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THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS: THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN LATVIA IN EARLY 1919

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ABSTRACT
In early 1919, Courland, which had already been semi-abandoned during the First World War, turned into an area of the Baltic region where at least four political agendas, and, in many cases, the military forces that supported them, clashed. The Bolsheviks exported their world revolution and acted through the Army of Soviet Latvia. The German armed forces had withdrawn from parts of Estonia and Latvia, and were still under the command of Berlin. Volunteer units formed with the help of the German army, many of which included local Baltic Germans. The Latvian Provisional Government and the units loyal to it was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Oskars Kalpaks. All these forces needed motivated soldiers and loyal civilians who might become engaged in military activities. The article discusses the political, economic and social backgrounds that contributed to the motivation of soldiers and the public support for the warring parties, with a particular focus on how important the sense of belonging and identity was in these circumstances.
KEYWORDS: Latvian War of Independence, Red Army, German Freikorps units, Baltic Germans, Latvian armed forces, identity, motivation.

ANOTACIJA
1919 m. pradžioje Kuršas, dar per Pirmąjį pasaulinį karą netekęs didelio skaičiaus civilių gyventojų, tapo ta Baltijos regiono vieta, kur susidūrė mažiausiai keturi politiniai projektai ir (daugeliu atvejų) juos remiančios karinės jėgos. Bolševikai, eksportavę savo pasaulinę revoliuciją ir veikę per Tarybų Latvijos kariuomenę. Iš dalies Estijos ir Latvijos atitrauktos Vokietijos ginkluotosios pajėgos, kurioms tebevadovauta iš Berlyno. Savanorių daliniai, kurti padedant Vokietijos kariuomenei, juose dalyvavo daug vietinių Baltijos vokiečių. Galiausiai Laikinoji Latvijos vyriausybė ir jai lojalūs daliniai, vadovaujami plk. ltn. Oskaro Kalpako. Visoms šioms jėgoms reikėjo motyvuotų kareivių ir lojalių civilių, kurie galėtų įsitraukti į karinius veiksmus. Straipsnyje aptariamos politinės, ekonominės ir socialinės aplinkybės, lėmusios karių motyvaciją ir visuomenės paramą šioms kariaujančioms pusėms, ypatingą dėmesį skiriant tam, kiek svarbus šiomis aplinkybėmis buvo priklausomybės ir tapatumo jausmas.
PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Latvijos nepriklausomybės karas, Raudonoji armija, Vokiečių savanorių daliniai, Baltijos vokiečiai, Latvijos ginkluotosios pajėgos, tapatumas, motyvacija.

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is to look at factors contributing to identity and motivation in the western part of Latvia, the Courland region, in the spring of 1919 during the Latvian War of Independence, as they can also effectively help to explain military-political events in the region. This was a crucial moment in the formation of the Latvian state, for in January 1919 the existence of the newly established Latvian state was critically threatened. One of the reasons for this was the public's distrust of the Provisional Government. In this military-political situation, the inhabitants of Courland reinforced the Latvian armed forces. However, for this to happen, the Provisional Government and the members of the armed forces had to be sufficiently convincing and capable of motivating and creating a sense of belonging to independent Latvia. Motivation and identity are some of the most difficult characteristics to measure, even in everyday life, let alone in a postwar situation, when the bearers of the current and potential power are relatively weak and unable to win public trust convincingly and rapidly. However, this is precisely a factor that weighs in favour of military or political force.

In Latvian historiography, this issue has so far been viewed almost exclusively through a political prism, based on the outcome of the Latvian War of Independence, and has largely not been explored in depth. Studies indicating a true cross-section of society, showing an individual's belonging to one of the groups, have not actually been carried out so far, and, presumably, this could significantly overturn the existing views that were formed and consolidated in the 1920s and 1930s. The Latvian state was built as a nation-state, with Latvians at the forefront, while at the same time referring to the past and the cultivated myth of the '700 years of slavery', meaning the political and economic dominance of the Germans in the Baltic since their arrival in the region in the 13th century. At the same time, this simplistic view does not allow a full understanding of events in the region as a whole, especially in the context of 1919. As a result, for example, Baltic Germans are virtually excluded from the Latvian social memory.

