From Displaced Persons to Exiles:
Nationalism, Anti-Communism, and the Shaping of Latvian American Diaspora

A Dissertation
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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June 2016

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation for the guidance and encouragement of many inspiring people within academia and beyond, who have helped me grow as a part of various supportive communities. Thank you, first of all, to my advisor, Lisa Sun-Hee Park, for her continued, generous support throughout my time at the University of Minnesota. I would also like to thank my other committee members, Cawo Abdi, Ron Aminzade, and Jean Langford, who have been the sources of great feedback and always-approachable support.

Beyond this, I would like to extend my thanks to the whole Department of Sociology, as well as the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), especially Donna Gabaccia and Erika Lee, and the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Minnesota, particularly Alejandro Baer, for heading vibrant, stimulating, and welcoming institutions for an international scholar with an interest in migration and identity. The generous support I have received from the Department of Sociology, the American Latvian Association Graduate Fellowship in Latvian American Studies at the IHRC, the Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, awarded by the Graduate School, as well as other types of support from University of Minnesota institutions and beyond, has made this research project, as well as participation in international conferences and courses, an enriching and generative experience.

A special thanks to the IHRC for being an unparalleled multi-disciplinary, boundary-pushing space for scholars of migration, and absolutely formative to my experience at this university. Thank you to the staff, current and past, for continued help and guidance during lengthy spans of archival research. Thank you to the American Latvian community for supporting my project through generous funding.

Thank you to colleagues, fellow students, graduate and undergraduate, who along amazing professors across different departments at the University of Minnesota and elsewhere, have pushed my imagination, introduced me to new ideas and perspectives, and encouraged to think across disciplines in seminars, workshops, conferences, and informal conversations. Finally, thank you to my husband, parents, and the rest of my family and friends for encouraging me to pursue my interests, and remaining supportive throughout. Liels paldies!

Abstract

This dissertation explores the shaping of the Latvian American exile from temporary settlement in Displaced Persons (DP) camps in post-war Europe, to resettlement to the U.S. following the DP Act of 1948. Specifically, Latvian diasporic discourses of nationalism, transnationalism, and anti-Communism are analyzed through the lens of Latvian-language exile periodicals. These are conceptualized as a transnational space, a locus of intersection of diasporic, national and hybrid, and sometimes competing identities. Building on archival research conducted at the Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, the project uses newspaper articles to identify the variety of discourses present in major diasporic periodicals and draws out points of contention as well as agreement on the shaping of the Latvian nation both pre and post USSR dissolution. The dissertation's main goal is to explore how the Latvian American exile community was shaped by the Cold War, and how Latvia as nation was imagined and re-imagined in diasporic press. Through secondary source analysis of Vietnamese refugee experience later in the twentieth century, this project also aims to question notions of "exile" and "refugee" as such, and interrogates how they were used in relation to different Cold War era anti-Communist immigrant groups to the U.S. Finally, the dissertation also addresses post-USSR collapse Latvian identity politics, including exile and homeland relations, as well as suggesting avenues for future research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On May 4, 1990, the Supreme Council[1] of the Republic of Latvia voted on the issue of reinstating the country's independence from the USSR. The Soviet Union had started to crumble in the 1980s and there were swelling nationalist currents in many of its republics, including Latvia. While the population of Latvia organized in marches, demonstrations, emergent political parties, and cultural events highlighting Latvian culture, there was a considerable Latvian population abroad, also following the events, getting involved, and working tirelessly towards Latvian independence. Mostly refugees from WWII and their descendants, the Latvian exiles in the U.S. and other countries in the "free world" published periodicals, met with politicians, sent aid to the homeland, and engaged in other activities in order to help the process along. The reestablishment of Latvian independence had been at the core of their ethos since the Soviet occupation took hold in 1945. Thawing Cold War tensions allowed for more direct interaction between the exiles and the homeland, not just in spirit, but also through concrete projects, communication, newly emergent NGOs and political movements. However, the situation in 1990 was still volatile, and even a symbolic vote to start the process of restoring independence was not guaranteed to be able to take place. For now, supporters of Latvia's independence held their breaths in Latvia as well as in the U.S.

During Latvia's occupation by the USSR in the second half of the twentieth century (1945-1991), Latvian exiles abroad maintained strong communities, rooted in preserving language, tradition and ethnic identity. In fact, throughout Latvia's

[1] Transitional parliament in Latvia during the early 1990s.

occupation, the Latvian American community presented a largely homogenous front, united around its exile ethos, and clear aim to preserve Latvian language and identity. Numerous diasporic Latvian organizations, churches, and schools were established, many founded as early as the late 1940s, in Displaced Persons (DP) camps in Germany and Austria. These institutions, created under the most volatile of circumstances, found stability in routine activities and organizations. The establishment of Latvian language print was also a fundamental part of gaining legitimacy for the cause of Latvia's reinstatement as an independent nation, serving both as a space as well as a mechanism for maintaining cohesion among the widely dispersed, yet active Latvian refugee community.

Starting from temporary settlement in Displaced Persons (DP) camps in Germany and Austria to resettlement to the U.S., Canada, Australia and Western European countries, Latvian exiles consciously strove to embody a politically active positionality, speaking out against Communist occupations in Europe, repressions, and Russification efforts in their homeland. The largest group of DPs ended up in the U.S., with more than 40,000 arriving under the Displaced Person Act of 1948. Under the supervision of United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and in an era of heightened anti-Communist sentiment, Latvian DPs came to inhabit the relatively legitimate and non-threatening category of "exile." Some scholars, including Edward Said and Liisa Malkki have argued that exile status could even be described as an "aestheticizable realm" (Malkki 1995, 513). I interpret exile as a generative positionality, capable of producing meaning, unlike the more restrictive, bound status of "refugee," often used to describe non-European, racialized migrant populations. Something more than just a

migrant category, exile in this context is a gestalt, shaped by a specific national past, a new way of being displaced, then rehabilitated, and finally resettled, surpassing the writ of the category. Malkki notes: “Into the contrast between ‘refugees’ and those ‘in exile’ is built a whole history of differences, not only of race, class, world region, and historical era but of different people’s very different entanglements with the state and international bureaucracies that characterize the national order of things” (Malkki 1995, 513). Said, in turn, argues that “The word ‘refugee’ has become a political one, suggesting large herds of innocent and bewildered people requiring urgent international assistance, whereas ‘exile’ carries with it, I think, a touch of solitude and spirituality” (Said 2000, 181). I return to a further exploration of the difference between different migration statuses later on, but for now, want to flag the importance of “exile” as a descriptor used by the Latvian American post-WWII diaspora to describe their experience almost exclusively, and the implications of differentiating oneself from refugees. This distinction is at the heart of my project.

Supported by a U.S. refusal to acknowledge Soviet occupation of Latvia and the other Baltic States as legitimate, Latvian exiles could at least symbolically maintain their status as representatives of an independent nation for several decades. The newspapers printed by the community, starting with publications in the DP camps, reflected the community’s negotiation of its own positionality. While these newspapers maintained a transnational connection with the homeland, this was largely imaginary until the late 1980s, when the iron curtain over Eastern Europe started to disintegrate. By the time cheering crowds in Riga celebrated the victory of the independence vote in May of 1990, they already contained some Latvian Americans, returned to their homeland, or that of

their parents. There was much work to be done ahead, including dealing with a coup attempt by Soviet Special Forces in January and again August of 1991. During the tense days of August 19-21, 1991, the Supreme Council of Latvia voted for the reinstatement of the 1922 Constitution of Latvia, under the threat of overthrow by the Soviet forces. Regardless of these problems along the way, the teleological project of working towards the independence of the state had started to materialize, thanks to both homeland and exile Latvians. Later, the path of Latvia during the twentieth century would often be popularly retold in teleological terms, linking the persistence of the idea of independence in the imaginaries of the people, as well as the labor invested by the exiles and resistance at home, to something akin to an inevitability or predestination, in keeping with a strong national narrative. However, my aim is to highlight some of the historical contingencies Latvian exiles were a part of along the way, and how that shaped a certain exile positionality. This included the formation of DP camps, the U.S. decision to not recognize the occupation of the Baltics as legitimate, as well as, much later on, the possibility for exiles and their descendants to obtain dual citizenship in the 1990s.

This dissertation explores the shaping of the Latvian American diaspora during the Cold War and into the 1990s. Specifically, Latvian diasporic discourses of nationalism, increasing transnationalism, and anti-Communism are analyzed through the lens of Latvian-language exile periodicals. I conceptualize these as a transnational space, a locus of intersection of diasporic, national and hybrid identities. The project uses newspaper articles to identify the variety of discourses present in major diasporic periodicals and draws out points of contention as well as agreement on the shaping of the Latvian nation both pre and post USSR dissolution. The dissertation's main goal is to

explore how the Latvian American exile community was shaped by the Cold War, and how Latvia as nation was imagined and re-imagined in diasporic press. It also looks at how the U.S. utilized anti-Communist refugee populations during the Cold War, in order to bolster its interests.

The project is also sensitive to the role of intergenerational relationships within the diaspora, and how second and third generation Latvian Americans challenged the fixed notions of identity put in place by the first generation, thus contributing to the change of the diasporic discourse itself. I started initially by drawing on Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined community," (Anderson 2006) as I explored the role of diaspora newspapers in shaping and increasingly facilitating the diasporic negotiation between the Latvian people and its nation. While Anderson's perspective on the role of print media and education as central to modern nation-building is arguably well reflected in the case of many of the Eastern European communities in the U.S. at the time in question, this project does not limit itself to approaching newspapers as the only or even the main source of nation-building in exile or otherwise. Rather, Anderson's approach lends some valuable insight into the possibility of shaping a shared media space for dispersed populations, but a further exploration of U.S. and supranational policies regarding immigrant and refugee management, as well as by then already established national identities in the communities in question, create a more comprehensive picture of the environment in which the diasporas operated. This dissertation does not assume diasporic nationalism existing in a vacuum, as a result of displacement from home, but the very opposite – in a context rife with both pressures and opportunities created by their situation of displacement. More broadly, this project contributes to an understanding of

nationalism in a diasporic context, U.S. immigration policy during the Cold War, and the interaction of the two.

Background

As a homeland Latvian born in the mid 1980s, I grew up with the discourse of the struggle for and achievement of Latvian independence deeply embedded and emotionally wired in me. Even as a young child, I remember picking up on currents of uplift, national unity, all those larger-than-oneself sentiments a national re-awakening can evoke. My memories from the early 1990s, the excitement and uncertainty of the transition, are mixed with stories from family members, snippets of documentary news footage seen over and over. Altogether, this has formed an impression of the time, in part false memory, but probably one of my most formative experiences. For better or worse, I have had the feeling of growing up together with the newly reinstated independent country. I could start grasping the idea of what an independent state was by the age of five, when the transition in Latvia occurred; then by the time I started school in 1993, I became part of one of the first years that had no overlap with the Soviet education system. The imprint of the era is immensely strong, and surely at least in part responsible for my recurring return to the issues of Latvian independence, occupation, or exile in my academic career. There is an inability to move past the powerful pull of the events in my time, but also those of my family's history. It would not be remiss to say that this is a sentiment shared by many in Latvia, my generation and older. At the same time, the first generation born and raised in a free Latvia is now of age; only time will tell if this cohort remains drawn to the trauma of the previous century. However, I do see myself as an outsider when it comes to the exile experience. No one in my immediate family became a DP or exile, so I

learned about it from a relatively removed position. I thus feel simultaneously privy to, yet an outsider when it comes to Latvian-language exile publications. They are in a language I understand; yet distance in time, space, and experience make them somewhat of a "foreign country."

I became interested in the diasporic print materials at the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) because I was fascinated by the very fact of their collection and preservation. I knew Latvians in the U.S. were an active community and had been throughout the years of Soviet occupation, and I was aware they had maintained publications. However, it was the combination of the amount of materials published and the high numbers that were preserved that signaled to me that the archive could be one way of looking at the communities behind it. Following the settlement of thousands of European refugees in the Midwest throughout the 1950s, and their increasing willingness to actively sustain a voice, a tangible presence in their new environments, the communities found an ally in the IHRC, established to promote "research on international migration with a special emphasis on immigrant and refugee life in the U.S." (IHRC 2011). Thus, the Latvian community, among others, found a physical location, stable, safe and legitimate, that would house their documents for posterity. Given the volatility of the exile experience, and the hostile political situation back home, having a university archive take in and preserve printed documents of the community, seems like a reasonable bid for stability, an establishment of rootedness in a new place, and validation of the past. The archive is currently housed in underground caverns, dug into the limestone banks of the Mississippi, reinforced by curved walls to safeguard the collections from possible flood damage or worse. It is literally interred, buried at a

constant temperature and humidity, yet next to the ever-moving, powerful river, a constant reminder of the potential of destruction. Several times a day staff members descend into the caverns to retrieve materials for patrons in the reading room on the second floor of the library building. A metaphor for bringing the dead back to life if there ever was one.

The intention of this project was not to get a "complete picture" of the Latvian American community, whatever that might look like, but rather, to focus on a few themes and search the newspapers for these discursive threads. By following the materials chronologically, from the first ones published in DP camps, through the Cold War era in the U.S., and finally, during and after Latvia's regain of independence in the 1990s, I aimed to understand the role of the print materials in each of the eras. First, it was about establishing communication within the community, discussing potential resettlement; later, publications emerged to challenge the fixed notions of exile identity put in place by the first generation; and by the 1990s, diasporic press had first-hand knowledge of events in the homeland, as some exile Latvians had returned.

Importantly, this dissertation strived to not be narrowly Latvian-centric. While much of Latvian exiles' as well as homeland Latvians' work has been to instinctively tell the world about Latvia, where it is, its history, and of its relatively recent rebirth, I aimed to be more critical in tackling some of the same issues that to a certain degree have become legend and taken for granted. Without disrespecting any of the efforts done by generations of Latvians abroad, or in the homeland, I felt strongly about approaching critically the messiness, ambiguities and conflict that are part of any community, political process or development. By looking at Latvians as one of the several groups of

immigrants to arrive to the U.S. in the twentieth century, I aim to de-centralize the Latvian experience, not to minimize its importance, but rather to contextualize it, show it as part of larger political international and nation-building processes. When speaking about identities being shaped by interactions with DP administration organizations or younger Latvian Americans challenging their predecessors, my aim is to show identity as a socially constructed, dynamic process, shaped by individuals, institutions, and political environments, not to expose weaknesses or discredit the labor of exiles, but rather to recognize the multifaceted cast of actors that were part of this process.

Structure

The dissertation starts with a description of the data and methodologies used in Chapter 2. I describe the benefits and challenges of using print materials as primary sources, and look at the history of the materials in the IHRC archives. Since the project deals with print media of a population that was actively seeking legitimacy as exiles, I also raise the issue of paper vs. digital, or oral history sources.

Chapter 3 develops this thread further, delving into DP camp Latvian publications. The newspapers used work as a prism, a tool for looking at the DP and UNRRA relationship, and how DP identity was gradually formed by interaction with authorities, internal discussions, and in the face of potential resettlements. This chapter pays particular attention to the ambivalent status of the DPs, particularly in nationalism, political agency and bodily integrity. I look at camps as generative "third" spaces, with DPs coming to define an uneasy third positionality in the aftermath of WWII and its binary.

In the following chapter, I look at the next period of the Cold War, and anti-Communist immigrant groups in the U.S. Specifically, Chapter 4 compares Latvian and Vietnamese immigrant resettlement experiences. This chapter further highlights the difference between concepts of DP, exile, and refugee, arguing that each differing categorization of migrant status had implications regarding incorporation into the U.S. master narrative during the Cold War era. It addresses how the U.S. used both WWII and Vietnam War era refugees for propaganda purposes, but in different ways, including allocating differing descriptors, “exile” and “refugee.” I also bring to the fore some of the parallels in both communities’ youth experiences, namely 1.5, second and third generations challenging some of the more static understandings of ethnic identity and political stance put in place by their parents and grandparents.

Chapter 5 returns to more of a focus on Latvia, looking at the 1990s as a transitional period when both diasporic and homeland Latvian discourses worked together, and at times conflicted, to shape notions of what a post-Soviet Latvia should look like. This included discussions in diasporic press about belonging, citizenship, and loyalty, as well as continued challenges and pushing of boundaries by the younger generations.

Finally, Chapter 6 reiterates the main findings of the project, its theoretical contributions, and imagines potential avenues for future research, based on this research.

Chapter 2: Data and Methods

This chapter describes the data and methodologies used in the research project. First, I introduce the newspaper sources used and address the benefits and challenges of using these primary sources. I describe how Latvian language publications came to be at the IHRC archives, and how since their beginnings, the periodicals have served to shape the diasporic community and vice versa. I contend that exile legitimacy was strengthened through these publications, even as the community itself changed over the decades.

Legitimacy Through Print

This project is based on research conducted in the Latvian American collections at the IHRC archives. I identified publications in these collections that were representative of the temporal and geographic scope of interest, namely, periodicals from post-WWII Displaced Persons camps in Europe and Cold War era newspapers form North America. I worked with *Laiks [Time]* and *Latvija Amerikā [Latvia in America; LA]* most extensively, as these papers spanned throughout all of Latvian exile while their homeland was occupied by the USSR. I read issues from the 1950s to 1990s. I included every twentieth issue from 1955-1985 (approximately four or five per year). As I was interested in the transitional period of the late 1980s, early 1990s more closely, I examined every newspaper issue in the time period from 1985 to 1995. I also included November 18 (Latvian Independence Day) issues from every year as these focused on themes central to the project, and served as markers of another year of Latvia's occupation.

In addition to these well-established publications, I also examined newspapers from the early displacement years of the Latvian DPs, as this was another transitional period

that fundamentally shaped the Latvian exile community. I was interested to see how notions of exile that seemed to be well established by the 1950s, taken for granted in the North American Latvian language publications, had their roots in the DP camp experience of post-war Europe. I examined Latvian language DP camp newspapers from UNRRA Camp 191, Glasenbach, Austria. The paper was first titled *Latviešu Balss Austrijā [Latvian Voice in Austria; LVA]*, later renamed *Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā [Baltic News in Austria; BNA*. One of the reasons for selecting this publication was that the IHRC had an almost complete collection of this paper, thus allowing for a systematic, chronological approach to its analysis. I examined every bi-weekly issue published from 1945-1948, until the passing of the DP Act, and subsequent migration to U.S. and other Western countries. The fact that the papers were printed in Austria, not Germany, where most of DPs were located, is perhaps fitting, since the displaced were already a marginalized population in the post-war era. Their geographic position in a location slightly removed from the highly politicized space of post-war Germany seems important in itself. Away from their homeland, and for a few years, with little clarity about possible resettlement to the U.S. or other countries, the DPs were stuck in post-war limbo in a third European country that had also been involved in the war.

Working with original print materials provided some clear advantages, but some challenges as well. The biggest benefit of being able to work with these documents was the access to primary sources, printed at the time and by the communities the project was interested in. Moreover, the sources were almost exclusively in Latvian, with only occasional additions in English. Therefore it can be said that these publications were truly by and for the Latvian exile community. This is an important point, because some of the

questions central to the project focused on self-positioning and representation of the exiles. Knowing whom the papers were addressed to helped guide understandings of not only how the Latvians saw themselves, but also how they saw themselves through the eyes of UNRRA, and countries of potential resettlement, especially U.S. Later on, during the second half of the Cold War, the papers were still of and for the Latvian American community, but increasingly also included opinions from homeland Latvians, especially during the *Perestroika* period, when more open communication was possible. Thus, Latvian exile press was simultaneously set in the experience of displacement, but in the 1980s and 1990s, clearly also positioned itself as part of the re-emerging independent Latvia. It was always transnational, firmly present in a national Latvianness, anchored in a longing for the homeland that gradually transformed into a more real interaction with Latvia, but also firmly part of their country of exile.

As with all publications, the limitations of encountering only certain opinions and missing the nuance of views existing outside of the print, in the rest of the community, need to be acknowledged. Regular contributors to papers were common; however, their biographies are not always readily available, relegating the names of many authors to the self-contained universe of the publication. Still, this project is as much about the development of Latvian DP/exile identity, as it is about the role of the print media, emerging in the volatile environment of the immediate post-war years, and continuing into the Cold War era. The newspapers were approached not as sources for a complete understanding of Latvian exile identity, but rather as one constitutive element of this process, and also a way of looking at exile as an experience. My aim was not to track any one individual's contribution to the papers, but rather approach them as an organism in

itself, evolving through and reacting to their environs. The completeness of the IHRC's collection of the papers allowed for the tracing of exile publication narratives consistently, chronologically. It should not be claimed, however, that they contain an exhaustively complete portrayal of the community through the decades. Rather, the papers are a self-contained universe in some sense, and were analyzed as such. Part and parcel of the Latvian exile experience, of course, but the two should be more accurately seen as having shaped one another.

Some challenges were present in working with physical print. The materials had not been digitized and were in a Latvian. On the one hand, this added another dimension to consider in the analysis of the sources, the materiality of the paper, its visual appearance, layout and type used in the publications, but it also complicated the logistics of coding and organizing the themes found in the papers. Optical character recognition software could not be employed because the texts were in Latvian, often with diacritical marks added by hand, the print faded. Overall, analysis consisted of a combination of identifying key themes and following them over the course of the publications as well as coding article sections. Changes in the visual appearance of the print were also noted.

The understanding of discourse used in this project evolved throughout. The work of Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Hardy on the refugee discourse in the U.K. has been helpful in conceptualizing my project's use of discourse analysis. These authors explain that: "[There] is a strong argument for the active role of discourse in the creation of social reality: discourses create ways of understanding the world; they do not mirror reality. Discourses do not reveal some hidden, pre-constituted reality, but rather provide concepts, objects and subject positions that actors use to fashion a social world" (Phillips

and Hardy 1997, 166). Phillips and Hardy also note that since discourse allows for certain spaces to be open for access and transformation, "discourse analysis thus challenges traditional models that view the self as a stable entity" (Phillips and Hardy 1997, 168). Within the parameters of this project, concepts of refugee, DP and exile permeate the discourse of migration statuses in the post-WWII world, particularly in an East to West dimension. Thus, at the core of the analysis of these Latvian language publications are the ways in which they worked to shape an exile identity not as a static, unchangeable one, but rather transforming over time, increasingly hybrid.

The establishment of Latvian language print was also a fundamental part of gaining legitimacy for the cause of Latvia's reinstatement as an independent nation, serving both as a space as well as a mechanism for maintaining cohesion among the widely dispersed, yet active Latvian refugee community. Initially, Latvian American administrative documents as well as periodicals were kept by individuals or respective institutions. With the formation of the Latvian Studies Center at Western Michigan University in 1981, and an overall centralization of the Latvian diaspora's efforts, academic partnerships emerged that resulted in notable Latvian collections throughout the U.S. in the second half of the twentieth century, such as in the Hoover Institution, the University of Minnesota, Indiana University, University of Wisconsin, and University of Washington.

The papers used in this project and many more are currently housed in the IHRC's Latvian Collections at the University of Minnesota. As an archive that preserves mainly documents from immigrants to the U.S., the collections at the IHRC are themselves caught in the in-between-ness of the transnational experience. The problematic position

of the diasporic archives post-1991 is a parallel issue I see permeating the larger discussion of exile periodicals, but not one I engage with extensively in this project. Even now, more than twenty years since the reinstatement of Latvian independence, and the formal end of exile for the Latvians in North America, the belonging of the materials is an ongoing discussion, as illustrated by the Conference on Latvian Diaspora Archives and Material Culture, held at the IHRC on April 12-14, 2012. Moreover, with repository space rapidly filling up, the archive must become more selective about what they preserve, only accepting rare copies of periodicals now. Besides, the state of Latvia has expressed interest for diasporic archives to be "returned" to the homeland, although they were by default produced and consumed anywhere but. I see this impetus as part of a larger nation-building effort in the past decades, trying to acknowledge the various Latvian language publications in the world. After a trying relationship with the exiles in the early 1991, before they were offered unconditional dual citizenship, Latvia has tried increasingly to include exiles and more recent migrants in its cultural and political realm.

The materials housed in such archives, like the extensive collections of Latvian exile periodicals, were sites where diasporic and national-exile identity were negotiated and legitimized. This peculiar space inhabited by the Latvian American exile community is a non-place of sorts, characterized by the ultimate inability to "come home," neither the temporal nor spatial, and ultimately qualitative expectations of a country left behind. Similar to a DP camp, it exists in-between. The "trail[s] of collective memory about another place and time," as Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge term them (1989, i) refer to the fate of strongly nationalist diasporas caught in the zone between memory of their homeland at the time of their departure, and a need to keep the community

developing onward. It is in this awkward space that the diasporic archive looms as a consciously shaped site of memory, the history, stories amassed and preserved in it just as consciously gathered. Moreover, this archival space is shaped by smaller particles, those of individual materials, yards of newspaper, and other publications.

To paraphrase Marc Augé's perceptive observation, the lives of the exiles serve as narratives, not of their own making, but what they see as a duty to remember, a vigilance of memory (Augé 2004, 87–8). Augé also points out that: "The duty of memory is the duty of the descendants, and it has two aspects: remembrance and vigilance. Vigilance is the actualization of remembrance, the effort to imagine in the present what might resemble the past," arguing in effect that memory has two approaches, of which one, vigilance, is the more active one, prompting the reinterpretation of remembrance, an ongoing imagining (Augé 2004, 88). The DP-turned-exiles' very raison d'être was that of preservation of national identity (including language, traditions, culture) they saw as being endangered in their homeland. Joel Wurl, long time archivist at the IHRC, remarked at an international conference on Baltic Archives abroad that it was possible to trace back the impetus of post-war émigrés to archive documents to their status as Displaced Persons (DPs), when their "mission of maintaining national culture in exile" was conceived (Wurl 2006, 5). This was to become a life-long endeavor for many, as Wurl continues: "This mission was deeply ingrained and almost universally shared among the refugees from early on in their camp years. It was the overriding motivation for so much of the heightened educational, artistic, political, and folkloric efforts that emerged at that time and continued after resettlement" (Wurl 2006, 5). I began the project starting with materials from the immediate post-WWII years, and focused on publications

from the DP camps, before moving on to periodicals published in the countries of permanent resettlement.

The Periodicals

The newspaper issues were examined chronologically, identifying articles that spoke in some way to the DP experience, their activities, future plans, or relevant political developments that might shape their stay in the camps or resettlement. I did not focus much on other aspects of the newspapers' content, such as news from Soviet-occupied Latvia, general updates about events in the world, or news about specific individuals, unless they were pertinent to the larger DP experience, for example, letters from the first resettled DPs in Canada. In reading the articles, I identified keywords that I used in coding sections. I utilized keywords and topics that appeared to dominate in the paper to identify continuous themes.

The major theme was the refugee/exile/DP identity itself. Depending on the context, at times these terms were used interchangeably, both by authorities and the DPs, while at others one was used over another to stress a particular aspect of the experience. For example, throughout all the newspapers, "refugee" was the word least used when the DPs were speaking about themselves, yet it was still present. "Exile" and "DP" dominated throughout, but especially around 1948 and the passing of the DP Act. Subthemes also included emigration and resettlement – the hope, waiting and frustration associated with being stuck in the camp. Possible countries of resettlement were also widely considered and discussed, as was the so-called mission of the DP Latvians. Individual articles outlined what a DP Latvian's "stance" should be, imbuing morality and virtue in a certain kind of exile experience. Maintaining a healthy body, being sober,

trustworthy, working together, being willing to learn and work, were the traits lauded as desirable for a DP to have. As an offshoot of the topic of maintaining a mission or having a certain "stance" while in exile, the newspapers consistently highlighted DP youth and children, the importance of their national education, and raising them as loyal Latvian subjects. The importance of culture, youth organizations, and a strong family unit was also stressed throughout.

LVA/BNA was first published in October 1945, a few months after the war ended, and right at the beginning of the USSR and its satellite countries demanding "their" DPs be returned. The first issue of the newspaper makes clear that the publication was only possible because of UNRRA support. The front page is titled "UNRRA 191 Presents: Glasenbach Journal" in bold, green typeface, under which follows the same text in Latvian, and the additional "Latviešu Balss Austrijā [Latvian Voice in Austria]," drawn freehand, decorated with Latvian symbols, issue number and date (Figure 1). The drawing is imperfect, sketchy, but clearly rooted in a "Latvian folk" aesthetic. The heavy, forest green typeface above dominates the frail heading, the space between the bold lettering and the front-page article looks almost literally carved out, allowed, under supervision. The text on the front page is in Latvian, the diacritical marks on some letters half hand-written, half adapted from typewriters that were not made to produce text in that language. There is no sense of ownership of the materials, the tools used in producing this printed material.

However, a few issues later, the front page changed, with the Latvian writing now in large, bold, but still "Latvian-style" letters, and "UNRRA 191 Glasenbach Journal" in smaller print underneath (Figure 2). The title "UNRRA 191 Presents" does not appear

anymore, there is a sense of more autonomy on behalf of the DPs than in the first issue, but also a sense of the community itself having become more institutionalized, more legitimate. Rather than dominating the publication, the text in English now "supports" the Latvian; the actual paper of the publication still low quality and crumbly, the mimeographed pages looking more confidently inked by then. However, once the newspaper changed names in March 1947, the front page changed once more. As Figure 3 illustrates, the top of the page now reads, in the same "Latvian-style" font and in Latvian: "Baltic News in Austria, formerly Latvian Voice in Austria," and then underneath that in English: "Permitted by UNRRA Team 191." If anything, this reads as somewhat of a loss of autonomy for the Latvian DPs, since even though the paper is still only published in Latvian, it must now at least "on paper" represent the whole Baltic community. However, it is the addition of "permitted by" that stands out most, as initial publications featured the arguably more empowering "presented by." Here, it is clear that no mistake should be made about the legality of the newspaper. Perhaps this was done so as to ensure anyone who might be enforcing the one-publication per camp rule that this, indeed, is the one sanctioned publication. I am in two minds as to whether this seemingly infantilized the DPs efforts, serving as a reality check for their pretensions of self-determination, or whether this worked instead as a slightly clumsy way of attributing legitimacy (if so, to whom, since the readership is exclusively Latvian speakers?), or like most things about the UNRRA-DP relationship, somehow managed to do both at the same time.

In the first issue, the presence of the camp's authorities demonstrably extended beyond the front page. UNRRA 191 director Philipp Gullion's words about the high level

of quality of life the camp had achieved in a few weeks, and how "we" (implies both UNRRA staff and DPs) should be proud of it took up a good paragraph. He also encouraged cooperation between the different nationalities in the camp, and expressed hope that the newspaper would serve as one of those links (Gullion 1945).

The initial editorial board of *LVA* consisted of Ernests Jākabsons, assistant at the University of Latvia, pastor Dr. Romans Reinfelds, and head of Liepāja railroad station, Rūdolfs Kalniņš. This mix of academics, professionals, and religious leaders is characteristic of the variety of people residing in the camps, representing different fields, education levels, and social backgrounds. While there were many women in the camps, their voices were not heard as often in the newspaper, but do become more common in the subsequent decades. More often than not, women were talked about instead, the importance of their role as mothers was highlighted in the context of passing on tradition and language, or their morality and chastity as young girls in the unstable camp environment was discussed with concern. In short, women's role in ensuring the continuation of the nation was stressed, both through formal and informal socialization and education.

The clear link with camp administration made apparent on the title page of *LVA* was made even more evident in the rest of the first issue. The second page contained a short address *Mūsu lasītājiem [To our readers]*, wherein the editorial board recognized the "support of UNRRA 191 director Philipp Gullion in economic and cultural spheres, which has created the possibility of publishing this newspaper" (Jākabsons, Reinfelds, and Kalniņš 1945). For the DPs to utilize some of their symbolic capital, it necessitated UNRRA's recognition of it as legitimate, valuable, and deserving of material support.

The editors wrote further that the purpose of their people, Latvians, was to "regain the same legal, cultural, and economic position we had [before Soviet occupation] and which any sovereign, independent, cultured people [nation] has" (Jākabsons, Reinfelds, and Kalniņš 1945). This latter term, "cultured," while slightly nebulous, can be traced to the incessant work on behalf of DPs to prove their cultural uniqueness, and their efforts to keep traditional cultural practices alive. The newspapers mostly addressed this by highlighting the role of education and youth, stressing the importance of a culturally national upbringing as key in maintaining a Latvian identity. Activities such as crafts, folk song and dance were mentioned specifically. This fits into a broader discussion on maintaining a unique Latvianness but also benefitting from Western culture, which the papers illustrated to be a fine moral balancing act, as the DPs negotiated ensuring youth did not take on the negative influences from wherever they settle, their volatile current environment. Yet again, the retention and passing on of cultural, symbolic, national capital was given priority.

Thus, the papers also stressed the importance of education, building character and cooperation among the DPs:

> We must maintain an unwavering faith and strength in being able to walk the long roads ahead and reach our goal unbroken. In order to achieve it, every one of us [Latvians], every one of our groups, be it in the camp or on a wider scale, must maintain good Latvian virtues, make an effort, work, in order to increase the standard of our cultural and economic life. As one of the most important starting points for the overall increase in the standard of living would be self-education,

obtaining a strong character and mutual understanding among Latvians, family members, camp inhabitants as members of one big family, even in the family of the nation. (Jākabsons, Reinfelds, and Kalniņš 1945)

Levels of communication and understanding seemed to collapse the newspapers at times, with family, camp, and the nation as a whole mutating into one another. Latvia was the nation, but it was also in every one of its *tautieši* [compatriots], it was those in relative freedom in the DP camps, and the newspaper aimed to connect them all.

Jākabsons, Reinfelds and Kalniņš framed the newspaper as one that would "serve the Latvians in an ideological sense and would act as a link between us [Latvian DPs] and UNRRA authorities" (Jākabsons, Reinfelds, and Kalniņš 1945). The editors also reiterated Gullion's idea of making their camp economically and culturally exemplary among others, and *LVA* "sees as its duty to serve in creating contacts with Latvians in other camps and outside them, thus transcending the borders of the camp, and fostering the spiritual life and efforts of Latvians abroad" (Jākabsons, Reinfelds, and Kalniņš 1945). A narrative of self-betterment, rehabilitation was clearly present and it resonated with the broader UNRRA agenda.

