

¹¹⁸ LSDSP’s current leader, Juris Bojars, has declared he was a KGB officer and therefore cannot become a member of the Saeima.

“economists” primarily concerned with the issues of recovering the country’s economy left TSP to form a separate party. Their departure made the “ethnic” issues and the defence of non-citizens’ rights became more to the forefront, according to Ikstens.¹¹⁹ With the departure of the liberally-oriented “economists”, the TSP economic policies have become more left-leaning. However, the party’s pro-EU position testifies to a policy orientation that is not just a “pro-Russian” party.

7.2.7 *Integration or Ethnic Polarization?*

The strength between the national-liberals (“integrationalists”) and the national-conservatives (“exclusionists”) has been decisive for the domestic and international political direction chosen by Latvia, in particular when concerning the most controversial nation-building issues such as citizenship, naturalization, language and education. The direction has been decided by the moderate left and right parties, which included TSP before the alliance with the Equal Rights Movement and the Socialist Party. This policy have been adopted also by governments dominated by the People’s Party and New Era, apparently very much as a consequence of the all-over priority among moderate nationalists to get Latvia into the European Union.

There is no evidence as yet of an increasing polarization along the cultural axis between Latvians and non-Latvians (or Russians). The future development may depend on a successful integration of the current non-citizens in the political nation. The national-cultural policy pursued by the moderate (pro-integration) parties is aimed at integrating the non-Latvians by naturalization and Latvian language instruction, and slowly convert the society from a dominantly “Soviet-Russian” to a dominantly “Latvian” by linguistic definition rather than ethnic definition (see Smith-Sivertsen 2002:61-63, Jubulis 2001:113-114, 122-123). Latvian then would become a second or even third language among citizens who do not speak Latvian as their first language, and a common language of all Latvian citizens.

The mobilization of the Russian and non-Latvian vote together by TSP/LSP was motivated by the wish to increase the leverage of the Russian vote. Politically, the alliance was a step in a confrontational direction, as the PCTVL largely adopted LSP’s position of opposition and protest rather than the pragmatic approach of cooperation. TSP, Equal Rights/LSP and PCTVL constitute the main opposition along the new *cultural nation-building dimension*. The dimension remains profoundly salient in Latgale with the largest proportion of ethnic non-Latvians (and larger support for Equal Rights/LSP and SLAT/TSP) and Riga, where Latvians are a minority among a Russian-speaking majority which is a

¹¹⁹ Ikstens: Popular Harmony Party (<http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/16.htm>)

minority among Latvian citizens. The 'regional' cleavage remains, but in a changed version due to Soviet russification policies and possibly the geographical position of Latgale. While between the two world wars, the Latgalian distinctiveness was distinguished by the district's ethnic-cultural pluralism and religion (Catholicism), today this regional cleavage is distinguished by the relatively dominant 'Russian' or 'non-Latvian' features. The catholic element has not been politically mobilized (yet). The salience of the Independence and Ethnic (cultural) cleavage makes Latgale politically more like the Riga district, although economically and socially the two districts are far apart. Latgale struggles with economic disadvantages, while Riga the capital is way ahead. The regional contrast, and possibly cleavage, may become more pronounced if the economic cleavage gain more salience. So far, the national-cultural contrast, with a relatively high concentration of non-Latvian voters, has been dominant, although the support for "pro-Russian" parties may also be an expression of 'economic' contrasts rather than purely cultural contrasts.

The dramatic weakening of the Latvian national-conservative party after 1998 may be the result of the decision to remove the naturalization windows and speed up the naturalization process, depriving the TB/LNNK of the party's primary mobilizing issue. The education law, including the decision to gradually introduce Latvian as the language of instruction in non-Latvian schools, has been pushed by Latvia's Way and other integrationalist parties. It appears that the pre-war political separatism of Latgale belongs to history, at least at the Saeima level. One Latgalian party, Latgales Gaisma ("Light of Latgale") received only 1,6 per cent of the votes nationwide in 2002. However, Latgale's Gaisma received nearly 10 percent of the votes in the Latgale district and is a political player on the municipal level. Thus, there is a slight tendency of localism, prevented nation-wide by the five per cent election threshold.

7.3 Party Continuity

Latvia's former democratic experience was a 14-15 year long period if counted from the time of the Constituent Assembly (1920) until the suspension of the constitution (1934). By 2004, approximately the same amount of time has passed since the democratic election of the last Supreme Soviet (1990), which reinstated the 1922 Constitution, and a little less since the fifth Saeima elections in 1993. The development of political parties in the inter-war years stretched back two-three decades, whereas the formation of parties in post-Soviet Latvia started only in the very last stage of the USSR's existence. Most parties were founded after the restoration of independence, in 1992 and 1993. One might have expected that a revival of earlier parties

would follow, if at least for the sake of symbolic relationship with the first democratic era and the possibility of reaping political benefit from a legitimacy attached to parties of the first decade of independence. However, only three parties were re-established or adopted the names of pre-war parties in 1989-1992, the Social Democrats (LSDSP), the Farmers Union (LZS/CPZS); and the Democratic Centre Party (DCP).

The Social Democrats (LSDSP) and Farmers Union (LZS) were the two most significant parties in the 1920s. They represented the main fronts in the countryside at the time of the Russian revolution, between Latvian landowners and landless peasants. The Democratic Centre Party (Partija Demokratiskais Centrs) was founded in 1922 with the merger of three radical liberal (urban-based) parties, and again in 1992 by leading members of the Latvian Popular Front, and merged in 1995 with "Landlord". Pabriks and Purs, (2002:70) regard the DCP as "re-established",¹²⁰ while Ikstens call it "an unconvincing retraction to history". Ikstens states that the organization never stressed the succession.¹²¹ DCP's party statutes from the founding Congress in Riga 1992 (English version) does not suggest any relationship to the previous Democratic Centre. Its political programme was in many respects similar to that of Latvia's Way as DCP adopted a programme that expressed what would become the "integrationalist" line vis-à-vis non-citizens and non-Latvians – rather contrary to the anti-minority policies and radical nationalism advocated by the pre-war party.

The Farmers' Union and the Social Democrats (LSDSP) are the only inter-war parties that can be regarded as 'continuous parties'. LSDSP existed in exile in Sweden (Balodis 1990:365), whereas LZS was re-established on the basis (party statutes) of its predecessor.

In 1993, the Farmers' Union entered a government with Latvia's Way, but it fell apart in July 1994 due to differences primarily over agricultural issues.¹²² Since then, the party has been represented in the Saeima only in election alliances with other parties (the Christian Democratic Party in 1995 and the Green Party in 2002). The difficult position of the Farmers' Union at present may be explained by the fact that agriculture is not any more the dominant economic sector; as well as demographic change. Only 35 per cent of the population lived in cities and towns before the Second World War; by 1994 the number was 69 per cent (Aasland 1996:27). Less than a third of the population lives in the countryside. 80 per cent of agricultural land was owned by private farmers by 1996, showing the rapid transformation

¹²⁰ In a document prepared for the Saeima Information Office in 1993, "An Overview of the Fifth Saeima of the Republic of Latvia June-July 1993", Aldis Purs states that "the democratic centrist politicians decided not to literally renew the old party, but instead create a new party with new statutes and goals." (Page 9).

¹²¹ Ikstens: 4.1.2. Factors in the Revival of Historical Parties (<http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/4.htm>)

¹²² Import tariffs and subsidies (Smith-Sivertsen 1998/Dreifelds 1996)

that happened in the rural economy, as 92 per cent of agricultural land belonged to collective and state farms only five years earlier (Smith-Sivertsen 1998:102-103). Another reason why the Farmer's Union has not managed to become *the* farmers' party may also have to do with the character of measures necessary to transform the countryside and the fact that the Farmers' Union did not stand out as any different than other Latvian conservative-liberal parties. Both Latvia's Way and the People's Party have had a significant voter segment in the countryside. According to Ikstens, the Farmers Union presented a programme that was similar to other "national bloc" parties, and it did not suggest solutions to or discuss important problems facing the rural economy. "Although the Latvian Farmers' Union's words supported farming, its actions gave the impression, not of an agrarian party, but of a liberally oriented urban organization."¹²³ Since the defeat in the 1995 elections, the party started to work on its rural image, and returning with 12 seats in the eight Saeima together with the Green Party, it may find a position within the post-Soviet party system.

LSDSP (Bolsheviks and Mensheviks) controlled much of the rural votes in the elections in 1917 due to the large number of landless rural workers. Following the pre-war Land Reform, the Social Democrats lost much of their basis in the countryside and became largely "urban". LSDSP won 55.1 per cent of the urban votes in 1931 (Balodis, 1990:201). The current LSDSP was unsuccessful in the 1993 elections (0.66 per cent). The party nearly passed the five per cent threshold in 1995 with the "Labour and Justice" alliance,¹²⁴ and then captured 14 seats (12.8 per cent of the votes) in 1998 with LSDP. In the 2002 election, the new Social Democratic Workers Party (a merger with LSDP) again fell under the threshold.

LSDSP's experience is somewhat similar to that of the Farmers' Union's in 1995 and 1998 and shows that the party has not managed so far to retake its pre-war position as a mobilizer of its traditional segment, the workers and the economically disadvantaged. The explanation may be a remaining scepticism among a majority of voters with respect to parties associated with socialism at this stage shortly after the downfall of communism. Many voters may also still assume a leftist orientation means an orientation towards Russia (Pabriks and Purs, 2002:83). Moreover, the "left" vote is split profoundly by the nationality variable. Besides, the social economy has changed not just away from a dominant agricultural sector, but also away from a dominant blue collar industrial sector. The new "worker" may not identify neither with the "worker" nor with the "social democratic" labels. It is a "post-

¹²³ Ikstens: Latvian Farmers' Union (<http://www.politics.lv/en/psistema/4.1/13.htm>)

¹²⁴ Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, Latvian Democratic Labour Party and Party for the Defence of Latvia's Defrauded People "Justice".

modern”, post-industrial issue as well. The surveys indicate that economically disadvantaged citizens voted less for LSDSP in 1998 than for the People’s Party and Latvia’s Way. The same pattern is found in the second lowest income category.