To analyse this period successfully, it is necessary to try to apply other types of methods, such as the social morphogenesis approach, which allows us to look at both social groups and individuals.[1] Warfare, soldiers' motivation, the sense of belonging and identity on the battlefield, are issues that are relevant not only in the past but also today. Consequently, several studies have been carried out which attempt to examine the processes that determine the motivation behind a soldier's decision-making and actions.[2] In the Latvian context, no such critical analysis has been carried out so far;

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1 ARCHER, Margaret Scotford. *Realist social theory: the morphogenetic approach.* Cambridge, 1995, pp. 183–265.

2 ENGEN, Robert C. *Strangers in arms. Combat motivation in the Canadian Army, 1943–1945.* Montreal, 2016, p. 309; SMITH, Leonard V. *Between Mutiny and Obedience: The Case of the French Fifth Infantry Division*

therefore, in this article I will try to conceptualise the case of Latvia, in an attempt to understand the situation in which the participants in these events found themselves, what the background was, and what were the future prospects of the events in which they were forced to take the decision to join the armed forces.

With the end of the First World War, the Baltic region became a place where new nations were forming on the map of Europe. Within a few months, it saw several new powers trying to establish themselves. This was particularly visible in the Courland region at the end of 1918 and in the first months of 1919, when new political and military groups formed in the war-ravaged territory, each of which considered the territory to be its own. The aim of this article is to summarise the main political and military intentions, and to describe the determining motivations of the actors that supported or hindered the success of each side. In the article, the author will try to look at the period from November 1918 to May-June 1919, when the most significant societal tilt in favour of one of the parties took place.

The article will not identify the other parties involved in the conflict: for example the motivation of the forces of the Russian White Army, and will not touch on other smaller ethnic minorities, such as local Russians from Latvia and Jews. The reason for this is that the influence of these groups on the overall processes is a separate issue to be studied: they had an important influence, but it was not decisive, if we are looking at identity and motivation. In the context of the Latvian War of Independence, the members of these groups are not part of the focus, and it is possible that their motivations and identities were similar to those of the groups discussed in the article. It should be noted that a different issue is the question of the so-called Livenians, a volunteer unit formed by the first rittmaster Anatol Lieven. Since its core consisted of former officers of the defeated Pskov Corps of the Russian Northern Army and a volunteer unit of the Russian monarchists in Liepāja, neither the Latvian Provisional Government nor the Germans trusted them. Despite this, the unit carried out its tasks very successfully and in an exemplary way, and did not interfere in political matters. Whether its members could all be considered monarchists (probably not, however) the spirit of the unit, reminiscent of the traditions of the Tsar's army, definitely created an atmosphere that attracted soldiers from the former Russian army who had experienced the anarchy of the Russian Civil War, despite their nationality.[3]

Belonging to a specific nation in a period of war often became one of the strongest contributors to ethnic crystallisation in the 20th century. This is probably due to the

During World War I. Princeton, 1994, p. 274; WALZER, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars. A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations.* New York, 1977, p. 281; WATSON, Alexander. *Enduring the Great War. Combat, Morale and Collapse in the German and British Armies, 1914–1918.* Cambridge, 2009, p. 288.

[3] ČAPENKO, Aleksandrs. Firsta Anatola Līvena Liepājas brīvprātīgo strēlnieku vienības izveidošanās un cīņas Latvijas teritorijā 1919. gadā. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, 2003, IV, 95.–110. lpp.