It can be seen that the interests of the DPs and UNRRA authorities were noticeably interwoven. While the former were interested in creating a way to organize, communicate and share ideas both within the camp and beyond it, the latter were looking to create an exemplary camp, and have UNRRA and the U.S.-dominated post-war rebuilding effort a success. There is overlap here of UNRRA's New Deal relief and rehabilitation approach, creating a self-governing refugee community with opportunities

for education, professional training, organizing, and the UNRRA as "enlightened self-interest," according to Herbert H. Lehman, Director of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations ("Address given by Herbert H. Lehman (17 June 1943)" 2016). This can also be seen in these pages through the urging of local UNRRA leadership for DP camp excellence. Both, DPs as well as the authorities acted out of self-interest, but, obviously, from different power positions.

A shared emphasis on culture, and the importance of presenting the DPs as a "cultured," meaning literate, Christian, educated, hard-working population facilitated several projects between UNRRA and the Latvians. In the same first issue, Gullion suggested gathering the best articles from all three UNRRA 191 camp newspapers, Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian, translating them into English and publishing a special volume in order to inform other countries, especially U.S. and UK, about their efforts (*Latviešu Balss Austrijā* 1945). It is noteworthy that this initiative happened a few years before either the U.S. or UK opened their borders for most DPs. It is not fully clear, however, whether Gullion proposed this out of personal initiative, or acted as part of an established UNRRA strategy. Knowing that the administration's initial plan was to repatriate as many DPs as possible, Gullion's proposal seems to be a contradiction, aimed not at fostering a conversation about repatriation, but rather at creating a deeper understanding of the refugees, humanizing them and, possibly, dissipating reservations about these people as untrustworthy, Nazi collaborators, or Communists. The exact motivation for Gullion's initiative is not known, however, it is undisputable that its outcome would have been a more humanized view of the DPs.

The position of the DP newspaper can be seen as threefold: first, in a purely Latvian DP context, *LVA/BNA* presented an almost official, or, at the very least, normative, nationally focused Latvian platform. The paper printed messages from Latvian exile diplomats, the only truly official representatives of a sovereign Latvian state. It did not contain counter-narratives, as it emerged from a rather homogenous experience. This is not to say that any particular DP publication can be seen as more "official" than another, but rather that *LVA/BNA* was as much part of the dialogue from a DP perspective as any other DP newspaper; it was a mainstream, nationally oriented paper. Thus, its mission at least in part was one of claiming space, agency, seeking continuation of the independent state at least in stance, as a mode of self-definition.

Second, the newspaper actively and consciously positioned itself as a link between UNRRA and the DP community. In its first issue, a statement from the editorial board stressed this:

> [We] needed a newspaper that would serve our people ideologically and would be a link between us and the UNRRA administration. Since UNRRA 191 administration has decided to make this camp economically and culturally exemplary among camps in Austria, and is well on its way, in order to make our work more productive and so a higher level can be reached, our newspaper holds as its duty to establish connections with other camps and Latvians living outside them, so as to have the newspaper transcend the borders of the camp, thus facilitating the spiritual life and efforts of Latvians abroad. (Jākabsons, Reinfelds, and Kalniņš 1945, 2)

LVA/BNA, in serving as intermediary between UNRRA and the DP community, worked to create links between Latvians outside the camp as well; the project of one group of Latvian DPs thus became already a project for the whole Latvian DP community, if not the Latvian nation. The paper was plainly only made possible with the support of UNRRA at a time of massive paper shortages, so it is therefore by default part of the UNRRA's activities as well. By allowing, even encouraging the publication of this paper, UNRRA 191 administration took at least in part ownership of a publication they could not read and thus fully control. Since one of the aims of the paper was to reach beyond the camp, there is a lot of trust assumed in the camp administration-DP relationship.

Finally, the role of the newspaper as a tool for UNRRA must also be acknowledged. One cannot suggest that it was a dummy publication somehow crudely used for propaganda purposes, not least because the newspaper was at times critical and weary of UNRRA's actions. Rather, ensuring that an otherwise dispossessed, vulnerable population has access to printing is a gesture that speaks to a shift in interpreting human rights after WWII, despite the mixed perceptions UNRRA staff had of the DPs. None of these positionalities are mutually exclusive, but rather can be seen coexisting simultaneously. It is not possible to argue definitively that the newspaper was simply either a part of UNRRA's new approach of refugee management, an empowering outlet of self-definition, or that it was conceived as a device for facilitating national togetherness in the camps, with the aim of ultimately resulting in a collective urge to return to the occupied homeland. In other words, it may have served both as a device of empowerment for the DP community, as well as a way for U.S.-dominated UNRRA to help shape DP experiences in strategic ways. Knowing that in late 1945 USSR demanded

DPs from Soviet-occupied countries be repatriated as per the Yalta agreement, the establishment of a Latvian-language newspaper in one of the camps can be read as both defiance of this demand and as a way repatriation policy initially worked in the U.S. zone, as per Walter Dushnyck and William J. Gibbons (1947). The paper, as the DP experience itself, rested firmly within these tensions, contradictions, and shifting notions of weakness and power.

It is important to be cautious about an interpretation of *LVA/BNA* as a purely grassroots Latvian DP endeavor, in line with the dominant narrative about the exile community as one of having taken a proactive stance in their displacement from the beginning. While the presence of Latvian diplomats and members of the intelligentsia did indeed play a large role in creating and maintaining a clear position for Latvians abroad, it would be too simplistic to assume that this would have happened regardless of the climate DPs found themselves while in western Allied controlled zones, or at least, that it would have happened in the same way. The willingness of UNRRA to not only allow but also encourage publication in the camps, let alone in the DP languages, is an element that cannot be underestimated. Latvian DP and then exile identity was an ethos shaped not only by the displaced themselves, but the conditions they found themselves in, and the institutions and structures they encountered.

Laiks [Time] and *Latvija Amerikā [Latvia in America]*, two large North American Latvian exile newspapers, grew out of this broader DP ethos, although in different ways. Founded by Helmārs Rudzītis, the former owner of *Grāmatu Draugs* publishing house in Latvia, *Laiks* was first published in Brooklyn on November 8, 1949. A successful publisher of books and records previously, Rudzītis maintained that for a people in exile

the most significant thing is information and communication, and thus established the publication before rebuilding his book publishing in the U.S. He seems to have understood the significance of print for a nation, dispersed across North America, and only in name, deterritorialized (Anderson 2006). American East coast cities were for Latvians, as for most other transatlantic migrants to the U.S., the first point of entry and often also settlement. The newspaper's first editor was Kārlis Rabāks, and the aim of both men was to create a newspaper that would be "objective, apolitical, and national" (Vītolu Fonds 2010). The newspaper still purports to stick to the objectives of its initial leaders. Even though the publication claims to be apolitical and speak to Latvians globally regardless of their party allegiances, the very stressing of it being a "national" newspaper, in the sense that it recognizes a certain idea of the nation of Latvia, has its implications, that will become especially apparent in the transitional years of the early 1990s.

The next newspaper, *Latvija Amerikā [LA],* has been published in Toronto continuously since October 6, 1951. Its history is slightly different, as it resulted from the merger of the West German newspaper *Latvija [Latvia]* and the Toronto newspaper *Brīvā Balss [Free Voice],* published between 1949 and 1951. Thus, *LA* has its roots both in the DP legacy of West Germany, as well as its Torontonian predecessor. It is published by *Daugavas Vanagi* (DV), an organization first established by Latvian soldiers in POW camps in Belgium toward the end of WWII. Initially aiming to encompass the soldiers of the Latvian Legion (those drafted in the German army during Nazi occupation of Latvia), it later spread to include Latvian soldiers and their families worldwide. DV states its goals as unifying Latvians globally to maintain a Latvian community, commemorating and honoring Latvian soldiers, helping Latvians in need, and promoting Latvian culture

and youth development. Furthermore, DV calls for the defense of Latvia's independence and liberty, as well as its democratic institutions, human rights, and freedom (Daugavas Vanagi 2015). Several global discourse threads can be seen as tightly intertwined with the more national-level ones, namely, human rights, freedom, democracy, youth, and culture.

Besides substantive themes forming the content of the newspapers, the language used in the publications was also an element of this project. Specifically, I was interested in the use of migration-related terms over the course of the publications' run. In other words, I wanted to know how the community referred to itself. I paid particular attention to the words refugee, DP, and exile to see whether they were used differently right after WWII, and later on throughout the Cold War. In the beginning of the displacement, notions of exile had not been clearly established in the community, the concepts utilized shifted, depending on the context. I return to the concepts of DP, exile and refugee in more detail in Chapter 4.

Comparison with Other anti-Communist Immigrants

Through secondary source analysis, this project looks to situate the Latvian experience in an Eastern-European, as well as a broader anti-Communist immigrant community context within the U.S., including in comparison to Vietnamese Americans (Espiritu 2006a; Espiritu 2006b; Espiritu 2014; C. N. Le 2009; L. Le 2011; Vo Dang 2005; Vo Dang 2008). I was interested to find out how and why different immigrant communities adopted a similarly strong anti-Communist ethos at the time, yet became known as "refugees" rather than "exiles," as in the case of Latvians and other Eastern Europeans. Thus, the project not only regards the immigrant groups as actively shaping a seemingly homogeneously anti-Communist positionality for themselves, one strictly in

opposition to an oppressor in the homeland, but also being molded structurally, through a complex political environment combining their different countries of settlement and supranational institutions.

I am conscious of the difference in sources utilized to reflect the challenges of Latvian and Vietnamese youth, namely, Latvian language publications and mostly spoken, albeit transcribed, texts in English about the Vietnamese experience. In part, this is due to the unsurpassed collection of Latvian language exile periodicals at the Immigration History Research Center archives, University of Minnesota, which covers all of the Cold War period. Having utilized this collection to research both early and late Cold War era Latvian American publications, I remained consistent in examining 1.5 and second generation youth through this prism. Thus, it was important to utilize contemporary sources also when looking at the Vietnamese American youth. Since this community is relatively newer to the U.S., the sources reflecting their experiences are also differing in media; unlike the printed journals of the 1960s and 1970s and without knowledge of Vietnamese, I found recent oral histories, websites and documentaries to be most appropriate for a comparison. However, I would not argue that the two types of sources are equivalent. For one, the print medium and native language utilized by the Latvian youth must be taken into account; language therein is edited, more literary, arguably missing the urgency of an oral source. Articles have continuations throughout issues; there are letters and callbacks throughout the publications. The oral histories used in this project collected by the Vietnamese American Oral History Project, immensely informative, rich and valuable, offer a different kind of insight, mostly personal views from Vietnamese Americans, expressed or later translated into English, with all the

elements of normal spoken language, including pauses, repetitions and filler words. This type of record is more immediate, but definitely less polished. Then again, this is contrasted by the very thoughtfully worded statements on Vietnamese American mayor of Garden Grove, Bao Nguyen's campaign website where a personal narrative is taken to the other extreme, curated for a particular purpose, in this case, running for U.S. Congress.

In sum, the purpose of the comparison between Latvian and Vietnamese experiences is not to present them as somehow naturally analogous, as that would be artifice. However, certain elements of the two groups' journey, resettlement, and, finally, coming of age in the U.S. provide valuable parallels and insights into how the U.S. incorporated each of these groups into its master narrative in the Cold War era.

Conclusion

Latvian language exile publications following WWII provided unparalleled access to the state of the community over several decades. While working with primary sources provided great benefits in terms of being able to track the transformation of diasporic discourse over time, it also included challenges, as already mentioned. The publications used in this research have been sources of data, but have been also used as metadata in some ways. I was interested not only in what was contained in the newspapers, but also how they came to be, who their contributors were, and how the appearance, image of the publications changed over time. From fragile, low-quality paper and mimeographed type in the DP camps, to regular, standardized papers in the later decades of the twentieth century, Latvian language exile newspapers became gradually more sophisticated and widespread. Throughout their existence, they have been sites for the negotiation of

Latvian exile identity, and sometimes ambivalent, contradictory notions of identity, nationalism, and belonging. That is the topic of the next chapter.

UNRRA 191

Presents

Glasenbach Journal

UNRRA 191

SNIEDZ GLAZENBACHAS AVIZI

LATVIEŠU BALSS AUSTRIJĀ

Nr. 1. Pirmdien, 1945.g. 29.oktobrí.

Ar letvįešu avízes pirmo numuru Baltijas tautu piederígie Glazenbachas nometné var bút apmierináti ar patíkamiem ieguvumiem attiecíbá uz nometnes un pasaules ziņém.

Dažás nedéļás més esam sasnieguši ļoti augstu nometnes límeni, atkal més varam bút lepni ar to.

Tomér més neapstásimies un nekavésimies šajá límení, bet mums jákápina sadarbíba šiní virsiená starp dažádém tautu grupém un vieníbém nometné, lai pársniegtu gaidíto, kas mums jau bija nodométs. Es ceru, ka šis laikraksts bús viens no daudzajém saitém Glazenbachá, lai sasniegtu augstáko nometnes dzíves límeni.-

Philipp G u l l i o n

Direktors

XXX O XXX

XXXXX

Figure 1: Front page of Issue 1, *Latviešu Balss Austrijā [Latvian Voice in Austria]*, 10/29/1945.

LATVIEŠU BALSS AUSTRIJĀ

UNRRA 191 Glasenbach Journal

Sestdien, 25. maijā   Nr. 30   1946. gadā.

Jo ziema bargāka, jo kuplāk zaļo zars.
V. Strēlerte.

KO NO MUMS PRASA NĀKOTNE?

Ja jāatbild šim jautājumam, tad vispirms jābūt skaidrībā, ko mēs no
nākotnes gaidām. Vienis prātis būsim par to, ka labvēlīgākais mūsu nā-
kotnes atrisinājums ir atgriešanās dzimtenē, vienotai un morāliski stip-
rai tautai. Ja šis atgriešanās brīdis dažādu politisku notikumu norisē
aizkavētos, tad mūsu tautas intereses prasa, lai mēs varētu dzīvot kom-
paktā masā, veidojot savu gara dzīvi, vairojot un saglabājot kultūrālās
vērtības, radot apstākļus, lai mūsu jaunatnei būtu iespēja augt latvis-
kā garā, lai varētu pastāvēt latviešu skolas un visbeidzot, lai mēs va-
rētu nodrošināties materiāli, lai mums būtu darbs un darba iespējas.
Tās ir vadlīnijas, pa kurām ejot, mēs varam rēķināties ar savas tautas
dzīvošanu, lai arī nākošos gadu simtos vēl minētu latviešu vārdu. Lai
visu to sasniegtu, tad nu ir pēdējais laiks visiem, kā vadītājiem, tā va-
dāmiem, būt skaidrībā, ko un kā rīkoties, ir jāatbild jautājumam, ko no
mums prasa nākotne. Mēs nevaram un nedrīkstam rokas klēpī salikuši ska-
tīties un vienaldzīgi noraudzīties, kā dzīve aizrit mums garām.

Kā pagātne ir prasījusi, tā nākotne no mums prasa izturību un mie-
rīgu, bet mērķtiecīgu pieeju notikumiem. Katrs darbs, kas var kalpot mū-
su zemes atbrīvošanai, nedrīkst palikt neizdarīts, vai mūsu nevienprā-
tības dēļ aizkavēts. Pasaules sabiedriskā doma aizvien vairāk sāk no-
svērties tai pusē, no kuras arī atkarīgs mūsu zemes brīvības rīts. Mū-
su uzdevumos tai pašā laikā ar visiem līdzekļiem jācenšas panākt, lai
pasaules aktuālo problēmu starpā būtu arī Baltijas tautu un zemju stā-
vokļa noskaidrošana un mums labvēlīga nokārtošana. Ar savu stāju mums
emigrācijā jāpierāda, ka esam tauta, kam neapšaubāmas tiesības uz brī-
vu un neatkarīgu dzīvi. Sarunās ar angļiem, amerikāņiem un frančiem
daudzreiz nācies konstatēt, ka daļa no mūsu draudzīgām tautām ir visai
greizos uzskatos par mūsu tautu un zemi. Te daudz vēl darba kā mūsu
vadītājiem, tā ikvienam tautietim, jo arī to prasa no mums mūsu nākot-
ne. Ja mēs pastāvam uz savas zemes tiesībām, ja mēs prasām atgriešanās
iespējamības, tad šī jautājuma kārtošanā vajadzīga visciešākā vieno-
tība, nav pielaujams, ka atsevišķas grupas, vai personas rīkojas citā
virzienā, mūsu nākotnes jautājumu nostādot nepieņemamā apgaismojumā.

Tāpat mēs nedrīkstam nokavēt laiku, jau šodien neapsverot iespēja-
mības, kā un kur saglabāt tautas kopību, ja dzīves izbeigšanās nomet-
nēs nesakristu ar dienu, kad mēs varam doties uz savām mājām. Ja līdz
tam brīdim mūsu vadībai nebūs vismaz konkrētu priekšlikumu, vai no-
rādījumu, tad nekas neaizkavēs mūsu tautas izklīšanu uz visām pusēm
un vai tad vairs varēs runāt par tautu, tas ir stipri apšaubāmi. Ir gan
jāsaprot, ka mūsu rokās nav varas, ne arī lielu iespēju, bet tomēr arī
citos gadījumos esam daudz panākuši, kaut arī tad ne katrreiz bija va-

Figure 2: Front page of Issue 30, *Latviešu Balss Austrijā [Latvian Voice in Austria]*, 5/26/1946.

J Velde 36-1

BALTIEŠU ZIŅAS AUSTRIJĀ

AGR. LATVIEŠU BALSS AUSTRIJĀ

Permitted by UNRRA Team 191

Sestdien, 29.martā | Nº 74(5) | 1947.gadā.

Ciešanu krusts un cerību zvaigznes lai
mūs spēcina, ka, Dievu lūdzot, mēs pie-
dzīvosim Viņa žēlastību savai tēvijai,
latvju tautai, sev pašiem.
Prof. Dr. T.Grinbergs.

A K T U Ā L Ā S   P R O B L Ē M A S .

=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=.=

Sekojot samērā asam lūzumam, kāds radies tieši pēdējā laikā lielvalstu
starpā, kur Amerika pat oficiāli nodeklarējusi, ka tā neuzskata par sai-
stošu Jaltā, Teherānā un Potsdamā panākto vienošanos, var secināt, ka
rietumu pasaule vairs tālāk nedomā iet kompromisa un izlīdzinājuma ceļu,
bet gan rast dzīvu piepildījumu tiesību, taisnības un brīvības jēdzie-
nam, kas vismaz uz laiku likās esam aprakts. Galvenā kārtā to pašreiz
var teikt par Amerikas ārpolitisko nostāju iepretī Pad.Savienībai. No
tālākām Amerikas konsekvencēm, zīmējoties uz austrumu totalitārām ie-
kārtām, varēs spriest, kā un cik efektīvi tas iedarbosies uz to austru-
mu teritorijas daļu, kas nes Baltijas vārdu. Jaunā Amerikas ārpolitiskā
nostāja nenoliedzami dod pamatotas cerības tautām, kas brīvību zaudēju-
šas varas ceļā. Protams, nebūtu ne gudri, ne arī tālredzīgi, ja jau ši-
nī brīdī mēs nodotos pārāk lielam optimismam.

Pēdējās ziņas, kas saņemtas no informētiem ārzemju avotiem, ļauj seci-
nāt, ka cerības par Baltijas valstu neatkarības atjaunošanas iespējamību
tuvojušās zināmai realitātei. Šinī pašā sakarībā jānorāda uz mūsu sūtņa
pēdēje vēstījumu no Londonas, kurā viņš norāda, ka pašreizējā situācija
nav tāda, kurā pēc iespējas ātrāk būtu jāatstāj šis kontinents. Arī LC
pēdējā paplašinātā sēdē, apspriežot emigrācijas jautājumus, konstatēju-
si, ka pašreizējā situācija neizsaka, ka mēs būtu par katru cenu spiesti
doties uz aizjūras zemēm. Nav zudušas cerības brīvam ceļam uz savu zemi.

Pieskaroties tieši emigrācijas problēmai, konstatēts, ka pašreizējie
piedāvājumi ir galvenā kārtā privātas dabas un nav organizēti no attie-
cīgām valdībām. Plašākas emigrācijas iespējas šinī brīdī vispār nepa-
stāv, līdz ar ko jāpieņem, ka 1947.gads lielākai bēgļu daļai būs jāpava-
da pašreizējos, vai līdzīgos apstākļos.

Iedziļinoties sīkāk Kanādas imigrācijas politikā un ņemot vērā attie-
cīgo iestāžu informāciju, var diezgan droši teikt, ka pēc zināma laika
uz šo zemi radīsies izceļošanas iespējas diezgan lielam bēgļu skaitam.
Tā kā no latviešu trimdas vadības puses Kanāda atzīta par vienu no tām
zemēm, kur izceļošana pie zināmiem apstākļiem būtu atbalstāma, tad ap-
sveicams ikviens solis, kas sperts informācijas un sagatavošanas materiā-

Figure 3: Front page of Issue 5, *Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā [Baltic News in Austria],* 3/29/1949.

Chapter 3: Latvian-Language Publications in Austria:

Managing the Ambivalence of Being a DP

This chapter analyzes Latvian Displaced Persons' (DP) newspapers to understand identity formation in refugee camps following World War II. It explores DP newspapers as a prismatic tool in the ongoing process of self-positioning by the DPs and the ambivalent process of the construction of their identities. Newspaper articles from the Latvian-language DP newspaper in Camp 191, Glasenbach, Austria, were examined from 1945 to 1948, as well as United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration documents from the UN Archives.

Thousands of Latvians found themselves in DP camps in Germany, Austria and Italy at the end of WWII Altogether, it is estimated that more than 11 million DPs from various nations were in Allied controlled zones after the war, a little over four million in the U.S. zone (Hilton 2009). DP camps were a unique post-war solution at the time. While World War I had also seen major population displacements, WWII differed by generating mass movements of refugees as a result of changing state policies, not just military strife (Cohen 2008, 440). When, in late 1945, the USSR and its East European satellite countries started demanding their citizens be repatriated, many DPs refused to comply. Of those, the largest number were Poles (about 45 percent), followed by Latvians (17 percent, or approximately 39,000), then Lithuanians and Estonians (13 and six percent, respectively) (Hilton 2009, 280). United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) repatriated the majority of DPs by the end of the year; however, more than 700,000 DPs remained and refused to be returned to their homelands.

This chapter is based on an analysis of more than eighty issues of Latvian-language DP newspaper *LVA/BNA* from UNRRA Camp 191, Glasenbach, Austria, tracing its course from the first issue published on October 29, 1945, to June of 1948 and the passing of the Displaced Persons Act. Ultimately, many of the camps' residents resettled to the U.S. because it was willing to sponsor Europeans to come work in its different industries, given the labor force demands following WWII. The publication continued until 1950, but my analysis focuses on the transitional period immediately after WWII, which was laden with volatility and instability. *LVA/BNA*, in conjunction with secondary sources about UNRRA, present a particular perspective on the Latvian DP experience. This chapter utilizes the newspapers as a tool, a prism through which the position of the DPs in the aftermath of the war can be reconstituted.

First, I introduce the DP camps, the philosophy behind them as sites of relief and rehabilitation, inspired by UNRRA's American New Deal ethos. UNRRA's emergence as a new type of refugee relief organization, one aimed at increased self-governance and autonomy, is examined, as well as the DPs' complicated position between Western Allies' and Soviet interests. Focusing on Latvians in the U.S. occupation zone in Austria, I explore how authorities in charge of the camps—namely UNRRA—and the Latvian community interacted to create an exile identity based on ambivalent positions of nationalism, culture, political agency, and bodily integrity. I posit that these camps were loci of a new type of international humanitarianism, but one that was still shaped by a world dominated by nationalist interests and claims of sovereignty. Next, I turn to the papers themselves, looking closer to their origins, the tensions and generative capacities of a publication in Latvian, by Latvian DPs, at a time when Latvia had both ceased to

exist after Soviet annexation, yet clearly persisted in the discourse of those displaced. The camps, including the DP newspapers as one of their constitutive elements, were novel, generative, or "third spaces" (Bhabha 1994; Rutherford 1998), where various ambivalences were negotiated. DPs themselves, a new category or migrant, were also a kind of "third element" in post-war Europe, not fitting neatly into binaries of "friend or enemy," "aggressor or victim" and so forth. I draw on Zygmunt Bauman's writing on the stranger (1990) to show how UNRRA camps were sites for these complex ambivalences to be negotiated.

I then explore the difference between the concepts of refugee, DP, and exile, problematizing the implied notions of statelessness/nationalism, helplessness/agency, worthiness/unworthiness, and cultural uniqueness/assimilability. *LVA/BNA* address these and other tensions present in the DP experience, and show that DPs in fact embodied at times contradictory positions.

UNRRA DP Camps: A New Deal

The formation of UNRRA was approved in 1943 by forty-four countries "to provide relief to areas liberated from Axis powers" (Storrs 2013, 208). UNRRA was created to exist only for a limited time, and by 1946 its responsibilities were gradually taken over by the Interim Committee of the World Health Organization, the International Refugee Organization, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Economic and Social Organization (UNESCO), and "other parts of the newly inaugurated UN apparatus" (Reinisch 2013, 71).

During its relatively short lifespan of about four years, UNRRA was primarily U.S. funded and dominated. The reasons for the U.S. taking on the majority of the

responsibilities for the new administration appear to be manifold. Jessica Reinisch has noted that a refusal by the U.S. to participate in "inter-Allied relief schemes" following WWI was seen by both American and European analysts as having contributed to some of the "subsequent decades' crises and upheavals," leading the U.S. to take a larger part in the rebuilding of Europe this time (2011, 266). However, initially the U.S. trend of isolationism extended into the first part of WWII, and was seen as potentially damaging by both major political parties:

> Both a group of Roosevelt's New Dealers (within and outside the State Department) and an influential wing of the Republican Party used the spectre of isolation in their attempts to mobilize forces and to urge that the United States should now assume a leading role in international affairs, so as to make up for its earlier failures and broken promises... The United States now had 'a second chance' to heal the world and make it 'safe for democracy'. (Reinisch 2011, 267)

The U.S. saw this trying period as a possibility for righting the wrongs of isolationism following the previous war, spurred on by what Reinisch calls "missionary internationalism." However, there was to be a distinction between WWI-era charity, an unsynchronized effort from various small organizations, and the concerted plan put together by the emerging United Nations. Moreover, the investment in post-WWII Europe was treated more like a loan than a gift, tying European markets to the powerhouse that was post-war U.S. Herbert Lehman, former Governor of New York and director of Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations, in a speech urging for the establishment of UNRRA, noted that "relief should not be given as a 'selfless gift' but

with the understanding that it would be repaid," and the whole effort would be "merely enlightened self-interest" (Reinisch 2011, 271). This cuts to the core of a Weberian notion of the morality of self-interest, the very spirit of capitalism. A New York Times article from earlier in 1943 summarized Lehman's approach quite succinctly: "He does not propose to build utopia at the expense of the United States, but to invoke businesslike practices that will at the same time be humanitarian and effective in providing insulation against future war" (Krock 1943). Reinisch adds, "But as the declarations on moral responsibilities and just leadership suggested, these considerations transcended Realpolitik and simple self-interest. American advocates of leadership in international relief regularly used Christian imagery of charity and philanthropy, providence, morality, and the protection of individual dignity" (Reinisch 2011, 272). Moreover, she notes, "Many agreed that it was a major purpose of America's management of the relief project to internationalize New Deal achievements and teach the world how to enjoy higher standards of living. Through relief work, countries could be taught how to use their soils and resources more effectively, and shown how to raise their standards of production and consumption," and, perhaps more troublingly, "Some writers also compared the process of making devastated Europe habitable again with the hardships of the nineteenth-century pioneers who had forced their way through frontier wilderness" (Reinisch 2011, 272). This conceptualization of post-war Europe as a "wilderness" unavoidably also reflected on those displaced in it, a sort of personification of the chaos in the aftermath of the war, "human backwash," regardless of background or provenance (Cohen 2011, 6). Thus, while rooted in New Deal ideas of self-governance and rehabilitation, this new approach of refugee management did not necessarily provide equal treatment with integrity.

Wyman cites a former occupation officer who worked in DP affairs as saying: ""The Germans gradually conditioned the military officers and military government to regard the DPs as inferior and undeserving people." One former military policeman admitted he looked on DPs as "troublemakers"" (Wyman 1988, 174). While in theory the rebuilding of Europe was a monumental feat of post-war internationalism, in praxis, the attitudes of the staff on the ground differed from camp to camp, resulting in different DP experiences throughout.

Micro-level contingencies aside, UNRRA was a new type of organization, different from the fragmented charities offering help after WWI, more targeted in its intention. Historian Elizabeth Borgwardt argues that WWII marked a difference in how those displaced by the war were managed. During the period between the end of the war and the solidification of Cold War positions, more self-governing and empowered DP communities were created, rooted in the ideals of the New Deal and embodying the notion of relief and rehabilitation as a public, rather than private concern. Borgwardt calls this the "internationalization of New Deal-style problem-solving" (Borgwardt 2005, 119). By placing much of the decision-making in the hands of the DPs themselves, and organizing the camps according to national lines, UNRRA tried to create self-governing camps, and, allegedly, by mid-1947 most could be said to be exactly that. At the same time, other accounts tell of the apathy and depression in the camps, contradicting the view of a generally positive outcome, leading me to conclude that a variety of experiences took place in the camps, largely dependent on the staff and DP relations, time period (before/after resettlement became possible), and, also, depending on the positionality of the author narrative, the time period when it was constructed.

It would be impossible to view UNRRA as a purely humanitarian, apolitical endeavor, exemplifying a post-war turn to universal human rights. Anna Holian writes that while camps were in a way extraterritorial, not part of the country they were located, i.e. German or Austrian jurisdiction did not apply there, they were also a lot more open than is often imagined. Holian notes: "Displaced persons who lived in camps were "border crossers."… Unlike contemporary camp refugees, who are often severely restricted in their opportunities to leave the camp, displaced persons could come and go at will" (Holian 2005, 52). Technically, "DP status was supposed to be tied to the person rather than the place. It was supposed to be a portable personal status" (Holian 2005, 52–3). In reality, being in the camp became a prerequisite for obtaining the benefits DPs were entitled to. Also, DPs were encouraged to organize, as already noted, as self-sufficiency was seen as one of the aims of UNRRA's agenda. This, Holian recognizes, both reduced the number of staff necessary to run the camps, as well as supposedly "prepared" displaced persons for life in a democracy (Holian 2005, 55). UNRRA stressed the role of democracy and self-governance as key in the running of the camps, both because it was seen as the most practical, as well as ideologically sound (Wyman 1988, 117). The camps thus tried to practice what they preached. However, the DPs located in UNRRA care had additional claims on them, mostly from their homelands, now Soviet-occupied or dominated, so activities within the DP camps did not just take place in a post-war no man's land, but rather a quite politically charged space where U.S. and Soviet interests met.

With the creation of a new type of refugee management administration, a new kind of refugee, or in this case, DP, emerged. UNRRA framed the responsibility of DP

management as a moral endeavor; thus, those on the receiving end of the rehabilitation policies had to be deserving of the organization's efforts. The displaced had to be active, taking on part of the responsibility. Part of being "worthy" of UNRRA services meant a DP had not collaborated with the Nazis during the war. Later on, as U.S. and Soviet relations soured, being vehemently anti-Communist also carried value. For instance, since Latvian DPs had largely fled due to impending Soviet occupation and were fervently anti-Communist, the only real point of contention to their potential "worthiness" was the fact that some Latvians had been part of the German forces during the period of their country's occupation by the Nazis. This was a major issue in how Western Allies conceptualized who was to be labeled a DP or refugee and who was not. Camp inhabitants were screened constantly in order to identify possible German collaborators. Historian Mark Wyman notes:

> Such charges had fertile soil in which to grow. Within the United States and Canada, left-wing groups published reports that many DPs had been, and still were, Nazi enthusiasts… A New York Times writer classified a third of the Baltic DPs as collaborators, and one of Eisenhower's aides condemned the Balts, Poles, and Ukrainians as "Nazis to the very core of their being." Ethnic solidarity was often absent on this issue, in Europe and overseas. A pro-Soviet Ukrainian-Canadian group told the Canadian Parliament that the Ukrainian DPs in Europe consisted mainly of war criminals, collaborators, and people who were trying to avoid rebuilding their homeland. (Wyman 1988, 179)

Those who were suspected of having favored the German regime were in most cases expelled from UNRRA camps and left to fend for themselves in West Germany (Hilton 2009). Although this can be seen as a rather mild punishment, it would have been harsh in the immediate post-war years, since attitudes to refugees in war-torn Germany were often very negative, even violent (Holian 2005).

In the Latvian case, the community mobilized in order to prove that the majority of male Latvian DPs had not collaborated voluntarily with Nazi forces. Quoting a letter from the Latvian Red Cross to the United States Forces European Theater (UFSET) in December 1945, Hilton writes:

> [The] Latvian Red Cross proclaimed indignantly that "Latvians have never been 'nazis' [sic] by the simple reason that there never existed a 'nazi' [sic] party in Latvia." It explained that Latvians who served in the Wehrmacht were forced to do so by the Germans and that those who did volunteer did so to fight against the Bolsheviks, not the Western Allies. ((Hilton 2009, 315), referring to Letter from Latvian Red Cross to USFET, 19 December 1945, in file: Latvians, April–June 1946, UNRRA German Mission fonds, S-0437-19, UN Archives.)

Latvian DP identity became essentially synonymous with anti-Communism. Arguably, this later facilitated the DPs' emigration to the U.S. and other Western countries. The very persistence of a Latvian Red Cross throughout the war and its representation even during mass displacement may have further solidified the legitimacy of the Latvian refugees. They were able to maintain some institutions, thus aligning with the narrative of

self-government, put in place by UNRRA. Apparently, some cultural capital could be carried over into the new context of the DP camps and could be exchanged for legitimacy.