7.3.1 *Latvian Liberalism and “the Federative Idea”*

Liberal ideas found their way to the Baltic provinces from Western Europe in the nineteenth century. Andrew Ezergailis makes a point that the parties of the Latvian ‘centre’ appeared originally under other designations than “liberal”; as “progressive”, “democratic” or “radical”. Latvian liberalism was linked to a federative idea, formulated as “A free Latvia within a free Russia”, a slogan that referred to their concern for civil as well as national liberties, according to Ezergailis (1971:37). The idea of independent statehood emerged as a goal only in 1917 among the “liberalists”. (Ezergailis, 1971:33). Radical anti-privilege reform-liberalism and anti-German nationalism among the Latvian bourgeoisie and farmers served the same ends, as an oppositional ideology against the (“foreign”) privileged elite. The first Latvian national Awakening shares similarities with the simultaneous Nordic cultural “national romanticism”, cultivating and idealizing the conception of (one’s own) nationality (‘volk’), its history and myths, cultural expressions and traditions which were ‘peasant’.

The “liberalists” were individuals who were not social democrats nor demanding “exclusive class liberties”. It would include a majority of Latvian journalists, poets and leaders of agricultural, cooperative and refuge organizations, and most of the pre-revolutionary politicians (Ezergailis 1971:33). Ezergailis cites passages from the Farmers Union and the National Democratic Party; the latter would in 1922 merge with other parties and transform into the Democratic Centre Party. Thus, the “liberalists” were not equivalent to the ‘centre’ block. The ‘centre’ was mainly the urban-based liberalists who played a secondary political role to the farmers and the Farmers’ Union.¹²⁵

The parties of the ‘centre’ rejected the idea of “class struggle” and were hostile to protection (‘privileges’) based on cultural identities. ‘Centre’ meant “not left nor right”, and possibly reflected the total rejection of class-type contrasts. In the course of the 1920s, this political idea of a single and unified national society provided ground for ethnic nationalism (von Hehn 1966:13). The reason why ethnic nationalism emerged as an ideology of the ‘centre’ may have several explanations. One may have to do with “jealousy” towards the relatively dominant position in trade, industry and banking by members of two non-Latvian cultural groups; Baltic Germans and Jews. Another contributing factor may be the actual

¹²⁵ Jürgen von Hehn uses the concept “Liberalen Mittelgruppen” about the ‘centre’ parties (von Hehn 1966:9)

political fragmentation among the Latvian urban middle strata; the bourgeoisie and intellectuals, a social strata that historically, has played a nation-building role, as well as a force for democratization. In Latvia, the elites supporting democratization and independence belonged to many different political shadings. The landowning farmers apparently played a more important political role after 1917 than the Latvian urban middle class. Another aspect pointed to by Ezergailis is the lack of a common ideological superstructure and inner cohesion among the 'centre' parties, and finally; the nationalistic liberal centre parties emerged from groups and circles that were in war exile in Russia and presented from the outset radical programmes that went further than the home-based parties, like the Farmers' Union (Ezergailis 1971:39). Today, the 'centre' designation usually refers to the space occupied by moderate parties that collect votes more or less equally among all nationalities, such as Latvia's Way, DP "Landlord" (1995), the People's Party and "New Era" - and pursue a policy intended to avoid polarization. The real equivalent today of the political 'centre' of the 1920s and 30s is the so called 'nationalists' (radical or conservative nationalists), and identified by policies that are close to the "ethnic" brand of nation-building ideologies.

An important question is whether the terms 'liberal' or 'liberalists' makes sense when analyzing today's party system in a comparative, historical perspective. All "Latvian" Saeima parties adhere to the "federation-to-independence tradition" and supports independence, the nation-state, democratic civil rights and the democratic institutions.

Corresponding to the two main "liberalist" groups of the 1920's and 30's; the radical bourgeois (radical national) 'centre' parties and the more moderate (national-liberal) Farmers Union; are the radical-nationalist For Fatherland & Freedom/LNNK and moderately nationalist Latvia's Way (including later also the liberal-conservatives People's Party and New Era); originating, respectively, in the radical and the pragmatic/moderate national independence movements of the 1980s. A significant change has occurred: The declining role of agriculture within the economy as well as demography. The party that have more or less filled the role of the pre-war Farmers' Union; Latvia's Way, has found not insignificant support among voters in the countryside. In 1993, 41.7 per cent of the respondents living in 'rural area' voted for Latvia's Way; in 1998, 20.6 of the rural votes were won by the People's Party. The support for Latvia's Way was declining, and only 14.8 per cent of the rural voters voted for LC; however; the rural votes ('Town, Village, Countryside') made up almost half of its total support, according to the post-election survey.¹²⁶ Similarly, the rural voters

¹²⁶ Hermann Smith-Sivertsen and the Baltic Data House.

constituted 43.9 of the total support for the People's Party, which was the 1998 election winner. In the 2002 election, 27.1 per cent of the rural voters ('Village, Countryside') cast their ballots for the New Era party, which became election winner. Among all the contesting parties, New Era collected the most rural votes, constituting one-third of New Era's votes. The People's Party came second, collection 19.4 of the rural votes, constituting 41.2 of the total number of votes won by TP. This suggests that the main problem the post-Soviet Farmers' Union have faced is the fact that the role as a pragmatic and moderately nationalist "government backbone" which the pre-war party held for a decade, has been taken by parties that has succeeded in attracting support from the urban and the rural areas alike. The reason why rural voters prefer apparently "urban" liberal and liberal-conservative parties to a designated agricultural party, may be complex. It may be the appeal of certain political figures, or that the rural population find themselves more affected by the economic transformation, and that the vote is to large extent a protest vote that at each election has helped a new party win. In 1995, the rural vote was divided between several parties, but mainly between the left-of-centre Democratic Party "Landlord", which won the election, Latvian Unity Party, the populist People's Movement "For Latvia" and the Farmers' Union & Christian Democratic Union list. As a conclusion, the "dualism" of Latvian national-liberalists, into competing radical and moderate opinions which existed in the 1920's and early 30's, has reappeared under new circumstances and is represented by new parties.

Conservatism in the Latvian political "tradition" in the inter-war years and before the revolution appears to be mainly associated with a sympathetic attitude, promotion and/or defence of Baltic German dominance, interests and/or culture. One such Latvian party was lawyer Fridrichs Veinbergs' People's Party (von Hehn 1966:8). Veinbergs "despised socialism" and had no faith in the viability of Latvian independence (Plakans 1997:158). His "mouthpiece" was the *Latviesu Avizes*, which was founded in 1822 by a Baltic German intellectual who engaged in the education of the peasantry and created a newspaper that was published in the Latvian language. The newspaper later took on a militant tone in opposition to the activities of the Latvian "national awakening" and became "a defender of Baltic German privileges", according to Plakans (1997:101). Conservatives like Veinbergs were excluded from the People's Council and the Constituent Assembly. Albert Zalts (1926) employs a 'conservative' designation or category in addition to 'liberal groups' and 'democratic groups'; the liberal groups correspond to the *moderate reformers* among the pro-independence nationalists, while the democratic groups correspond to the *radical reformers* among the pro-independence nationalists. Among parties designated as conservative by Zalts

is the National Farmers' Union. Formed in 1924, it supported collaboration between the wealthier strata of Latvian farmers and the landed Baltic German nobility, the estate owners. The Land Reform had been implemented, and the National Farmers' Union sought to minimize its effects (Zalts 1926:14). The party was basically defending big owners' private property rights against the objectives of socialism and the "bureaucratic tutelage" ("die Formundschaft des Bürokratismus"), as encroachment on private property was seen as a threat to free enterprise. The party also held *nationalism* to be the foundation of the state and the "unified Latvian people"; and further that the Christian culture should be the adequate basis for a "healthy development of the population". According to Zalts, the conservative tendency of the party was expressed in the programme: A total defence of private property rights, free enterprise and labour; it warned against a social legislation that was not in accordance with the existing (assumably: economic, BS) conditions, but in favour of nationalism for the sake of unity, and the Christian culture. Also among the small 'conservative' category was a marginal party called the Christian-National Union, whose main concern was the role of the christian (Lutheran) faith in society. The majority of bourgeois Latvian parties were more or less "indifferent" to religious matters (Zalts, 1926:19). Among its leaders were prominent members of the Lutheran clergy (Plakans, 1997:72,78).

A major distinction between the conservatives and the liberals (right liberals) in pre- and post-revolutionary Latvia is the attitude with respect to whether or not collaborate with the old regime and its adherents.¹²⁷ This was a crucial question at the time when the farmers began to form parties; from 1917 (Zalts, 1926:13). Zalts counts the Latvian Farmers' Union (1917) among the liberal groups which did not collaborate with the Baltic German nobility. The party attempted to soften the provisions of the Land Reform, but the Farmers' Union supported and carried out the radical reform. The National Farmers' Union, formed in the wake of the Land Reform, represented the farmers who were in favour of collaborating with the estate owners, and is categorized by Zalts as conservative. A question is whether the 'conservative' attitude among Latvians was more a phenomenon in the countryside, among wealthy farmers, than in the cities, among the wealthier segment of the Latvian bourgeoisie.