Total War nature of modern warfare, where it is not just the armies fighting on the front, but the whole of society. In these circumstances, there is often a search for those who do not belong to the community, or, conversely, for conditions that unite a social group, and this process is institutionalised through the active participation of government or community leaders. An ethnic or religious affiliation is one of the most visible factors. In the modern period, it has resulted in a continuous redefinition of populations with respect to each other. Ethnic nationalism has been fanned as a result of the invasion, overthrow and rise of states, the shifting of states into new geopolitical spaces, the turning of dominant groups into national minorities and vice versa, and large-scale transfers of population. Ethnies became like social and political actors.[4]

The collapse of the Russian and German empires at the end of the First World War in 1917 and 1918 created a geopolitical instability which could be called a power vacuum. Although the war in the West was over by the end of 1918, it continued in the Baltic region with a different intensity and different actors. In the case of Latvia, a very clear and convincing view of ethnic and social groups represented by the Latvian population, which determined their belonging to one of the belligerent sides, was formed and consolidated up to the present day.

However, what the views of the inhabitants and soldiers in the area were in 1919, how they were divided, and what motivated them to take sides, are questions that, although seemingly easy, are extremely difficult to answer because of the volatility of the situation at the time. More important than the battles on the ground were the battles for the 'hearts and minds'[5] of the people, which were decisive in the further consolidation of the statehood of the Republic of Latvia. The motivation to take sides in an already war-torn area is the most important element that determined events in the Baltics. In addition, along with motivation, the ability of local leaders and commanders to rally the community around them and drive ideas forward is crucial.

The identity and motivation of a soldier

The motivation and identity of societies, and soldiers in particular, in times of change, are among the main issues that preoccupy a wide range of researchers, but have become particularly topical in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. These terms can also be described in very simple words that I think everyone has asked themselves at

[4] HUTCHINSON, John. *Nations as Zones of Conflict.* London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 2005, p. 137.

[5] 'Winning hearts and minds' is an expression that describes a concept in which victory in a conflict is achieved by favouring opponents and neutral players. The term was first used by the French general and colonial leader Hubert Lyautey in 1895 to describe the Tonkin campaign in North Vietnam against the Black-Flag army less than ten years earlier.

some point: 'What do I represent, who am I, and why do I do something?' Especially if this question is further directed towards the soldier, who can rephrase it: 'Why am I putting my life and health in danger, and why am I prepared to kill?' Moreover, this may change in different circumstances: patriotic responses at the beginning of the war will differ from those at the front line. Significantly, even when comparing conflicts from different periods and regions, such similarities can be discerned, and therefore also apply to the period under consideration here. Of course, there is also the aspect that only survivors of war can recount their experiences, and only a few of them are often prepared to do so. Most are silent, unheard, and part of a statistic that cannot always be interpreted properly.

This topic is of particular interest when looking at every war, but especially at the end of the First World War and the related formation of the new European states. In fact, the armies of all the great countries and empires were made up of soldiers from different backgrounds and political persuasions, with their own, often unique, perceptions and feelings of belonging. This was most often the case in Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany, and even Great Britain. The motivations of those serving in these armies, the choices and feelings of soldiers both on and off the battlefield, and survival strategies, not only reveal society, but are a major determinant of military success or failure. The historian John Keegan calls the motivation of soldiers one of the main mysteries of the First World War.[6] A very good summary and example of how motivation is assessed is discussed by the historian Ryan Edwards Zroka in his dissertation.[7] The historian Alexander Watson, in his study of British and German battle morale and its collapse in 1914–1918,[8] cites the war veteran, journalist and historian, US Brigadier General Samuel Lyman Atwood Marshall, who describes morale as the 'thinking of an army. It is the whole complex body of an army's thought: The way it feels about the soil and about the people from which it springs. The way it feels about their cause and their politics as compared with other causes and other politics. The way that it feels about its friends and allies, as well as its enemies. About its commanders and goldbricks. About food and shelter. Duty and leisure. Payday and sex. Militarism and civilianism. Freedom and slavery. Work and want. Weapons and comradeship. Bunk fatigue and drill. Discipline and disorder. Life and death. God and devil.' But here is a rhetorical question: can this be applied to a relatively civilian society, are these values important to it, and can they contribute to the choice of a potential soldier? The Canadian-Latvian historian Modris Eksteins, for instance, argued that combat motivation was tied to the spread of bourgeois ethics, and especially its central concept of duty. Others pointed to the

6 KEEGAN, John. *The First World War.* New York, 1999, pp. 426–427.

7 ZROKA, Ryan Edward. "*If Only This War Would End:" German Soldiers in the Last Year of the First World War.* Dissertation. San Diego, 2013, pp. 1–19.