The ubiquitous screening procedures, largely in place due to the simultaneous presence of both U.S. Armed Forces as well as UNRRA personnel in the camps were eventually abandoned because they were inefficient. Some described the atmosphere in the camps as one of “perpetual screening” (Dushnyck and Gibbons 1947, 56). They mostly consisted of interviews about the DPs’ wartime activities and whereabouts. DPs have claimed that interviews were most often conducted only in English, German, or Russian, at times without an appropriate interpreter present (Wyman 1988, 59). Refusal to agree to an interview meant automatic eviction. Wyman notes that DPs were often also asked about relatives in their homelands, and were required to provide addresses, which many felt might endanger their family members. Initially, “the detection and eviction of collaborators from the camps was a military prerogative; the identification of refugees, as well as the verification of their date of displacement, was the responsibility of UNRRA teams” (Cohen 2008, 445–6). Thus, besides an increasingly professionalized relief and rehabilitation force, the DPs also encountered the rigidity of a military-run operation. The two styles did not always mesh well. UNRRA’s humanitarian expertise, focused on fostering self-governance was at points met with military commanders’ beliefs that “if you made things hard enough in the camps, the DPs would go home” (Cohen 2008, 442). The difference in how the two sides perceived DPs is rooted in the changes that the UNRRA itself embodied. Moreover, while dominated by the U.S., the administration was

still an international project, which posed some additional tensions. Describing this relationship in the aftermath of WWII, Silvia Salvatici explains:

> In her memoirs Bickerdike [a British welfare officer] described the approach of her US colleagues rather bluntly: 'Americans didn't do the work, they just told how it had to be done'. The rift between European and American relief workers was aggravated by the fact that Americans hadn't experienced the war within their own country, while the French and the British tended to believe that 'only people who [had] suffered in the same way [could] appreciate the sufferings of displaced persons. (Salvatici 2012, 432)

Although the emphasis on helping those liberated from Axis powers shifted gradually, and DPs escaping Communist oppression were aided, the initial focus on relieving those who had suffered under the Nazis was central. Hence, much attention was paid to screening DPs for potential former Nazi sympathizers or collaborators, as those would not be eligible for DP status and aid. The lingering suspicion of Nazi collaboration was haunting the post-war European landscape not just in the immediate post-war years, but also for decades to come. Shadows of wartime collaborations with Nazis and concerns about impunity lingered, only to slowly give way to a new "other" for the Western world to define itself against in the second half of the twentieth century, the Soviet bloc.

In this sense, the DP camps can be read as "third spaces" of sorts, as conceptualized by Homi K. Bhabha. Writing about post-colonial spaces, Bhabha noted their capacity for

generating hybridity and mimicry, instead of absorption or further dichotomizing. He explained:

> But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom. (Rutherford 1998, 211)

In the case of DPs following WWII, their experience was shaped by the conflict of several huge political forces with clear colonial pretensions. The DP camp, dominated by the U.S., was by no means a neutral political site or a buffer zone. U.S. interests and expectations, relayed via UNRRA, were clearly present in how DPs were managed and ultimately resettled. Soviet interests were also present, most literally embodied in liaison officers and repatriation campaigns. Also present were a spectrum of former Nazi affiliations, now rendered murky and spectral after the collapse of the Reich. Briefly held wartime (colonial) positions and collaborations were still interrogated. Those, along with preexisting national belongings, as well as possible resettlement outcomes, all intertwined in order to shape the constant positionality work of DPs, and, indeed, new political initiatives.

Tightrope Walking: Managing Ambivalent Positions

The roles of UNRRA and the unprecedented post-war institution of DP camps are key in understanding the shaping of Latvian DP identity. Newly established refugee management bodies after WWII, such as UNRRA, were at least in theory aimed at creating empowered, self-governing, democratic European DP populations, while also furthering U.S. interests of solidifying its dominance in the region at a time when Soviets were also making claims to that part of the world. Latvian exile identity, for all intents and purposes a national identity, often seen as sui generis in the community, was also dependent on the space available for self-definition in the DP camps. This is not to say that a conscious, politically engaged Latvian community would not have existed without UNRRA, but rather that the inextricable coexistence of UNRRA and displaced populations, including Latvians, shaped this process. What seems particularly interesting, however, are the often contradictory or ambivalent positions DPs negotiated, including positions of empowerment and powerlessness.

I take Robert Merton's definition of sociological ambivalence as "incompatible normative expectation from the unstable social structure composed by multiple relations" (Merton 1976, 4) as a basic starting point. Ambivalence in the experience of the DPs had to do both with the expectations projected on them as political (anti-Nazi, anti-Communist, but not "too political," still assimilable), as well as physical bodies (strong and healthy potential laborers, but also weak and in need of rehabilitation). In conceptualizing ambivalence as the simultaneous embodiment of conflicting categories, I find a broadened definition of the concept most productive, since it incorporates many contexts and relations.

While Merton provides a good basic framework, ambivalence, as experience and process specific to displacement or post-colonial contexts, can be developed further. Zygmunt Bauman's writing on the stranger, for example, as a disruptive and threatening category to the world order, undermining the binary of friend/enemy, applies also to the DP. Strangers, Bauman argues,

> are that 'third element' which should not be. The true hybrids, the monsters: not just unclassified, but unclassifiable. They therefore do not question this one opposition here and now: they question oppositions as such, the very principle of the opposition, the plausibility of dichotomy it suggests. (Bauman 1990, 148)

DPs disrupted the clear wartime distinction of "us vs. them." Their provenance and wartime activities were unclear, and only through interviewing, screening, and, ultimately, rehabilitation and resettlement, could they be clearly vetted into either the "friend" or "enemy" category. Until this could be done, they actively disrupted the concrete binary of friend and enemy by their mere existence. However, they also challenged notions of refugees or DPs as helpless, passive recipients of aid by maintaining an active political voice and national identity. Latvian DPs' refusal to return home, for instance, can be seen as one such manifestation of agency, albeit supported by an official U.S. position. Still, Bauman's stranger shows through here as well:

> The stranger who refuses to go gradually transforms his temporary abode into a home territory – all the more so as his other, 'original' home recedes in the past

> and perhaps vanishes altogether. On the other hand, however, he retains (if only in theory) his freedom to go and so is able to view local conditions with an equanimity the native residents can hardly afford. (Bauman 1990, 150)

Although it would be an exaggeration to say that DPs transformed their camps into home territories as the assumption of temporariness was always there, it is clear that they did make an effort to maintain the idea of the nation while in this transient space. Perhaps it would be more accurate to extend the notion of "temporary abode" to a post-war Europe as such, which DPs were ultimately able to leave, but most locals in the countries where camps were located, were not. The DP position, thus, is also tied to a disruption of temporality, not just territories. While DP newspapers represented, besides spaces for communication and community-building, efforts to appeal to a kinship to Western European culture, including Protestantism, fine arts, democracy etc. in order to minimize suspicion, they never truly belonged to post-war Europe where their camps were located. The DPs were in Bauman's terms "an event in history." By "having a beginning, the presence of the stranger always carried the potential of an end. The stranger has a freedom to go. He may be forced to go – or at least forcing him to go may be contemplated without violating the order of things. However protracted, the stay of the stranger is temporary" (Bauman 1990, 149).

By combining notions of third space and the stranger, it is easier to conceptualize the role of DPs in post-war European camps, run by U.S.-dominated UNRRA. While the camps were particular spaces in themselves, where categories of friend and enemy were constantly reevaluated through screenings and changing post-war international relations,

the DPs were third elements which did not neatly belong on either side after the war. Besides their unclear positions as either friends or enemies from the viewpoint of the administration of the camps, the ambivalence of their identities extended beyond that relationship. The DP community itself struggled with managing several conflicting positions, not just from an external gaze, such as the U.S. or USSR, but also internally.

Nationalism was a key component for many DPs, central to the maintenance of Latvian identity, but also deeply problematic in light of how it was perceived in post-war Europe. Nationalism is an inconsistent, contradictory category, seemingly pre-defined, but also malleable and adapting to lived experience, in this case, DP life. It set parameters for inclusion and exclusion to the group, but also adjusted to changing broader circumstances: Latvian exile nationalism came to be defined as anti-Communist, anti-Nazi, and pro-democracy, and embodying a certain work ethic and cultural kinship to the Western world. Thus, DP nationalism had to both maintain a constant hard line regarding who and what constituted a Latvian, but it also had to increasingly articulate on why this ethos might be something that is not threatening to potential countries of resettlement, but quite the opposite, a welcome addition to their communities, familiar, benign, and unthreatening. DP camp newspapers thus often included discussions on how to strike a balance between the community's unwillingness to compromise in maintaining its language, culture and traditions, but also being able to fit into a new country not as an isolated group, but full-fledged participants.

The Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian DPs' position was different from that of other Eastern Europeans because the U.S. did not recognize their countries' annexation by the USSR in 1940 as legitimate, and thus did not view them as Soviet citizens. In late June

1940 the acting Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, issued a statement condemning USSR annexation of the Baltic States:

> From the day when the peoples of those Republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest.
>
> The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak. (The Welles Declaration)

A few weeks later, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8484, which froze Baltic States' assets in light of their recent occupation by the USSR, as a protective measure. The Soviet government condemned this move.

Since the official U.S. position did not see the Baltics' annexation to the USSR as legitimate, these DPs did not need to "return home." Thus, DPs after WWII also embodied a particular kind of symbolic nationalism, on the one hand seeing themselves as true and natural representatives of their homelands while they were Soviet-occupied, and on the other, only being able to maintain this identity with any kind of legitimacy through the U.S.'s recognition of the Soviet occupations as illegitimate. U.S. support was powerfully symbolic, and helped a strong exile nationalism to establish and take root in

U.S.-dominated refugee management spaces. DP camps were thus, again, paradoxical sites. On the one hand, they were established according to ideals stemming from a post-war humanitarian, internationalist approach, yet were spatially and socially organized largely according to categories of nationality. As historian Mark Wyman has observed:

> And the Allies had hoped that One World would emerge from the war, a world where victors and vanquished alike declare their solidarity in Humanity. But as occupation authorities tried to further these ends, they discovered that many of the DPs were stateless only according to diplomatic labels: these refugees revealed a tenacious attachment to their ethnic identity. The issue was faced by an American Quaker, working in Germany with DPs, who wrote that he was concerned over "the growth of nationalism among them at a time when the world at large is suffering from too much nationalism." (Wyman 1988, 157)

Ethnicity by no means became less significant than before or after the war, it remained at the center of DP group organization and cultural life.[2] Still, the camps operated somewhat paternalistically, inevitably infantilizing the DPs to a certain degree. They received rations and aid from UNRRA in the camps and some possibilities for rehabilitation and education, but actual options of self-realization through work or education were limited; the camps were rather self-contained universes for a few years, until resettlement became a viable option for most. Language acquisition, learning new skills was to some extent

[2] That said, DPs were also aware of the potential for their involvement in the new countries of resettlement, and in the late 1940s Latvian language newspapers in the camps urged those resettling to the U.S. to take part in the political process there in order to raise awareness of Soviet occupations in their home region.

more a way to keep DPs busy than to actually prepare them for resettlement, since it was not clear where to and in what capacity people would be able to emigrate. Thus, on the one hand, strong notions of nationalism and duty motivated DP groups to remain active through social and cultural activity, maintaining a clear political stance, but on the other, feelings of helplessness, dehumanization, and idleness were common, and a lack of personal space, control over one's own future, a sense of perpetual waiting and screening also were present resulting in an ambivalent experience. This sentiment has been well captured by a DP poem, cited by Estonian DP and scholar Eduard Bakis, one of the first to study the psychological effects of displacement among the refugees:

> Would you please excuse me
> That I nothing know
> I am only a number
> In the I.R.O. long row. (Bakis 1952, 82)

Bakis, and later H. B. M. Murphy, both writing in the 1950s, accentuated the apathy found commonly among DPs, the lack of motivation, depression, anxiety, and other psychological effects of war and later, what felt like for some DPs, warehousing, for the years in the camps (Bakis 1952; Murphy 1955; Gemie, Humbert, and Reid 2012). Thus, the second element of ambivalence within the camps can be identified as that of power/agency vs. helplessness. Gerard Cohen refers to the label of "DP" as "generally resented by its unfortunate recipients, [it] connoted a political and material entitlement limited to non-German European refugees from World War II" (Cohen 2011, 7). In a

broader sense, ambivalence also included determining eligibility for DP status and thus a past free of Nazi collaboration. It is important to note that it was possible for the DPs to embody these contradicting categories simultaneously, depending on whose gaze was present.

In accounts of Latvian DPs, the role of cultural activities and education is often mentioned as prominent in their time in the camps. Allowing and even encouraging national celebrations, cultural events, and publications by the DP communities signified not just a humanitarian gesture on behalf of UNRRA, but initially, also a concrete strategy to try to repatriate as many DPs as possible. Part of the reasoning behind administering DPs by nationality and fostering patriotism in the communities was to encourage repatriation, and to counteract the "'deep apathy' engendered by uprootedness" (Salvatici 2012, 439). Thus, we see a kind of international post-war solution for the refugees, yet the nation is never too far away, be it in how DP camps were organized, or the claims the displaced made about their status. Bakis and Murphy wrote of deep apathy among the refugees, yet the newspapers contain several accounts challenging Soviet repatriation efforts, suggesting otherwise. DPs embodied these strains, the push and pull of agency and helplessness, nationalism and statelessness.

One of the regular contributors to the newspaper was E. Štiglics. It is surprisingly difficult to find information about most individuals active in the newspaper, whether they later resettled to the U.S., or even what their other activities were while in the camps. The newspapers are a self-contained universe in that sense, and it seems that the regular contributors to *LVA/BNA* were not well-known upper class elites of Latvian society, but likely middle-class professionals. Like many other DPs, who after their resettlement were

absorbed into their new professional contexts and sponsored jobs, most were not linked with further publicity. That is not to say that they were not individuals with appropriate cultural and symbolic capital, but rather that on a camp level, the voices heard in the publications were not necessarily those in highest status positions in pre-war Latvia. In one of his articles from August 1946, Štiglics wrote:

> Even if the most important is talked about [in the Latvian DP community], meaning, where to settle permanently, great mistakes are made, making any option of getting to such a settled life impossible. It is underlined [in meetings] that we [DP Latvians] should be demanding a territory that would practically allow for the maintenance of a national community, bring up youth in a Latvian manner and virtue, but economically, the decisive factor seems to be the possibility of creating a broad and robust employment opportunity, independent of other [local] employers. What fantasy! That is a state within a state, demanding minority rights. Having lived in Western Europe for decades and observed relationships between nationalities, I have not seen that in any country of culture any nationality would be oppressed… If we do not want to be counted among the fascists, if we want to get a permanent place to live, then under no circumstances may we come demanding minority rights, but rather with an indication of who we are and what we can and want to do for the country we choose for our second motherland. Then we will be spoken to out of turn, then respect for us will rise as for a people capable of thinking, organizing, and building, and then the shameful mark of hanger-on will be removed from us, and then the rest about us as a

> national community will come on its own within the limits of our own capabilities. (Štiglics 1946b, 5)

It is this constant negotiation of DP identity that colored all of the community's activities. Especially in light of UNRRA's initial emphasis on providing relief to victims of Axis power, Latvians wanted to clearly distance themselves from any Nazi involvement, for fear that a few collaborators' pasts might taint the perception of the rest of the community; they wanted to insist on the right to maintain their language and culture, but did not want to appear pushy and ungrateful to any potential country that offered them resettlement. However, as the opinion above illustrates, the author still talked about the choice of a new homeland; it is implied that even in this situation, the community would have some say regarding where they ultimately landed. Being respectful to the country of settlement would beget respect in return, but it is unacceptable to demand any minority rights from the outset, the author argues. The position illustrated in the quote above is fascinating; on the one hand, it is limited to a discussion in a DP camp newspaper. A paper, published in a language understood by a few thousand readers, located in another war-torn European state, but it is making claims about a nation and its future that sees an imminent resettlement. Moreover, it addresses a choice of resettlements, a right and a wrong way of going about them, and includes an acknowledgement of self-worth, but caution from arrogance.

This tightrope walking exemplifies the constant image-managing labor performed by DPs, oscillating between agency-imbued representatives of a nation, and just parts of a displaced, unorganized mass to be rehabilitated. It illustrates the multiplicity of

perspectives considered by the DPs in articulating their position, but also managing their past, and imagining a possible future. It is a balance of maintaining "Latvianness," disassociating with Nazi collaborations, claiming a good work ethic, and also an understanding of how "countries of culture," shorthand for Western European countries, work, and thus what demands are reasonable and what are not. Nationalism is yet again openly present in the text, it is in the lines "Then we will be spoken to out of turn, then respect for us will rise as for a people capable of thinking, organizing, and building, and then the shameful mark of hanger-on will be removed from us," demanding recognition and respect, but present is also an understanding of how minorities might fit into a Western democracy in a post-war era. One thing that does strike the reader of Štiglics's remarks is that the author does not acknowledge the persecution of Jews in Germany, supposedly a "country of culture," when making the sweeping argument about the security of minority rights in Western Europe. Perhaps Nazi Germany and its influence were already seen as completely removed from the culture of Europe, an anomaly so extreme, it was not even taken into account here. Still, fascism is mentioned in the same paragraph in relation to demanding minority rights. Nationalism is clearly present, but the author urges other Latvians to dial it back, should they want to resettle to another country, perhaps even have a choice of countries. DPs should not approach the subject with demands at the forefront, according to Štiglics. Even from the vulnerable position of displacement, making claims about enclave-type resettlement options is gauche if not dangerous. Meanwhile, in the portrayal of contemporary Europe right after the war, Nazism is only present by implication, not clearly named. It is spectral, perhaps exactly because it is hyper-real at the end of the war. Štiglics's writing reflects another, wider

ambivalence, the realization that claims can and must be made by the community regarding its resettlement, but in this process the DPs must not be too demanding. Still scrutinized over their wartime activities, Latvian DPs had to be careful about any demands they put forth as a "nation."

It is apparent in the newspapers that being recognized as a "people of culture" was seen as something key for the Latvian DPs, both for themselves, as well as for their temporary countries of settlement, such as Austria and Germany, but, ultimately, also long-term resettlements. Exactly what constituted "culture" was not always immediately tangible from the publications, however. Apart from clearly identified events representing Latvian material culture, visual arts, crafts, song and dance, culture appears to speak also to a pan-European affinity, a habitus. Similarly to modern day imaginaries of the European Union, whereby entering the EU signifies the acceptance and sharing of "European values" (also a contested issue, but broadly based on democracy, human rights, and, not without issue, some shared Christian heritage), the necessity to be recognized as "cultured" for Latvian DPs and others meant a recognition of humanity, "civility," and common understanding, a shared denunciation of Nazism and Communist oppression. Broadly, I interpret "cultured" as code for Western, rather than Eastern, educated, and, more likely than not, white, democratic, Christian, modern, but rooted in an agrarian past, and assimilable.

DPs, or at least their most vocal representatives, were eager to claim their position as unique, safe guardians of Latvianness, yet always already fitting into a Western European sensibility, thus not a threat, an extreme, a foreignness. Anna Marta Holian, in her thesis

on the politics of self-representation of DPs in Munich, explored the manipulation of cultural capital by DPs as follows:

> DP elites were central to the formation of communities of interest. These individuals sought to harness a wide array of hesitations, anxieties, and fears about what awaited displaced persons at home for specific political projects and to represent displaced persons as cohesive political constituencies. They put their cultural and political capital to work organizing and representing displaced persons. This capital included not only their specific professional skills, which in many cases were only indirectly useful to them, but also their familiarity with the protocols of formal interaction, especially with how to address the authorities; their organizational and administrative skills; and their superior knowledge of languages, especially German. (Holian 2005, 24)

Their willingness to be seen as conscious actors, educated, hardworking and self-empowered intersected with the aims of UNRRA, and thus the DP and camp authorities' agendas often met in mutually beneficial ways. A critical mass of Latvian DPs was able to utilize some of the cultural and symbolic capital they had amassed in their pre-war life, in order to challenge the characterizations of DPs as apathetic, disinterested and tired. The establishment of Latvian language newspapers in the camps can be seen as one such activity.

While DPs surely enjoyed some freedoms, including the ability to publish periodicals in their languages and maintain their cultural nationalism, it is difficult to

pinpoint how much of this was due to initiative from the DPs themselves, and how much was actively encouraged by the camps' authorities. Most likely, issues of screening and "worthiness" aside, the strongly anti-Communist stance from the refugees and the willingness of UNRRA to appear as encouraging democratic organization worked strongly together. Dushnyck and Gibbons note a February 1, 1947 article in The New York Times on DPs by Anne O'Hare McCormick, journalist and U.S. delegate to UNESCO, wherein "the writer stresses, moreover, the American responsibility toward these people…American responsibility lies in that we are the only hope on earth for these people to look to" (Dushnyck and Gibbons 1947, 57). From a U.S. perspective then, UNRRA served to carry out part of this self-appointed sole responsibility.

Documents from that time period reveal a further tension between UNRRA's public image of an empowering refugee relief organization and its role as instrument of post-war international politics. U.S. and Britain had initially agreed to Stalin's demand that "all political refugees claimed by the Soviets should be handed over by the Western powers" (Dushnyck and Gibbons 1947, 55) at the Yalta conference. While there was no official confirmation of such an agreement from the U.S. government at the time, an UNRRA document, Repatriation - U.S. Zone Order No. 199, outlines a very intense and purposeful "repatriation program." Walter Dushnyck and William J. Gibbons note that the document was written at the U.S. Zone Headquarters of UNRRA in Heidelberg, Germany in late 1946, and made provisions for the "visits of Soviet 'liaison officers' to the displaced persons camps, for the distribution of Soviet newspaper and film propaganda, and 'the use of emotional devices' at what the order calls 'the propitious time'" (Dushnyck and Gibbons 1947, 55). Besides allowing Soviet propaganda in the

camps, it also called for a strategic “psychological ‘conditioning’ of displaced persons,” by identifying small DP leader groups that could be approached by Soviet liaison officers from their homelands, as well as turning cultural activities towards the theme of repatriation (Dushnyck and Gibbons 1947, 55–6). Today, a digital copy of the original document clearly tracks the amendments to the initial version to the order. Correspondence attached to the document reveals initial confusion and astonishment to the order among UNRRA executives as they at first interpret the orders to provide lists of all Soviet citizens in the camps. This went against UNRRA policy, thus seemingly putting at odds the decision of U.S. Zone Director and the DP management authority. Dudley Ward, General Counsel of UNRRA European Regional Office, expressed his concern to Cyrus Greenslade, Acting Chief of DP Operations in a letter:

> I am unable to understand the reference to regulations laid down by U.S. military authorities. It may be that the U.S. Army is following a policy contrary to that adopted by the U.S. representatives on the Council, but it seems rather strange especially in the light of the vehemence with which the US has maintained at all international meetings that these lists should not be provided.
>
> I should be glad, therefore, if you would look into this matter and let me know exactly what the position is. Certainly it would be most improper for UNRRA on its own initiative to furnish these lists and if it is being done on Army constructions, we shall have to arrange for the matter to be taken up in

> Washington. In the meantime, please put Mr. Whiting[3] right on this point. (UNRRA 1946)

Greenslade's response echoed Ward's disagreement with the U.S. military's apparent agreement to provide lists of DPs to the Soviets, and in February of 1947 an official amendment was made, the obligation to provide lists is no longer included "since these in spirit at least contrary to UNRRA policy" (UNRRA 1946). One of the paragraphs deleted from the original version of the order read:

> Lists of Soviet citizens: Only lists of persons determined by U.S. military authorities to be Soviet citizens may be furnished Soviet Liaison Officers. UNRRA officials will cooperate with military authorities in preparing and submitting such lists. (UNRRA 1946)

Here, the discrepancies in U.S. military's and UNRRA's approaches are notable, with the latter refusing to take part directly in any repatriation efforts.

Dushnyck and Gibbons note that even though these contested parts of Order No. 199 were rescinded a few weeks later, they had lasting effects on the DP population and authorization of visits for Soviet repatriation officers. The order still allowed Soviet repatriation officers to visit camps at the discretion of UNRRA teams.

One such encounter was described in an issue of *BNA* in April 1947. The article included the account of a meeting between the Head of the Soviet Repatriation

[3] J.H. Whiting, UNRRA Director in the U.S. occupation zone

Commission and Latvian DPs in the camp. The official had answered DPs' questions and concerns, encouraging them to return home, assuring there were no dangers associated with the process, that all in the Soviet Union were guaranteed freedom of religion and rights to private property. When asked about the freedom of press and whether Latvian citizens would be free to publish their own newspapers and discuss their opinions freely therein, the official replied that "No, there is no such possibility. The press belongs to the state" (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1947a). It is difficult to pinpoint the sudden streak of honesty on behalf of the official, who had so vehemently denied any threat of persecution or worse to the DPs. Perhaps it had to do with the framing of the question, posed from the position of citizens of Latvia, as DPs saw themselves, not Soviet citizens. By this logic, certainly, publications from proponents of a "sovereign Latvia" would not be tolerated, let alone recognized by the Soviet state. The very publication of this exchange in the DP camp newspaper shows, however, that while not always smooth and transparent, the relationship between the authorities in charge and the Latvian DPs was one that allowed the latter to voice their grievances, if only to a limited audience. The editor of a Polish DP newspaper said that there had been no censorship in place for the publications in the camps, although they had to inform UNRRA of the content of the newspaper. "Due to the emphasis on democracy, or perhaps because of a lack of personnel, the occupation, UNRRA, and IRO authorities did little to control newspaper content outside of occasional repatriation controversies" (Wyman 1988, 120). Indeed, issues of repatriation were among the more emotionally charged sections of the newspapers.

News of resistance to Soviet attempts at repatriating Baltic DPs were no surprise. Many DPs, including Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians, had experienced Soviet

occupation and terror in 1940, seeing thousands of people killed or deported to forced labor camps. When Nazi Germany occupied the Baltic region in 1941, and mass graves of civilians killed by the Soviet Army in retreat were discovered and exhumed. Nazis utilized the deep anti-Soviet sentiment to gain support among the population. Some Latvians joined the newly formed Latvian Legion in 1942, under the auspices of a German promise that they would be defending Latvia from new Soviet offensives. Many more were drafted forcibly. However, Latvian soldiers ended up fighting on the Soviet front as part of German forces, and illusions of reinstating an independent Latvian state soon were shattered (Hilton 2009, 293). Consequently, some Latvian DPs were fearful of Soviet retribution upon their return home, since they would be treated as German collaborators. However, most of the Latvian DPs were civilians who simply feared Soviet oppression and had become refugees before the encroaching Soviet takeover from the east. Hilton argues that this helped Latvian DPs to be treated as political refugees, unlike, for example, Polish DPs, whom the UNRRA often saw as economic refugees (Hilton 2009, 295). Still, now and again, not only UNRRA-motivated screenings sorted who was to be deemed eligible for DP status, the community itself looked inward and policed its own members, their morality, actions, and past.

LVA/BNA wrote of screenings with trepidation and reserve; they were directly associated with UNRRA's efforts to minimize the numbers of DPs in camps, and facilitate repatriation. In February 1947, the new makeup of the Latvian Central Committee (LCC) expressed concern about the high rates of DPs expelled from camps in the DP newspaper.

> A broad overview about LCC activities so far was given by its chairman prof. K. Kundziņš. He pointed out that camp screenings, whose aim, evidently, was to minimize the number of DPs under UNRRA care and encourage repatriation, has taken worrying proportions in the American zone. The number of those expelled can be estimated at 10-12%. Screenings in the English zone started later. Members of the Baltic Central Committee have been able to establish that former soldiers lose only UNRRA support, but not DP status. Around the same time a major refugee-transporting event started, whose aim was to concentrate large masses of refugees in the same place. (*Latviešu Balss Austrijā* 1947, 1)

It is interesting that the account of the LCC meeting wherein the worrisome developments of screening were discussed, also mentioned that N. Laborde, the director of the camp where this event took place, greeted the new representatives of LCC, and "wished practical solutions for complex issues" (*Latviešu Balss Austrijā* 1947, 1). Again, UNRRA itself was never too far away, even at times when DP organizations discussed the potential issues with UNRRA's policies. In December of the same year, an extended LCC meeting took place in another DP camp, Esslingen, Germany. This time, there was less worry about the consequences of screenings, but the Baltic DPs still presented a united front in opposing more checks:

> First, there was a discussion about IRO screening, which has begun also in several places in the American occupation zone. Because of this all three Baltic central committees have addressed the IRO headquarters in Geneva with a collective

> proposal, stating that a new screening should not be applicable to Baltic DPs. There had not been a response yet. (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1947d)

The main aim of these protests was to allow the former Baltic soldiers to both stay in DP camps and receive aid, since the DPs insisted that most had been drafted forcibly.

However, while the recuperation of innocence of any Latvians drafted into the Nazi army was a project primarily oriented towards UNRRA, and more generally, Western states that could at some point become countries of resettlement, there was also an ongoing internal screening, conducted by the community itself. Explicit discussions on Nazi-collaborators within the community were absent from the newspapers. I suggest that instead of trying to identify any possible former Nazi sympathizers among the DPs, the community rather chose to not openly address the issue for fear of being further labeled negatively. DPs were already seen as suspicious by populations within the countries where the camps were located, and by Soviet propaganda that equated DP camps as hideouts for Nazis. Instead, the many discussions of the importance of morality and virtue were in fact an effort to illustrate living a moral, "cultured" life as the Latvian way. National awareness and education was key, especially instilling Latvian values to youth in exile, but this was done with an awareness of other groups, nationalities, possible countries of resettlement. Being "good," moral, trustworthy, Christian, hardworking, assimilable were also codes for Latvians to distance themselves from any political extremes, be they Communist or Nazi. Dealing with dubious pasts within the community was linked back to a necessity for moral, trustworthy, diligent individuals, but it was not specified what their past misdeeds were.

A 1947 article titled Bad Man delved deeper into the bothersome issue of factions within the community. The author, A. Vilks, wrote of a “bad man,” a problematic, spectral representation of all that is wrong with DP leadership.

> In exile we must get rid of the so-called bad man, who as a prowling Lietuvēns[4] still continues to act and take over our collective work… A bad man is also he who carries with him a sense of guilt from the motherland, and by hiding it expertly, and with support from a particular environment, takes the reins… A bad man, often hiding behind flawless manners and demonstrations of good tact, tries to recommend himself to other people, but in the event of a sudden transgression, explains it as the actions of ill-wishers and those envious, trying to denounce and belittle him. (Vilks 1947, 1–2)

Vilks noted that life in exile was a great equalizer, and it was no use being proud of what one used to be before the war. Vilks argued that the current situation did not allow for divisions within the community, and all should work together. It was also pathetic and despicable, he wrote, to think about what position one might hold once they return home (Vilks 1947). Vilks went on to stress honesty as a guiding principle, as well as unity and hard work. A “bad man” in this context is someone with a murky past (possibly, a further “othering” and distancing from associations with those who may have been in contact with the Nazis). A foul reputation that follows them and uncovers their true colors once this person is in a leadership role and it turns out they had lied about their skills, are

[4] In Latvian mythology, the haunting soul of a killed person, strangled, drowned, or hanged.

proven incapable (Vilks 1947). Perhaps, within the context of the DP Latvian community, the bad man is the stranger, as per Bauman. An individual seemingly belonging, yet not what he appears, without a clear, shared past. Interestingly, it also seems that women are quite easily dismissed from this problematic category by the use of vīrs [man], not cilvēks [person], which, while also masculine, is less gender-specific. Perhaps this was the case because Vilks chiefly spoke about the dangers of bad men reaching leadership roles, so one is left to conclude that either women were not assumed to have dubious wartime pasts, or they simply were not likely to be in the positions Vilks calls "at the reins." This article urges individuals to act, but not for the sake of their own ambition, rather, for a collective goal. Again, the nation supersedes all other interests, when necessary.

A few months later, another article appeared in *BNA*, tackling further the issue of growing divisions among the DPs. It had been reprinted from the Latvian paper in London and read that any differences were only skin-deep and the result of a few individuals who were trying to vie for power. It stated that there were no positions of power to be had, there were only duties, and all DPs share the same ones. These duties included uniting all national forces for a common goal, a free and independent Latvian state; representing Latvian people in exile until the renewal of independence, also representing the people in Latvia, currently under occupation and incapable of expressing their will freely; spreading information about Latvia, popularizing Latvian culture, history in the free world; and leading Latvian social and cultural work in exile, taking care of émigrés' cultural needs (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1948b). The stress on having a duty just by being in exile is one that becomes increasingly crystallized and articulated

here. As is the recognition of one's ambivalent position as a DP, both extremely vulnerable, but at the same time also empowered on some respects, contrasting to that of the population in the occupied homeland, which is in effect seen as powerless by the DPs. An article earlier in the summer of 1947 highlighted exactly that, arguing that it was true that the refugees were suffering, but those back home were suffering doubly. The threat of destruction was perceived as more pressing for those who are away from their homeland, but as almost inevitable for those left behind. The piece also urged DPs to imagine and build another Latvia, not rich in material things, but spiritually (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1947c). Yet again, the stress is on maintaining culture, and through that, community and identity. Work and effort is presented as not only redeeming the individual DP, but also strengthening the imaginary of the nation.

Constructing Assimilable Bodies

Besides repudiating Nazi collaboration claims, DPs strove to posit themselves as not just assimilable because of their political views, but also their personal features. Negative characteristics, such as joblessness, idleness, and sometimes self-destructive habits like drinking, were discussed now and again in the newspapers. At times the paper addressed the overrepresentation of Latvian intelligentsia among its DP population, which was seen as both an asset as well as a drawback. On the one hand, as noted earlier, having individuals from educated elites would have been beneficial for Latvian DPs for positioning themselves as representatives of what they deemed a "people of culture." However, when faced with the humdrum realities of resettlement options, it became evident that it was going to be mostly physical labor of some sort that would serve as a way out of the camp. K. Avens, contributor to the paper, encouraged fellow DPs to face reality when it came to their job prospects in

resettlement. When prospects of skilled labor were slim, he urged Latvian intellectuals, reluctant of physical labor, to take on agricultural work, since, according to Avens, that is where Latvian culture supposedly stemmed from, where Latvian roots lied, and what ultimately gave them stability, health and benefit:

> It is natural that we all dream of working in our profession. But it appears that these expectations are unlikely to come true since our numbers are mostly made up of intellectuals [literally, "those doing spiritual work" – A.A.]. These professions are highly respected in all countries thus there are usually no vacancies. Besides, we cannot forget that due to lack of language skills we are often incapable even if we were offered work in our profession. (Avens 1947)

Avens framed the likelihood of agricultural work for many of the resettled DPs almost as a positive opportunity to reconnect with a way of life that is at the heart of the Latvian ethos, agricultural, linked with the land. Agrarian labor is posited as having the potential for once again providing stability, a sense of rootedness, and maintaining a healthy body, instead of withering away in idleness in the camps. Simple farm work is not portrayed by Avens as a step down for some of the overqualified DPs, it is rather a chance for recovery; by going back to the basics, it is possible to regain one's integrity. Granted, Avens's approach may just as well be interpreted as someone trying to make a not-so-great situation seem more appealing, however, I would argue that the very capacity to do so, a reframing of resettlement as a symbolically empowering opportunity is what lies at the heart of this article. The line between agency and passivity in the world of the DPs is often blurred, as it

is not clear to what extent DPs can be said to have had a say in decisions regarding their status and prospects. However, even if many of the external factors that impacted their experience were beyond the DPs' control, agency is still evident in the framing of and responses to decisions that would impact their futures.