A Latvian party belonging to the right wing of the broad "liberal" ('centre') category (among the liberal groups in Zalts' categorization) is the National Union (1919-1921), also called the National Centre (in 1921 called the National Centre Party/Independent Bloc) (Zalts,

¹²⁷ According to Zalts' description. Bilmanis used different designations and categories. In stead of democrats (Zalts) he called the left-liberal parties "radical bourgeois" ("Radikalbürgerliche"), liberals (Zalts) for "Bourgeois" ("Grossbürgertum"), and he categorizes all farming parties as one group, regardless of their ideological orientation. Nor does Bilmanis distinguish between liberals and conservatives (Bilmanis 1928-2:29)

1926:18). Its prominent leader was Arveds Bergs, a lawyer, who became a leading figure of the “ultranationalist right wing” (Plakans, 1997:33). Bergs was among Latvians leading the relief efforts among Latvian refugees in St. Petersburg during the First World War. He collaborated with Karlis Ulmanis’ authoritarian regime following the coup d’etat in 1934 (von Rauch, 1995:159). His right-wing faction represented the views and interests of a tiny, wealthy part of the Latvian bourgeoisie; industrialists, traders and also certain intellectual groups (Zalts, 1926:18). Their political goals were economic stability, minimal social reforms and a strong central political power in order to secure stability. The influence of this party was undermined by the extra-parliamentary organization of right-wing radicals in the late 1920s (von Rauch, 1995:93, von Hehn, 1966:17).

It appears that nationalism was a common political principle shared by the Latvian bourgeoisie in the 1920s and 1930s. The defining contrast between conservative and right liberal parties; the attitude to whether or not collaborate with the former Baltic German estate owners; makes no sense today. Conservatism is difficult to define as a political theory as it rejects explicit ideology and advocates pragmatism (Robertson 1993:107). The *content* of conservative politics may change from generation to generation because different generations “may have different things to preserve.” In Latvia today, several parties define themselves as conservative. To some parties on the right, a liberalist view on economic issues goes along with a conservative view on issues concerning the nation and the family institution and often also (Christian) religion. The People’s Party define itself as a conservative party which emphasizes the promotion of European culture, traditions and values of the Christian world.¹²⁸ The People’s Party base itself upon four cornerstone principles: Freedom, Justice, Private Property and the Nation-State. The Party promotes the *nation-state* principle, but explicitly admit minority population protection of their cultural identity. The party sees the defence of Latvia’s independence served within the EU and NATO. The promotion of christian values is common to other European Christian-Democratic parties. Another party that explicitly defines itself as conservative, is For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK. The programme (English version¹²⁹) states: We are a conservative political organization which is founded to strengthen the state independence and sovereignty on the basis of the principle of legal succession of the Republic of Latvia proclaimed on the 18th of November 1918 and the Constitution of 1922 (...). The party is against “an extreme liberalism permitting an unlimited development of market economy” which the party says leads to “a sharp contrast between rich and poor, mass

¹²⁸ Party programme in English on the Internet: <http://www.tautaspartija.lv/files/tpprogeng.doc>

¹²⁹ The English version was provided by Ance Gulbe at the TB/LNNK office.

strike and social disturbances, that is a natural ground for leftist ideas (...)” and sees it as the responsibility of the state “to protect the poor and socially ruined”. TB/LNNK supports a “socially responsible market economy”. Common for all the parties along the centre-right axis, in the 1920’s and 1990’s, is the rejection of “leftist ideas” (Marxism and socialism), and the promotion of a unified nation-state. Under post-Soviet circumstances and during the transition from state economy to market economy, and the ongoing process of social differentiation, it seems rather premature to try and establish clear-cut definitions that can distinguish between “liberals” and “conservatives” in a meaningful way, for example when concerning parties like Latvia’s Way, the People’s Party and New Era.

Another aspect to the existence of several parties that look rather similar is observed by Margarethe Lindemuth who found that the existence of several bourgeois parties and groups in 1905 –1907 did not result from profound ideological (“Ideelle”) contrasts, but rather from minor disagreements on “formalities and tactics” as well as “personal antagonisms” (“Gegensätze”) which made impossible the formation of a single, larger Latvian bourgeois party (Lindemuth 1969:77). Such tendencies are present in Latvian politics also today. For example, following the 2002 elections, New Era party leader Einars Repse became Prime Minister of a centre-right coalition, while the People’s Party (of Andris Skele) was left in opposition, although both parties are members of the association of European conservative parties.

7.4 A Multivariate Analysis of the 1998 Survey

To which extent can *changes* in new party system be explained by changes in the voter population and new socio-structural contrasts since the 1940s? I will introduce results of a multivariate analysis of the 1998 survey data. The results are presented in Figure 7-3 to Figure 7.7. An explanation of the multivariate analysis and of how to interpret the plots is given in Chapter 3.4.2.

The following is a very important result: Most of the variations in the voter characteristics (X-variables) and party choice (Y-variables) were found *not to be explained*. For the Y-variables (party choice) only 6% of the variation is explained by the first PLS-component, and 1% by the second PLS component - 7% all together. For the X-variables (voter characteristics) 10% of the variation is explained by the first PLS-component and 10% of the second component (20% all together). It means that other X-variables than the ones included in the survey stands for the variation in Y, *or party choice is more or less random*. An X-variable that might explain more of the party choice but not included in the 1998

survey, may be for example “parents’ party preference”. Similarly, a possible reason for randomness with respect to party preference might be that it is not clear to the voters what the different parties stands for. Also party choice may have been motivated by party leaders or other front figures.

The variables included in the analysis in Figure 7-3 (and Figure 7-4) are Nationality, Region, Urban/Rural Area, Occupation, Income, Age and Gender.

In addition, the survey included questions about the *motivation* for party preference. The following alternatives were given: **a)** I didn’t like any of the electoral lists, but I voted for the list I consider the least bad, **b)** I didn’t have much confidence in those I voted for, but I voted for them because I was dissatisfied with the incumbent politicians, **c)** I voted for the electoral list that I believe represents the best candidates, ideas and program, **d)** I voted for the list that contained my favourite candidate, **e)** I voted for the most professional and competent candidates, **f)** I voted for those I expect to further my personal interests, **g)** Those I voted for are the best both for the country and for people in my situation, **h)** I didn’t vote for the party that is closest to me, but for a related electoral list with real chances to enter the 7th Saeima, **i)** I voted in support of the ethnic group I belong to and **j)** Hard to say, no answer.

An analysis with these questions where included as X-variables (in addition to the **other X-variables**) gave more or less *same degree of explanation* of the X- and Y-variables (Figure 7-5). The Y-variables were explained 6% and 2% by the two first PLS components respectively. However, it must be underlined that the analysis do after all explain *some* of the variation, and leaves three interesting findings: Firstly, by looking at Figure 7-3 (and Figure 7-4) it is found that “nationality” likely is the most salient variable (First PLS component). Secondly, Riga and rural area (‘Urban-Rural’ variable) appears to be the Second PLS component. Thirdly, the other PLS-components (no. 3-8) explain *less than 1%* of the Y-variations. (Shown in “Explained Validation Variance Plot”, a graphic not included here.)

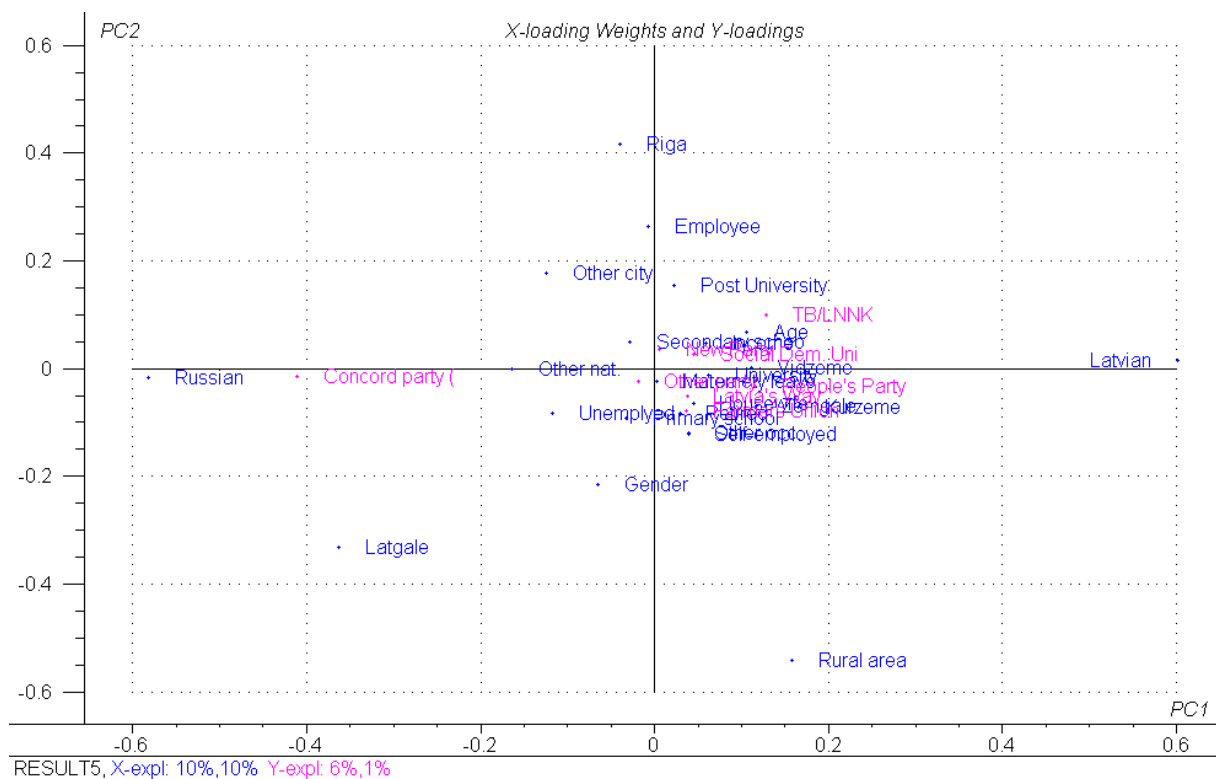


Figure 7-3: The figure shows plot from multivariate (regression) analysis of the 1998 survey. The variables included in this analysis are: Nationality, region, urban/rural area, occupation, income, age and gender. The axis show the most important PLS-component (labelled PC1) describing the party choice on the “x-axis”, and the second most important PLS- component (labelled PC2) describing the party choice on the” y-axis”.