Since so much of traditional Latvian morality hinges on the virtue of diligence, a love for work, Latvians were urged to work by other members of the community, even if they were unable to do so in their own professions: "We cannot make ourselves into dependents or beggars. At times we will have to overcome ourselves to replace spiritual [white-collar] work with physical, but we must also do that. And he who does it sooner, will reach his goal quicker" (Avens 1946, 2).

Avens does not state clearly what exactly the goal is in this context, but it is implied that through work, even not in one's own profession, DPs will be able to regain whole personhood. Since work is a virtue in itself, being picky about job options as a DP is unacceptable.

While having to deal with complex pasts, Latvians, Hilton writes, "also promoted their strong and healthy physical stature; in one publication they…emphasized that 60 percent of the population had fair hair and blue eyes, and that Latvia was one of the healthiest nations in Europe" (Hilton 2009, 316). Hilton also notes they "stressed their devotion to established Christian religions, mainly Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism" (Hilton 2009, 316), thus positioning themselves as more part of the Western cultural realm than the Eastern. Besides essentially framing themselves as white and familiar (not Orthodox Christian, Jewish or otherwise "other"), they additionally stressed their agricultural skills, and the self-sufficiency of families as economic units, thus reducing

the risk of having to depend on state support (Hilton 2009, 316). This somewhat problematic framing speaks both to how the DPs saw themselves, but, importantly, also to what they saw as their "assets" in the eyes of potential sites of resettlement. Thus, besides arguing for their unique, yet unthreatening cultural identities, they also positioned themselves as strong, healthy, agrarian, white, Christian, anti-Communist, self-sufficient bodies in a time of post-war dearth and limitations. The DP body then had to be empowered, hard working, but, first of all, hygienic and healthy, all challenging goals to achieve in camps that did provide rations and aid, but were still marred by post-war dearth. Moreover, some DPs could never reach this standard, because of age, gender, disability, or a doubtful past. Youth, health/morality, and initially, the lack of family ties, were assets in the process of being recruited and resettled.

Morally unsound behaviors were seen as most damaging for DP youth. A June 1946 letter from a *LVA* reader, signed S.L., expresses concern about the continuation of a Latvian nation, which requires children and youth imbued with national culture even in the trying circumstances of the camps:

> Living in their own country and its virtues, it was a lot easier for the youth to see the right way for themselves, besides, the state, school and family were always and everywhere on hand and vigilant. This is not the case today. Every moment our youth is subjected to different favorable and unfavorable influences. (S. L. 1946, 7)

The claim here is that growing up in their own country, young people would have

absorbed the "right" position almost by osmosis. The rest of the letter stresses the importance of establishing clearly national educational and afterschool activities for children, so as to impart the same level of national identity and pride in kids in displacement, as they would have at home. However, the latter part of the letter makes a specific point, possibly aimed at someone personally, wherein the author ponders that since this type of educational work is demanding, the community should be glad for everyone who takes on the role. Still, S. L. wonders, it is not clear what people of "dubious moral standing" could achieve in the profession. (S. L. 1946, 7) This harks back to the Bad Man idea discussed earlier. In S. L.'s article as in Vilks's, it is unclear what exactly marks someone as having a problematic moral stance. It could be their former political affiliations, such as collaboration with the Nazis, but it could also be personal character faults, drinking, idleness, promiscuity, and so on. It is interesting that the author also chooses to remain nearly anonymous, and only be identified by their initials. This is an interesting dynamic, with some members of the community casting general concerns about the transparency and morality of others, yet themselves choosing to remain semi-anonymous. It gives the impression of at once a relatively small community, where initials might suffice one to become anonymous, but by the same token might also serve for them to be identified. S. L.'s article, along with Vilks's from the following year, has an air of claustrophobia about them as well, as sense of surveillance. These pieces, speaking in vague terms about who/what is moral and not, make the criticism included therein quite open for interpretation. Without specifying concrete issues, the authors create a sense of the community being under scrutiny for their actions and character.

The same page featured a few more letters from readers that pointed out the

differences between youth in Latvia before the war and now in the camps. Another reader, B. P., provided two vignettes, in which they described the day in the life of a teenage girl, both in pre-war Latvia, and in the DP camp. The author was clearly aiming for maximum contrast, portraying a middle to upper-class girl in Latvia, running around Riga, dutifully doing her homework before shopping for her family and helping her mother get ready for a party she would be allowed to take part in for the first time. It is a middle-class bourgeois idyll of innocence where sixteen-year-olds need permission to go to the cinema with their cousin on Sunday. It is a time, not too long ago, but seemingly a world away, and is juxtaposed to a description of a lazy teenager in the camps, not taking part in any of the activities available, preferring to drink and going to parties at the canteen. The innocence is gone. The author asks if mothers should not look after their daughters closer in the camps, to make sure they are just as much a pride for the community, as they were back in Latvia. There is an air of the decorative about the description of the pre-war girl, a beautiful flower or butterfly, moving with ease, ultimately, the pride of her parents, the community, and the nation.

A few issues later, the newspaper published a letter from a youth, titled Jaunatne atbild [Youth Responds] and signed P., that challenged the original criticism:

> They're talking about us! Oh, so they talk at all? The old generation wants to be proud of us and not ashamed. All right, we can talk about that. Can we ask you something? The old generation was also once young, right? But that was in the good old times, when mothers took their daughters in evening gowns at age 17 to their first formal party, when sons could finish their studies by paying for them

> with their fathers' money. But us? We too lived carelessly and worry-free until a certain age, dreamt of great achievements, of the future. But in one day it was all gone, a rude awakening and pain. And ahead of us a whole unlived life and unknown future. (P. 1946)

The rest of the response criticizes the old generation for berating the youth, stating that they themselves were not all great role models, although they wanted to claim that position. The young people were calling out the hypocrisy of the older generation that envisioned the same standards for youth in peacetime Latvia as in post-war displacement. The letter also seems to minimize the loss of material stability, or rather, takes a position that distances the idea of obedient children, remaining in their parents' care throughout university. A sense of individuality, the result of a rushed, forced process of growing up seems to come through in the text. The body of the youth, the child, is not just an item of "pride" for the parents or the community, it acknowledges and actively challenges the restrictions and expectations projected onto it. The "good old times" are well and truly gone, and no one is more aware of it than the youth, still held to standards from a bygone era, with limited support. This response not only highlights the misplaced critique of DP youth, but perhaps a whole manner of thinking present in a part of the DP community, that it was somehow possible to safeguard the old Latvia, an imagined golden age, innocent and virtuous, if only in the imagination. The youth, acutely aware of the reality of their new position, call for a more realistic view, the need to adapt to a post-war experience where nostalgia and local-level cultural capital are near useless currency. The youth of the community, faced with the impossible task of reconciling post-war

displacement reality with pre-war era expectations and behaviors, call out the paradox. They are on the forefront of a changing post-war world, making a break from the social structures of the past. It is not surprising that maintaining class status and manners seemed trivial for young people who had experienced the war. Rather, being adaptable and resilient were more realistic options. The world their parents are clinging on to is gone; no more debutante balls or the safety net of accumulated capital. Therefore, another ambivalent position is highlighted, that of DP youth, balancing their parents' expectations. Those, still rooted in a pre-war world order, and the lived immediacy of the DP camp, volatile and unpredictable, but in some ways also imbued with potentiality for change, new possibility, independence, created new narratives of being Latvian abroad. Upon growing up, the 1.5 and subsequent generations would increasingly formulate their own versions of Latvianness, challenging their parents' more fixed notions of identity. They would also start their own publications, chiefly among them *Jaunā Gaita [New Course]*, which speaks to the continued power of the published word as a legitimazing process, even for a counter-narrative.

DPs struggled with negotiating their positionality not only in the isolated UNRRA camps or in the Western Allies' home communities, but also in the countries where the camps were actually located. In a mid-May 1946 issue, *LVA* offered an excerpt from the Austrian government party's newspaper *Volkszeitung* from May 15. The article highlighted a recent exhibit of Latvian paintings and traditional crafts in Salzburg, and was titled *Kultūra nav atkarīga no labklājības un zemes lieluma* [*Culture is Not Dependent on Prosperity and Size of Country*]. It contained a glowing review of the exhibit, organized by UNRRA, and praised the quality of the art and crafts, many of

which had been brought along by the DPs from their homeland, and some also created in the camps. The article concluded that "Culture - this exhibit teaches us – is not dependent on prosperity and size of the country, but on the ethos with which a person overcomes their soul's grief and creates a path to immortality and eternity" (*Latviešu Balss Austrijā* 1946a). Similar comments were also published from the Austrian Social Democratic Party's newspaper, Demokratisches Volksblatt. The story provided validation and recognition of Latvian culture as unique, old, but still relevant, and appreciated by the Salzburg community. Being recognized at such was beneficial for the DPs, ratifying their claims of being "cultured," thus, "non-other." At the same time, the Austrian Communist newspaper is reported to have written about the DPs as fascist, dangerous and lazy (*Latviešu Balss Austrijā* 1946b).

This awareness of different narratives projected onto them, illustrates the DPs' constant evaluation of how their bodies and identities were perceived, and their ability to adapt or react to changing frames accordingly, all while trying to maintain a stable, supposedly unchanging "core" of Latvianness intact. In July 1947, *BNA* reported on more Soviet propaganda, this time accusing the UK and Canada of bringing over DPs for "slave labor" to be employed in heavy industry, forestry, etc. for very low salaries and under restrictive contracts (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1947b). While the UK had been open throughout about letting in DPs as a way to rebuild its post-war industry, and not just as a humanitarian gesture, this accusation by the Soviets was not without grounds. Wages were small and DPs did not have much say as to where they would be relocated and what job they would be given. This depended on the sponsor. Many of those sponsors represented heavy industries and agricultural enterprises. It is interesting how a

willingness to work was in this case portrayed by Soviets as giving up a freedom, agency, while the other, simultaneous Soviet propaganda claim was that DPs were lazy and did not want to return and rebuild their homelands. Thus, it seems that not only were the DPs managing different, ambivalent identities in the camps, they were also incorporated into propaganda narratives in ambivalent ways, even from the same side. Depending on whom Soviets were addressing regarding the DPs, it was beneficial to either portray them as politically dubious characters, probable Nazis, or as weak refugees, swept up in the aftermath of the war, now to be exploited by Western capitalists as cheap labor. In either scenario, the DPs strong anti-Communism could be de-legitimized as either evidence of their fascist views, or their manipulation at the hands of Western capitalism.

Alongside the conscious framing of a homogeneous Latvian identity, the Latvian DP community was not as homogeneous as it perhaps strived to appear. Although refugees were sorted by nationality in camps, some Latvian citizens may have had more obviously conflicting identities. Latvia had a small but notable population of Baltic Germans, many of whom resettled to Germany in 1939, when Hitler was calling on all Volksdeutsche, or people of German descent, to return to their ancestral homeland. The Baltic States had fallen in the Soviet sphere of influence after the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939, and Stalin did not want ethnic Germans in the Baltic when the Soviet occupation of 1940 would begin. Still, some of those who resettled to Germany were still Latvian citizens on paper, and after the war, this created further confusion and mistrust of Latvians. *LVA* informed its readers in 1945 that a Latvian newspaper in Bavaria had addressed this issue, stating that these repatriates of the Reich "we cannot see as Latvians." The issue became even more complicated because Austria did not allow

any German subjects on its soil after the war, and thus they would have to leave the country (Mednieks 1945, 4). Thus, even during this time, discussions of inclusion/exclusions to the arguably threatened category of Latvianness were prominent.

Conclusion

The end of WWII saw mass displacement throughout Europe; shifting political borders and new zones of influence meant return to the homelands was often not easy, not possible or desirable. This chapter has shown how the establishment of UNRRA marked a new way of managing refugees, as well as a new avenue for U.S. to assert its global position in the aftermath of the war. The new model of DP camps, and the new label of DP shaped the ways Latvian refugees saw themselves, and conceived a politically active identity, mostly through managing different tensions as part of the experience. *LVA/BNA* show the mutually beneficial purposes of the camp publications, serving both UNRRA and the communities. UNNRA, while not created for a purely humanitarian purpose, as made evident by the discussion surrounding its foundation, was a unique solution for a complicated post-war Europe. The administration's emphasis on maintaining camps along national lines, while initially a tool for fostering repatriation, ultimately came to reinforce a Latvian DP, and later, exile, identity. Camp newspapers may be seen as one such unique "third space" created by UNRRA. While serving to show Glasenbach as an "exemplary" camp on the one hand, it allowed for the publication and circulation of Latvian DP voices, thus further legitimizing them, but also creating a locus for introspection for the community.

This chapter addressed the tightrope walk of Latvian DPs' self-positioning, as seen in these publications. On the one hand, an urge for establishing and maintaining Latvianness

in exile, in part by utilizing the space made available by the U.S.'s official assessment of USSR occupation of the Baltic States as illegitimate. On the other, a self-awareness of the scrutiny the DPs were under, within the community, in the camps, the countries they were located in at the time, and ones they considered resettling to.

Nationalism was a key constitutive element throughout Latvian DP community, an ethos, a basis for cooperation and education of youth, but it was also reined in, applied in non-threatening ways when it came to prospects of resettlement, mostly channeled into culture, art, and not into a demand for autonomous minority rights, as the more extreme flank of the community might have wished. The spectrality of Nazi collaboration and the problematics of a strong nationalist position are both present and absent.

The newspapers give an insight into the management of seemingly contradictory DP positions – helplessness and need for aid/politically active exile, apathy and depression/active resistance to repatriation and considerations of countries of resettlement, non-threatening, "Western" cultural affinities/strong nationalist views, burden of proof regarding a clean war-time record and Nazi collaborations, and weakness, illness, immorality/assimilability, health.

Agency is claimed through discussions about the DPs' duty, mission and future prospects; choice is present in how Latvians depict their bodies, their morality, their culture; choice is also present in considering resettlement options. This seems somewhat atypical from a modern-day perspective on refugee resettlement, where choice does not seem to figure as much, or it is at least rendered invisible. Perhaps, the discussion of options rather illustrates the importance of the illusion of choice-making on behalf of the Latvian exiles, rather than actually having it. Ultimately, Latvians could still only go

where they were sponsored, and only as certain numbers, skills, or genders of people, not as a nation. Yet, the internal management of worthiness, the policing of suspicious, lazy, immoral characters from the community, coupled with external screenings by UNRRA and the U.S. Army, meant that compliance with a certain Latvian DP and later exile ethos was required, and it was clearly based on nationalism, the shared aim of restoring Latvian independence, passing on Latvian language and culture to the youth, and also vehemently opposing Communism.

The following chapter looks at anti-Communism as a constitutive element of Latvian, but also other immigrant groups. It asks how the same core political identification shaped Latvian and Vietnamese immigrants differently, with the former claiming the moniker of exiles, while the latter were mostly known as refugees.

Chapter 4: Exiles and Refugees: Comparing Latvian and Vietnamese Experiences

In many ways, the story of the Latvian DPs, alongside other European refugees who ultimately resettled in the U.S. after WWII, was similar to that of other anti-Communist immigrant communities. Their seemingly homogeneous, strongly anti-Communist stance made them favorable additions to the U.S. during the Cold War. However, a variety of factors shaped the experiences of the Eastern European and, for instance, Vietnamese refugees[5] in markedly different ways. The difference in time period (arrival in late 1940s vs. mid 1970s, beginning and middle of Cold War), the distinctive roles of the U.S. in each of the two conflicts that generated the refugees' displacement (WWII and Vietnam War), the authorities and refugee processing infrastructures in place, and ways in which refugee bodies were racialized and politicized, shaped the distinctive manner in which both communities, while anti-Communist, were written into the U.S. Cold War narrative. This chapter claims that while the U.S. used the resettlement of both displaced populations for propaganda purposes, it did so in differing ways. The European DPs of WWII came to inhabit a seemingly more active, self-determinant role, posited as "exile," while those fleeing Vietnam have been allocated the less empowered descriptor of "refugee."

While on the surface the two communities appear to share a common typology of escape from Communist-dominated homelands, persecution, and finding political freedom in the U.S., they came to be positioned somewhat differently. In what follows, I explore the reasons for this difference. First, I look at the implications of using either

[5] I use the term "refugees" as shorthand here to refer to those who arrived in the U.S. as a result of the Vietnam War, but am mindful of the spectrum of differing experiences and contexts under which persons left Vietnam and arrived in the U.S.

“refugee” or “exile” as descriptor of an immigrant group. I also compare the DP camp and refugee camp experiences of post-WWII and post-Vietnam War refugees. Next, I examine how the narrative of humanitarianism became highly politicized in the second half of the twentieth century, and how the U.S. was able to mobilize this frame for its benefit. Finally, I turn to the parallels of the two communities in the late 1980s, toward the end of the Cold War, and see how the 1.5 and second generation challenged their forebears’ more static positions. I explore the different ways Latvian and Vietnamese youth confronted the relationship between the community and the state as well as that with the homeland, as established by the previous generations. I see how notions of “inbetweenness” are linked in how exiles/refugees were racialized and politicized, and how that intersects with liminal position of the youth, creating what Sunaina Marr Maira has called a double liminality (Maira 2009, 16). While the categories of comparison are not completely analogous between the Latvian and Vietnamese immigrant groups, I compare ways of resistance, as reflected in the Latvian language print media, oral histories from the Vietnamese American Oral History Project (VAOHP) and a documentary film about the Vietnamese American community in the U.S. in the early 2000s (Jang and Winn 2004). I focus particularly on the case of Bao Quoc Nguyen, one of the protagonists of the documentary, a young Vietnamese American who has actively challenged some of the deep-seated, conservative political views in his community as well as racist remarks by then presidential candidate John McCain. Now mayor of Garden Grove, CA, Nguyen is running for U.S. Congress, but not without controversy. Without aiming to hone in too narrowly on Nguyen’s story, or to generalize from it, I

include it as a very public, crystallized example of where younger immigrant generations' questioning of the established narratives created change and commotion.

Problematizing "Refugee" and "Exile"

In order to look more closely at the use of the concepts of exile and refugee, I return to the publications. Starting from the first issue of *LVA*, the DP camp publication, the term "exile" (*trimda* in Latvian) dominates in how the community refers to itself. Latvian press abroad was seen as working in tandem with Latvian diplomatic institutions in several countries. The newspaper was placed alongside these official institutions as key in maintaining links between Latvians all over Europe:

> The main hindrance at the moment is travel restrictions, which do not yet allow communicating directly with Bavaria, Rhineland, Northern Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, England, and USA, all places where Latvians are, where Latvian diplomatic representation exists – Latvian national committees and Latvian exile press and its staff. (Mednieks 1945)

This is not surprising, as the overrepresentation of educated, socially and politically active Latvians in the camps, backed by existing Latvian diplomatic institutions, facilitated the maintenance of a clear, articulated idea of national sovereignty among the displaced. Additionally, UNRRA policies did not discourage these nationalist efforts. As mentioned previously, UNRRA's motivation was not always clear in this regard. While Latvians in the camps were still subject to UNRRA rules and regulations, their collective activity was not hindered, but rather encouraged, as testified by the first issue of *LVA*,

where the editorial board clearly identified reaching out to other Latvians displaced by WWII as one of the key missions of the newspaper. In the eyes of UNRRA, Latvians, among other nationalities in the camps, arguably remained refugees, or rather DPs, but Latvians saw themselves as exiles. The newspapers contain mentions of refugees when describing Latvians as well, but it seems that this is mostly in cases when they are the objects, rather than actors of a given situation. For instance, when the threat of forced repatriation existed as a possibility, and resettlement as an alternative had not yet materialized as a viable option, E. Štiglics wrote an article on the problems of resettlement, encouraging wider discussion of the topic. His writing illustrates the frustration of waiting in the camp, not knowing whether either emigration or repatriation will be a possibility.

> If we think deeper about the facts [historical precedents of political refugees being forcibly repatriated], then it seems that a dark politics is starting to take shape around the whole refugee problem and that the legal status of refugees will worsen even more quite soon… [From] the Allies' hesitation about deciding on the D.P. question quickly and clearly, one can deduct that the refugee question has some background game. (Štiglics 1946a, 3)

Štiglics voiced concern about Western Allies waiting for the USSR to issue amnesty to all DPs, and then taking a negative position toward refugees, forcing them to repatriate. Here, DPs and refugees are used interchangeably, but without mention of exile. The latter category implies agency and political involvement, and while that was certainly true for

Latvians in DP camps at the time, it was irrelevant in this case. “Exile” is the project of the community, it is not a status shaped just by external discourse. In the eyes of the world, Latvian and other DPs remained refugees, but they saw themselves as exiles. In May of the following year, the front-page article of the newspaper, titled *Piedāvājumi un iespējas [Offers and Chances]*, noted the passing of two years since the end of WWII and what that meant for DPs in the spring of 1947:

> Already two years have passed since the end of the Second World War, there has been much talk about the future of refugees scattered across Western Europe, but there is no concrete solution yet today. This solution would have happened at the very beginning, had the world dared to clearly and openly define why these refugees even exist and tried to avert circumstances for which they refuse to return home. This has not happened, although the last half-year has given some clarity in east-west relations, giving hope to peoples that have lost their freedom through force. Thus, in the present situation we can count on a temporary solution to the refugee question and accept it as such, because we do not want to find a new motherland before the last word has been said, before it is proven that injustice will have victory. (Freivalds 1947, 1)

Ev. Freivalds, one of the regular contributors for the newspaper, saw the ambiguity of the refugees’ fate as tied with the Western Allies’ indefinite stance on USSR occupations. He blamed the “toothlessness of the world,” but presumably, mainly that of U.S. and UK, the Western victors of the war, in challenging Soviet occupations, but even more than that –

in allowing for them to even take place and continue. Again, the refugee was at the mercy of two superpowers, and while they did not want to resettle to another country, they would consider doing so only if return home was completely impossible.

"Exile" is used when speaking about the collective strength, political and national stance of the displaced, also when reiterating the importance of individuals maintaining a clear, moral position. In this case, it is articulated as being rooted in Latvians' rejection of USSR's occupation of their homeland. Exile was a position to be embodied without choice, DPs, especially upon their refusal to return to Soviet-occupied Latvia, had made a political stand, thus were physical, political bodies.

The term "refugee" appears to have been reserved mostly for situations when the position described was one of limited power, which while simultaneous with being an exile, highlighted the vulnerability of the community. To be in exile, just like being a refugee, was at once construed as not a choice, but a duty for Latvians who found themselves abroad after WWII. At the same time, this position was incessantly cultivated in public discourse, as the newspapers attest. Morality, worthiness and virtue, and an uncompromised past were required to fully embody this emerging Latvian exile identity. A September 1946 issue reiterated the parameters of DPs eligible for UNRRA support:

> General director of UNRRA in Germany, gen. E. Morgan has demanded a strict screening of 114.187 displaced persons in western occupation zones, to scatter those who are not eligible for UNRRA care.
>
> Eligible for UNRRA care:
>
> 1) Members of the United Nations, displaced by war since September 1, 1938;

2) Stateless individuals, displaced by war;

3) Persons which have been stripped of citizenship by the government but who are yet to receive a new citizenship.

Ineligible for UNRRA care:

1) Members of United Nations, stateless and Italians with permanent residence in Germany;

2) War criminals, collaborators and traitors;

3) Nationals of enemy or neutral states, except those persecuted;

4) Ethnic Germans and Baltic Germans;

5) Former members of German army, regardless of nationality, provided no proof exists that they were drafted by force. (*Latviešu Balss Austrijā* 1946c)

One had to be able to account for one's wartime activities, even as a Displaced Person. The burden of proof for their innocence was on the refugees. However, due to the war, documents, or official institutions that could verify people's identity were at times no longer in existence. Nonetheless, even within the DP circles themselves, the community was interested in putting its best foot forward, since they saw themselves as representing a nation, but also since resettlement was an uncertainty.

More than a year after the end of the war the discussion of who really belongs, and what a Latvian should be gained more momentum. This would be a conversation at the core of the exile community throughout its existence, and even after the reinstatement of Latvia's independence in 1991. For example, in November 1946 Ev. Freivalds urged all in exile to drop their pre-war political party allegiances, and join together for work

towards Latvia as a whole. He also brought to the fore a discussion about who should be the true representatives of the Latvian people. He noted that many Latvians believed that members of the last Latvian parliament, Saeima, should constitute such a body. However, since Latvia's last Prime Minister, Kārlis Ulmanis, declared himself to also be the country's president and dismissed the parliament in May 1934 as a way of ending inter-party bickering, this would no longer be an option (Freivalds 1946), there was no continuity between the old parliament and the current situation. Ulmanis's move to dismiss the parliament was unsurprising given the political climate in Europe in the 1930s, it did not meet much opposition from the population, and was actually quite popular. In the post-war reality of displacement and exile, this created a power vacuum. While some Latvian government institutions, including embassies in the UK and U.S., remained active throughout the period of occupation, no parliamentary institutions remained functional in exile.

When the Soviet Union began to fall apart in the late 1980s, the diasporic community was able to engage more directly with homeland Latvians to work towards the independence effort. This carried over into the early 1990s, after the reinstatement of full Latvian sovereignty on August 21, 1991. However, the notion of Latvia and Latvianness that had developed in exile did not always match the reality in post-Soviet Latvia, so both sides also disagreed. Thus, the discourse of nationalism can be seen to have developed along two parallel trajectories that had to be reconciled during the independence restoration era of the late 1980s/early 1990s. Moreover, as the 1.5 and second generation of Latvian exiles came of age, they challenged their parents' fixed notions of Latvianness. They were more likely to embrace their hybridity, bilingualism,

and establishing contacts with Soviet-occupied Latvia. They published their own publications, such as *Jaunā Gaita*.

One of the major points of disagreement was the issue of citizenship in post-1991 Latvia. Arguably, the role of nationalist discourse has been so prominent in Latvian sociopolitics since the independence movements to date because the development of a national identity was cut off by Soviet occupation in 1940 at the perceived height of nationalism, but also a time of authoritarian power in the state. The state and the nation were presumed to be synonymous in nationalist discourses. This discourse was maintained in exile communities, and resurged openly during the independence movements of the late 1980s. A sense of having been deprived of a started course of development, a projected future, seems to have fuelled the sentiments surrounding the independence effort, and provided a period of euphoria immediately following the reinstatement of independence in 1991. Nationalism as the perceived natural course of events that was cut short by a brutal occupation, and subsequent fifty years of oppression thus functioned as an ethically constitutive story, because it had "special capacities to inspire senses of normative worth" (R. M. Smith 2003, 59). Re-emergent Latvia and other post-Soviet countries therefore struggled somewhat to reconcile a rather anachronistic, calcified version of nationalism, carried in part in by the strong exile communities of the time, with a more post-nationalist, increasingly neoliberal capital dominated world of the 1990s, where a single European currency and minimization of state borders were on the agenda.

Returning to the immigration to the U.S., however, both Latvians and Vietnamese occupied a specifically Cold War created niche, which did not exist for immigrant groups

before. Still, different processes of integration, perception of "otherness" and racialization, among other factors, must be taken into account when looking at both similarities and differences between Eastern European and South East Asian immigrants (Brettell and Reed-Danahay 2012; Le 2009; Le 2011; Nguyen 2012; Vo Dang 2005).

When speaking about the Latvian American experience during the Cold War, it is common to refer to this community as "exiles." Scholars of Latvian exile literature have grappled with defining terms for describing the experience of displacement. Latvian Swedish historian Juris Rozītis has put forth a model for distinguishing between the different stages of exile, rooted in temporal distinctions:

> During the early years of exile, whilst fleeing from Latvia, to Germany, Czechoslovakia, Sweden etc., and whilst living in provisional dwellings or camps in any of these countries, the exiles may be referred to alternately as **refugees** or **displaced persons (DPs)**. On the other hand, once they have begun to settle in their new country of domicile, they may be referred to as **émigrés**. When seen from the perspective of the established residents of the new country of domicile, they may at times be called **immigrants**. (Rozītis 2005, 21–2; emphases in original)

I would also add "diaspora" to this mix, referring to 1.5 generation Latvians abroad and on. However, Rozītis, drawing on Paul Tabori's work, settles for "exile" as the umbrella term for "all Latvians, indeed all East and Central Europeans, who found themselves outside their homeland were patently displaced as a result of the Second World War and

the Nazi and Soviet occupations" (Rozītis 2005, 21). What seems significant for Rozītis is that the cause of going into exile (voluntary or forced) is not as key as the embodiment of exile positionality by the individual. He quotes Tabori again: "An exile is a person who is compelled to leave his homeland – though the forces that send him on his way may be political, economic, or purely psychological. It does not make an essential difference whether he is expelled by physical force or whether he makes the decision to leave without such an immediate pressure" (Tabori 1972, 37). Thus, exile is something that is both evolving, as well as deeply personal, lived, rather than simply an external label.

In his treatment of exile, Tabori also included an opinion from one of his friends, Lithuanian exile Rimvydas Šilbajoris, who seemed to challenge some of the almost romanticized characteristics of exile: "Are not we Lithuanians rather 'poeticizing' ourselves with the noble name of an exile (echoes of Siberian exiles, etc.) while in actuality we simply ran? How many of us fought and were pushed out? How many ran not from persecution but from justice? How shall we sort out among ourselves who is an exile and who is not, and suppose we do, will it make any sense, since we are, after all, one community now?" (Tabori 1972, 36)

On the subject of exile imagined as noble, moral endeavor, Lisa Malkki rephrased Caren Kaplan and posited that "[Literary] exile can hold a kind of freedom and power. Persons huddled in masses under the refugee label are not thought of as seeking freedom or power in quite this way" (Malkki 1995, 514). Additionally, in *Reflections on Exile*, Edward Said wrote of the unique predicament of this experience. He brought to the fore the pressures and constraints of exile as the closest to tragedy in the modern era:

> There is the sheer fact of isolation and displacement, which produces a kind of narcissistic masochism that resists all efforts at amelioration, acculturation and community, at this extreme the exile can make a fetish of exile, a practice that distances him or her from all connections and commitments. (Said 2000, 147)

Said's depiction of exile here is, perhaps, more akin to a state of melancholia, since it echoes a refusal to allow a certain object to disappear into oblivion (Butler 2004, 92). Said continues by noting that the pressure on the exile of joining parties, national movements is counterbalanced by a loss "of critical perspective, of intellectual reserve, or moral courage" (Said 2000, 146). Exile is profoundly contradictory as a category; it is able to paradoxically encompass experiences of disenfranchisement, uprootedness, vulnerability, but also self-reflection, almost a fetishization of itself. It can stand for politically active positions of claiming freedom and power, but can also collapse in on itself by becoming insular, static and thus counterproductive.

What lies then in the term "refugee," and why must it be unpacked and challenged? To begin with, there is the official definition, put forth by the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees:

> [Any person] owing to well- founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a

nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 1951).

The 1967 protocol specified in addition that those persecuted in their own countries also might be seen as refugees.

The above definition clearly prioritizes the state as the unmoving center from which the refugee has fled, or within which they are in danger. This has important implications for how those leaving their countries of origin have been conceptualized. For example, the continued U.S. position of not recognizing Latvia's annexation to the USSR as legitimate, had consequences for the range of positionalities displaced Latvians could claim. Their political exile was not contested, in fact it was a way to both legitimize the Latvian diasporic community, as well as symbolically show the U.S. as a beacon of freedom, where nations threatened by communism could lead politically engaged lives. Thus, "refugee" did not quite fit the Latvian case, once they were resettled to the U.S.

As noted in the previous chapter, Latvians and other DPs positioned themselves clearly as anti-Communists already in the DP camps of Europe. Besides the also desirable characteristics of healthfulness, Protestantism and diligence, anti-Communism was perhaps the most valuable "currency" the DPs could offer. However, the perception of Baltic DPs as sought-after, assimilable, and most importantly, white immigrants must not be taken for granted. A mere twenty years prior, in the 1920s, Latvian arrivals to the U.S. were not among the desirable national origins quotas.

As James Barret and David R. Roediger and others have argued, the DP

admission process to the U.S. after WWII transformed the racial "inbetweenness" of Eastern Europeans. Considered undesirable before the war, in its aftermath, they would be incorporated into the U.S. as welcome, white, non-adulterating additions (Barrett and Roediger 1997; Roediger 2005; Maegi 2008). Roediger explains that historically, Eastern Europeans had been positioned as "inbetween peoples," that is, existing between "hard racism and full inclusion – neither securely white nor nonwhite" (Roediger 2005, 12). However, the resettlement of Baltic and other Eastern European DPs into the U.S. as desirable was only possible due to their pronounced anti-Communism. Bernard Maegi has highlighted some of the key "whitening" parallels that were drawn by DP admission supporters. They called DPs "delayed pilgrims" in the press, comparing them with the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims of the 1620s, linking in the public imaginary the notions of whiteness, Protestantism and love of liberty with the newcomers. As Maegi notes: "This welcome invoked the Pilgrims to tell a narrative of inclusion, in which the common experience of a flight from oppression and persecution emerged as a new marker of fitness for the inclusion of Eastern Europeans in the nation, one more appropriate for the new era of the Cold War." (Maegi 2008, 101) Interestingly, when the more explicit descriptor of "white" was used to talk about the DPs, it at times already had implicit anti-Communist connotations. Maegi points out the appeal of Professor Nicholas Alexander, dean of Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary in New York, on behalf of DPs stranded abroad:

> The most important characteristics of these people are the following: They did fight their whole life against Bolsheviks. They are really White people, absolutely

> unquestionably White people, bitter and strong enemies of communism, excellent fighters for freedom and prospective defenders of the Constitution of the United States. (United States Congress Senate Judiciary 1950, 385, quoted in Maegi 2008, 106–7)

A footnote in Alexander's testimony clarified that "White" in this context meant not being "Red" or Communist. Clearly, Alexander was referencing the anti-Communist, but also nationalist White movement that emerged in Russia in opposition to Bolshevism. While resisting Communism and the Red Army, it was nonetheless a movement rooted at least in part in the imperial idea of Russia, and did not support ethnic independence of former parts of the empire, such as the Baltics. Thus, it is curious that as late as 1948, the word "White" was used to describe DPs from by then Soviet-dominated countries, when less than thirty years prior, some of these states had fought for independence from the Russian empire. In some sense, this illustrates that while Alexander's intention was to make the case for supporting DPs' arrival in the U.S., yet another process of homogenizing the displaced population occurred, as would often be the case. "White" was used as shorthand for "anti-Communist;" opposition to Bolshevism was what mattered, not the complex local histories, engagements with, or resistance to different powers. WWII had solidified a binary of Red vs. White politically, however, at times these categories seemed to collapse into the racial distinctions of non-white and white as well. Maegi writes: "Within the context of the witness's testimony, it was possible to mistake what [Alexander] said about the refugees' politics applied just as well to their race. It suggests the ease with which anti-Communism and race were associated in the

popular imagination, one that could color white politically White Eastern European refugees." (Maegi 2008, 107–8)

At least on paper, political affiliations became one of the most determinant factors in who would be deemed a desirable immigrant to the U.S., unlike the explicitly racist national origins quotas of the previous decades. It is clear, however, that in many ways, political "whiteness" was proxy for racial; the Communist expansion in the East was framed also in terms of "Asiatic" colonists threatening "Western European values": "Without resorting to the usual language of race — Balts were 'Western-minded,' not biologically Western — Balts were implicitly white, as compared to the 'Asiatic' colonists" (Maegi 2008, 140). As the previous chapter noted, Baltic DPs performed conscious image-forming labor in order to position themselves as "peoples of culture," aligning themselves with "Western-mindedness." What set European DPs apart from later Cold War refugees to the U.S. was their capacity to not only appeal to their anti-Communism as a claim for legitimacy, but to have this trait translate into a normative whiteness. Granted, this was only possible when the category of whiteness had been expanded to Eastern Europe. While the process of DP admission to the U.S. was not seamless, this population was largely able to claim whiteness and thus benefit from it. In effect, the very process of being incorporated into the U.S. as white, allowed Eastern European DPs to utilize this privilege of being rendered largely invisible. After decades of "inbetweenness," questioned belonging and loyalty, dwelling in "third spaces" and years of scrutiny in the DP camps, this marked a change, the ability to partake in "whiteness" as synonymous with "normalcy." George Lipsitz defines whiteness as: "[The] unmarked category against which difference is constructed, whiteness never has to

speak its name, never has to acknowledge its role as an organizing principle in cultural relations" (Lipsitz 1998, 1). Latvians, along other DPs, could thus benefit from their relative invisibility. By continuing to highlight anti-Communism at the core of their political beliefs, they were free to maintain a cultural Latvianness in exile that was not seen as threatening, non-white or otherwise offensive to the American palate.