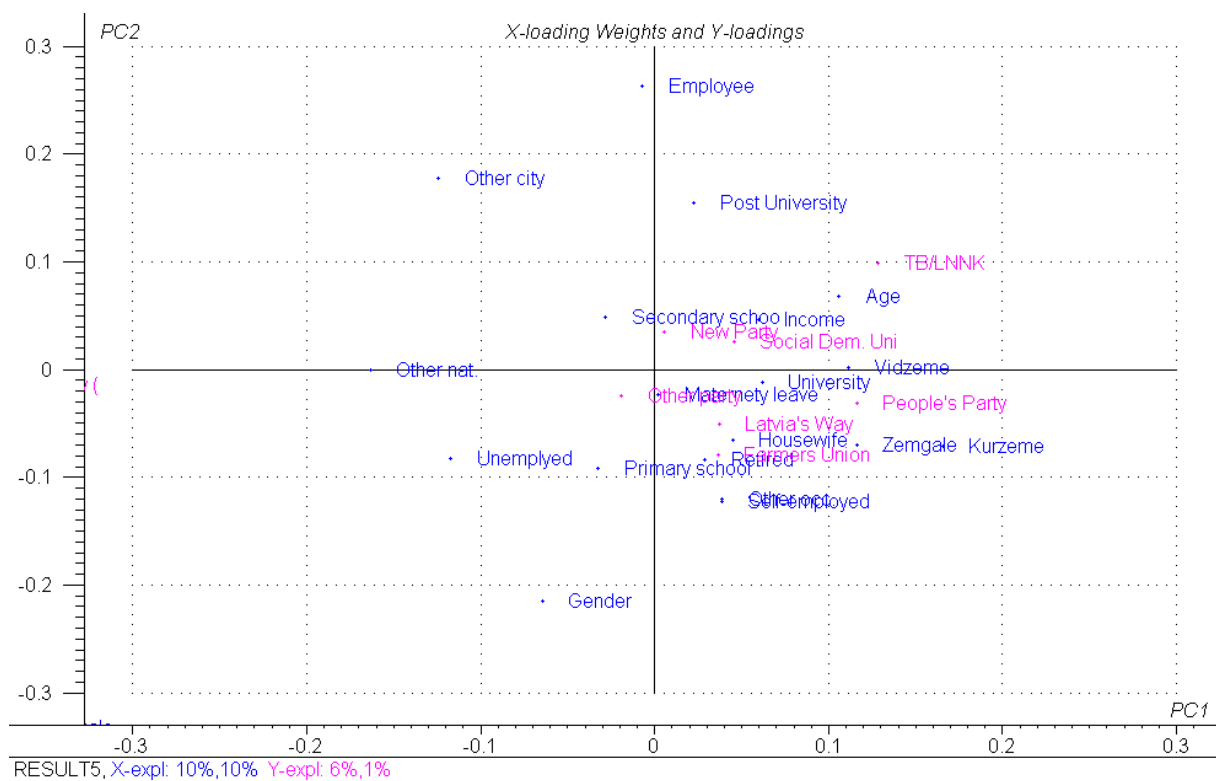


Figure 7-4: A scaled-up version of Figure 7-3, to look at the variables in the center of the plot.

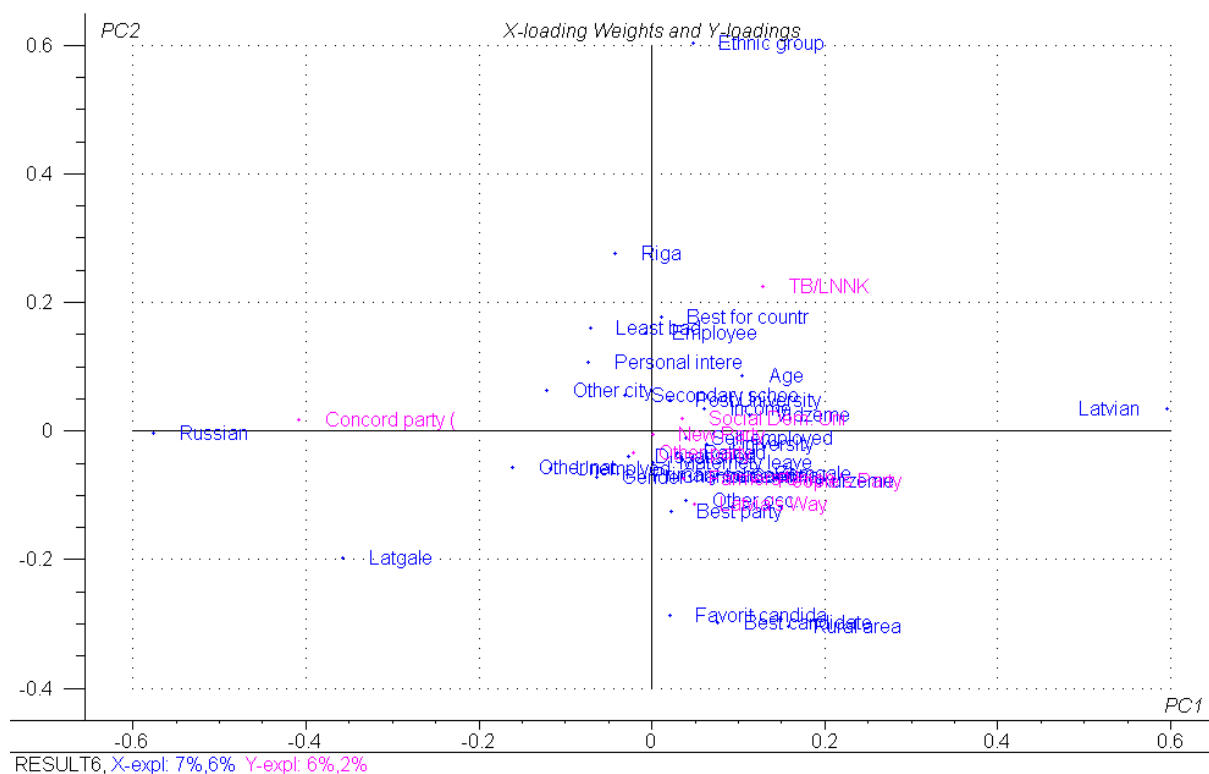


Figure 7-5: The same as Figure 7-3, including also motivation for party choice as X-variables

Figure 7-6 shows “Score Plots” corresponding to the “Loading Plots” in Figure 7-3 (and Figure 7-4). The plots distinguish by colour between respondents belonging to a) different nationality groups, b) different places of residence, c) different regions (election districts) and d) income level. Figure a) strengthen the interpretation of “Nationality” as the first PLS-component. The figure shows that the three nationality categories are grouped together *along* the first PLS-component (the X-axis), Latvians to the right and Russians to the left. Figure b) strengthen the interpretation of ‘Urban-Rural’ as the second PLS-component. As seen, Riga dwellers (pink) are in the upper part of the diagram, whereas rural dwellers (green) are found at the lower (opposite) part. In Figure c) Latgale respondents are found in the rural/Russian quadrant, which corresponds well with demographic data. Riga dwellers are the same as the ones in plot b) and are of course located at the same place, as a group in the upper part of the ‘Urban-Rural’ axis. The Figure further shows that the other regions, Zemgale, Kurzeme and Vidzeme can not be distinguished from each other. A majority of these residents are Latvian. Figure d) shows that the respondents can not be distinguished with respect to income level. The same applies for education and occupation. This means that *neither income, education or occupation appear to be significant* with respect to party preference.

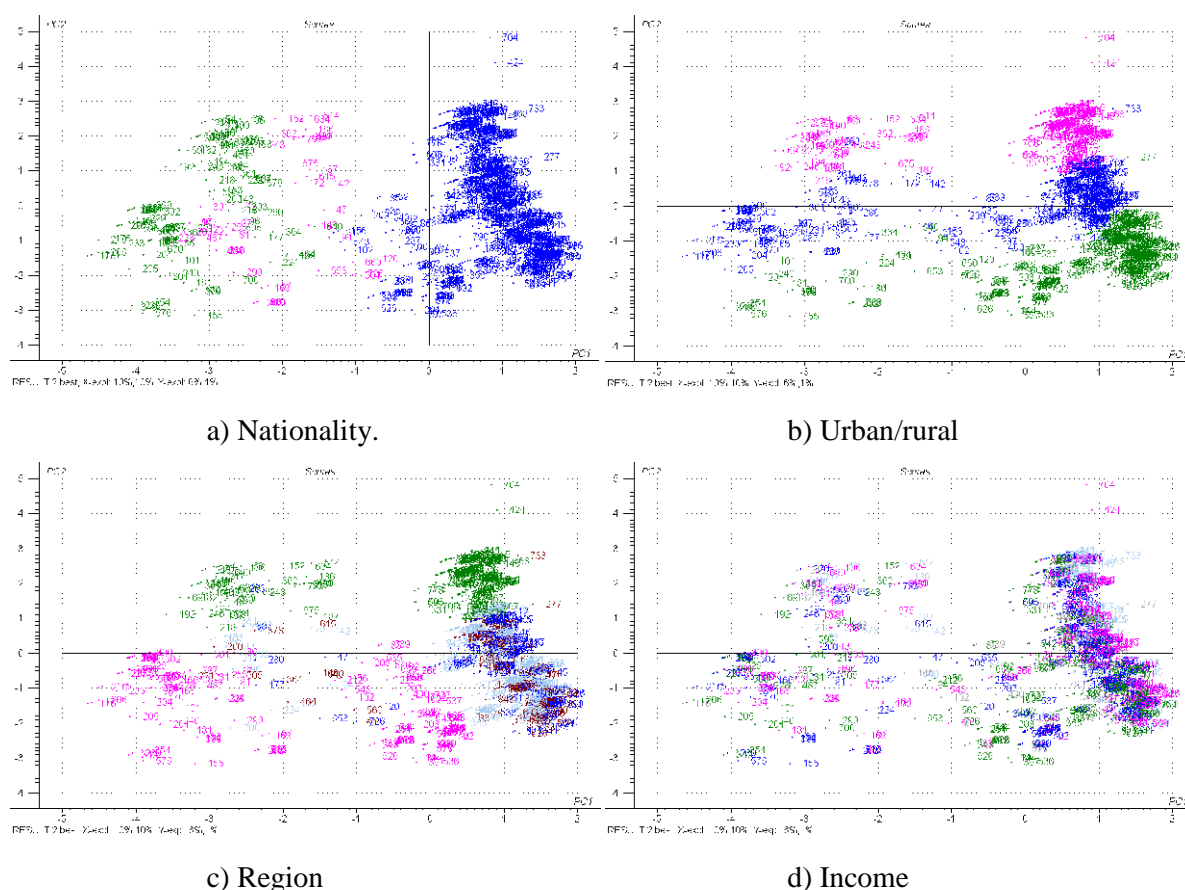


Figure 7-6: Shows “Score plots” of the analysis shown in Figure 7-3. The plots distinguish by colour between respondents belonging to a) different nationality groups, b) different places of residence, c) different regions (election districts) and d) income level.