Lipsitz has also argued that WWII remains a powerful vehicle for "patriotic revival," in part resting "on nostalgia for preintegration America, when segregation in the military meant that most war heroes were white" (Lipsitz 1998, 76). WWII has maintained the legend of "good war," clearly won by the U.S. and its allies. The outcome of the Vietnam War, less unequivocal, made the experiences of the refugees from that conflict more ambiguous as well. According to Lipsitz "Anti-Asian sentiment in the United States depends upon its necessary correlative – the assumption that true cultural franchise and full citizenship requires a white identity" (Lipsitz 1998, 72). Similar conclusions were drawn by Maira in her study of post-9/11 Muslim immigrant youth; obtaining legal citizenship was not a guarantee for status as "good citizen," it was necessary to be a "patriotic citizen" (Maira 2009, 21). South Asian youths, perceived with suspicion in the aftermath of 9/11, could not attain this level of belonging; their liminal ethnic and religious positionality would curtail their "true cultural franchise," and thus, full citizenship.

This is a clear continuation of the extant default assumption of Americanness being white. Slightly modified in the early years of the Cold War, by adding the pre-requisite of anti-Communism to the checklist of whiteness, this dynamic was already well established by the 1970s. While the Vietnamese refugees could claim anti-Communist

sentiment, they could not become invisible the same way fair-haired Balts were. Thus, they could not make claim to "full citizenship" in Lipsitz's definition. Moreover, without access to this "true cultural franchise," Vietnamese refugees would not also be able to claim exile status, as the European DPs had. This leads us to conclude that claiming exile, albeit a temporary positionality, hinged on the premise of eventual return, requires the same attributes as full citizenship; thus, it also requires whiteness. In order to be the right kind of outsider in the U.S., a certain racial position is necessary; a political position alone is not sufficient. Without racial whiteness supporting their political "whiteness," Vietnamese refugees were positioned as still always lacking and deficient, a population that was in need, rather than enriching and empowered.

Mimi Thi Nguyen offers an insightful analysis of the concept of "refugee" noting that it is situated as the anomaly to the "normalcy" that is the nation state. It is an uncomfortable position, she writes, "as a political noncitizen, the refugee is outside the law, devoid of rights, the effect of a terrible exception" (M. T. Nguyen 2012, 58). Thus, refugees constitute a "problem," since, according to political scientist Nevzat Soguk, "refugees do not properly belong to the nation, and as such they represent disruptions in the conditions of normality in life imagined in terms of the hierarchy of the citizen/nation/state ensemble… They must be regimented, even during those times when they deserve compassion and pity" (Soguk 1999, 19). Refugees are uncomfortable to the notion of a nation and in lacking "proper ties to a community of citizens" and the state, they are seen as incapable of participating as "effective, knowledgeable actors in the tasks essential to the efficient and orderly organization of the community" (Soguk 1999, 19). Malkki, speaking of refugees disrupting the "national order of things," the normalcy of

the nation state, notes: “The word ‘refugees’ evokes not just any persons who happen to have sought sanctuary or asylum but rather… a ‘kind’ of person. ‘Exile’ connotes a readily aestheticizable realm, whereas the label ‘refugees’ connotes a bureaucratic and international realm” (Malkki 1995, 512). The context of a migrant population’s labeling as either exile or refugee thus shapes which realm they are positioned in or have access to.

More recently, Yen Le Espiritu has explored the term “refugee” further, asking why it remains the main framework for conceptualizing Vietnamese Americans:

> [The] term “refugee” triggers associations with highly charged images of Third World poverty, foreignness, and statelessness. These associations reflect the transnationally circulated representations of refugees as incapacitated objects of rescue, fleeing impoverished, war-torn, or corrupt states – an unwanted problem for asylum and resettlement countries… In particular, I am interested in how and why the term “refugee” – not as a legal classification but as an idea – continues to circumscribe American understanding of the Vietnamese, even when the Vietnamese in the United States now constitute multiple migrant categories, from political exiles to immigrants to transmigrants, as well as a large number of native-born. (Espiritu 2014, 4)

The reductionist view of Vietnamese Americans as sharing a largely uniform refugee experience and forming a homogeneous community that has a particular relationship with the U.S. and a particular relationship to their homeland, has been

problematized in earlier literature (see S. Chan 1991; Lieu 2011; Ong 2003; V. Pham 2003; Tollefson 1989), but has also been reinforced by other accounts, highlighting the hopelessness, passivity and disorientation of the refugee condition (see K. B. Chan and Loveridge 1987; Freeman 1989; Kelly 1977). My aim is not to make the case that no collective, shared experience exists for those displaced by the Vietnam War; it is rather to problematize the narratives that posit that the experience was predominantly a homogeneous one, as was the population in question. Moreover, I ask what power relations this dominant narrative represented and benefitted.

Just as a messy war has largely been reduced to a simple dichotomy of endangerment by Communist aggression and resulting rescue and freedom found in the U.S., the nuances of the timing or manner of the refugees' arrival and the community's internal dynamics are often missing, trivialized or generalized. In some ways, this kind of erasing or leveling of social positions was recognized by the refugees themselves. During the fall of Saigon an American reporter quoted a Vietnamese refugee stating: "It doesn't mater now if one is the wife of a Cabinet minister or even a Cabinet minister himself. We are all the same now" (Rambo 1975).

That was not entirely the case, however. For instance, refugees with existing links with the U.S., for example, were able to mobilize more social capital earlier on. Nhi T. Lieu mentions several instances of American companies helping directly resettle their former employees to the U.S., and together with those who had over $4,000 per household member in liquid assets, about 8,000-10,000 people from Vietnam arrived to the U.S. not as refugees, but as immigrants (Lieu 2011, 16–7). This relatively small, yet significant population alone significantly complicates the notion of the homogeneous,

dispossessed mass of refugees. Lieu notes that Vietnamese refugees "adamantly resisted the labels imposed on them" (Lieu 2011, 14). In this case, positions within capitalist systems proved to be more salient for a swifter and safer resettlement. These refugees might have been in danger in their country of origin, but their links with capital networks worked to mobilize them when the situation became perilous. In effect, it was their economic, and not political or ethnic status that allowed for these individuals to resettle to the U.S. more quickly and safely than most of their counterparts.

The first Vietnamese refugees arrived in the mid-1970s, a few years after the U.S. military withdrawal from the war. In 1975, as a result of the Communist North's invasion, more than 125,000 refugees left the country under operation "New Life" and were later resettled in the U.S. (C. N. Le 2009, 191). Kieu-Linh Caroline Valverde describes this group as being well educated, having middle- to upper-class standing in Viet Nam, and having lived in urban centers, often speaking several languages and being familiar with foreign education systems. According to Valverde, this group is commonly referred to as the "75ers" in the Vietnamese American community (Valverde 2012, 8). Tens of thousands more, known as "boat people" followed from 1978, adding to approximately 400,000 refugees total, about the same number as Eastern European DPs thirty years prior (C. N. Le 2009, 191). This second wave continued until 1981, and during this time many thousands more attempted to escape by making the perilous journey to neighboring first asylum countries. While of a more diverse socioeconomic background, Valverde characterizes the majority of the second group as being well educated and having lived in Saigon (Valverde 2012, 9). Still, it faced difficulties that had not been as pronounced for the "75ers": "Their adaptation was less cohesive than that

of the first wave, having lost more years living under an oppressive communist regime, staying longer in refugee camps, and starting over in a less welcoming political and socioeconomic environment in the United States than their predecessors" (Valverde 2012, 9). Yet more Vietnamese nationals came under the Orderly Departure Program of the UNHCR. Spanning two decades until its end in 1999, it was an even more diverse group than the previous two. Many arrived alone, others were reunited with families, and others still were former South Vietnamese soldiers and officials, resettled after their imprisonment in internment camps in Vietnam (Valverde 2012, 10). Valverde also addresses the dynamics within the community, as pre-resettlement social status evidently carried over into the new situation; for instance, young "75ers," many of whom were from "establishment" backgrounds, called second wave arrivals FOB, or "fresh off the boat." Individuals' former positions in Vietnam, as well as the time and circumstances of their departure, or rather, journey and arrival to the U.S. influenced their experience of resettlement. Certainly, while social class, ethnicity and status remained salient within the community, many of these characteristics remained largely untranslatable outside of it, creating a basis for a narrative of leveling, starting anew from nothing in the U.S. Even more than that, this new beginning was framed as a positive, an opportunity to build a new life in the land of opportunity. It is impossible to speak of any one homogeneous refugee experience within the Vietnamese community or any other population. Individual efforts, statuses, and networks were mobilized just as after WWII, yet that does not inform the dominant perception of Vietnamese Americans.

What is evident, however, is that both in the case of WWII, but especially after the U.S. fiasco in Vietnam, the flows of resulting refuge populations were used by the

U.S. as a tool for reinforcing power, but in slightly different ways. In the case of WWII refugees from Europe, they were the symbols of captive nations, occupied by the USSR. They fit into the mold of active, political/-ized exiles. In the case of the Vietnamese, they were relegated to an arguably less empowered status, refugees: supposedly passive, not politically active in the same way as the European arrivals some decades prior.

The context of the Vietnamese arriving in the U.S. was different from that of refugees following WWII; namely, the U.S. used the Vietnamese refugee resettlement to illustrate its military's involvement in the war as morally justifiable. Thus, alongside the image of the refugees as helpless, inferior and lacking, ran a current that worked toward portraying this population as becoming successful in the U.S. Nhi T. Lieu explains this contradiction: "This new status as 'model minorities,' a stereotype shared by other Asian Americans, symbolized the incorporation of Vietnamese refugees into the US multicultural discourses on race... The bifurcated images of Vietnamese Americans reflect the deeply fraught process of Vietnamese emigration which is made more complicated by subsequent waves and classes of migrants" (Lieu 2011, 18–9).

An example that illustrates this bifurcation in an extreme scenario has been described by Sylvia Shin Huey Chong. In her book, Chong delves into the case of Nguyen Ngoc Loan, the former South Vietnamese general who shot and executed a suspected member of the Viet Cong on camera in 1968. He later resettled to the U.S. and opened a small restaurant, enjoying relative economic security. Apparently, this particular story of "model minority" success did not sit well with the American public, as Chong notes: "Americans could not win the war in Vietnam, yet the Vietnamese could come to America and succeed at the American dream, beating Americans at their own

game" (Chong 2012, 166). Action was taken to have Loan deported on "grounds of "moral turpitude," based on the summary execution captured in the "Saigon Execution" photograph" (Chong 2012, 166). It was only in the context of American war veterans struggling to find employment that Loan's story was framed as morally indefensible; both in Vietnam and in the U.S. Loan did not belong to the stereotype of the helpless, defenseless refugee. He had acted violently then and had been successful at business in his new home. Albeit in extreme ways, Loan's case challenged the notion of the model minority as passive, disciplined, grateful. Chong quotes Robert G. Lee: "The model minority has two faces. The myth presents Asian Americans as silent and disciplined: this is their secret to success. At the same time, this silence and discipline is used in constructing the Asian-American as a new yellow peril" (Lee 1999, 190, quoted in Chong 2012, 164).

Espiritu notes that "The figure of the refugee, as a socio-legal object of knowledge, has been metaphorically central in the construction of U.S. global power" (Espiritu 2014, 8). She argues that in order for the U.S. to frame the war in Vietnam as a legitimate, anti-Communist intervention, it needed somebody to save, and thus the image of the helpless, yet grateful refugees was useful: "[It] is the presence of the refugees – Vietnam runaways – that enables the United States to recast its aggressive military strategy as a benevolent intervention" (Espiritu 2014, 18). Espiritu argues that for the production of "'good warriors'…the 'rescue and liberation' narrative also needs the figure of the rescued," furthermore, "the 'good refugee' narrative…enables the United States to chart a lineage of war triumphs directly from the mid- to late twentieth century" (Espiritu 2014, 94). This is a very significant point, because it not only connects the

Eastern European DPs of WWII with subsequent refugee arrivals to the U.S. typologically, it arguably shows both processes as in fact being part of one continuous strategy.

Crucially, both populations have been positioned as “fanatically” anti-Communist, since they had, indeed, suffered a great deal from Communist regimes. However, Espiritu urges us to dissect “this ‘anticommunist’ stance as another narrative, adopted in part because it is the primary political language with which Vietnamese refugees, as objects of U.S. rescue fantasies, could tell their history and be understood from within the U.S. social and political landscape” (Espiritu 2014, 96). For both, Latvian and Vietnamese refugees in the second half of the twentieth century, anti-Communism provided a way to be incorporated into the U.S. mainstream narrative. Unsurprisingly, the pervasiveness and homogeneity of a single, master narrative within the diasporas reduced the multiplicity of lived experiences, political views, and reasons for leaving the homeland into a simplified binary. It is important to complicate this simple view by recognizing divergent, challenging narratives within the communities (Yoneyama 1999), a point I will return to later, when I look at how the static, dominant narratives were later challenged by 1.5 and later generations in both communities.

While similar in many aspects to the resettlement of other populations displaced by Communist aggression, the outcome of the Vietnam War was also markedly different from WWII in that the U.S. lost. Yet, the U.S. has been able to incorporate the war into its list of “good wars” by making the case that “Vietnamese refugees reportedly gained much more than they lost from the war, suggesting that the United States had to take everything away from the Vietnamese in order to “give them everything”” (Espiritu

2014, 104). This ties back to Soguk's explanation of refugees' particular position of vulnerability due to a lack of ties with the state and a community of citizens, but also connects to what Nguyen deems as the refugee figure "patently bereft of property – possessing neither interior faculties for the rational and moral calculation of interest and consequence, nor external properties for their 'right' exercise in intercourse with others [..] Profoundly dispossessed, from this perspective the refugee has lost every thing" (M. T. Nguyen 2012, 59). We see again the narrative of leveling, of the necessity to reshape the refugee subject (as in operation "New Life"), which is presented less as a loss of previous identity, than as a gain of a new, more desirable one. However, as I have pointed out, it is also clear that a complete leveling of prior statuses and new opportunities did not occur, as some elements of refugees' identities and positions were partially "translated" and others yet were modified in the process of resettlement.

Framing the ultimate outcome of the war as a success validated U.S. involvement as "ultimately necessary, moral," while also recuperating the "veterans' and the U.S. failure of masculinity" (Espiritu 2014, 104). I posit that the necessity of the U.S. to recast their failure in the Vietnam War as a success reinforced its commitment to deem people displaced by the conflict as refugees, and not as DPs, exiles or another type of migrant. Being a refugee meant all the things Soguk and Nguyen highlight, it equated displacement with a loss of identity, security and belonging, which would then be "remade" in offshore, third-country refugee camps.

DP vs. Refugee Camps

In the previous chapter, I described the relationship between UNRRA and Eastern European refugees in the camps of Germany and Austria. They served as spaces for

several purposes besides literally containing the stateless as awkward reminders of the messiness of the end of a war. The camps, functioning as "third spaces," sites where new positionalities were created (Bhabha 1994; Rutherford 1998). They shaped the Displaced Persons (DP) ethos, built not only on notions of existing nationality, culture, but also on ideas of adaptability, assimilability, and the notion of being a "worthy," non-threatening, non-other, potential immigrant to the U.S. and other Western countries. This camp ethos shows some parallels with the experience of Vietnamese refugees, who also most often did not arrive to the U.S. directly, but via first-asylum countries, such as Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, and Singapore. The invisibility of the contested process of admission of refugees to the U.S., both in the case of WWII and Vietnam is very problematic, but serves to further solidify the image of the U.S. as a nation of refuge. What matters in this context is that those displaced by the war in Vietnam were resettled to the U.S., one of the parties involved in the conflict, thus claiming a moral edge. In addition, one must look critically at the very process of the groups' resettlement to the U.S. not just as a humanitarian effort, but as a profoundly political one, involving not just their countries of origin and the U.S. as a place of refuge, but also recognizing the significance of third countries, in-between spaces of processing, waiting, and, as Espiritu calls it, "sanitizing."

Similar to the case of DPs who were scrutinized in repeated checks and screenings by UNRRA, the institutional gaze was also present in the Vietnamese refugee context. These factors included what Aihwa Ong has called "surveillance-correction" practices, where social scientists wrote refugee reports, often making simplistic links between purported peoples' "cultural features" and employment potential (Ong 2003, 84–

5). Deeply problematic, essentialist profiles were created that became received wisdom for social workers and teachers working with refugees; Vietnamese and Chinese were deemed “more assimilable,” while Cambodians were judged individualistic and thus less reliable for employment (Ong 2003, 85). Lieu writes that the “Vietnamese quickly understood their social standing among the other Southeast Asian refugees, and they consciously set themselves apart from those they deemed “less deserving” particularly their own co-ethnics” (Lieu 2011, 15). While some social status within the community had carried over from the homeland, a whole new positionality was being created, at times almost literally written, as in the problematic reports mentioned. At times, this happened vis-à-vis other immigrant groups. Being a refugee did not mean always being in the same helpless position; it signified being part of a fluid process where positionality shifted, depending on a variety of narratives and relative to other marginalized groups.

The roles the transient spaces of European DP camps and refugee camps in the aforementioned South East Asian states played were thus similar in some respects and different in others. In both cases, these were, indeed, true “third spaces,” as in hybrid, novel and generative of new positionalities, but also quite literally third countries, neither homeland nor place of permanent resettlement. While DP camps, at least to some extent, were built on New Deal ideology, notions of public responsibility for relief and rehabilitation, creating a self-governing refugee community with opportunities for education, professional training, organizing, camps in first-asylum countries for Vietnamese refugees mirrored more troubling larger trends in the relations between Western and first-asylum states. “The international division of the task of refugee resettlement thus replicated the power hierarchy between the ‘Third’ and ‘First’ worlds,

as the poorer Southeast Asian countries assumed the role of a ‘surrogate refuge’ – performing the civilizing work of ‘sanitizing’ the cultures, languages, and bodies of the Vietnamese objects of rescue – for the sole benefit of Western resettlement countries” (Espiritu 2014, 53). The creation of large refugee processing centers in the Philippines and Indonesia was meant to relieve the pressure on first-asylum countries; however, their true purpose was to shape refugees into good potential U.S. subjects (Espiritu 2014, 58–9). Some of the efforts put forth by the UNHCR administration, backed by U.S. funding, included language instruction, job training, and cultural orientation in the transit centers, activities similar to those in the DP camps some three decades earlier. Still, what is important to note is that most of the people employed in the processing centers, such as the Philippines Refugee Processing Center (PRPC), were locals who were paid relatively low wages, less than $4,000 a year for language instruction, for example. Espiritu argues that this in fact demonstrates the neocolonial nature of the project: “Having acquired English as U.S. colonial subjects, Filipino ESL teachers were once again serving U.S. imperial needs by helping to transform Vietnamese refugees – another group of U.S. war spoils – into compliant U.S. subjects” (Espiritu 2014, 58–9). Ong figures that the training offered in the large refugee centers, like the one in the Philippines, had the primary aim of “[keeping] the refugees from going on welfare once they reached the United States,” but also preparing them “for low-level jobs as janitors, hotel maids, and domestic workers” (Ong 2003, 83). The assumption built into the process was that regardless of their former backgrounds, the majority of these refugees would be members of the working poor (Ong 2003, 83). James W. Tollefson has suggested that the refugee center “was part of a larger political-economic system that displaces [refugees] from their

homes and then provides education suitable only for long-term peripheral employment" (cited in Ong 2003, 84).

While the situation thirty years prior in Ally controlled Europe was markedly different, some typological similarities are evident – local, European UNRRA staff were utilized for the most part to carry out U.S. plans for "relief and rehabilitation;" however one can not make the claim that this relationship resembled closely the model exemplified by U.S. utilization of the Philippines as an off-shore conditioning site for the reasons noted above.

Despite the differences in approach and execution, with the post-WWII era camps being a new, emergent phenomenon, unlike the more professionalized refugee camps of the Vietnam War era, one similarity seems to be the U.S. firmly positioning itself at the helm of operations. This happened both by funding the process, as well as occupying positions of power, outsourcing posts of less influence to the locals, namely, subjects of the countries where camps were physically located, or allied states, but not to people actually representing the displaced populations. While New Deal ideas of 'helping people help themselves' informed European DP camps, they did so in decidedly prescriptive and limited ways.

In the case of UNRRA, "welfare" activity initially was supposed to mean repatriation, as the Allies had agreed in Yalta. Part of the reasoning behind administering DPs along national lines and fostering patriotism in the communities was that it was thought to have the potential to encourage repatriation, and to counteract the "'deep apathy' engendered by uprootedness" (Salvatici 2012, 439). Allowing and even encouraging national celebrations, cultural events, and publications by the DP

communities signified not just a humanitarian gesture on behalf of UNRRA, but a concrete strategy to repatriate as many DPs as possible. People were encouraged to organize, be politically vocal. Granted, the only voices truly available were those of anti-Nazism and as the Western Allies' relationship with the USSR soured, anti-Communism. This served U.S. interests by illustrating the freedom of speech available to refugees in non-totalitarian countries; DPs were shown as voting with their feet, choosing to stay in the camps over return to their homelands. Only when repatriation was looking increasingly unlikely to happen for the majority of the DPs, since they did not want to return to their countries of origin now controlled by the Soviets, did the U.S. pass the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 and actual resettlement started.

The overrepresentation of social, political, and cultural elites among the DPs was also utilized by the authorities, who worked with those most active in order to organize communities. In a way, this was a perfect two-way relationship, with DPs wanting to preserve national identities and the authorities encouraging and aiding them in doing so; arguably, this is also when many of the Eastern European refugees began to see themselves as being in exile, their identities having been shaped internally and externally with a degree of agency, self-reflection. They were allowed, encouraged even, to retain an otherness, which, as long as non-threatening and vehemently anti-Communist, allowed them to maintain national identities, languages and cultures (at least in part) while resettling in the U.S.

In the case of Vietnamese refugees, the authorities' emphasis was not on the fostering of nationalistic sentiments among the refugees in camps in order to encourage repatriation. That would have defeated the purpose of, yet again, interpreting those

leaving a Communist dominated homeland as voting with their feet against the ideology (issues of U.S. involvement in the conflict in the first place would not figure into this narrative). In other words, it would signify a loss for the U.S., with Communism reclaiming those who had left. Rather, it was the shaping of a "good refugee," a good subject that was central. Espiritu describes how Vietnamese refugees were represented: "Constituted as existing on the other side of freedom, Vietnamese could only be incorporated into modern subjecthood as the good refugee – that is, only when they reject the purported anti-democratic, anti-capitalist (and thus anti-free) communist Vietnam and embrace the 'free world'" (Espiritu 2014, 101). For Vietnamese refugees, there was no initial positioning by the authorities as DPs, suggesting a temporary migration and eventual return. They were construed as a uniform mass, helpless, yet simultaneously inherently political, anti-Communist due to their having left Vietnam, and their very existence having "ironically become the featured evidence of the appropriateness and even necessity of U.S. war in Vietnam" (Espiritu 2014, 175), a population to be rebuilt from the ground up.

There are thus marked differences in how the refugees were positioned in each situation. Espiritu notes that "Researchers have repeatedly portrayed refugees as passive objects of sympathy that suffered not only the trauma of forced departure but also the boredom, uncertainty, despair, and helplessness induced by camp life… Tellingly, studies of refugee camps often pair the construct of Vietnamese refugees as passive objects of sympathy with a plea for the West to 'assume an active role in caring, counseling, or intervening' (Dubois 1993)" (Espiritu 2014, 50). Similarly, Nguyen writes of anthropological, sociological and ethnographic accounts of refugees as passive and

powerless, in general “the condition of being a refugee is construed as a generalizable state of abnormality, shorthand for deprivation, deindividuation, and deficiency” (M. T. Nguyen 2012, 55). She highlights several accounts that present this exact perspective (Chan and Loveridge 1987; Freeman 1989; Kelly 1977)

In the case of European DPs, however, emphasis was on resilience, ability for communities to preserve their cultural, but also social and national identities. Yes, in both cases the U.S. is painted as the safe haven for Communist-oppressed peoples, but for the European DPs that translated into having a space to continue a de-facto nation in exile, to inhabit that more poetic state of displacement, while for the Vietnamese refugees, there was less room available to present an alternative identity to the prescribed “refugee” one.

“No Longer Faceless, Distant, Anonymous”

It is clear that the resettlement of refugees to the U.S. was a profoundly political act in both of the cases examined here. Gil Loescher, refugee scholar, has pointed out that

> U.S. generosity of asylum towards refugees from Eastern Europe was in part motivated by a desire to “roll back” or at least contain Communism by encouraging East European citizens to escape their homelands. Refugees became instruments of the Cold War, representing instruments of power and sources of espionage and information that were counted in the balance between East and West. (Loescher 2001, 35)

Similarly, Vietnamese refugees became tools in a larger strategy of U.S. anti-Communism during the Cold War. Ayako Sahara writes that for the U.S., the use of

global humanitarianism, in this case, the Indochinese refugee issue, allowed the state to "carry on its geopolitical and ideological struggle against Communism in Asia" (Sahara 2012, 2). Espiritu calls it the "we-win-even-when-we-lose syndrome" (Espiritu 2006a). The resettling of Vietnamese refugees illustrates clearly what Loescher and Scanlan deem an example of "the frequent symbiosis that obtains between humanitarian and political motives" (Loescher and Scanlan 1986, 213).

Sahara further argues that humanitarianism, employed in a covert imperialist way, has allowed for U.S. statecraft to be practiced in a manner that is different from overt colonialism. She mentions Edward Said's notion of " 'illusion of benevolence,' where imperialism appears as a moral, benevolent power" (Sahara 2012, 14). According to Sahara, human rights can be seen as a replacement for anti-Communism in U.S. foreign policy, part and parcel of maintaining U.S. global power. "Refugee policy functioned as a racial project in the U.S.'s attempt to rehabilitate itself after the Vietnam War and sustain its power," the author claims (Sahara 2012, 20). Through positioning the resettlement of Vietnamese refugees in the U.S. as a moral endeavor, an effort to rescue "friends," the U.S. gained more legitimacy as leader of the "free world," the opposite of Communism. However, this time, human rights served as the framework for comparison.

Similar to European DPs, stranded in camps at the end of WWII, the Vietnamese refugees only became labeled "friends" when they could be utilized by the U.S. in order to strengthen its position after WWII as victor, liberator, and, ultimately, to differentiate from its erstwhile ally, USSR. After the Vietnam War, in order to recast the lost war as a righteous intervention, the aim was to show that the refugees eventually benefitted from their ordeal by ending up in the U.S. However, the friendship was more imbalanced than

the term suggests. The Vietnamese were still first and foremost “refugees,” a population “rescued,” and thus indebted.

> In other words, it is as refugees—the purported desperate seekers of US asylum—and not as migrants, transmigrants, diasporics, or exiles, that Vietnamese have become most intelligible in the US public imagination. This “good refugee” narrative naturalizes Vietnam’s neediness and America’s riches and produces a powerful narrative of America(ns) rescuing and caring for Vietnam’s “runaways.” (Espiritu 2006b, 421)

Moreover, Sahara claims that “In the case of Indochinese refugees, the U.S. focused more on the Americanization of refugees by teaching them English and American culture. One might claim that this signified a depoliticization of the refugees, but on the contrary, it marked the politicization of refugees as members of the free world by making them assimilable subjects” (Sahara 2012, 185). As a May 1, 1975 article in the LA Times, titled The Newest Americans, illustrated the safe arrival of refugees in California: “Suddenly, the pathetic queues of homeless people were no longer faceless, distant, anonymous refugees, but people who would be the family next door, the new girl in the fourth grade, the new worker on the assembly line. The newest Americans” (Los Angeles Times 1975). The good refugee goes from facelessness, anonymity to belonging in a seamless way. This requires a partition of life as before and after arrival to the U.S. The start of a “New Life” was expected, unlike the DPs whose links to their occupied homelands were their claim to legitimacy.

During the twenty-fifth anniversary of the "Fall of Saigon" in 2000, U.S. press tended to represent a particular narrative: "Most often, news reporters deploy the anticommunist trope to valorize capitalism, equating 'freedom' with economic access and choice, upward social mobility, and free enterprise" (Espiritu 2006, 345). Moreover, in broader terms, Vietnamese resettlement to the U.S. is presented as ultimately having been beneficial, focusing on individual refugees' stories and contrasting them with supposed "what if's," speculating about what their life would have been like, had they not been "rescued."

> In many ways, these refugee narratives resemble those told about other racialized immigrants and refugees to the United States: both groups are regularly cast as exiles from the indigenous space of unfreedom, violence, backwardness, and nonindividuality - all of which help to authenticate the United States as the site of freedom, modernity, and progress. (Espiritu 2006, 339-340)

In this framework, the terms "pathetic," "faceless," "distant" and "anonymous" characterize the refugees' "before" state, while the U.S. is able (and thus morally obligated, as the Los Angeles Times article implies) to reinstate these peoples' humanity, making them neighbors, families, kids, and workers again. This ties back to Soguk's point about refugees being uncomfortable subjects to nation-state normativity due to their lack of embeddedness in the community, social fabric, and thus, the state. This also speaks to general Cold War fears of outsiders trying to infiltrate American society: "The DPs were a security menace. Russia had planted spies among them. Others, if not actual

spies, carried intellectual germs which would infect America's ideology" (Zucker and Zucker 1987, 27). Images, like the one in the newspaper, reassured readers that this "otherness" would meld seamlessly into existing networks, neighborhoods, and workplaces. They would soon become property owners, having lost everything (according to the master narrative), they would be able to regain their humanity, wholeness once more. Some thirty years on, this narrative would be taken on in part by a young Vietnamese American mayor: "Nguyen, the mayor of Garden Grove, Calif. and a congressional candidate in the Golden State, tells NBC News he was 'born with nothing but the opportunity of success in America'" (Bai 2015). Still, Nguyen would also challenge many entrenched opinions on his community and its relation to the U.S.

In the following section I look at the parallels between Latvian and Vietnamese American youth dissent with Cold War era stances. I argue that while their doubly liminal position (racialized) immigrant as well as youth) was one of vulnerability, it was also one of flexibility, allowing for synthesizing cultural capital from both their communities of origin and the U.S., the country where they had come of age.

Youth in Revolt

A significant point of comparison of Latvian exiles and Vietnamese refugees is how the initially rigid and uncompromising anti-Communist narrative, found in both communities, appeared to soften with time and new generations. They were more interested in establishing contact with their ancestral homelands and their people, rather than furthering a political principle. In both cases, this move did not happen without its share of controversy within the community. Undoubtedly, the liberalization of Communist regimes both in the USSR and elsewhere also fostered easier communication,

and, perhaps, signaled to diasporas abroad that contact with the homeland was less perilous for them as well as their friends and family in the homeland.

The process of negotiating Latvianness was, indeed, an ongoing one. It occurred in diasporic communities during the period of Latvia's occupation, as well as in Latvia itself, albeit not always overtly so, due to the constraints of Soviet ideology. The question became ultimately particularly significant after the aforementioned reinstatement of Latvia's independence in 1991. The diasporic community largely represented decades of conscious preservation of what they saw as clear Latvian identity. The passing down of Latvianness in exile was seen by the community as potentially key for the survival of the Latvian people as a whole, as the extent of Russification and repressions in occupied Latvia were hard to gauge or predict, especially from the outside. The initial course taken up in the 1950s, shaped by the exiles' knowledge of mass Latvian deportations to labor camps, and increasing influx of immigrants from around the Soviet Union to the territory of Latvia, was one strictly aimed at preserving Latvianness alive in exile. This included passing on Latvian language to the next generations of Latvian Americans, teaching them Latvian culture, folklore, and history, as well as instilling a deeply anti-Communist sentiment. Families made a point of allowing children to speak only Latvian in the house, sent them to Latvian school during the weekends, engaged them in various traditional folk dance groups or choirs. Later queries into the effects of these uncompromising policies inevitably also "revealed painful memories caused by rejection, demands for conformity to an ideal Latvian émigré identity" (Hinkle 2006, 16). The point of reference for exile Latvians was the economically flourishing, independent Latvia of the interwar period, marked by increasing standards of living, agricultural, industrial and artistic

development. Independent Latvia was on the rise when it was occupied in 1940, and was seen as having been taken away from its people at its prime. In that sense, Latvia, the remembered, and for the younger generation, the imagined, was a somewhat static, fixed notion, definitely idealized, and almost mythologized.