a) Latvian=blue, Russian=green, and “Other nationalities”=pink.

b) Rural area=green, Riga=pink, and “Other city”=blue

c) Riga=green, Latgale=pink, Zemgale=brown, Kurzeme=dark blue, and Vidzeme=light blue

d) < 31 LVL=green, 31-50 LVL=dark blue, 51-80 LVL=pink, > 80 LVL=light blue. Light grey represents missing information about income.

Figure 7-5 shows that the motivation category ‘Ethnic Group’, which corresponds to “I voted in support of the ethnic group I belong to” appear to describe the second PLS-component. Similarly the motivation categories related to voting for parties with “Favourite” and “Best” candidate appear to be on the other end of an “motivation” PLS-component. **However, a score plot shows that “motivation” values are more or less randomly distributed, and that “motivation” is not (part of) the second PLS component.** The data material suggests that ‘Ethnic Group’ is primarily associated with TB/LNNK voters, which probably explains most of the “extreme” location of “Ethnic Group”.

To sum up, Figure 7-3 - Figure 7-6 indicate that the X-variables (describing the voters) that most clearly explains party preference is nationality, with ‘Russian’ and ‘Latvian’ as the extreme values. ‘Other nationality’, on the other hand, is more neutral (lies closer to the origin). With respect to the Y-variables (party preference), the People’s Concord Party (which

in 1998 included Socialist Party candidates) and For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK are the main opposing parties along the nationality variable. The People's Party, too, is equally close to 'Latvian' (Figure 7-4). The explanation why TB/LNNK is not closer to the 'Latvian' value, compared to Concord's position much closer to 'Russian', may be explained by the relatively low election support for TB/LNNK, and the fact that the majority of the Latvian votes are distributed among several other parties. The effect of the 'Latvian' value is dispersed. In 1998, 19.9 per cent of the Latvian voters voted for TB/LNNK, whereas 58 per cent of the Russian voters voted for the Concord Party (2.7 per cent of the Latvian voters voted for the Concord Party, but none of the Russian voters voted for TB/LNNK). The explanation why the People's Party matches TB/LNNK's position along the 'Nationality' axis appears to be the high all-over Latvian support for TP (29.2 per cent). TP emerged as election winner in 1998, and received also 9.8 per cent of the 'Russian' vote and 11.1 per cent of the vote of 'Other Nationalities'. The "Russian" support for TP distinguishes the party's electorate from that of TB/LNNK in spite of the similar location along the "Nationality" component.

If we look at the second most important PLS-component in Figure 7-3 (and Figure 7-4), which describes the 'Urban-Rural' variable, TB/LNNK appears as the most "urban" party (Riga) whereas the Farmers' Union (which was not elected to the seventh Saeima) and Latvia's Way are closer to the "rural" end (Figure 7-4). The People's Party, People's Concord Party and the Social Democratic Union appear neutral with respect to the urban-rural component. The position of TB/LNNK closer to the "Riga" end support the assumption that the "nationality conflict" from the Latvian side is more politically significant in Riga where very many (Russian) Soviet migrants live. A question, then, is whether this tendency will become even more pronounced as more and more non-citizens become naturalized and use their ballot. A polarization in Riga, where approximately a third of the country's population live, may have a great impact upon the national elections as well as local elections. The 2002 survey data however suggest a different development than the one of 1998, which leaves many questions open until the 2006 election.

The findings of the multivariate analysis, of the 1998 post-election poll, indicate that the two variables that can explain variations with respect to party preference are 'Nationality' and "Place of Residence" (the 'Urban-Rural' variable). Notably, the values that matter are 'Russian' and 'Latvian', and not so much 'Non-Latvians' versus 'Latvian'. The findings seem to underscore the "nationality" contrast as one mainly between Russians and Latvians.

Figure 7-3 (and 7-4) further shows co-variance between Latgale ('Region') and 'Russian', and 'Russian' and 'Other city' (the 'Urban-Rural' variable). Russian voters are

found mainly in Riga, Daugavpils and other big cities. The position of the X-loading 'Latgale' in direction of X-loadings 'Russian' and 'Village, Countryside', and Y-loading 'Concord Party' indicates that Russians living in the countryside in Latgale also primarily voted for the TSP. Whether the 'Nationality' variable and the 'Urban-Rural' contrast will become permanent cleavages, is too early to tell. The term 'cleavage' is associated with long lasting contrasts that become permanently expressed by political representation. The findings here suggest a weak tendency, only, and only with respect to 'Nationality' and 'Place of Residence'.

The analysis of the 1998 survey data suggests a *positive co-relation* between residing in the countryside, low Education and low income, whereas higher income and higher education ('Post-University') co-relate with 'Riga'. (In Figure 7-4 it can be seen that income has a positive value along the second PLS-component (the Y-axis). Skilled worker co-relates with Riga, whereas "Unskilled worker" co-relates with "Russian". The latter may indicate a socio-structural impact of the Soviet "export" to Latvia of unskilled labour.

Does the material reveal any emerging socio-economic cleavage? To study this, a modified analyses was performed, where 'Education', 'Income' and 'Occupation' were the selected X-variables (with all Y-variable included). Next, Y-variables that were closely positioned in this plot were grouped together and analyzed in relation to the three X-variables. TB/LNNK and the People's Party (TP) were grouped together, as were the People's Concord Party (TSP), the Farmers' Union (LZS) and "Other Parties". The resulting Loading Plot, shown in Figure 7-7, indicates a slight tendency: 1 % of the Y-variation is explained by the three "socio-structural" variables, with 'Income' apparently as the most decisive component. TB/LNNK+TP+Other Parties and TSP+LZS are counterparts in this plot, with the former group closer to the higher income end, and the latter somewhat closer to the lower income end. However, the one per cent explanatory value must be characterized as low, and the effect on party choice by the socio-structural component, mainly income, must be said to be weak. With regard to the Social Democratic Party, Latvia's Way and the New Party, the selected socio-structural variables are neutral. It is difficult to interpret the second PLS component, since there is no linearity with respect to 'Education' or 'Occupation'. The explanatory value is less than 1 %.