Seeing themselves largely as the safeguards of Latvianness, and spokespersons of the Latvian nation, the first generation of exiles invested large amounts of money and land into building Latvian centers, churches, and cultural institutions. Ieva Zake, sociologist, notes that "[T]o this generation of American Latvians, it was very important to project an image of respectability in the eyes of American government and public" (Zake 2010a, 63). These people saw themselves as representatives of the nation, but as Zake continues: "[T]his generation was convinced that ultimately the community of Latvian Americans was too small and weak to fundamentally alter the cold war realities or to make the Soviets withdraw from their occupied homeland" (Zake 2010a, 63). The focus was thus on maintaining Latvian language and culture.

These attitudes of the first generation of Latvian exiles were increasingly being challenged by the second generation, either born or come of age in the US and Canada. Resisting the imposed, unquestionable "duty to remember" (Augé 2004, 87), young Latvian Americans from the 1960s onwards protested their role as merely vessels for handing on memory. An impetus to communicate with Latvians beyond the iron curtain created one point of tension among the generations. Additionally, the younger generations saw their elders' ingrained attitudes as static, in dire need of transformation, and acknowledgement of changing circumstances both inside the diaspora, as well as outside. In this sense, they were consciously trying to escape being written into a

narrative that was not their own, “being caught in someone else’s text” (Augé 2004, 39), consciously trying to forget some aspects of the identity they had been presented with, and reinventing instead forms of Latvianness, of belonging and activism, that made sense in the 1.5 and second generations’ experience. The youth embraced the spirit of social and political change of the era, as well as the possibilities for free speech and political engagement, possible in their countries of settlement. Although not unanimously, they contested the diaspora’s role as major keeper and guardian of Latvianness, and encouraged instead recognition of the role of Latvians in Soviet Latvia in the struggle towards independence, believing that ultimately change could only happen from inside the occupied state. Many rejected the diasporic claim to authenticity of Latvian identity that positioned exiles culturally above Latvians who remained in Latvia and were seen by first-generation exiles as increasingly Russianized and brainwashed by communism (Zake 2010a). In the bi-monthly youth-edited journal *Jaunā Gaita*, young diasporic Latvians openly discussed issues of identity, and published not only exile writers’ works, but also those of Soviet Latvians, maintaining that not all of this art and literature was rendered pointless by Soviet propaganda.

In *Jaunā Gaita*, issue 107 (1976), composer Tālivaldis Ķikauka invited readers to participate in a tongue-in-cheek mail quiz, aimed at measuring their Latvianness by the Latvian objects found in their living rooms. For example, a photograph of the last president of independent Latvia, Kārlis Ulmanis, earned five points, while an oil painting of the panorama of Riga, twice as many. Other “attributes of Latvianness” included Latvian authors’ books, traditional ceramics, traditional amber jewelry, and so on, thirty-six categories in total. Ķikauka noted that anyone amassing upward of 250 points should

be deemed “unbeatably Latvian” (Ķikauka 1976). Issue 109 contained a letter from someone signed “Super-Latvian,” noting that 250 was a laughably low threshold, as well as a photograph identifying the various “Latvian” objects in his home (Figure 4), including several bonus points for items not originally included in the survey, such as a photograph of President Kārlis Ulmanis’s mother. Over all, “Super-Latvian” amassed a whopping 580 points.

Such unorthodox engagements with Latvianness would have been unthinkable by the first generation. However, the younger diasporic Latvians found the old dogmas stagnant and lacking in energy; humor was one way to explore possible change. In this case it was done by illustrating the pointlessness of accumulating Latvian-themed objects, “performing” Latvianness at home, rather than engaging in more direct endeavors, in order to define Latvianness through actions.

Second generation activists encouraged exiles to make the most of their hybrid identities and positionalities instead of furthering a “timeless” notion of Latvianness, static and somewhat anemic, stripped of potential for political agency. They were not afraid to be provocative, pro-active and demanding in their claims toward the Soviet Union, often seeing the older generation as “politically impotent and even hypocritical” (Zake 2010a, 70–1).

The question of cultural authority and authenticity is one that became very central to this intergenerational tension. Diasporic youth contested the exiles’ claim to “true Latvianness,” urging to “acknowledge Latvians in Soviet Latvia as the true Latvians and their culture as equally or even more valuable than the one maintained by American Latvians” (Zake 2010a, 70). The first generation’s zero tolerance for any Soviet-initiated

communication or outreach, a hyper-awareness of the possibility of falling into the trap of the occupiers' propaganda, in addition to virtually non-existent communication possibilities, made for very little direct contact between Latvians abroad and in Latvia. Any news that did make it to the West was taken with a considerable grain of salt. Soviet-run publications, such as Dzimtenes Balss [The Voice of the Homeland], and radio broadcasts aimed at Latvian exiles, were largely disregarded by the diasporic community due to their transparently propagandistic agenda. Starting from the 1960s, however, Soviet-initiated cultural visits from Latvia became more common in the US. Soviet Latvian musicians, theater groups and writers came to Latvian centers. While all generations of Latvian exiles were aware of the political undercurrents of such cultural visits, the inescapably Soviet-monitored and regimented nature of the meetings, as well as the certain presence of KGB informers among any group of such guests, the younger generation was more inclined to at least form some type of contact with them. First generation exiles often could not see past the role of Soviet Latvian cultural actors as pawns in the hands of the Soviets, and preferred to distance themselves completely from such events, also believing that these cultural outreach missions were in fact aimed at collecting information about the state and structure of Latvian exile communities abroad, thus adding ammunition to the Soviets' arsenal.

Soviet Latvian film screenings or choir performances in the US were often preempted in diasporic press with articles outlining the actors' or conductors' career development, including membership of the Communist Party (CP). Such positioning of any individual according to their membership of the CP created little to no space for allowing individual contingencies, a more heterogeneous positionality beyond the

simplistic binaries of "with us vs. against us," "true Latvian vs. Russified, Communist/brainwashed." The younger generation was more attuned to the complexities of identity formation and negotiation in Soviet Latvia; they recognized that not everyone carrying a CP card was a true communist, but rather that this was a precondition for anyone wishing to advance into almost any career, including the arts. The first generation saw this as compromising, bargaining with the Soviets. In their eyes, the most authentic, truly purely Latvian identity was preserved in exile, and if/when Latvian independence should be reestablished, they would be at the helm of bringing it back to their ancestral homeland. History proves this to not be entirely so; when push came to shove, only a small fraction of diasporic Latvians actually returned. Hinkle notes that

> The main reasons [for not returning] have been practical, for instance family in the United States and health. More complex reasons are the perception of not being accepted in Latvia, and cultural differences between Latvian and diaspora Latvians, including: language (attitude toward it, meaning of words, communication style); societal norms, manners, value systems; emotional attachment to all things Latvian; traditional Latvian culture; and investment in and familiarity with émigré culture. (Hinkle 2006, 16)

While the construction of Latvianness, be it in exile, or under Soviet rule may be seen as a fluid, continuous process, it is clear that the trajectories of the development of this notion were drastically different in each setting, and shaped by the communities' positions, circumstances, and available discourses. For example, a discourse of cultural

authenticity was never explicitly present in the emergent Latvian independence movements of the late 1980s, since homeland Latvians did not need to reiterate their authenticity with regard to another group. They saw themselves as the logical continuators and shapers of an independent Latvian state, and were only challenged on their level of Latvianness upon encountering the diaspora's lingering claims to it.

Coincidentally, as the USSR was weakening in the mid 1980s and communication increased between Latvians on the two sides of the Atlantic, tensions increased in the Vietnamese American community as well. In Little Saigon, Orange County conflicts occurred among those who were perceived to sympathize with the Communist government and those maintaining a staunch opposition (C. N. Le 2009). In the Latvian case, disruptions in the fixed, conservative narrative of the first generation of exiles started in the 1960s and 1970s, when the 1.5 or second generation came of age. As noted in the previous section, this was evident in a challenging of "Latvianness" à la first generation, by publishing new periodicals like *Jaunā Gaita* and by communication with Soviet Latvians (Nollendorfs 2012). In the case of Vietnamese Americans, the transformations within the community also manifested in protests and demonstrations.

One incident that illustrates the complex intersections of the refugee narrative and the power of the image of the U.S. as beacon of freedom and refuge occurred in 2000. During John McCain's presidential campaign, he used the term "gook" when referring to his North Vietnamese prison captors: "I hated the gooks. I will hate them as long as I live." McCain's choice of words prompted Vietnamese American college student Bao Quoc Nguyen and his peers to stage a protest during McCain's rally in Little Saigon (see

also Jang and Winn 2004). They felt that the candidate was capitalizing on his past by presenting it in a certain way:

> We've been called gooks. We've been called chinks and whatnot, so when a presidential candidate uses those racial slurs, or uses that specific one when he did that, it was strategic so he can come across as a maverick. And that kind of insensitivity is very unbecoming of a presidential candidate, of a public official, so the media didn't really give it much attention. (B. Q. Nguyen 2012)

Nguyen saw a clear link between McCain's use of the racist term as not just offending the Vietnamese community, but also a gain for his own image as "maverick," yet again strengthening the image of the masculine, righteous American intervention.

During the event, Nguyen and fellow students from UC Irvine put on white t-shirts with the words "American gook" written on them. He addressed the crowd with a megaphone, and at first, people from the community were responsive:

> So yeah, we went out there, we rallied the people. "Are you a gook? No!" Something like, "We are Americans!" I think that was another chant. "Are you a gook? No! We are Americans!" Something like that. And people were rallying for a little bit. The old folks too, the elders. (B. Q. Nguyen 2012)

However, soon the dynamic in the crowd changed dramatically. Nguyen recounts:

> And I don't know what happened, but it suddenly shifted where certain people, one or two people came up and pointed at us and said, "No! Gook means communists!" We were like, what? Huh? We're all shocked. We're like, no, not in our experience, right? That's not what it means to us, and that's not what it means here in America. That's not what it means on a playground… all of a sudden, a mob of people encircled the small group of protestors—there were only like six or seven of us—and we're like encircled by this mob and they were the faces of, you know, our parents and our grandparents, and I felt like, that's why we're out here in a sense, and they didn't understand our message, definitely not… But it was really sad. It was really sad because those were the faces of our parents and our grandparents and I, when all the cameras went away, all the media went away and all the crowds went away, you know, I just started bawling. It was uncontrollable. (B. Q. Nguyen 2012)

As soon as Nguyen and the other protesters were perceived as defending communists, the McCain rally participants turned on them. In the following days, Nguyen was even accused of being an exchange student from Hanoi, a spy. He felt crushed and misunderstood by his own community, and the experience highlighted for him the power of dominant narratives. In this case the narrative was made visible by the persistence of the anti-Communist rhetoric, the strong link between anti-Communist immigrant groups and their support for the Republican Party, but also by the generational chasm, new ways of challenging power, calling out racism. Twelve years after the event, Nguyen, by then mayor of Garden Grove, reflected:

> Did gook really mean communist? No, it didn't mean that, and it still doesn't mean that. But why was that message taken in that way? And how do people process their experiences to be able to carry such a message? How do they buy into political rhetoric? It's interesting. (B. Q. Nguyen 2012)

As mentioned, Nguyen is now running for U.S. Congress. His website describes him as "Born in a Refugee Camp. Made in Orange County" ("Meet Bao" 2016). A Democrat and supporter of Bernie Sanders for president in 2016, he is an evident break from the perceived tradition of backing Republicans in the Vietnamese American community. However, his policies have not been well received throughout the community. For instance, on February 10, 2015, Garden Grove city council discussed a proposal from the community to send a letter to the city of Riverside, urging them to reconsider a sister city relationship with Can Tao, Vietnam, on the basis of the latter's grave human rights violations. The proposal was brought forward by City Councilman Phat Bui, but rejected by Nguyen:

> As a city, I don't think we should be telling another American city what to do. I want Garden Grove to exemplify our ideals of freedom and democracy in our own actions. Too many have made the ultimate sacrifice for what we have today. We should honor them by being the bearers of freedom and democracy, by being responsible and by being true to our own ideals… We must not allow those who

> seek to silence dissent by labeling others as communists. If we use the same tactics, how are we any different? (L. Nguyen 2016)

The video recording of the meeting, including Bui and Nguyen's arguments, also captures the voices of the public in attendance, expressing disdain at the mayor's position. This unpopular and, as the video's introduction claims, "odd and unexpected" position taken by Nguyen is still a remarkable example of a young Vietnamese American voicing opposition to the supposedly entrenched view that any association with Communist-dominated Vietnam is unwelcome and should be condemned. By appealing to "our own ideals," Nguyen claims belonging to the Garden Grove, the U.S., or an imaginary state of "freedom and democracy." Even in a contested situation like that of whether the city should support Riverside, Nguyen privileges the right to self-determination and democratic process. He does, still, make a reference to his own community, stating "Too many have made the ultimate sacrifice for what we have today." While this could be interpreted as a broad statement about lives lost in the protection of freedom and democracy in a more abstracted, U.S.-centric sense, it certainly applies very immediately to the Vietnamese community as well.

Nguyen, however, appears not to just have ruffled some feathers of his community; reporters from *OC Weekly* suggested that he was being politically targeted by the Garden Grove Police Association (GGPA). The publication claimed that "On June 19, police sergeant Mike Viscomi--the president of the Garden Grove Police Association that supported Bruce Broadwater, Nguyen's opponent in the last election--surreptitiously recorded a conversation with the first-term mayor" (Moxley 2015). During the

conversation, leaked from the GGPA, Nguyen talked disparagingly about City Councilman Phat Bui, who had accused Nguyen of being a Communist sympathizer. OC Weekly saw this as the “California police union officials’ brazen efforts to politically assassinate opponents,” adding that “In Little Saigon politics, however, manhood sadly continues to be measured by how loudly a person screams in anger about Ho Chi Minh, dead nearly 46 years now. Though not the most articulate politician in the city, Bui has nonetheless mastered this particular dog whistle. He has proven his willingness to incite mostly older Vietnamese immigrants into frenzies, as if the war for South Vietnam is ongoing” (Moxley 2015).

The GGPA issued a press release the following day, detailing the circumstances of the conversation between Viscomi and Nguyen, stating it had been recorded by Viscomi as part of normal police protocol (The Garden Grove Police Association 2015). The press release also claimed that Nguyen had been intoxicated, a detail seen as further incendiary by OC Weekly. “In the press release, GGPA claims--with offering no evidence whatsoever--that Nguyen was drunk. Not once, or twice, but THRICE… Yet another attempt to politically assassinate the mayor by trying to embarrass him” (Arellano 2015).

Without delving even deeper into the city politics of Garden Grove, it is clear that Nguyen’s role as a mayor is by no means an uncontested one. While his personal statement draws on a past of refugee experience, Nguyen clearly sees himself as also “made in Orange County,” if not the U.S. However, the very arguments he aims to uphold and exemplify as, arguably, a model minority success story, are sometimes used against him. A synergy exists between an entrenched Cold War worldview in the

Vietnamese community, its clear and uncontested position as composed of anti-Communist refugees, and that of structures of power within the U.S., even as local as the GGPA.

Other interviews with Vietnamese Americans from different generations, conducted by the VAOHP, illustrate that while younger Vietnamese Americans share some of the same sentiments their parents did, their perspectives are distinctly their own.[6] An interviewee who arrived in the U.S. in his early twenties, describes his position on Communism as follows:

> Yes, I'm anti-communist but I have a different opinion about, about ideally. Not because of hatred or because [of] what they did to me. Right? Like revenge or something. No, I don't put that in front. But I don't put that. Ideally communism doesn't work. You know. Won't work. (T. Nguyen 2012)

Tuan Nguyen left Vietnam at a relatively young age, and while his family had directly suffered from Communist aggression, he prefers to distance himself from taking a personal position of vengeance. Instead, while still identifying as anti-Communist, he takes the position of seeing the ideology itself as faulty, doomed for failure. T. Nguyen sees Vietnam's Communist system as profoundly corrupt and increasingly shaped by capitalistic tendencies, thinks its downfall is a matter of time, one where his active participation is not necessary:

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[6] Interview transcripts have been edited for filler words and repetition, but retained as close to the original as possible.

> Now the entire country collapse, they collapse themselves. They don't do anything… Now the communist people, they would love to have their property. They would love to have their possessions. So they corrupt themselves. You know they don't do anything… We don't have to do violence. Or we don't need to have any revolution or nothing like that. (T. Nguyen 2012)

Towards the end of the interview, when the interviewer asked T. Nguyen if there had been anything else she had not asked him, he made clear his reasoning for having left Vietnam in 1981, six years into the Communist rule:

> [What] I need to clarify in your project [are] two main reasons [for leaving] see for freedom and for their safety. Some people that I have encountered with, they think the people who fled before 1975 [are] truly the refugee and the one who fled after was just because their economic condition turned down to bad and they had to leave, but that's not true… Let [me] put it this way, if you fled before the Saigon fall, before the war, you don't know communist yet, right, you haven't tried them yet… The one who fled after they been through that, they know they cannot live with that, they have to leave their homeland… they have no choice, the one that fled before you scared. Right? You scared that was it. Right? So for us as a refugee, as a whole, to me - hey you fled before or after, it doesn't matter, you know you make a right decision. (T. Nguyen 2012)

This explanation seems to show that within the community itself there is a difference in perception of the different time periods refugees arrived. T. Nguyen wanted to make clear that the later time of leaving his homeland did not mean initial sympathizing with the Communist regime.

Even with a more relaxed relationship between Vietnam and the U.S., and increased travel opportunities, many in the refugee community remain opposed to visiting the country. Binh Truong, a man in his sixties who was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, does not foresee going to Vietnam in a sentiment very similar to that expressed by many Latvian American exiles:

> So [maybe if in] Vietnam they don't have any more communist it could be, I try to go back one time to see our own country before I can close my eyes. But if they still communist, forget it. I don't like communists. Even a lot of people they try to go back in there, but not me. I don't like. (Truong 2012)

Analogously in the Latvian case, some exiles could not imagine traveling to Soviet-occupied Latvia, and viewed those who did with much suspicion and mistrust. However, those who grew up in the U.S. are more flexible in their views about return. Duc Tri Pham, born in the 1960s, is one of them:

> MLP [interviewer]: Some people say that 'I swear I'll never go back to Vietnam, unless there is no Communism', do you feel that way?
>
> DTP: No

> MLP: Why?
>
> DTP: After 1975 there is so much resentment, they just say it. I won't go back to Vietnam unless there is no Communism. It's been 37 years, it's the past. Right now how many people go to Vietnam in a year? Hundreds of thousands of people. (D. T. Pham 2012)

Pham does not see returning to Vietnam as a breach of loyalty to the community in the U.S., although he is also aware that it may be seen as such by some.

> Yeah, some people still upset, most reason is because they're scared. They don't know what's going on, they scared. Vietnamese people in America at the time called people who go back a traitor. They call me a traitor, but hey I'm not a traitor, I go back to see my mom, see my family. If you wanted to buy an airplane ticket they protest, if they knew they would protest against you…No, okay if they call me a traitor for that time, for that time only a small amount of people go to Vietnam, if they call me a traitor, right now every year 400,000 people come back to Vietnam. So 400,000-500,000 people are traitors who go back to Vietnam. See what I mean? Even the people who called me a traitor they've already gone back to Vietnam. The people who called me a traitor has also been back. (D. T. Pham 2012)

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted some of the parallels and differences in how Latvian and Vietnamese immigrant groups were written into the U.S. during the Cold War. The

key similarity between both populations is a purported vehement anti-Communism. While both groups had clearly suffered from the effects of Communist aggression, their countries' different statuses at the end of the respective wars, as well as the position of the U.S. determined the particularities of their experience. In both cases, the U.S. utilized the displaced population in order to further its power and dominance. Immediately after WWII, this was done in opposition to the USSR. The resettlement of European DPs to the U.S. as representatives of nations whose occupation by the Soviets the U.S. did not recognize as legitimate, re-established the image of the latter as safe haven for those fleeing Communism, politically aware and active exiles. After the U.S. debacle in the war in Vietnam, the recuperation of Vietnamese refugees, their resettlement to the U.S. was a continuation of the same Cold War dynamic, yet this time the population in question was not depicted in the same manner as the Europeans thirty years prior. The refugees' helplessness, dispossession was stressed. The trope of their arrival of the U.S. was not one of political exiles, but rather, while also anti-Communist, less imbued with the same aestheticized notion of exile. For the Vietnamese, resettlement to the U.S. was framed as a new start, "New Life," a chance to reconstruct a new identity, to regain humanity.

I chose to focus on the two groups' younger generations in order to see if they challenged their predecessors' fixed notions of identity, including nationalism and strict anti-Communism in similar ways. While the methods for challenging the rules set forth by the first generations' were different, typological parallels were evident. Both Latvian American and Vietnamese American youth resisted and problematized an undisputed "writing into an existing text." As B. Nguyen noted:

> Well, identity is fluid. I mean, the word identity doesn't suggest that it's fluid, but it is. It is fluid. I'm an American, and being an American can be anything I want to be, but to be a better American, I understand where I come from… Because identity can be a confinement. It can be a box. It can be pigeon-holed very easily based on someone else's performance of that identity, but it's shaped by you. And you have the power to change that. So nothing is permanent. (B. Q. Nguyen 2012)

This kind of position would have been quite unusual at the end of WWII, or in DP camps, where identities were constructed by clinging to the seemingly static and unchangeable elements of national belonging – traditions, language, and political views.

In essence, the youth of both communities resisted the restrictive frameworks in place, but in different ways. In the Latvian case, challenging these norms meant engaging with the rather fixed ideas of what or who was Latvian by, for instance, extending communication to Soviet Latvia. Still, this was primarily a community-contained discussion; some youths' willingness to communicate with occupied Latvia was not seen as a threat to the whole group's status as exiles. Latvians were already firmly imbued with whiteness by the time the 1.5 and second generation mused about their role in the 1960s and 1970s. Exile, legitimate, recognized and to some extent, aestheticized, did not require immediacy, urgency. It could even be toyed with, gamified, as the example of the Latvianness quiz shows.

However, for Vietnamese Americans in the 1.5 and second generation, challenging their community's purported staunch anti-Communism meant not only problematizing their parents' views, it also highlighted a much more complex intersection

of master narratives about the Vietnam War, tropes of helpless, sanitizable bodies, as well as moral U.S. intervention and rescue. As Bao Nguyen's protest example illustrated, even intra-community ties can be subverted by dominant political rhetoric. In other words, accusations of supporting Communism are more salient than narratives that claim to work in the interest of the community, but in different ways. For the Vietnamese youth, a continued dominance of the resistance to official links with Vietnam, as well as a still salient master narrative of refugee helplessness and gratitude, makes it that much more difficult to challenge extant narratives. In the case of Bao Nguyen, he is doing so from within the system, but that is proving to be even more challenging, as he encounters resistance from his own community, but also power structures beyond this immediate context.

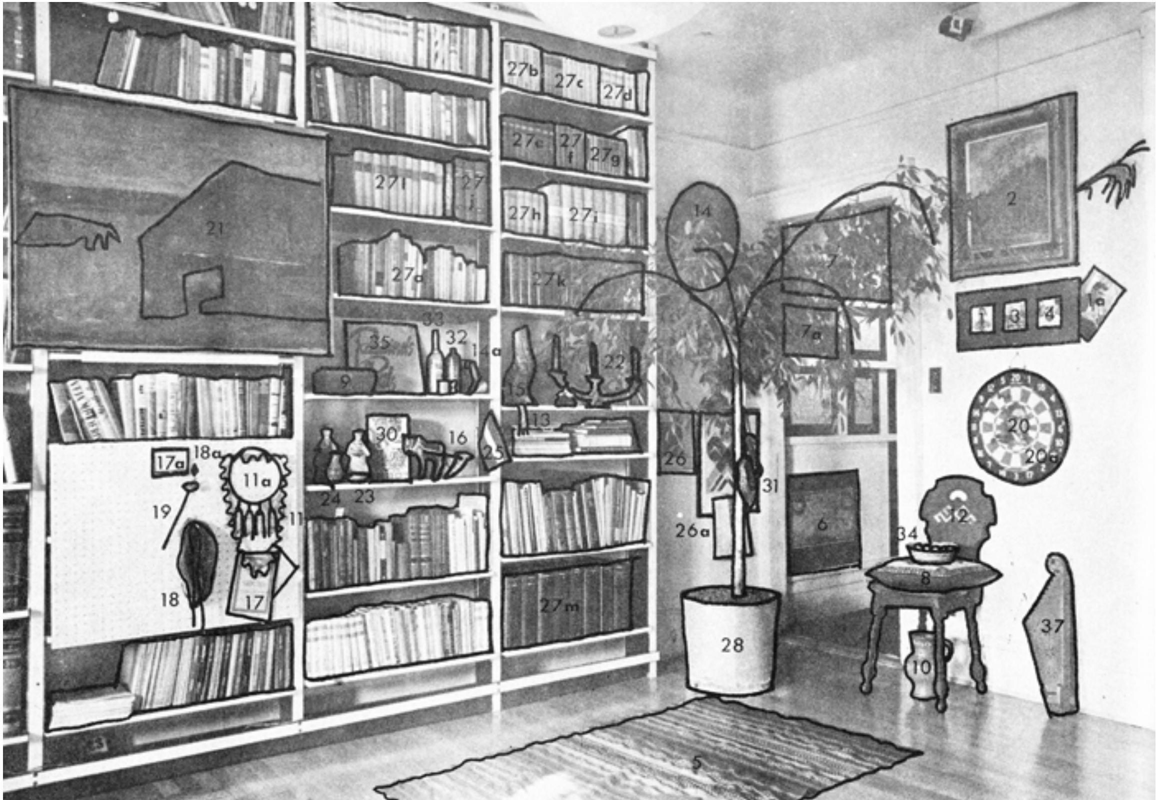

Figure 4: Image from "Atskaņas par tālkvizu nr. 1 [Reflections on Quiz #1]." 1976. *Jaunā Gaita [New Course]* 21 (109): 64-66.

Chapter 5: Latvian Exile and Homeland in the 1990s

This chapter looks at the negotiation of Latvia at the end of the Cold War, and after reinstatement of the country's independence. It examines how renewed communication between exile and homeland Latvians fostered a new negotiation of the nation, and how this was represented in diasporic presses. It also looks at how generational and experiential positionalities created differing perceptions of the status and desirable trajectory of the development of Latvia at the time. I focus on 1.5 and later generations of Latvian Americans, specifically those who returned to or visited Latvia at this time. I examine perceptions of hybrid identities and claims to cultural authenticity on both sides, as well as issues of belonging and citizenship. Many 1.5, second or third generation Latvian Americans had not visited Latvia before its regain of independence, but a discourse of "return" is nonetheless often used when speaking about diasporic Latvians moving to their ancestral homeland.

When the Soviet Union began to fall apart in the late 1980s, the diasporic community was able to engage more directly with the homeland in order to work towards the independence effort. Their transnationalism became more material rather than symbolic and imagined, as it had been for many decades. This carried over into the early 1990s, after the reinstatement of Latvian sovereignty. However, the notions of Latvia and Latvianness that had developed in exile did not always match the reality in post-Soviet Latvia, creating disagreements on both sides. One of the questions asked in this chapter is: How did diasporic Latvian and homeland discourses converge and conflict during the era of the reinstatement of Latvian independence? I explore the meeting and divergence

of both discourse and action of diasporic and homeland Latvians. As post-Soviet Latvia grappled with determining whether exile Latvians were to be unconditionally accepted as full-fledged citizens of the renewed state, it was also confronted with how different experiences of time had impacted diasporic and homeland identities. I also look at children and youth as actors in inter-generational and inter-experiential discussions about rebuilding Latvia in the wake of USSR collapse.

Belonging and Citizenship: Inclusions, Exclusions

As in the earlier chapters, I used *Laiks [Time]* and *Latvija Amerikā [Latvia in America]* as the main two sources of data, here focusing on issues from 1990 to 1998. Unlike Latvian exile publications earlier in the Cold War, newspapers from the late 1980s onward contained much more information from journalists in Latvia or those recently returned from there. Thawing tensions gave way to easier travel, telephone calls and written correspondence. By no means completely reliable, these new currents allowed for a more immediate relay of news about events in Riga, including first-hand accounts and photographs. The choice to look at this process of negotiation from a diasporic periodical perspective was a conscious one, as I wanted to incorporate the outcome of USSR dissolution and Latvia's rebirth, the object of many years of work and wishful thinking, by both Latvians abroad and in the homeland, as a natural conclusion to this case. I seek to explore how the diasporic community wrote about its own endeavors, as well as increasingly about those of their homeland counterparts as the Soviet Union had begun to crumble. However, easier communication did not necessarily mean better mutual understanding. The two communities' tropes of reference were different, and although both groups might have agreed on, for instance, the idea of citizenship for all

Latvians, the notion of who really was a Latvian was disputed. In other words, while I have chosen to frame my project largely in the scope of the formal existence of a Latvian exile category (1945-1991), it is clear that the issues of exile-homeland and intergenerational relations stretch out well beyond this strict timeframe, into the period after the reinstatement of independence.

Diasporic Latvians engaged in the nation-(re)building discourse in the early 1990s differently than their counterparts in the homeland. This was not just due to their geographic, but also their temporal location. While diasporic Latvians had a somewhat static view of Latvia, suspended during the period of the occupation, and then revived in 1991, homeland Latvians had experienced a different temporality, having to negotiate both a Soviet experience, as well as memory from a few decades of independence between the wars. Moreover, generations of Latvian Americans had grown up in the U.S. knowing their parents' country of origin from only stories, but still identified as Latvian. All these were genuine "Latvian" experiences, but proved to be difficult to reconcile at times, especially at a period of heightened national awareness. Continuity was not a given, it had to be reiterated in discussions about who was taking part in rebuilding the renewed state.

The perceived threat of Russification and repressions against the Latvian people had provided a strong impetus to raise fundamentally Latvian-identifying generations abroad that would keep the cause for Latvian independence alive, and when the day came, return to their ancestral homeland and take part in its rehabilitation as uncorrupt, ideologically cohesive and loyal subjects. Joel Wurl, former Curator at IHRC, noted: "They [intelligentsia exiles] recognized that displacement and exile meant not the end of

their social productivity but that in fact it magnified the importance of the talents and knowledge they carried" (Wurl 2006, 3; emphasis in original). Thus, there was a true sense of galvanization and purpose in the community. In essence, as Latvian American scholar Inta Gale-Carpenter argues, the Latvian exiles: "claim[ed] moral victory over those in political power in the homeland… by capitalizing on their access to free speech and movement" (Gale Carpenter 1996, 94). Furthermore, they thrived in their diasporic consciousness as "individuals who view[ed] themselves as the only ones at liberty to preserve and perpetuate 'true culture' during a period of 'foreign occupation' of the homeland" (Gale Carpenter 1996, 93). Thus, the transitional period was an era of not only political transition and reconfiguration, it was also a time of national soul-searching regarding determining who belonged automatically, and who did not. For decades, seeing that free speech was virtually non-existent in the Soviet space, exiles claimed the right to represent Latvian interests globally.

One of the major points of contention between the diaspora and the homeland was the issue of citizenship in post-1991 Latvia. There was a strongly nationalist discourse that emerged during the "awakening" period of the late 1980s and early 1990s. A culturally nationalistic and deeply anti-Communist discourse had been maintained in exile communities, as I have showed previously, and harmonized with those of the independence movements of the late 1980s. Nationalism was seen as the perceived natural course of events, cut short by brutal occupations in the 1940s, and subsequent fifty years of oppression. During the re-emergence of the independent state, this narrative functioned as an ethically constitutive story, because it had "special capacities to inspire senses of normative worth" (R. M. Smith 2003, 59). Robert M. Smith further elaborated

that these types of stories have some key characteristics, such as being "religious or quasi-religious, kinship-like, and gendered" (R. M. Smith 2003, 69), echoing Anthony Smith, who has also argued that nations rely often on the quasi-mythical core of ethnicity, homeland and hero/golden age for survival (A. Smith 1986, 212–3). This is to say the power of these stories is that one reads oneself as always having belonged to a group, including one's ancestors and following generations. Due to this type of membership, it is difficult to opt out of or join this group. This translated into differing discussions surrounding belonging and citizenship in post-Soviet Latvia and different understandings of who was already part of independent Latvia. While many saw themselves as belonging to Latvia, the contested issue of granting dual-citizenship, or existing mistrust and miscommunication between the diaspora and the homeland, created different understandings of who automatically belonged. The presence of a large non-Latvian ethnic minority further complicated the conversation about belonging to the Latvian state in the 1990s.

Craig Calhoun has noted when talking about nationalist claims to history: "with the end of communist regimes in the USSR and many Eastern European countries, it has become common to appeal to the precommunist era as a time of imagined national unity and 'normality'" (Calhoun 1998, 52); the case of Latvia was no exception. As Europe was moving steadily towards softening economic and national borders, the post-Soviet states, restored to their pre-WWII statuses, clung to nationalism as a way to draw borders.

Thus, when in late 1991 the issue of belonging to the nation was discussed in terms of citizenship law, the Latvian exile community had a more or less unified opinion

regarding their position; they believed that they should be granted dual citizenship. The Supreme Council (SC) of Latvia first ruled that only those who were citizens of Latvia on June 17, 1940 and their descendants would be granted citizenship. No groups would hold dual citizenship. In order to become a citizen of Latvia, individuals would have to give up their existing citizenships (Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia 1991a). This ruling created much resistance from the Latvian exile community, and this was manifested in the diasporic press. *Latvija Amerikā* first published an article by Eduards Berklavs, politician, and homeland Latvian national activist. Berklavs had tried to push for a larger role for Latvian language and caps on immigration from other Soviet republics during the 1950s, leading to his deposition from a post in the Communist Party. Albeit not an exile Latvian, Berklavs's article expressed doubt whether the SC should be the body deciding on citizenship law. He saw many potentially disloyal members of the council, still associated with the Soviet military and other "Russian" institutions, who had the right to vote. While he allowed for the possibility that certain groups that have been particularly active in their efforts of reinstating Latvian independence might be considered for Latvian citizenship, he never explicitly named the Latvian exile community as one such group (Berklavs 1991). Although published after, the article appeared to have been written before the voting in of the October 15, 1991 law, so that at the time of its publication it in effect served more as post-factum comment, rather than suggestion on how legislation should be shaped. Still, it illustrated a telling sense of a shared understanding between the homeland Latvians and those in exile for the need to exclude potentially disloyal subjects, for instance ex-KGB or Soviet military personnel, by then formally Russian subjects, from the transitional legislative body. On the other

hand, it was a rather lukewarm acknowledgement of the possibility of giving citizenship (dual or otherwise) to exiles.