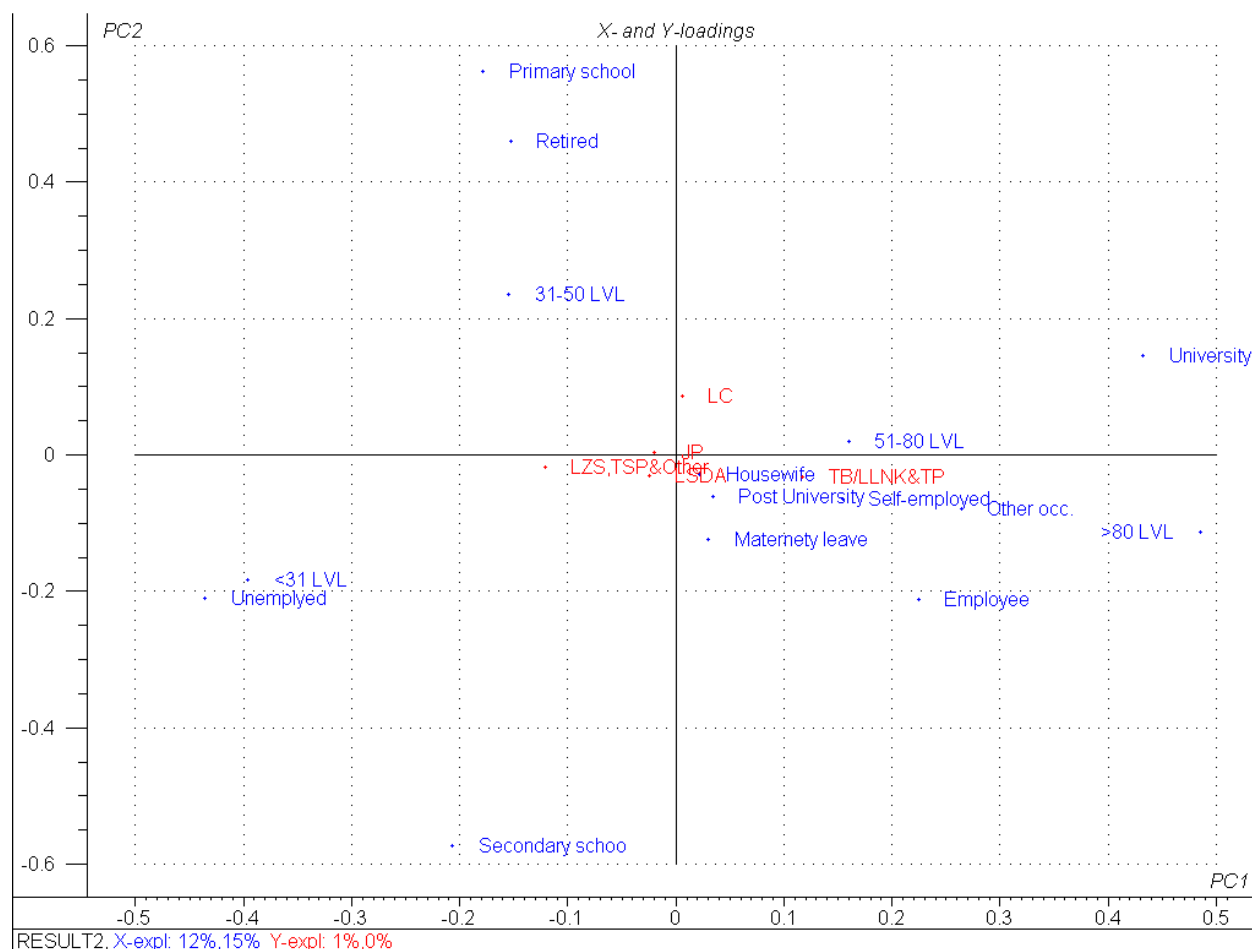


Figure 7-7: Loading plot of analysis comprising income, education and occupation as X-variables and with TB/LNNK and the People's Party (TP) grouped together, and the People's Concord Party (TSP), the Farmers' Union (LZS) and "Other Parties" grouped together.

The findings are interesting for two reasons: Firstly, that relatively low explanatory value of the socio-structural variables is contrary to expectations with respect to Rokkan and Lipset's findings in West-European party systems where the economic cleavage is found in all systems and is usually a fundamental cleavage. It is possible that an operational definition of socio-economic cleavage, here by income, education and occupation, is a too simplistic definition. A plausible explanation for the weak explanatory value may be the transitional character of the economy and society at large, where other factors than one's position in the social structure, income, education and occupation decide the voters' party preference.

Secondly, the slight *tendency* that many respondents who voted for TB/LNNK and the People's Party belong to groups with high income and high education, and oppositely; that respondents who voted for TSP and the Farmers' Union belonged to groups with low income and low education, may suggest that a socioeconomic cleavage may be developing and may become more significant, but in 1998 it was not. The four Saeima elections that have been

held, as well as changes of constellations within the Saeima and shifts of governments during the election periods, reveal a somewhat chaotic and confusing picture. It is not necessarily so that the voters have a clear-cut idea about the parties and their policies. The fact that new parties have emerged the winner at each election suggests that there's a degree of ambivalence among the voting population.

Rokkan and Lipset found the socioeconomic cleavage to be shared by all the party systems in all the countries they studied. It seems that, while this cleavage was profound in Latvia in the 1920s and 1930s, it has so far not clearly materialized in post-Soviet, post-communist Latvia.

As to the low explanatory value of the two first PLS components identified ('Nationality' and 'Place of Residence'), the result may be explained by various factors such as relevant variables lacking in the material, or that the relationship between the parties and the voters is not established in any firm or lasting manner. This analysis of the voter level adds only very limited information to the assumed relationship between the socio-structural and socio-cultural basis, and party preference.

7.5 Conflicts and Contrasts: Final Comments

Data similar to the 1993-2002 survey does not exist for the pre-war elections, and a comparison can be only tentatively made on the basis of approximate knowledge of the social structure and political representation. Clearly, the conflict along the 'class' status dimension represented a profound cleavage in the first democratic era. The nationality cleavage emerged and was mobilized in the late nineteenth century, becoming closely intertwined with class issues and the issue of independence. The conflicts were more or less transformed into a cultural-national conflict and ideological conflict in the pre-war democratic period.

The national-cultural conflict between Latvians and Russians has similarities with the conflict between Latvians and Baltic Germans, but the former is not rooted in a class cleavage. The conflicts have in common an *ideological* component, related to the ideological position of the deposed rulers (conservative/communist), which makes the present-day structure of political oppositions appear as a "mirror image" of that of the pre-war years.

There were two socio-structural (economic) dimensions in the 1920s and 1930s, 'class' and 'countryside/city'. The multivariate analysis indicates a *tendency* towards an urban/rural contrast by 1998, but it is premature to talk about a lasting political cleavage. Contrasts between city and countryside is a "classic" dimension identified by Rokkan and Lipset. It has been a salient dimension in Latvia before, and may become again.

Social and economic differences cannot, as yet, be viewed in terms of class contrasts. Social and economic advantage or disadvantage does not relate to nationality – or to being a citizen or permanent resident. The countryside is still dominantly “Latvian”.

Latgale remains an ethnically mixed district but the expressively separatist character of the pre-war years appears to be gone. Riga remains an ethnically mixed city. Latgale and Riga are districts where the nationality variable become more salient than in the rest of Latvia. The mobilization of votes for TB/LNNK, TSP, LSP and PCTVL seem to indicate a possible polarization along national lines, but the tendency may have been reversed (2002), and at present socio-economic factors does not appear to increase the salience of the nationality variable by polarization, which seems to have been the case in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Conflicts related to class contrasts and nationality were profoundly decisive for the formation of political opposition in Latvia in the 1920s, along a national-cultural (nation-building) and economic dimension. They were initially reinforcing conflicts, as nationality, expressed by language and other cultural features, and class, were traditionally two sides of the same coin in the region until the proclamation of the democratic republic. Additionally, a regional contrast has played a profound role in Latvian pre-war politics, due to the different historical development of eastern Latgale. Among Latvians in particular, an important socio-structural contrast was between landowning farmers and rural workers. The creation of a worker-to-peasant segment led to a transformation of a part of the class conflict in the countryside. In addition, there was a mobilized contrast between the (Latvian) intellectual, urban elite and the radical working class. The urban elite was less consolidated along this dimension. Political conservatism found scarce support, related, as it was, to the former rulers.

Some of the pattern has re-emerged after the readoption of independence and democracy in Latvia. Yet one profound conflict in Latvian history, which was identified by Rokkan and Lipset as a central conflict within all democratic party systems, is still almost non-existing: The socio-structural conflict, as expression of a class cleavage, finds only weak statistical expression, according to the findings in this thesis. It is highly possible that new socio-structural contrasts will find firmer expression within the party system in the future. The apparent absence of the class cleavage may, partly, be explained by the impact of Soviet communist regime's promotion of the working-class which may for some time have paralyzed the mobilizing potential related to socialism and 'class' identity. It seems other issues and other factors are more decisive to the voters. One of two 'continuous' parties, The Latvian Social Democratic Party, finds only minor support, and not primarily among its traditional electorate.

The old nationality contrast remain one of profound importance in Latvian politics; between the 'native' nationality and the 'conquering' nationality. The nationality dimension contain also an ideological factor, concerning the attitude towards the former, non-democratic regime and institutions. This leave different ideological flavours to Latvian nationalism which in the 1920s appeared as a radical opposition, whereas today it appears more conservative or liberal.

The regional component has re-emerged, but with a somewhat different expression. The catholic element is there, but hardly politically salient, nor is the cultural *diversity*. In

stead, Latgale's differentness consists of its relatively higher concentration of non-native Latvians; mostly Russian and other Slav inhabitants. They do not vote anymore, to any extent, for separate, local parties, but for the so-called pro-Russian parties. The contrast appears rather like polarization, and not in terms of pluralism. The regional dimension remains, but with a different expression.

Another significant change is the reduced importance of agriculture and similarly less politically important role of farming parties compared to the pre-war era. The second 'continuous' party, the Farmers' Union, is still relevant but play only a minor role

A question that has been tentatively answered in the course of this thesis is about the relevance of Stein Rokkan and Seymour M. Lipset's party system theory and in particular the cleavage concept. The idea that certain contrasts and conflicts becomes "structural" and lasting in a society has relevance – yet a weakness concern the mobilisation and expression of cleavages and the exact operationalization of 'cleavage' within a system where conditions for the organisation and expression of political opinion and disagreement has been very oppressive. It can be hard to say whether we observe genuine cleavages, or if they are currently important conflicts and contrasts that can turn out to be short-lived, and change.

A question that has emerged in the course of this study is the possible impact of feudal traditions in Latvia. Could Heidi Bottolf's notion of an 'elite cleavage' be somehow related to a long-lasting tradition of largely ignoring the greater population, and concerned with small group interests and "parties" among a relatively tiny elite? The feudal system existed to some degree until the Russian revolution. After Soviet occupation and annexation, another elite system was established with the presence of a nomenclature and the supreme powers of the Communist Party (see for example Michael Voslensky, 1986) . The question is whether the *responsiveness* of Latvia's still young democracy has developed enough to function as a thoroughly integrating system between the political elite and the voters. The question concerns the role of political parties as tools of political integration; integrating the voters through the system's responsiveness and, in consequence, its legitimation.

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APPENDIX A: The Saeima 1922-1931¹³⁰

Table A- I: Marxist and social democratic parties and the number of deputies in the Saeima, 1922-1934

Party	Number of Seats			
	1922-25	1925-28	1928-31	1931-34
Socialists/Social Democrats (total)	38	37	36	28
Social Democrats (LSDSP)	30	31	25	20
Latgalian Social Democrats (J.Opincans)		1	1	
Bund (Jewish socialists)	1	1	1	
Moderate Social Democrats ¹³¹	7	4	2	
Independent			1	1
Peasants' and Workers Faction			6	7

Table A- II: Liberal and radical bourgeois parties ("Centre parties") and the number of deputies in the Saeima, 1922-1934

Party	Number of Seats			
	1922-25	1925-28	1928-31	1931-34
The centre (total)	10	7	9	13
Democratic Centre	6	3	3	6
Workers' League ¹³²			1	1
Progressive Union				3
Economic Association ¹³³			1	1
Radical Democrats		1		
Independent Democrats		1		
Christian Labourers			1	
Latgalian Progressives	4	2	3	2

Table A- III: Agrarian parties and the number of deputies in the Saeima, 1922-1934

Party	Number of Seats			
	1922-25	1925-28	1928-31	1931-34
Agrarian (total)	28	31	29	34
Farmers' Union	16	16	16	14
New Settlers and Smallholders		3	4	9
New Farmers	3	3		
Catholic and Christian Farmers of Latgale (Rancans)	3	5	6	8
Progressive Farmers of Latgale (F.Trasuns)	4	2	3	3
Independent Farmers of Latgale		1		
Devastated Territories	1	1		
Christian Farmers of Zemgale	1			

Table A- IV: Right (conservative) parties and the number of deputies in the Saeima, 1922-1934

Party	Number of Seats			
	1922-25	1925-28	1928-31	1931-34
The Right¹³⁴ (total)	9	9	8	8
Christian Union				6
National Union	4	3	2	
National-Christians	4	2	4	
Houseowners' Union		1	1	1
Latgalian Association	1	2	1	1
National Farmers		1		
New Farmers Union				1

¹³⁰ Based on tables by Albert Zalts, 1926 and Alfred Bilmanis

¹³¹ 1931: Progressive Union (Centre). Margers Skujenieks' party.

¹³² Agnis Balodis, 1990

¹³³ Wirtschaftliche Vereinigung

¹³⁴ Rechter Flügel

Table A- V: Minority parties and the number of deputies in the Saeima, 1922-1934

Party	Number of Seats			
	1922-25	1925-28	1928-31	1931-34
Minorities	15	16	18	17
Russian Old Believers	1	2	2	2
Orthodox Russians		2	2	2
Union of Russian Civil Servants	1	1	2	1
Russian Farmers' Union				1
Russian National Democrats	1			
German block	6	5	6	6
Agudat Israel ¹³⁵	2	2	1	2
Mizrachi ¹³⁶	1	1	2	1
National Democrats	1			
Tze'ieray Tzion (Zion's Youth) ¹³⁷	1	1	1	
Polish Party	1	2	2	2

	1 st Saeima 1922-25	2 nd Saeima 1925-28	3 rd Saeima 1928-31	4 th Saeima 1931-34
Total number of seats	100	100	100	100

¹³⁵ Association of Israel, orthodox clerical Jewish party related to the Hasidic movement, headed by Mordechai Dubin. ("History of Latvian Jews" p. 68,85, by Josifs Steinmanis Daugavpils 1995/New York 2002)

¹³⁶ According to Zalts, Mizrachi won two seats in the First Saeima, but Mendel Bobe (72) in Josif Steimanis (p.87) recorded one seat for Mizrachi. Bobe recorded one seat also for a party named National Democrats, which is not mentioned by Zalts or Bilmanis.

¹³⁷ Ceire Zion (in German), supporters of Max Laserson's 'Labour Zionism' (History of Latvian Jews pp. 84-87) In 1931, Tze'ieray Tzion and Zionist Socialists merged into one party, Zionist Socialists of Latvia.

APPENDIX B: 5th-8th Saeima

Table B- I: Parties and the number of deputies in the Saeima, 1993-2002.

Party/Alliance	5 th Saeima 1993-1995	6 th Saeima 1995-1998	7 th Saeima 1998-2002	8 th Saeima 2002-
LC (Latvia's Way)	36	17	21	0
LNNK (Latvia's National Independence Movement)	15	8 (b)	17 (c)	7 (c)
TB (For Fatherland and Freedom)	6	14	17 (c)	7 (c)
KDS (Christian Democratic Union)	5	8 (a)	0 (e)	----
LZS (Farmers' Union)	12	8 (a)	0	12 (f)
DCP (Democratic Centre Party)	6	----	----	----
SLAT (Concord for Latvia/ National Harmony Party) (95-98)	13	6	16	---- (d)
LK (Equal Rights Movement)/ Latvian Socialist Party (1995-)	7	5	16 (d)	---- (d)
DP "Saimnieks" (Democratic Party "Landlord")	----	18	0	----
TKL (People's Movement For Latvia)	----	16	0	----
LTP (Latvian People's Party)	----	----	24	20
LSDA (Latvian Social Democratic Alliance)	0	0	14	0
JP (The New Party)	----	----	8	----
JL (New Era)	----	----	----	26
"For Human Rights"	----	----	----	25 (d)
LPP (Latvian First Party)	----	----	----	10 (g)
Total number of seats	100	100	100	100

- a) United List of LZS, KDS and Latgale Democratic Party
- b) Latvian National Conservative Party LNNK and LZP (Latvian Green Party)
- c) ATB/LNNK (Alliance "For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK)
- d) Including the National Harmony Party, Latvian Socialist Party/Equal Rights Movement and the Russian Party
- e) Alliance of KDS (Chr. Democratic Union) , DP (Labour Party) and LZP (Green Party)
- f) Green and Farmers Union, a merger of the Farmers Union and Green the Party
- g) Alliance of christian parties – KDS, Christian People's Party (reformed LTF)

APPENDIX C: Post Election Surveys 1993 – 2002

All the results are weighted by percent for each sub-group. This means for instance that for party choice measured by nationality, the sum of Latvian votes are 100%, and the sum of Russian votes are 100%.

Party- and Election Alliance Abbreviations:

Lidztiesība (Equal Rights) = **Lidz**
 Latvijas Sociālistiskā Partija (Latvian Socialist Party) = **LSP**
 "Par cilvēka tiesībām vienota Latvija" (For Human Rights in a United Latvia) = **PCTVL**
 Saskana Latvijai – Atdzimsana Tautasaimniecībai
 (Concord for Latvia – Rebirth of the Economy) = **SLAT**
 Tautas Saskaņas Partija (People's Concord Party) = **TSP**
 Latvijas Vienības Partija (Latvian Unity Party) = **LVP**
 Demokrātiska Centra Partija (Democratic Centre Party) = **DCP**
 Demokrātiskā partija "Saimnieks" (Democratic Party "Landlord") = **DPS**
 Latvijas Demokrātiskās Darba Partija (Latvian Democratic Labour Party) = **LDDP**
 Latvijas Sociāldemokrātiskā Strādnieku Partija (Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party) = **LSDSP**
 Koalicijas "Darbs un Taisnīgums" (Social Democratic Coalition "Labour and Justice") = **SDK**
 Latvijas Sociāldemokrātu Apvienība (Latvian Social Democratic Union) = **LSDA**
 Jauna Partija (The New Party) = **JP**
 Latvijas Cels (Latvia's Way) = **LC**
 Tautas Partija (The People's Party) = **TP**
 Jaunais Laiks (New Era) = **JL**
 Latvijas Zemnieku Savienība (Latvian Farmers' Union) = **LZS**
 Zālo un Zemnieku Savienība (Green and Farmers' Union) = **ZZS**
 Latvijas Kristīgi Demokrātu Savienība (Christian Democratic Union) = **KDS**
 Latvijas Pirma Partija (Latvia's First Party) = **LPP**
 Latvijas Nacionālās Neatkarības Kustība (Latvian National Independence Movement) = **LNNK**
 Tevzemei un Brīvībai (For Fatherland and Freedom) = **TB**
 Tautas Kustība Latvijai (People's Movement "For Latvia") = **TKL**

Nationality (1993, 1995, 1998 and 2002):

Table C- I: Results of the post election survey in 1993. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by nationality. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Nationality	Lidz	SLAT	DCP	LC	LZS	KDS	LNNK	TB	Other
Latvians, n=482	0.8	7.1	5.6	38.4	10.8	7.1	12.7	5.4	12.2
Non-Latvian, n=111	13.5	35.1	3.6	23.4	9.0	4.5	3.6	1.8	5.4

Table C- II: Results of the post election survey in 1995. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by nationality. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Nationality	LSP	TSP	LVP	DPS	TKL	SDC	LC	LZS & KDS	LNNK & LVP	TB	Other
Latvians, n=471	1.1	1.5	7.5	20.7	11.1	5.1	14.5	6	9.4	15.8	7.4
Russians, n=66	22.3	23.2	7.3	18.6	8	4	6.1	2.5	0.0	0.0	7.8
Others, n=21		9.8	21.8	20.5	21.1	4.7	17.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.7

Table C- III: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by nationality. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Nationality	TSP	LSDA	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
Latvian, n=703	2.7	14.9	7.7	29.2	17.2	19.9	8.4
Russian, n=112	58.0	8.0	5.4	9.8	9.8	0.0	8.9
Other, n=45	31.1	13.3	8.9	11.1	26.7	4.4	4.4

Table C- IV: Results of the post election survey in 2002. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by nationality. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Nationality	PCTVL	LSDSP	TP	JL	ZZS	LC	LPP	LNNK & TB	Other
Latvian, n=640	3.6	4.1	19.8	35	13	5.7	10.8	5.6	2.4
Russian, n=140	75.5	1.3	4.2	7.4	1.9	0.6	1.4	0.5	7.1
Other, n=50	41.7	6.7	5.8	24.8	4.1	2.3	10.2	0.0	4.5

Place of Residence (1993, 1995, 1998 and 2002):

Table C- V: Results of the post election survey in 1993. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by place of residence. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Residence	Lidz	SLAT	DCP	LC	LZS	KDS	LNNK	TB	Other
Riga, n=158	5.7	17.1	7.0	29.7	5.1	5.7	12.0	7.6	10.1
Other town, n=225	4.0	12.0	5.8	33.8	10.7	6.7	14.2	3.6	9.3
Rural area, n=210	0.5	9.0	3.3	41.9	14.3	7.1	6.7	3.8	13.3