Five days after Berklavs's article was published, *Latvija Amerikā* ran a piece by Gunārs Meierovics, an exile and president of the World Federation of Free Latvians (WFFL). In this article, as head of the WFFL, Meierovics rejected the latest version of the citizenship law. It was seen as "opposing the interests of Latvia." An action detrimental to exiles was implicitly detrimental to Latvia as a whole. In this sense, exile interests were represented as fundamentally aligned with the interests of Latvia, if not interchangeable. Meierovics pointed out a comment by a Latvian exile, Egīls Levits, who had characterized the ruling as one that "Absolutely without reason, gaining nothing, pushes the exiles away, the latter having incessantly worked toward Latvia's reinstatement" (Meierovics 1991). Towards the end of the piece, Meierovics also pointed out another reason the WFFL believed exiles should get dual citizenship, that is, in order to regain the land and property that was nationalized during the Soviet era. This final dimension of the recognition of dual citizenship for exiles and their descendants proved particularly controversial in Latvia, since over decades, properties had been nationalized, split up, inhabited at times by several families, both Latvian and non-Latvian. The exile Latvian was occasionally perceived as unwilling to return to Latvia for good, yet wanting to profit from reclaiming ownership of their family's property.

Following the outcry from the exile community, the amendment to the citizenship law was made on November 27, 1991, just a few weeks after the initial version. The amendment did away with the requirement for exile Latvians and their descendants to give up their foreign citizenship in order to qualify for Latvian (Supreme Council of the

Republic of Latvia 1991b). This was followed by a front-page publication of the amended sections of the law in English in *Latvija Amerikā* on December 7, 1991. The page also included an article titled *Latvijas trimdiniekiem dubultā pilsonība* [*Dual Citizenship for Latvian Exiles*], and a photograph of the Latvian flag atop the Presidential palace with the caption: "The flag of Latvia signals the victory of justice [truth]" (*Latvija Amerikā* 1991b; Figure 5). Although it is not made clear whether the photograph was connected to the amendment of the law, they appear to be positioned side by side intentionally. The fact that the fragment of the law published is in English is also interesting, perhaps intended to be read by exiles and their descendants who are not proficient in Latvian, stretching the boundaries of "Latvianness" beyond just those with a comprehension of Latvian. This serves as a curious inversion of the earlier discussion, where Russified Latvians, potentially disloyal, were to be excluded from the decision-making processes associated with citizenship. Hybrid identities, surpassing "pure Latvianness" were thus restricting on one hand, but enriching on the other, depending the context.

Laiks also reflected the discussion about the citizenship law during the fall of 1991. In late October, it published a piece by exile journalist Ingrīda Cāzere. The article included opinions of exile jurist and political scientist Egīls Levits and WFLA leader G. Meierovics, as well as some delegates of the Republic of Latvia, namely, its authorized representatives in Germany and Denmark. Both Levits and Meierovics agreed that the lack of provisions for dual citizenship for exiles would result in a loss to Latvia. Moreover, Levits framed the issue of denying exiles Latvian citizenship in terms of international law:

> Citizenship has been taken away from one tenth of the Latvian people. And that is a very grave violation of international rights…I think this is one of the most serious violations against the interests of the Latvian nation. (Cāzere 1991)

Later, Levits also pointed out that Latvians living in Europe might take their case collectively to the European Court of Human rights in Strasbourg. Additionally, he highlighted the giving up of non-Latvian citizenships, as in fact hindering the possibility of return for many exiles, as that would mean giving up their social security from countries of settlement. Similarly, he problematized the implied voluntary taking up of foreign citizenship, arguing that it was not a choice for the refugees-turned-exiles. Levits also wondered whether Latvia's unwillingness to return Soviet nationalized properties to their owners, many of whom were exiles, played a part in the process. Particularly interesting in this discourse was her comparison of Latvia with other countries, claiming that all "civilized countries," for example, Germany, allow dual citizenship. The legacies of a deeply centralized government were still perceived by Meierovics, as he noted that the new Latvian state did not have an understanding of private interests: "The problem is that the government does not know how to untie itself from all that is the past, which is already destroyed, from communism" (Cāzere 1991). The latter seems a particularly cut and dry interpretation of the recent system and regime change in Latvia. For exile Latvians, the clumsiness of transition could at times be interpreted as clinging to the old ways that they saw as already done away with. Exiles, many of whom had studied abroad, were "ready to build the country again and bring it into the fellowship of

Europe," according to Meierovics, but were being rejected. "Now we're not good enough," he noted (Cāzere 1991).

The appeal to "civilization" echoed some of the narratives used by Latvian exiles in the immediate post-WWII era to position themselves as "cultured" and coming from a "people of culture," in order to be resettled to Western countries. In this case, "civilized" signified open to Western values, including dual citizenship and ownership of private property, and post-Soviet Latvia was anything but. However, as later policy developments illustrated, dual citizenship for those who were not exiles or their descendants was denied, thus the majority of Russian-speaking Soviet era immigrants to Latvia could either naturalize, remain non-citizens, but could not, for example, obtain both Russian and Latvian citizenships. More than rights to private property, human rights and international law are appealed to here, with the possibility of exiles taking the Latvian government to international court. Western-educated Latvians are ready to take part in rebuilding the state, and leading it back into "Europe," but if shunned, might use that same know-how to fight for their rights. They are ready for action, either way, while the activity in Latvia seems to be talked about here as somewhat inscrutable, irrational, still rooted in communist-era power dynamics. Homeland Latvians cannot untether themselves from all that is supposedly already destroyed, including communism. Still, one must remember that just two months before this article was published, Soviet tanks were in the center of Riga and a putsch of the transitional government could have been possible. Given that even modern day Latvians struggle with the legacy of the Soviet occupation, Meierovics's frustration at the slow pace of change in Latvia in October of 1991 seems slightly misplaced.

The understanding among the exiles of, first of all, seeing their interests as coinciding with those of Latvia, much as they had throughout their efforts during the occupation, and, second, as having been jilted by the new, albeit still transitional power, is evident. The community had always seen itself as fundamentally part of the Latvian nation, and any possibility bringing their legal or other status into question was almost sacrilegious, bringing out the pseudo-religious aspect of nationalist thought, described by Kathryn Manzo (Manzo 1998, 3).

At the same time, homeland populations did not always see the legal integration of exiles and their descendants as self-evident, as their trans-Atlantic counterparts did. A profoundly differing experience had shaped many of their understandings of belonging, loyalty, and Latvianness in a broader sense. The issue of reclaiming private property added to the perception of exiles as at times materialistic and insensitive to homeland Latvians' realities. Moreover, intermarriage with non-Latvians, as well as shared lived experiences among different nationalities within Soviet Latvia times created a layer of experience that was imperceptible to the exiles, who often embraced more hard and fast rules of inclusion and exclusion. While 1.5 and second generation Latvians also intermarried with non-Latvians, a practice that was not always met favorably within the community, hybridity was at times seen as both enriching as well as adulterating. In the case of Latvian Americans, their "western" habitus, including education, language skills, business expertise, contacts, and so on, were seen as more valuable and desirable at the time of the political transition. At the same time, a more "Sovietized" or "Russianized" Latvianness, was seen as less valuable, flexible, adaptable, and thus retrograde. Simply

put, Latvia was working towards identifying with the Western world, and exiles with understanding of how it worked, served as gatekeepers of sorts.

While the awakening of the late 1980s and early 1990s had united both homeland and exile populations in support for the reinstatement of Latvian independence, arguably around a nationalist Latvian discourse, the reality was much more fragmented. Many non-Latvians who had supported the independence movement ultimately were not included in the new state as citizens, and had to prove their loyalty through naturalization. Moreover, some, more radical diaspora opinions opposed even this route to inclusion, deeming that no one who entered Latvia following the 1940 occupation should be allowed to become a citizen. All "occupiers" should have been made to leave, and, perhaps most importantly, anyone who held differing views on the subject was a supporter of Moscow (Cerbulis 1991). Cerbulis, an exile, also claimed that the Soviet occupation had bred cowardice among the homeland Latvians, and one should not fear to be strict in enforcing this policy. He also gave Israel as a good example of a nation defending its interests (Cerbulis 1991).

The antagonism toward those who were part of the citizenship discussion later became visible in the comments in diasporic press about Nils Muižnieks, a second generation Latvian American political scientist, who moved to Latvia in the early 1990s in order to advise the government on integration policies. Addressed in more detail further in the chapter, this example shows that the more conservative core of exile community did not necessarily doubt the loyalties of homeland vs. exile Latvians, but rather judged them depending on their involvement in sociopolitics in the broader sense. Someone who arguably represented the values the exile community saw themselves

embodying (national loyalty in combination with Western education and growing up in a democracy), could also be seen as using these attributes in the wrong way, by supposedly "helping" the occupiers. Facilitation of integration and compromise could be seen as a form of betrayal. At the same time, engaging in dialogue with Soviet-era immigrants was sometimes seen as weakness by homeland Latvians. Arguably, most exile Latvians embraced a more exclusionary nationalism than the homeland population, at least according to the opinions published in the diasporic press, which were largely informed by their displacement ethos.

The awakening in Latvia was headed by the Popular Front of Latvia [Latvijas Tautas Fronte, PFL], a political organization established in 1988. After gaining the majority of seats in the SC in 1990, its success was responsible for the SC vote on May 4 of that year to reestablish Latvia's sovereignty. Although not completely independent until August 21, 1991, Latvia's transitional period was largely led by the PFL. Many of its members were also elected to Parliament in the first elections since the reinstatement of independence, as well as other posts: Dainis Īvāns, chairman of PFL became the deputy speaker of the Parliament and Ivars Godmanis became the first Prime Minister of Latvia of the era.

PFL, and smaller independence movements before it, like Helsinki-86, captured the attention and support of the exile Latvians. Although many were distrustful of any Soviet Latvians, seeing society in Latvia as fundamentally permeated and occupied by decades of KGB infiltration and brainwashing, many more backed the PFL's efforts. Īvāns and Godmanis traveled to the U.S. and Canada, and met with Latvians there; their trips were discussed in the diasporic press. Many exiles also joined the PFL, and became

increasingly directly involved in the struggle for independence. Thus, 1988-1991 saw increased communication and travel between Latvia and exiles' countries of settlement. There was a sense of national unity, solidarity, and even euphoria, when the idea of independence fully materialized.

Latvia in the early 1990s faced a number of fundamental issues. First, there was uncertainty whether Russia would limit energy imports, in order to continue exerting influence; second, there were hundreds of thousands of Russian-speaking military personnel and their families in Latvia, now de jure nationals of another state; third, there were also hundreds of thousands of non-Latvian civilians in the country, people who had immigrated as part of the Soviet policy of rapid industrialization. Berklavs and many others have argued that this was a deliberate policy aimed at undermining Latvian traditional industries, agricultural practices, as well as its population make-up, thus dismantling any national solidarity (Berklavs 1991). Latvia had seen the highest influx of immigrants among all the Baltic States.

While looking back at the first Latvian Republic's legacy, such as the Constitution and other legislature, could help solve some of these issues by building on pre-existing democratic structures, the questions of immigrant and diaspora statuses were unprecedented. The positioning of the Russian military in the territory of Latvia was seen as incompatible with its sovereignty, so the state entered talks with the Soviet (and later Russian) government about the withdrawal of its forces, and a complete removal was accomplished by the end of 1994, during the term of the first President of the independent Latvia, Guntis Ulmanis, nephew of Kārlis Ulmanis, the pre-WWII Latvian Prime Minister, turned authoritarian President.

However, the position of the thousands of non-Latvian civilians was much more complex. While some adopted a zero-tolerance option in terms of integration, insisting that civilian immigrants had also served as part of the occupation effort, by deliberately undermining Latvian culture, language and national identity, and thus should leave the country, there were also talks of the "zero option," a possibility of offering Latvian citizenship to all those residing in the territory of Latvia on August 21, 1991. But perhaps most remarkable, in terms of the diasporic press, was the very limited reference to non-Latvians in Latvia altogether. The reality on the ground of a large, mostly Russian speaking minority was largely made invisible and ignored in popular diasporic discourse and policy proposals of the time. Associated with the era of occupation, it was almost immediately relegated to the past, only to be begrudgingly allowed to become visible in discussion of highly sensitive issues, such as the citizenship law. Thus, the discourse on citizenship itself became a space for negotiating the symbolic as well as political membership to the new state. The diasporic community was successful in attaining its dual citizenship status (provided they claimed it by 1995), and another unprecedented category, non-citizens (aliens), was created.

This status, which offers certain rights, as well as restrictions to its holder, is the embodiment of a paradoxical position. It may, perhaps, be likened to Linda Bosniak's concept of alienage, or a sort of borderline positionality between citizen and non-citizen (in the sense of being completely alien to the state) (Bosniak 2006, 38). All those who immigrated to Latvia after June 17, 1990, as well as their descendants, would thus automatically become non-citizens. Children born after August 21, 1991 to non-citizen parents could get citizenship without going through naturalization procedures provided

their parents wanted them to be Latvian citizens. Other non-citizens would have to naturalize by passing a Latvian language and history test. Since Russian had been the lingua franca for non-Latvians throughout the Soviet occupation, several generations had grown up without practically any knowledge of Latvian. They were not expected to learn it during the occupation, and many non-Latvians took the new requirement as humiliating and exclusionary, especially after a notable part of the non-Latvian population had also been supportive of Latvian independence efforts. Some non-citizens view the naturalization test as unfair. Elizabete Krivcova, former non-citizen, now naturalized, and co-founder of the Non-Citizens' Congress told journalists in 2014: "The exam is very ideological. You have to recognize that Latvia was occupied by Russia. The questions about Soviet times are only about its dark side. Concerning the economy, it's about industrialization and forced collectivization in the agrarian sector. When it's about peoples' lives, then it's about repression. A friend of mine explained [to] me how he prepared [for] it. He said, 'I know what I think about the history but for the exam I have to think exactly the contrary to have the correct answers'" (Petit 2014). By pointing out the ideology of the naturalization test, Krivcova is correct in assuming that this bureaucratic step serves a symbolic and ingratiating purpose; by becoming citizen, the individual agrees to read Latvian history according to the official narrative. However, as the interview illustrates, for some taking the test is just like jumping through any other administrative hoop – a formality to be dealt with, but not reflecting any actual shift in their interpretation of the past, particularly Latvia's fate in the twentieth century.

Legally not considered stateless, and carrying passports issued by the Republic of Latvia, as well as having certain rights and privileges, such as diplomatic protection by

the Republic of Latvia abroad, and residence in Latvia, non-citizens have limitations in real estate purchases, pensions, travel without visas, gun permits, and so on. They can donate to political parties and become a member, but cannot vote in municipal or national elections. The only other country to have a similar policy is Estonia (Brubaker 1996, 104). Both states have had their respective laws challenged by both non-citizens themselves and the Russian Federation, which at times has used the non-citizen case in order to claim human rights violations against ethnic Russians in Latvia, and thus exert political pressure.

The formation of the non-citizen category has not created an aspirational sense of national belonging within the group; rather, it has fostered a sense of exclusion and solidarity among the population in question. While donations to political parties are allowed, avenues of political participation are still limited for non-citizens, creating both frustrations among the community, as well as stalling civic loyalty.

Researchers Artjoms Ivļevs and Roswitha King have found that several variables have a particular impact on naturalization, with those elderly, male, single, or with poor knowledge of state language being less likely to try to obtain citizenship. However, Latvia's joining the EU in 2004 served as motivation for others, and Ivļevs and King note that the possibility to freely participate in the European labor market was significant in increasing naturalizations (Ivļevs and King 2012). Non-citizens were thus able to treat Latvian citizenship as a stepping-stone to a more flexible, attractive European citizenship. Naturalization, thus, by no means equals loyalty or even willingness to work and contribute to Latvia. In this sense, citizenship and belonging are somewhat false

categories, malleable not only according to shifting domestic ideologies, but also supra-national developments, such as opening EU labor markets.

Fathers and Sons of the Nation

The uplift and euphoria of the regain of independence of Latvia gave way to speculation and opinions about who should head the new state. This also included ongoing discussion on the necessities and limitations of reinstating elements of interwar Latvia, many of which were problematic due to the new makeup of the country. For example, Dainis Īvāns, a homeland Latvian and then leader of the Popular Front, much supported by the diaspora, was met with considerable controversy, when in an interview with Radio Free Europe, later published in *Latvija Amerikā*, he expressed his annoyance with the strictly "Latvia for Latvians!" discourse, stating that he supported the integration of other ethnicities and offering them equal rights (*Latvija Amerikā* 1992). This was seen as very peculiar by the diasporic media, since the prevalent narrative from the late 1980s to 1991 had been one of highlighting the role of Latvian culture and language as returning to the forefront. Īvāns expressed concern with sidelining the non-Latvian population at the time, after many had been supportive of Latvia's independence efforts. Later, in May of the same year, Īvāns argued against the dangers of reinstating an interwar Latvia, cautioning that what was de facto being restored, was rooted more in the post-1934 state, than anything else. Although Latvia experienced economic growth in the years leading up to WWII, controversy remains about the lack of democratic process during the initial Soviet occupation, when the head of state, Kārlis Ulmanis, more or less singlehandedly decided not to put up resistance.

Another contributor to the paper, Pauls Petersons, questioned Īvāns's alarm at Latvia rebuilding on the foundations set in the late 1930s, stressing that the Constitution of 1922 would be restored in its original form, not in its post-1934 coup state (Petersons 1992). However, although the formalities of the Constitution as well as other legislation were of immense importance in the discourse of the newly independent state at the time, the symbolism rather than pragmatism of the process was more dominant. This was a discussion not purely about the skeleton of the reemerging country, but about the very values upon which a late twentieth century Latvia would be built. Īvāns's cautioning against the temptation to restore on paper a state that ceased to exist in 1940, or even 1934, was met with suspicion, because the aim of the exile community over the previous five decades had largely been to one day reinstate the Latvia of that very "golden age," or at least, its direct successor. Sure, some adjustments would have to be made, but there was not a clear consensus on what would happen with the extensive non-Latvian population once the process was actually underway. Surprisingly, *Laiks* and *Latvija Amerikā* had very few articles mentioning the Russian-speaking population in Latvia at this time. There was no engagement with this population, and mentions were mostly made through negation. For instance, charity drives organized in the U.S., be they humanitarian aid, school or medical supplies, books, printing presses, were clearly aimed only at Latvians, some articles explicitly encouraging those sending books to schools in Latvia to make sure they did not end up in "migrant schools" (Liepiņš 1991). Articles did not openly vilify the non-Latvians however; they are mostly made invisible, a silence saturating the diasporic publications. On the one hand, this is curious, since much of the conversation on belonging is clearly linked to delineating an opposite, an "other" who

does not belong. On the other, perhaps it is not surprising at all, since the ethically constitutive story of nationalism permeating the diaspora was so powerful, it did not need to re-assert itself through articulating who is Latvian and who is not. The only times the non-Latvians are noted are on very specific issues, for instance, the abovementioned book shipments to schools in Latvia. Much more focus is on solidifying the exiles' belonging to the nation, their citizenship.

One point of consensus in this fuzzy discourse was the need for the former USSR army to withdraw from Latvia. This was a lengthy process, involving much insecurity and lengthy negotiations with the Russian Federation. Finally, the last of the army personnel withdrew from Latvia in 1994, leaving former military villages and bases as ghostly reminders. Thousands of retired military families remained. Civilian immigrants remained in an unprecedented position, not fully adhering to their country of settlement, and no longer subjects of their countries (once part of the USSR) of origin. David Laitin has called the Russian population in Latvia a "beached diaspora" "since they acquired that status [of diaspora] because the borders of the Soviet Union receded, rather than because they dispersed from their homeland" (Laitin 1998, 29). However, Latvian exiles, including diplomats, had officially always insisted on the illegitimacy of their country's occupation, maintaining this position through Latvia's remaining diplomatic institutions abroad, including embassies in the U.S. and UK. Moreover, the U.S. and other countries also supported this stance. Thus, the question of borders could not be as easily dealt with. If Latvia was never legitimately part of the Soviet Union, then immigration to its territory may well be regarded as external, as was done by the Latvian government in the 1990s when working out citizenship policy.

Clearly, the discussion of belonging, legitimately and symbolically to the state was an ongoing one. This resonates with the notion or analytical tool of "figured worlds," which refers to the "narratives and images that different social and cultural groups of people use to make sense of the world. They function as simplified models of how things work when they are 'normal' and 'natural' from the perspective of a particular social and cultural group" (Gee 2010, 150). Certain understandings of Latvianness, and what a Latvian state should look like were deeply embedded in the exile ethos. A challenging perspective, such as that of homeland Latvian and sociologist Tālis Tisenkopfs's exploration of Latvianness as malleable in the new age of openness, travel, and post-Soviet anonymity, was met with a reaction verging upon ridicule and outrage by Aivars Ruņģis, a Latvian exile writer in the winter of 1998. On November 25, 1997, Diena, one of the largest dailies in Latvia, published an opinion piece by Tisenkopfs. In it, the scholar from the Philosophy and Sociology Institute at the University of Latvia argued against the move towards ethnic nationalism as constitutive of national belonging.

> Only a slave loves their neighbor with a panicked awe, and I respect unflattering views of Latvians. They should not love their Latvianness so shallowly and usurp the state with it. An ethnically Latvian state seems comical, insular and narrow-minded nowadays… Latvia supposedly does not have a unified state identity, and that is noticed abroad as well. Many are worried about this as a flaw, inferiority, and feverishly try to construct an overarching and finalized identity. (Tisenkopfs 1997)

Tisenkopfs goes on to urge building Latvian national identity on the more concrete platforms of rational politics, economic development and social solidarity, instead of soft identities, such as ethnicity, taken as hard and fast rules of belonging. "'Pastalnieki'[7] identity, since the end of the occupation, has lost its relevance" (Tisenkopfs 1997). Furthermore, he suggests leaving the notion of vastly unifying national identities in the twentieth century, and embracing a more generative and hybrid view of identities in the future, where people can define who they want to be. In other words, Tisonkopfs sees a newfound freedom in the relative anonymity of post-Soviet Latvia and its population, allowing for much more freedom in self-determination, unlike the rigid identities of the twentieth century.

For Ruņģis, as a representative of the first generation of Latvian exiles, the value of his identity was to be found in a strict adherence to notions of Latvianness as unchangeable, irreplaceable, and most importantly, endangered in the USSR. The idea that Latvians of the late 1990s may perceive their identities differently as a result of opened communication, as well as a plethora of other factors, seemed disgraceful to Ruņģis. To Tisenkopfs's provocative statement that, "Indeed, Latvians are almost nothing, but that gives them [the] possibility to be anything!" (Aivars Ruņģis 1998a), Ruņģis responded with outrage:

> Latvians are almost nothing! What nonsense, what absurdity is this notion in the eyes of a person who for his whole life and in exile has been able to live a spiritually fulfilled life with his Latvian identity! (Aivars Ruņģis 1998a).

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[7] *Pastalas* are a traditional Latvian form of footwear, made from one piece of leather. Here, invoked to imply "traditional" Latvianness, but also a romanticized, anachronistic ethnic identity. "Pastalnieki" literally means those who wear *pastalas*, but in this context, those who support this view of Latvian identity.

Ruņģis sees the problem as rooted predominantly in the anonymity of Latvians, in the relatively recent emergence of Latvian modern literature, and the short-lived period of the first Latvian nation-state in the interwar period. This response signals a certain unwillingness to embrace some of the characteristics of the time. On the one hand, Tisenkopfs, largely speculatively and somewhat provocatively, explored the newfound "grayness" of a post-1991 Latvianness, a seemingly indefinable identity that many try to "exercise" both at home and abroad. The very notion of consciously toying with one's identity seems unacceptable from an older exile's perspective; their very goal had been for decades to make sure Latvianness was not swept under the rug of Soviet-ness, or absorbed by countries of settlement. However, a significant nuance of Tisenkopfs's sentiment, or mood, is missing from Ruņģis's reading. Tisenkopfs, having experienced the change in Latvia firsthand, faced the awkwardness and confusion of the time, seeing its detriments as well as benefits, while Ruņģis outright refuses to engage in any kind of discussion about the flexibility, malleability or interpretation of identities. To his mind, one is born into an identity, and that is it. His and his contemporaries' strict focus on maintaining an arguably unchanged Latvianness while in exile is to serve as proof. Hybrid identities in Latvia as well as abroad do not seem to be considered by Ruņģis, although they fundamentally constitute the exile experience.

Furthermore, in later articles Ruņģis engaged in arguments with both representatives of Latvia who had been born and bred there (e.g. Artis Pabriks, political scientist), and exile Latvian descendants who had "returned" to Latvia, namely journalist Kārlis Streips, and political advisor Nils Muižnieks. In a September 26, 1998 article in

Laiks Ruņģis accused Nils Muižnieks of serving as a collaborator for the "fifth column," those disloyal to the Latvian state (Aivars Ruņģis 1998b). As director of the Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies and employee of Soros Foundation Latvia at the time, Muižnieks was seen as indirectly aiding the "colonizers," by urging the discussion of citizenship laws. Ruņģis was angered by Muižnieks's seeming claim to authority in this context, since at the time he and Pabriks were the only two political scientists in Latvia with PhDs. Engagement with EU-centered human rights discourses was seen as treacherous. Pabriks had published an article on "Pastalas" nationalism in *Laiks* earlier that year, highlighting the dangers of maintaining an unchanged, historicized idea of nationalism as an ideological beacon (Pabriks 1998).

On October 17, 1998, Nils Muižnieks's father, Ansis, responded to Ruņģis in an article outlining his son's political neutrality, upbringing and education in the U.S., including studies at Berkeley, as well as the detriments of an ethnically isolationist stance for Latvia (Muižnieks 1998). On November 21, 1998, Ruņģis's son Austris responded instead to Ansis Muižnieks's article. While the discussion still appears to be about disagreement over potential trajectories for Latvia's citizenship laws, a different current also is noticeable. Austris points out that his father and grandfather, unlike Nils Muižnieks, were never part of "studies centers," but fought for their homeland weapon-in-hand in both World Wars (Austris Ruņģis 1998). Thus, as much as diaspora Latvians and their "Western mentality" were seen as valuable to the new state, sometimes their worldview, formed in multicultural societies, could be seen as too soft and ultimately detrimental to a Latvia strongly identified with Latvian nationalism. This exchange was a competition in Latvianness, if not masculinity, echoing back to the tongue-in-cheek

survey conducted by Latvian exile youth-run magazine *Jaunā Gaita [New Course]* in the 1960s, asking readers to send in photographs of their living rooms, offering points for each "Latvian" item. Streips, a second generation Latvian American from Chicago, then living in Latvia, also spoke out about the short-sightedness of some of the more conservative exiles, stating that nationalist statements hurt Latvia's progress in the long run, being detrimental to its joining the European Union, for example. He stressed the difference between exiles sticking to their nationalist views in the U.S., because they are used to them, and acting upon those views in contexts that have real implications for the independent state. For Streips, it was irresponsible to further a reactionary nationalist discourse in the diaspora, without being aware of the real conditions on the ground, for example, the complexity of the non-Latvian minority integration (Streips 1998).

The generational aspect of the discussion is quite interesting, fathers and sons defending one another's views. As always, the broadly social is filtered through a very personal prism. Aivars Ruņģis's views depict a rather typical old-school exile Latvian viewpoint, especially that of the first generation. He was unable to truly imagine a Latvia changed by years of Soviet occupation, not just through decline in church attendance, environmental neglect, but also complex, intertwined populations, hybrid in a way that did not clearly fit any preconceived mold, their allegiances just as nebulous. Ruņģis's figured world, although anchored in the work for Latvia's independence, could not in fact transcend and contribute to its reality. Geographically, as well as ideologically distant from the status quo of Latvia in the 1990s, his sentiments echoed those of many who could not bring themselves to return to their homeland because of the tragic inability to see a real Latvia as compatible with their imagined one.

Moreover, hybridity appear as an interesting category in itself, with Latvian-Western identities being highly valued for their possible contributions to the new state. Still, these were to be executed in particular ways and for particular ends, as the Liepiņš and Ruņģis articles show. If social, cultural, or economic capital was seen as being diverted toward non-Latvians, including children, it was seen as a waste, or worse, as betrayal by some in the exile community.

There was perhaps no other topic as emotion-laden and unifying as that of children and youth, both in Latvia and abroad, each for different reasons. The children in Latvia were seen as in need of help in several aspects, most notably education and overall welfare, including health. This issue was seen as closely linked to the lack of restrictions on pollution in many places in Latvia, exacerbated by the delayed and limited information about the Chernobyl tragedy of 1986, deepening many people's conviction that the USSR had not been open about other potentially dangerous environmental catastrophes, albeit smaller in scale. At the same time, the poor conditions of many of the orphanages of Latvia were exposed, as well as the abusive treatment of many Latvian youths serving in the Red Army. Several young men died while in service, often in mysterious circumstances, their bodies returned home in zinc coffins. There were rumors of brutality against Baltic men in the army, especially as the independence efforts increased.

Save the Children's Latvian affiliate was part of the endeavor to raise awareness about children's rights to clean water, good healthcare, and sound nutrition; *Latvija Amerikā* published an appeal from its head Ingūna Ebela in August 1990, outlining the organization's goals, as well as inviting donations, and other types of aid (Ebela 1990).

The significance of acknowledging Latvian children and youth around the world did not lose its importance during the transitional period; if anything, it gained importance. And not just Latvian youngsters in Latvia were highlighted. For instance, Latvians who had immigrated voluntarily to Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, in order to work the vast lands of the Siberian plains, still maintained small, diminishing communities. Latvian had been spoken there less and less, especially since the rise of Stalinism; however, an article in *Latvija Amerikā* on April 16, 1991, contained a photograph of three blonde children and an elderly lady, as well as a comment that perhaps these children should too be returned to Latvia now that it is free, in order for the Latvian people not to disappear and to increase in number (*Latvija Amerikā* 1991a). The possibility of visiting such remote Latvian settlements offered a new understanding of the dispersal of Latvians around the globe, not just in the Western world. However, the idea conveyed in this story that pre-WWII émigrés should also be asked to return, although having left by choice, is rather telling, and highlights the elements of moral panic around children, and future reproduction of the nation present in *Laiks, Latvija Amerikā* and Latvian diasporic society as such. For Soviet Latvians, claims about the catastrophic condition of children's health and development seemed exaggerated at times, but the moral discourse associated with the cause ensured Latvia and other emergent post-Soviet nations received attention, and strengthened their organizations' ties with other NGOs in the world, further aiding not only the direct goals of the organizations, but also building civic engagement at a time when openly political engagement was still highly problematic. Alongside environmental protection, children's rights was one of the areas where people could organize and get involved without explicitly political agendas.

However, the language used in these discourses revealed an undercurrent of Latvian nationalism, arguing that the children of Latvia deserved clean Latvian air, water, and food.

Education was another cornerstone of rebuilding, reinstating, and solidifying an independent Latvian state. At the same time, exile communities were largely unanimous in their decision that Latvian schools abroad must be maintained as well, most notably Münster Latvian Gymnasium in Germany (Minsteres Latviešu Ģimnāzija; MLĢ), which existed from 1957 until 1998. Similarly, recently acquired knowledge of Latvian descendants in the depths of Russia also prompted actions to send materials and teacher volunteers from Latvia to teach children Latvian. In Latvia itself, however, a fundamental overhaul on all levels of education was required but the extent to which the existing infrastructure should be done away with was debated. The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) was one of the actors involved in the shaping of a new education policy and content for Latvia. In the winter of 1991, AABS Academic Director Valters Nollendorfs expressed the view that changes could not happen in a strictly top-down way, they should occur with local Latvian support. Nollendorfs was quoted saying: “We won't need bulldozers, we will do fine with good gardening tools” (Karule 1991). He was referencing some of the West German activists’ positions after the Berlin wall came down in 1989, urging that all of East Berlin should be bulldozed down and rebuilt. Nollendorfs was aware of the dangers of trying to erase a past and highlighted instead the need to utilize it in order to move on.

Conclusion

Latvian diasporic press in the 1990s reflected the newly reinstated country as a contested terrain. Moreover, with increasing heterogeneity within the diaspora itself, growing communication with the homeland, visits, and first-hand experience, it became internally contested as well. Major differences in positionalities can be traced back to generational experiences, as well as whether individuals had returned or travelled to post-Soviet Latvia, and their various subsequent ways of engaging with the nation (re-)building effort.

While rather sidelined in the diasporic newspapers, the elephant in the room throughout the 1990s was the presence of a huge non-Latvian (mostly Russian) minority. After the relatively straightforward decision that all Soviet military personnel should leave Latvian territory, as they then constituted the army of a foreign state, the policy formation surrounding tens of thousands of civilians was less clear. This group did not really fit into the national imaginary of the exile, broadly summarized, thus a discourse of de-colonization, that is, the "return" of non-Latvians to their countries of origin, was sometimes offered as a solution. However, this was not a realistic course of action, as several generations had grown up with Latvia as their home. Yet, they often did not speak any Latvian, so it was decided they would not be automatically given citizenship, and would have to naturalize. Some saw this as an insult, as many non-Latvians had also supported the nation's independence, only to be denied many of the privileges associated with it later, as Īvāns pointed out. As Maria Golubeva and Robert Gould have argued, the potential for symbolic capital emergent from the support from both ethnic Latvians and ethnic Russians for the restoration of Latvia's independence in 1990 was never harnessed. Inclusion was not de facto measured by civil nationalism, i.e. loyalty to the

development of a new Latvian state, but rather limited by ethnic nationalism, creating a "perceived binary political imagination that structures society into seemingly non-porous and mutually exclusive groups, "us" and "them," the "Latvians" and the "Russians" (Golubeva and Gould 2010, 12, see also Aasland 1994; Aasland and Fløtten 2001).

At the same time, exile Latvians achieved a double status of inclusion, becoming the only group in Latvia eligible for dual citizenship. This links back to the notion of valuable hybridities and others seen as rather "adulterating" the primary identity. The Western-Latvians were perceived as enriching Latvia, while the Soviet (Russian)-Latvian were seen as having undermined true Latvianness. At the same time, examples of Muižnieks's accusation by Ruņģis, for example, show how even individuals highly rich in Western social and cultural capital could be seen as putting it to bad use, in this case, by helping shape integration policy in Latvia. In other words, Muižnieks was seen as fostering inclusion, rather than exclusion of certain groups, which did not align with the nationalist narrative of the time.