Table C- VI: Results of the post election survey in 1995. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by place of residence. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Residence	LSP	TSP	LVP	DPS	(TKL)	Social Democ. Coalition (a)	(LC) Latvia's Way	(LZS & KDS) FU & CDU	(LNNK & LZP) Indep. & Green Party	(TB) Fatherl. & Freedom	Other
Riga, n=137	6.8	6.9	4.3	19.5	2.1	4.6	10.8	1.3	13.6	20	10.1
6 bigger cities, n=93	8.6	12.6		18.9	12.4	5	17.6	2.7	5.1	12.7	4.4
District center, n=49	2	2.4	4.3	31.9	9.9	7	10.8	3.6	4.2	13.9	10
Other city, n=61		1.1	8.2	27.6	9.1	8.9	11.5	3.9	8.8	13.9	7.1
Village, n=40			4.9	12.3	23.3	6.5	15.1	20.4	2.1	12.8	2.6
Countryside, n=178	2	2	16.8	17.8	16.5	2.8	14.8	7.9	5.7	6.8	6.9

Table C- VII: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by place of residence. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Residence	TSP	LSDA	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
Riga, n=204	14.2	17.2	7.8	21.1	10.8	22.1	6.9
OtherCity, n=325	16.6	10.8	8.9	24.9	17.2	16.3	5.2
Town, Village, Country-side, n=331	4.5	15.1	5.7	29.3	19.9	13.3	12.1

Table C- VIII: Results of the post election survey in 2002. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by place of residence. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Residence	PCTVL	LSDSP	TP	JL	ZZS	LC	LPP	LNNK & TB	Other
Riga, n=226	30.7	3.2	7.8	38.6	4.4	5.7	4.6	2.5	2.6
6 bigger cities, n=131	28.2	5.2	11.1	22.4	9.9	1.8	11.2	3.5	6.7
District center, n=114	15.4	4.5	25.2	24.6	7.1	5.1	7.4	5	5.6
Other city, n=63	4.3	3.1	27.5	34.4	8.7	6.2	8.1	6.1	1.5
Village, countryside, n=296	7.2	3.5	19.4	27.1	17.6	4.6	13	5.7	2

Region (1995, 1998 and 2002):

Table C- IX: Results of the post election survey in 1995. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by region. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Region	LSP	TSP	LVP	DPS	TKL	SDK	LC	LZS & KDS	LNNK & LZP	TB	Other
Riga, n=137	6.8	6.9	4.3	19.5	2.1	4.6	10.8	1.3	13.6	20	10.1
Vidzeme, n=141		1.6	14	16.1	14.9	4.9	10.8	8.5	7.8	11.7	9.9
Kurzeme, n=103	2.1	2.6	2	21.8	20.1	5.6	16.3	7	6.3	13.8	2.3
Zemgale, n=94	1.3	2.5	4.9	24.9	18.1	9.5	14	4.6	4.1	13.1	3.1
Latgale, n=83	10.1	10.9	13.6	22.8	4.2	0.0	19.2	5.7	2.9	2.8	7.9

Table C- X: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by region. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Region	TSP	LSDS	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
Riga, 204	14.2	17.2	7.8	21.1	10.8	22.1	6.9
Vidzeme, n=220	5.0	13.6	5.5	24.1	21.4	20.5	10.0
Kurzeme, n=163	1.2	12.3	10.4	37.4	14.7	17.2	6.7
Zemgale, n=123	2.4	17.9	5.7	31.7	19.5	16.3	6.5
Latgale, n=150	35.3	8.7	8.0	16.7	18.0	2.7	10.7

Table C- XI: Results of the post election survey in 2002. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by region. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Region	PCTVL	LSDSP	TP	JL	ZZS	LC	LPP	LNNK & TB	Other
Riga, n=226	30.7	3.2	7.8	38.6	4.4	5.7	4.6	2.5	2.6
Vidzeme, n=197	5.1	3	27.9	33.7	7.8	4.7	9.5	6.4	1.9
Kurzeme, n=128	5.5	6.3	25	24.7	15.4	5.9	12.5	2	2.6
Zemgale, n=137	10.2	3.5	14.9	31.9	9	2.6	17.5	7.4	3
Latgale, n=142	33.3	4	7.1	12.2	22.3	3.7	5.9	3.9	7.7

Income (1998 and 2002):

Table C- XII: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by income. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

INCOME	TSP	LSDS	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
Up to 30 LVL, n=193	13.0	15.0	9.3	23.8	16.1	11.4	11.4
31 - 50 LVL, n=238	13.4	13.0	7.1	23.1	18.5	16.4	8.4
51 - 80 LVL, n=240	9.6	15.8	7.5	25.0	15.4	19.6	7.1
81 LVL and more, n=109	9.2	13.8	3.7	32.1	15.6	21.1	4.6

Table C- XIII: Results of the post election survey in 2002. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by income. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

INCOME	PCTVL	LSDSP	TP	JL	ZZS	LC	LPP	LNNK & TB	Other
LVL <20, n=61	26.5	8.6	18.4	15.05	18.05	0	8.55	0	4.9
LVL 21 - 40, n=135	16.15	3.55	20.5	26.35	14.85	5.1	4.3	3.6	5.7
LVL 41 - 60, n=232	18.5	2.2	15.35	31.45	9.45	3.7	9.65	6.2	3.5
LVL 61 - 80, n=117	12.25	7.6	15.3	28.5	9.05	6.5	14.05	4	2.75
LVL 81 - 100, n=86	16.55	3.45	13.3	32.6	7.15	5.65	13.45	3.35	4.6
LVL 101 - 150, n=50	21.25	5.65	9.4	43.9	11.6	3.3	0.0	4.85	0.0
LVL 101 - 250, n=90	22.6	2.8	12.4	44.2	6.7	4.3	2.9	4.2	0.0
LVL >250, n=18	2.5	0.0	23.7	42.1	3.7	11.7	9.9	0.0	6.4

Education (1998):

Table C- XIV: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by education. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

EDUCATION	(TSP	LSDS	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
Primary incomplete, n=54	14.8	13.0	5.6	9.3	42.6	5.6	9.3
Primary complete, n=125	12.0	12.0	8.0	26.4	16.0	19.2	6.4
Secondary incomplete, n=50	4.0	22.0	10.0	30.0	10.0	16.0	8.0
Secondary complete, n=458	13.1	14.6	6.8	25.5	14.2	16.4	9.4
University incomplete, n=70	1.4	12.9	8.6	40.0	17.1	12.9	7.1
University complete, n=97	12.4	10.3	7.2	22.7	19.6	21.6	6.2
Post-Uni incomplete, n=1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Post-Uni complete, n=4	0.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0

Age (1998):

Table C- XV: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by age. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group

AGE	TSP	LSDS	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
15-24, n=73	11.0	1.4	9.6	38.4	15.1	16.4	8.2
25-34, n=171	21.6	12.9	8.2	28.1	15.8	9.9	3.5
35-49, n=193	9.8	14.5	8.3	26.9	14.0	16.6	9.8
50-64, n=245	7.3	19.2	5.3	25.3	14.7	19.2	9.0
65-74, n=178	9.0	12.4	7.9	17.4	24.2	19.1	10.1

Occupation (1998 and 2002):

Table C- XVI: Results of the post election survey in 1998. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by occupation. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Occupation	TSP	LSDS	JP	TP	LC	LNNK & TB	Other
Unemployed, between jobs, n=84	21.4	14.3	7.1	23.8	10.7	8.3	14.3
Responsible for home, not working, n=31	3.2	25.8	3.2	32.3	19.4	9.7	6.5
On maternity leave, n=17	11.8	23.5	5.9	41.2	11.8	5.9	0.0
Retired, n=294	9.5	13.9	7.8	21.1	20.1	17.0	10.5
Student school/university, n=29	6.9	0.0	6.9	58.6	13.8	10.3	3.4
Self-employed, n=48	8.3	8.3	4.2	33.3	14.6	20.8	10.4
In paid employment, n=351	12.3	14.0	8.0	25.1	16.0	19.1	5.7

Table C- XVII: Results of the post election survey in 2002. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by occupation. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Occupation	PCTVL	LSDSP	TP	JL	ZZS	LC	LPP	LNNK & TB	Others
Unemployed, n=74	22.5	2.7	13.5	26.5	13.8	5.4	9.5	2.5	3.7
Housewife, n=33	26.8	6.1	22.1	15.5	15.5	2.7	6.4		4.8
Retired, n=267	14.7	4.4	14.1	35.2	7.5	6	8.1	6.6	3.4
Student at school/university, n=43	29.8		19.5	22.5	11.5	5	2.6	2.3	6.9
Self-employed, n=28	20.8	3.2	16.3	35.2	11.1		9.8	3.6	0
Farmer, n=12			16.9	42	25.1		8.1	7.9	0
Manager, general manager, n=48	17.9		12.5	40.9	5.8	4	10.5	6.4	2
Worker, n=135	17.4	7.6	17.3	26.9	8.7	5.4	8.5	2.2	5.9
Civil servant, n=184	15.4	2.7	18.9	27.6	13.7	3.8	12.1	4.6	1.1

Religion (2002):

Table C- XVIII: Results of the post election survey in 2002. The table shows the distribution of party choice measured by religion. The results are weighted by percent for each sub-group.

Religion	PCTVL	LSDSP	TP	JL	ZZS	LC	LPP	LNNK & TB	Other
Protestant, n=268	1.5	2.4	19.5	40.8	10.5	6.2	10.9	5.9	2.2
Roman Catholic, n=205	9.8	6	13.5	29.5	14.3	5.9	11.3	6.8	2.9
Orthodox, n=103	61.7	4.4	5.1	12.5	4.8	0.8	4	0.8	5.9
Old-believer, n=45	81.1		1.9		4.7			1.6	10.6
Baptists, n=9	10.4	10.1	8.5	12.7	9.9	12.9	35.6		0
Other, n=18	11.7		18.7	17.9	13		38.7		0
To none, n=128	12.1	2.3	25.2	36.2	10.5	3.3	4.6	2.3	3.5
Hard to say, no answer, n=54	9.4	7.8	24.4	25.6	13	6.6	8	5.2	0