Although we did not hear from Muižnieks himself in these articles, other "returnee" Latvians offered further challenge to the pre-determined exile narrative, such as Streips. At the same time, homeland Latvians themselves were becoming increasingly mobile, and with the fall of the iron curtain were able to hold a mirror to their own identities and define them with regard to others encountered. This is the context behind Tisenkopfs's musings, as well as Pabriks's thoughts on the dangers of "pastalas" nationalism. Latvian identity in the homeland was undergoing a tumultuous redefinition at the time, with Soviet legacies lingering, and Western freedoms as well as challenges approaching. Having inter-war Latvia to reference, and a vast Soviet experience, as well

as that of the exile, Latvian identity was not going to become the direct continuation of any of them, rather, a new form, meshing various experiences together. The diasporic newspaper, although predominantly speaking from its removed position, that of the overseas observer, became one of the inadvertent sites for all these discourses to converge. Anachronistic, wishful imaginaries of inter-war Latvia renewed; pessimistic tropes of lingering Soviet specters in the forms of corruption, Russification; perceptions of decline in "Latvian" values and diligence, spread of cowardice as well as more grounded experiences, coming from first-hand experiences in a complex, contested post-Soviet state; all these converged in the pages of the two periodicals. It is this meeting place of the discourse imagined and that of reality that highlights the complexity of the role of Latvian diasporic newspapers in the 1990s. Furthermore, highlighted by intergenerational contestation of Latvianness, as well as disputed discourses of what is means to be loyal to the nation in the first place, as shown by the scenarios illustrated by Muižnieks and Ruņģis, the diaspora itself is elucidated as far more complex than might have appeared. The juxtaposition of a long-term, strategic approach with a more immediate, uncompromising one is also interesting in terms of how national loyalty becomes gendered, with some arguing true patriotism is being ready to defend one's country with gun-in-hand, while others see the mobilization of various types of social and cultural capital as the true long-term investment toward national well-being. The dynamic of fathers and sons engaging in discussions about who is more patriotic, coming down to the readiness to take up arms for the defense of the country as the ultimate expression of national loyalty, links to an underlying thread of masculinity in this discourse. It is the ultimate, indisputable position that does not allow for the continuation

of a discussion. Arguably, these differences would not have appeared this starkly unless there had been the possibility to engage with the independence building effort in various ways. Thus, it is evident that Latvia of the 1990s, and still today, is an ongoing process of nation building, balancing inclusion and exclusion, long-and short-term strategies.

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THIS PAPER WAS MAILED WEDNESDAY, DEC. 4, 1991.

LATVIJA AMERIKĀ

LATVIAN LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER

Published weekly by the Latvija Amerikā Publishing Limited
Business Offices: 125 Broadview Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4M 2E9, Canada. Editor-in-Chief A. Kundrats, 465-7902. USA Editorial Offices: New York, Editor V. Irbe, 6D Millholland Drive, Fishkill, N.Y. 12524; Chicago Editor A. Zaube, 6908 W. Farragut Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60656; California Editor Kārlis Kalejs, 3522 Markridge Road, La Crescenta, CA 91214.

NR. 49 | SESTDIENA, 1991. GADA 7. DECEMBRIS | 40. GADS | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1991.

SECOND CLASS MAIL | CENA 1.35 DOL.

LATVIA SUPREME COUNCIL AMENDS CITIZENSHIP PRINCIPLES

RIGA, LATVIA, NOVEMBER 27, 1991—TODAY, THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA SUPREME COUNCIL AMENDED THE RESOLUTION „ABOUT THE RENEWAL OF THE RIGHTS OF REPUBLIC OF LATVIA CITIZENS AND THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF NATURALIZATION," ADOPTED OCTOBER 15,1991 BY AMENDING THE FOLLOWING TWO PARAGRAPHS OF THE RESOLUTION:

PARAGRAPH 2.2 — ELIMINATED THE REQUIREMENT TO SHOW A CERTIFICATE OF EXPATRIATION FOR THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE CITIZENS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA AS OF JUNE 17, 1940 (THE DATE OF THE USSR'S OCCUPATION OF LATVIA) AND THEIR DESCENDANTS WHO WERE NOT LIVING IN LATVIA AS OF OCTOBER 15, 1991 (THE DATE THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED), IF SUCH INDIVIDUALS WERE LIVING OUTSIDE OF LATVIA DUE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LATVIA'S OCCUPATION, EVEN IF SUCH INDIVIDUALS HAD OBTAINED ANOTHER STATE'S CITIZENSHIP BETWEEN THE PERIOD OF JUNE 17, 1940 AND AUGUST 21, 1991. THESE INDIVIDUALS WILL BE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA PASSPORTS UPON REGISTRATION OF THEIR REPUBLIC OF LATVIA CITIZENSHIP STATUS ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

PARAGRAPH 2.3 — THIS PARAGRAPH STATES THAT A REPUBLIC OF LATVIA CITIZEN CANNOT SIMULTANEOUSLY BE A CITIZEN OF ANOTHER STATE. HOWEVER, AMENDMENTS ADOPTED TODAY LIFTED THE PROHIBITION FOR THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA CITIZENS AS OF JUNE 17, 1940 AND THEIR DESCENDANTS, IF THEY WERE LIVING OUTSIDE OF LATVIA ON OCTOBER 15, 1991 AND IF SUCH INDIVIDUALS WERE LIVING OUTSIDE OF LATVIA DUE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LATVIA'S OCCUPATION, EVEN IF SUCH INDIVIDUALS HAD OBTAINED ANOTHER CITIZENSHIP BETWEEN THE PERIOD OF JUNE 17, 1940 AND AUGUST 21, 1991.

Latvijas karogs Rīgas pils tornī pauž taisnības uzvaru.

Latvijas trimdiniekiem dubultā pilsonība

Latvijas Republikas parlaments 27. novembrī pielika punktu vienai no pēdējā laika aktuālākajām diskusijām un pieņēma lēmumu, kas noteikti veicinās trimdinieku atgriešanās procesu. AP nolēma atjaunot LR pilsonību visiem trimdā dzīvojošiem emigrantiem un to pēcnācējiem, kam tā jau bija līdz 1940. gadam.

Lēmumā teikts, ka nesen pieņemtie naturālizācijas noteikumi un ekspatriācijas atļaujas uzrādīšanas nepieciešamība „neattiecas uz LR pilsoņiem un to pēcnācējiem, kuŗi tēvzemes okupācijas apstākļos, atrazdamies ārpus Latvijas, ieguvuši citas valsts pilsonību laika posmā no 1940. gada 17. jūnija līdz 1991. gada 21. augustam". Viens no lēmuma autoriem deputāts Rolands Rikards paskaidroja, ka sakarā ar to, ka šajā laika posmā nepastāvēja LR suverēnā vara un Latvijas valsts pilsoņiem, pieņemot citas valsts pilsonību, nebija brīvas izvēles, tika izstrādāts šis dokuments.

Lielajā trimdinieku atbalsta korī debašu laikā disonēja tikai dažas uzstāšanās. Pēdējā laika krasajam opozicijas runasvīram Oļegam Šipcovam liekoties, ka parlaments, pieņemot tik nekorektu dokumentu, viņu uzskatot par muļķi: „Mums jābūt godīgiem — vai nu piešķiŗam dubulto pilsonību visiem vai nevienam." Jāatzīmē, ka tā arī bija vienīgā opozicijas pārstāvja uzstāšanās, bet balsojot, parlamenta mazākuma lielākā daļa atturējās.

Konsekventi pret lēmuma pieņemšanu iestājās deputāts Juris Bojārs (no balsošanas vispār atteicās) un atgādināja, ka šis dokuments došot iespēju, piemēram, ebrējiem iegūt ne tikai otru, bet pat trešo pilsonību: „Ja mēs akceptēsim dubulto pilsonību ebrējiem, baltvāciešiem (viņiem būšot visas tiesības uz to pretendēt) un latviešiem, tad tās nedošana krieviem būs šīs tautas diskriminācija." Ar konstruktīvu priekšlikumu pie deputātiem griezās AP preses centra darbiniece, trimdas latviete Inese Birzniece, kas aicināja parlamentu griezties ar oficiālām vēstulēm pie to valstu valdībām, kur visvairāk dzīvo tautieši, un noskaidrot to attieksmi pret šo problēmu.

Kanadas igauņi turpinās atbalstīt Igaunijas demokratizāciju

7. novembrī Toronto uz gadskārtēju pilnsapulci sanāca Kanadas Igauņu centrālā padome. Par priekšsēdi ievēlēja līdzšinējo — Laass Leivatu. Nolēma, ka padomes darbība kategoriski jāturpina tādā pašā garā kā līdz šim, sevišķi jāatbalsta Igaunijas sūtniecības un Toronto konsulāta darbība.

Beigu rezolūcijā, kas publicēta arī laikrakstos un piesūtīta vadītājiem igauņu politiskiem darbiniekiem, uzsvērts, ka padome iespējami plaši atbalstījusi kopš gadu desmitiem Igaunijas neatkarības atgūšanu un konstatē, ka Padomju savienības armija joprojām valda Igaunijā un dažādos paveidos Igauniju ar Maskavu vēl saista okupācijas laiku atlieku struktūras. Privātīpašumu, robežu un demokratiskas pārvaldes jautājumi joprojām ir nenokārtoti. Igaunijai vēl nav savas Satversmes, arī Parlamenta vēlēšanas tikai paredzamas kaut kad nākamā gadā...

Šādos apstākļos Igauņu centrālai padomei Kanadā ir pienākums turpināt savu politisko darbību statūtos paredzētā kārtībā tik ilgi, kamēr augstāk minētās problēmas tiks izkārtotas un kamēr demokratiska valsts vara un ar to saistītās pavalstniecības tiesības iedzīvinātas, uz partiju darbību balstītais parlaments (Saeima) ievēlēts un izveidotas citas ar to saistītas politiskās institūcijas.

Šinī rezolūcijā izteikto nostāju Kanadas Igauņu centrālā padome revidēs tikai pēc tam, kad stāsies spēkā Igaunijas brīvvalsts Satversme un tanī paredzētās parlamenta vēlēšanas notikušas.— Beigās norādīts, ka Kanadas Igauņu centrālā padome palīdzēs Igaunijas valstij, tās pilsoņiem, firmām un institūcijām izveidot sakarus ar Kanadu pārejas laikā uz demokratisku valsts iekārtu un tirgus saimniecību.

L. Švarcs

Figure 5: Front page of Issue 49, *Latvija Amerikā* [*Latvia in America*], 12/7/1991.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Research

A Unique Type of Nationalism

The case of Latvian exiles in the U.S. during the Cold War is a unique one, but also a constitutive part of the larger U.S. immigration policy history. It concerns the process of Latvian nation-building, but is also a page out of the history of dominant anti-Communist discourse in the U.S. On the one hand, the DPs-turned-exiles' positionality was unprecedented, however, the experiences of exile and displacement are, certainly, not novel or unique. What makes the Latvian (and other Baltic nations') experience remarkable is the relative brevity of their state's independence in the interwar period, compared by an exile double in length, almost fifty years. The deep-seated rootedness of the national narrative throughout the duration of the exile is evident. Still, at times discussions about what it meant to be Latvian and how one should engage with the homeland were agents of change within the community. As 1.5 and second generation Latvian Americans negotiated their exile and U.S. identities, embodied new and hybrid positions, the scope of belonging was broadened, ultimately resulting in the creation of a dual citizenship category just for exiles and their descendants. Latvians in exile in the second half of the twentieth century not only kept alive the idea of the nation, they also transformed it in the process.

This unique type of diasporic nationalism was created first in the DP camps, in part shaped by UNRRA's novel approach to refugee management. UNRRA, in turn, was created during a period in which U.S. was attempting to firmly establish itself as a global power in the aftermath of WWII. Exile nationalism came to be articulated under the symbolic legitimacy of U.S. recognition. Once the threat of forced return to Soviet-

occupied homelands had passed, and Baltic DPs had the backing of the U.S. to position themselves as representatives of captive nations illegitimately annexed by the USSR, the community's clearly anti-Communist discourse was one of the reasons DPs were ultimately seen favorably by U.S. authorities.

Yet, as has been addressed in previous chapters, the status of DPs was by no means straightforward, even with the relative support of the U.S. and other Western powers. This project's key contribution is the conceptualization of DP experiences as fundamentally shaped through an ongoing process of negotiation of ambivalent, often conflicting positionalities. The treatment of the in-between space of DP camps as based on contradictory categories of power/helplessness, agency/apathy, friend/enemy, and so on, is relevant when conceiving of ways refugees are or might be managed in the future. What role does symbolic support, a formal recognition of legitimacy, and the availability of a space for self-government play? Most notably, nationalism in the Latvian DP community was seen as a claim to sovereignty, but also as potentially complicating the resettlement processes. Nationalism had to be balanced between maintaining identity and a political stance, and not appearing too insular, inassimilable. In the same vein, political activism was a double-edged sword. On the one side, a clear anti-Communist stance was expected from DPs in order to resettle to the U.S., but on the other, obscure war-time records made for a continuous vetting process both within the DP community, as well as by UNRRA authorities. DPs were supposed to be politically conscious, but only in the right way, in order to ultimately still be assimilable, non-threatening immigrants. Similarly, DPs negotiated culture as an ambivalent category. Simultaneously unique, specific to Latvia, intentionally exhibited through crafts, national costumes, folk songs

and dance, traditions, but also always already part of a European fellowship of nations, a Western tradition of "high culture," classical music, painting, largely protestant Christianity, and an unspecified identification with "peoples of culture," meaning Western European nations. Culture, thus, was used to both convey uniqueness or difference from other ethnic groups, but also to stress kinship, similarity, and familiarity with Western culture, indicating sameness and whiteness. This duality of culture remains a topic worthy of closer further study.

Like the managing of nationalism and political ideologies, culture, as well as health, became categories to carefully negotiate. A certain level of DP passivity was built into the camp experience during the uncertain period of waiting, which instilled a feeling of helplessness and dehumanization. This was compounded by the constant screenings, including health checks. In sum, the "enlightened self-interest" of U.S. involvement in refugee relief after WWII contributed to shaping an unprecedented diasporic positionality, which was fundamentally based in negotiating the various contradictions of DPs in the post-war era. Unlike pre-war European nationalisms, this one was aware of the destructive potential of the fetishization of nationalism, thus treaded carefully in making claims regarding possible resettlement scenarios (case in point, the article by Štiglics 1946a, wherein he calls out those demanding something akin to an ethnic enclave upon resettlement to North America as ludicrous).

The nationalism of Latvian DPs and exiles is particularly interesting because it illustrates the symbiosis of two national interests, Latvian (and other Baltic and East European) and U.S., as both sides gained symbolically from working together. Latvians were able to continue maintaining diasporic nationalism in the U.S., including diplomatic

representation, which was a thorn in the side of the USSR. The U.S. used the symbolism of harboring representatives of captive nations as an ideological tool against the USSR, its erstwhile WWII ally, and the rest of the Communist bloc. As the Cold War progressed, the U.S. was able to harness its involvement in and the outcomes of other wars for strengthening its image "as the innocent custodian of world peace and humanity" (Yoneyama 2003, 85), even when its involvement was deeply contested, as in Vietnam.

Lisa Yoneyama, writing about U.S. master narratives about WWII U.S.- Japan relations, has argued that

> [D]ominant American war memories are tied to what might be called an imperialist myth of 'liberation and rehabilitation,' in which violence and recovery are enunciated simultaneously. According to this myth, the enemy population's liberation from the barbaric and the backward and its successful rehabilitation into an assimilated ally are both anticipated and explained as an outcome of the U.S. military interventions. (Yoneyama 2003, 58–9)

Yoneyama claims that this framing of the U.S. war in Japan as a "good war" has been perpetuated in subsequent U.S. wars in the second half of the twentieth century and even into the twenty-first. "The imperialist myth of liberation and rehabilitation regards the use of force as interchangeable with freedom, recovery and prosperity" (Yoneyama 2003, 59). This speaks directly to this project's claim that in both cases, Latvian and Vietnamese, the U.S. was able to embody a position of rehabilitator and granter of

freedom, albeit in slightly different ways. For European DPs, freedom was framed as the opportunity to maintain national exile communities in the U.S., where democracy, freedom of speech, and anti-Communism were the order of the day. For Vietnamese refugees, it also meant rehabilitation through staunch anti-Communism, but then a more passive, helpless positionality, what Espiritu termed the "good refugee." The gift of freedom was not to be questioned, and with it, the problematic U.S. involvement and the war itself was transformed into a moral, necessary endeavor. Espiritu described the dominant U.S. narrative reflected in newspapers marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fall of Saigon. Stressing the opposition in a story of Vietnamese refugees, wherein some family members were able to escape and are now "nestled in Southern California suburbia" while others live "hand-to-mouth lives" after being left behind in Vietnam. The article also describes life for those on the U.S. side in the Vietnamese family as "becoming a mosaic of frozen pizzas, skateboards and well-kept lawns" (Gold and Tran 2000, cited in Espiritu 2006a). These can be read as proxies for safety, comfort and ease into middle-class capitalism/whiteness. However, they can also denote a transition from one de-individualized mass, refugees, to a different, non-threatening one, suburban American-ness, void of any identifying characteristics, which, again, connotes a kind of relegation to powerlessness or passivity.

Conclusions

This dissertation aimed to understand some of the ways in which a DP experience after WWII turned into an exile identity, how that differed from the path of other anti-Communist immigrant groups, and finally, how exile and homeland discourses came together in the 1990s during the rebuilding of independent Latvia. The project unpacked

the concepts of refugee, DP, and exile, as well as highlighted the role of historical contingencies, which tend to be less focused on popular narratives of Latvian exiles. However, as evidenced by the recent Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) conference at the University of Pennsylvania, the issues of nation-building, -branding, and identity politics is still very much at the forefront of scholarship of the Baltic region. Andrejs Plakans from Iowa State University remarked in his comments at one of the panels that a dominant narrative of predestination is alive and well in the Baltics as they approach their centenaries of independence in 1918. Plakans predicted that the celebrations will involve retrospective accounts, narratives of unavoidability, and the telling of Baltic pasts from a teleological angle that imagines there could not have been any other outcome to the Soviet occupation than capitulation in the face of Baltic and other nations' unrest. Historical contingencies will be downplayed, he noted.

One of this project's aims has been to recognize some of these very historical contingencies that have shaped a Latvian positionality abroad in the second half of the twentieth century, including a continuous development of the notion of Latvianness and what it meant to be an exile. Most importantly, a conscious effort has been made to not frame these community identity evolutions and activities as either "successes" or "failures." Rather, it has been paramount to illustrate the complexities and ambivalences associated with being in exile, or otherwise displaced, rather than focusing on an artificially static perception of diasporic nationalism.

The main findings of this project are threefold. First, the position of DPs was unique not only in a WWII setting, but a historical global migration context in general. The institutional framework in place after the war, in the shape of UNRRA and IRO,

fostered a particular migrant identity. A solid exile positionality took shape in the DP camps, rooted in a clear anti-Communist stance, but also in a sub- and consciously reiterated whiteness. The Latvian DP newspapers from the time show this problematic and ambivalent self-consciousness as DPs sought to be perceived as strong, choice-making, healthy, yet remained at the mercy of international DP management organizations, thus were continuously relegated to a position of powerlessness and needing relief. The unprecedented treatment of DPs after WWII created both new physical spaces, but, arguably, also new ways of being displaced, profoundly laden with managing ambivalences. As I have argued, DPs were in effect "strangers" as per Bauman, disrupting the clear binary of the post-war era. Not only literal aliens in third countries, but also unclassifiable, disruptive elements, hybrids who "question oppositions as such" (Bauman 1990, 148). While nebulous in-between spaces are not atypical after conflicts, as borders shift, a "third space" (DP camps) made to specifically cater to those displaced from their homelands was a novel idea. In addition, a DP camp in Austria is a further marginal location, compared to the more explicitly politically charged space of post-war Germany. Paired with UNRRA's New Deal-inspired philosophy of relief and rehabilitation through work and self-government, the DP camps of the 1940s and 1950s were self-contained spaces of both uncertainly as well as possibility. They became sites for displaced Eastern Europeans to articulate their positionality, in relation to their homelands, their possibilities of resettlement, and themselves.

Through UNRRA's mission to rehabilitate DPs through work, DPs embraced the ability to return to work after being suspended in post-war limbo for years. Personhood could once more be reclaimed through work, and letters from Latvian DPs resettled in

Canada, Venezuela and other countries accepting immigrants following the war, reinforce the uncertainty of post-war existence shattered by the tangible stability of mostly physical labor in the new lands. Those resettled occasionally wrote letters to their former camp fellows, informing them about their journeys and new jobs. There are descriptions of strict emigration procedures, seasickness, unfamiliar climates, flora and fauna, and initial impressions of the new countries of resettlement. A Latvian who had resettled to Canada in the winter of 1948, wrote in to describe his work on the rail lines east of Vancouver, including clearing them of snow. "The work is very easy," the man, identified as H.T., notes in his letter. "I bring water, coal, refill the petroleum in lamps, and that's it." (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1948a) H.T. does mention getting sad at times, remembering his loved ones in Latvia and Europe, but says he is satisfied with his position over all, since he had lately felt "abandoned by God and people" in the camp in Germany. H.T.'s letter projects a renewed sense of purpose following his resettlement. Even though he works on remote rail lines, has limited contact with the outside world, and notes that he does not know what Canadian cities look like since he only sees small rail stations with maybe ten people, H.T. also describes the harsh beauty of the Canadian wilderness, and there is a sense of both freedom and vulnerability in his words: "The nature here is savage. Rivers, lakes, fur-tree covered rocky mountains… At night wolves, hyenas, jackals and foxes often howl all around. Yes, the animal kingdom is actually terrifying, since there are many bears here and other predators" (*Baltiešu Ziņas Austrijā* 1948a). Still, exposed to the elements in one of the least populated areas in North America, H.T. feels less forsaken than in the DP camps of Germany.

The second takeaway, moving beyond just the micro-level of Latvian exiles, is that the U.S. benefitted from anti-Communist immigrant populations throughout the twentieth century, by incorporating them into its flexible master narrative of simultaneous global superpower "innocent custodian of world peace and humanity." Notably, the ways the U.S. dealt with refugees from Eastern Europe (DPs, turned exiles) and those from the Vietnam War were different, but in each case reinforced a U.S. position anchored in yet another binary, that of Communism vs. capitalism. The comparison of Latvian and Vietnamese experiences, those of "exiles" vs. "refugees" was addressed in this project, finding that Europeans were given space to inhabit "exile" as a generative, non-threatening position, while those escaping from the war in Vietnam were firmly relegated to the position of "refugee," a more racialized, limited position, imbued with less agency, but rather otherness and passivity. This is not to say that exile was somehow easy or less traumatic, but rather that due to Latvia's political status in the eyes of the U.S., exiles had more space to articulate their positionality, claim a politically active role, and maintain symbolic diplomatic representation in the West throughout the Soviet occupation. While all these tools could be seen as merely representative, they speak to a larger issue of the transfer of some social and political capital from a European to a U.S. context, whereas in the Vietnamese case, an official narrative of starting life completely anew was dominant. In the DP case, the U.S. benefitted by framing DP resettlement in part as harboring representatives of captive European nations. In the Vietnamese case and the absence of a U.S. victory in the war there, unlike WWII, the resettlement of refugees was a political maneuver, aimed at recasting the war as a necessary intervention.

However, in both cases, Latvian and Vietnamese, the 1.5 and second generations challenged their predecessors' arguably more rigid and static interpretations of identity. In the Latvian case, new, alternative publications were created, picking apart the notions of Latvianness set forth by the youths' parents. Upon the reinstatement of Latvian independence, some young people returned with the social capital of an education obtained in a democratic country, to work on a variety of issues, including integration. Occasionally, their approaches were seen as departing from the firm exile political line, and their allegiances doubted. At other points, they were lauded as the knowledgeable, modern, Western-thinking professionals Latvia was in need of during the transition.

In the Vietnamese case, disruptions of the status quo meant not only challenging static notions of being fixedly anti-Communist, but also challenging the mark of relative passivity and unconditional gratitude stamped on the refugees. The example of the political activism and now political career of Bao Nguyen served as one illustration for how controversial it may be for young refugee descendants to create change in their own communities. Nguyen's experience shows how intra-community relationships are still subject to powerful external narratives, which reinforce existing structures and opinions. When protesting John McCain's racially charged statements about his Vietnamese wartime captors, Nguyen and his peers noticed a quick pushback from members of his community at the rally, who adhered to the strong anti-Communist rhetoric, historically aligned with supporting the Republican party, rather than challenge the dominant narrative. Both Latvian and Vietnamese youth cases resonate with the experience of "being caught in someone else's text," put forth by Augé (Augé 2004, 39). In this case, youth are not only operating in frameworks shaped by their parents, community or the

more abstract state, they are importantly located in texts that were formed by the very relationship between the communities, their parents' generation, and the state, mutually reinforcing structures and narratives.

Finally, the reinstatement of Latvia's independence in 1991 did not bring closure to questions of identity, belonging or nationalism, instead, it renewed these concerns. Questions of citizenship, dual citizenship, and non-citizenship were acute in the 1990s, and remain sensitive to this day. Perhaps, Soviet-era immigrants to Latvia, rarely addressed in exile publications of the late 1980s, early 1990s, have become a new category of Bauman's "strangers." Caught between a state that no longer exists, the USSR, in the territory of a new yet old reinstated country at the border of a new, increasingly distinct separation between Russia and its sphere of influence and that of NATO, this population is an awkward reminder of a previous time, a "beached diaspora" (Laitin 1998). However, as Latvian sociologist Tālis Tisenkopfs recognized in 1998, the "greyness" of uncertainty of a newly reinstated Latvia is a generative positionality, and the ability to determine belonging, join alliances, curate identities, is a creative one. Lest it be misunderstood, the dominant narrative of Latvia as the sole state of the Latvian nation is firmly there, but while holding one hand firmly on all that makes Latvianness, contested as it might be, the other is increasingly reached out, imagining other belongings, starting with the Baltics, northern Europe, the EU, and NATO.

Questions of nation-building have become increasingly topical in the recent years in Europe, but also elsewhere. Issues of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, NATO and EU expansion (as well as "Brexit"), but also internal weakening and a new, continuous refugee crisis, coupled with rising populist rights movements in many European states,

retain discussions of nationhood, belonging, and sovereignty firmly at the forefront. Once a state-seeking nation à la Charles Tilly (Tilly 1996), Latvia now, among other post-Socialist states, finds itself in a position of relative power. Internationally recognized, a member of EU, NATO and other supra-national organizations, Latvia is able to determine its own domestic and foreign policy. However, its various memberships not only serve as acknowledgements of independence, they also represent communities Latvia has sought to consciously join. Furthermore, in 2013 Latvia expanded its citizenship law to allow more possibilities for dual citizenship. However, Latvian dual citizenship is still restricted to countries that are either part of the EU, NATO, and Australia, Brazil, New Zealand, or under other special circumstances. Children under the age of eighteen are able to hold dual citizenships with any other country. This is a response to increased mobility of Latvian citizens within the EU and beyond. However, as may be already clear, dual citizenship with Russia or other former USSR member states is less easy to obtain. Shared loyalties are permitted, but largely only if they remain within the EU and NATO realm. Still, citizenship does not signify automatic belonging to "Latvianness."

Recently, dual citizenship was scrutinized through the issue of four Latvian female track athletes who qualified in the marathon distance race for the Rio Olympics. Three of them are residents of Latvia, while the fourth, Ariana Hilborn, is a dual citizen of Latvia and the U.S., as a descendant of exile Latvians. Since only three runners can represent a country at any one event, Hilborn, who beat Anita Kažemāka, will likely be one of the Latvian athletes to compete. This has enraged some Latvians who think Kažemāka should participate instead because she actually lives in Latvia. Comments on an article in a Latvian newspaper site about the situation reveal a divide in opinion –

some appeal to the rules of sport and the simple point that Kažemāka was four minutes behind Hilborn, others see the latter as purely trying to fulfill her own athletic ambition. A reader named Madara comments: "The state should be represented by its residents. Patriotism. Carry the name of your motherland into the world. What can the American carry? For her, it's just about showing herself, not about taking pride in Latvia" (LETA 2016). Not only is Hilborn's personal ambition seen as prioritized above her national identification, the two are seen as being at odds. For what it is worth, Hilborn has been to Latvia and stated she liked it there and felt well (Stūriška 2016), but, clearly, choosing to live in Latvia would be the only way she would be able to claim "patriotism" and "taking pride in Latvia," prerequisites in the view of some.

Being in NATO and thus part of its Eastern border is a tense position, but generally perceived all the more valuable in the recent years in Latvia. This is especially salient given Russia's pronounced neo-colonial tendencies, including the annexation of Crimea. Being in the EU and now also part of its monetary system, is another example of Latvia seeing itself comfortably belonging to the project of European unity. As Ieva Zake has noted, there was somewhat of a shift toward a more statist nationalism in Latvia in the post-EU adhesion period. The ethnic nationalism of the 1990s gave way to a less isolationist, xenophobic stance, brought on in part by EU criticisms (Zake 2010b, 208). In the past few years, however, the populist right has gained new popularity in Latvia, due to broader geopolitical issues seen as encroaching on Latvia.

Indeed, occasional soul-searching still occurs within the country, through such discussions on whether to accept refugees from Syria, how many official languages there should be, and how to commemorate victims of Soviet and Nazi regimes in Latvia.

Reactionary pushback occurs when non-traditional, “Western” values are seen as encroaching on Latvianness within Latvia, especially in regard to issues of minority rights, be it same-sex marriages, refugees, or children. In a way, Latvia wants to have its cake and eat it, too. The country craves the economic security of being part of the EU, and accepts praise for the successful austerity policies enacted following the economic crisis. Yet divisive internal politics, including growing support for the right-leaning factions, result in a reluctance in progressing issues to do with same-sex, or women’s rights. Anecdotally, this manifests, for example, in some Latvians, freely moving between their homeland and living and working in the UK, as per the EU’s labor laws, and aligning themselves with the rightwing English National Front, in order to protest the possibility of resettlement of refugees from Syria and other countries. Inadvertently, some pan-European alliances are indeed strengthened this way, albeit on the right-wing spectrum. What is possibly lost from this identification with the English nativist organization is that the Latvians, Poles, and Czechs seeking to keep “the other” out of the UK/EU now, were and still at times remain the targets of the National Front themselves. However, in this case, Europeanness and whiteness are identities that allow some working-class Latvians to side with the English far right. Plus, there is the presumption of legality, as work is easy to obtain from EU nationals. Again, what is missing from the conversation, are the numerous cases of exploitation and illicit work that happen within the EU, including of and by Latvians. Herein lies one of the biggest tensions, reflected in this dissertation, but also applicable to cases beyond it: nationalism is always shaped in conjecture with other narratives of power, structures, and categories. It is flexible and adapts to fill the space available, be it the novel area of the DP camps, exile institutions,

or a post-economic crisis EU, torn between maintaining a union and prioritizing individual national interests.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first suggestion for further research is to build on this project, and relate it to the situation of émigrés from Latvia and other post-Socialist states today. In the case of DPs, resettlement was possible because of demanding labor markets following the war, and economies and industries that needed to be rebuilt. U.S. was emerging as a powerhouse in the post-WWII era, so bringing in workers from abroad, like the country had before (for instance, through the Bracero program) and continues to do, was a sound economic decision. Simultaneously, it served as a political tool, as I have illustrated. Through harboring anti-Communist exiles, the U.S. reinforced its opposition to the USSR and its bloc. However, the political stance of the DPs was thus one of the constitutive elements of their position; the camps and later resettlement was only accessible if one did not have a murky wartime record.

In the case of migrants from the Baltic and Eastern European regions today, it would be interesting to investigate how the narrative of deservingness and morality is constructed. Because most migrants today are economic, and are able to return to their homeland freely, more clearly transnational experiences emerge, and as I have sketched anecdotally, new types of allegiances and identifications form. What this might look like, should the UK vote to leave the EU (at the time of writing, the voting has not yet happened), is one of the contingencies to consider, given that so many EU national from across the union work there.

A second trajectory for further research would be to examine the parallels between discourses on refugees following WWII and the current refugee crisis. Given that the countries once highly affected by the war in terms of casualties, refugees, and political regime change, that is, again, the Baltics and Central and Eastern European states, are now expressing some of the most refugee-resistant sentiments, is an interesting point. Finding itself in a position of relative power, Latvia is part of the decision-makers who get to say who is allowed into the EU and who is not. Once stranded in post-war limbo, Latvians find themselves to be gatekeepers now. This research could delve further into exploring the nationalist discourse in Latvia as transitioning from an ethnic nationalism, to a more statist one, to, arguably, showing signs of resurging ethnic nationalism. How is that being negotiated with Latvia's membership in different supra-national organizations? Also, such a project might utilize the model of the ambivalence of refugee positionality (simultaneously having to be helpless, yet also healthy, educated in order to actually be resettled to a new country) developed in this dissertation. Perhaps attention could be paid further to the distinction between the use of terms "refugee crisis" and "migrant crisis" in various media, how that informs the public's perception of those displaced.

Finally, building on the often used typological comparison of the post-WWII refugee crisis and the current refugee situation in Europe, a project exploring the parallels and differences in the two cases would be particularly important. This dissertation's findings on the positionality of DPs as a profoundly ambivalent one, constantly negotiated within the community as well with regard to external gazes (countries of resettlement, refugee management authorities, the media, and so forth), would serve as a

productive starting point for a study on the current crisis. Some similarities are already evident, including a constant screening and vetting process. In the DP case, individuals had to prove they did not have a past of Nazi collaboration. In the case of refugees from Syria and elsewhere, it is a record clear of connections with ISIS or other terrorist organizations that must be demonstrated. The specter of guilt is always already present, and it is the burden of the refugees to dismantle it. Similarly to WWII era refugees, the presence of strong, young men in refugee camps is seen as suspicious, as, again, ulterior motives are presumed; strong youths may not be refugees, they are seen as either cowards for not remaining in their homeland and fighting, or possible terrorist infiltrators. Either way, their morality is questioned. Refugees in the imaginary of the West must still be poor, uneducated, wretched masses and in such need of assistance that elements of choice over where to resettle, for instance, are seen as indications incompatible to their refugee-dom. A refugee is one who is stripped of personhood, and thus must accept aid unconditionally and humbly in order for their whole being to be rebuilt. The possibility of infiltration of then-Nazis, now-ISIS among the general refugee population legitimizes the discourse of exclusion and warehousing of displaced people, bolstered by the media playing to the sense of insecurity and looming danger among those within Europe and beyond.

Ideally, this project can serve as a case study that, while not making over-generalized claims, is able to contribute to a larger body of work aimed at problematizing refugee management, diasporic nationalist politics, and historic U.S. immigration politics.

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