8 WATSON, A. Op. cit., p. 140.

way in which the 'warrior' identity became a part of bourgeois culture, or of bourgeois concepts of masculinity.[9] At the same time, the morale of French soldiers, on the other hand, is linked to the state's democratic political culture, and to the sense of mutual obligation between rulers and ruled.[10] These two examples, in turn, show that a soldier's civilian values are also reflected in his military prism.

The conceptual experience of army personnel, which changed during the war from the qualitative, prewar, to the quantitative, wartime, is also important. The performance and morale of the rank-and-file was hardly helped by the fact that most of the soldiers who entered the war in 1914 were killed, maimed or captured in its first two years. By 1916, the youths of 1914 had largely been replaced by raw conscripts and reserve formations that had been hastily called up to satisfy the war machine's insatiable appetite. The poorly resourced Austro-Hungarian recruits were not motivated by the fact that the Russians were in an even worse situation.[11] In the end, these were personnel who were in the hands of the commanders of the postwar conflicts or in the circle of potential mobilisers.

Accordingly, an assessment of the development of the German Freikorps as early as 1918 and 1919, as well as the related idea of the special relationship of brothers-in-arms both during and after the war, reveals another aspect, tribalism. This is particularly evident in the brutality against the enemy and neutrals in battle and after battle, which is not bound by legal frameworks. As seen in the events of 1919, sooner or later such traits begin to be present in all the belligerents.[12] Belonging to a particular unit and type of force, identifying with it, being ready to follow the leader and the flag of that unit, or the patriotism of the unit, which goes beyond mere service, bordering on fanaticism, is undoubtedly thousands of years old and continues to this day.

However, these are examples that more or less tell the story of the motivation of soldiers in the armies of large countries, and it is clear that being in a situation of a disintegrating army forces one to look for other alternatives. The historian Simone A. Bellezza even points to the example of Italy, where some Italians living in Austro-Hungarian territory were forced to fight against the Russian Empire and were taken captive, looking with some puzzlement at the Russians' great attention to identifying

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9 Cf. ZROKA, R. E. Op. cit., p. 6; EKSTEINS, Modris. *The Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age.* London, 2000.

10 ZROKA, R. E. Op. cit., p. 109.

11 ROSHWALD, Aviel. *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires. Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914–1923.* London, New York, 2005, p. 74.

12 EBERLE, Christopher J. *Justice and the Just War Tradition. Human Worth, Moral Formation and Armed Conflict.* New York, London, 2016, p. 37.

the ethnic origin of prisoners of war.[13] What is more, the First World War forced Italians in general to choose a political and national identity.[14]

Thus, in the postwar world, the soldier's self-identity and morale were based on multiple, often competing conditions: patriotism and nationalism, collective identity, social class, nation, culture and national identity, and economic factors.

In the context of the Latvian War of Independence, it is also worth looking at another aspect: virtually all belligerents were confronted with a phenomenon that today could be called the so-called Legionnaire policy, when foreigners were called into the ranks of national armies both as mercenaries and with the promise of material benefits after the war, thus trying to the best of their ability to replenish the ranks of the belligerents.[15]

This was certainly the situation in the Baltic States, especially in the early stages of their formation and at the beginning of the War of Independence. It should be pointed out here, of course, that the situations of the three Baltic States, although similar, are fundamentally different. For example, the formation of relations between Lithuania and Germany in 1918 created completely different conditions for the formation and consolidation of the state than was the case in Latvia and Estonia.

'Men without a Fatherland' and German plans for expansion

This uncertainty at the beginning of 1919 is described well by a German feature film made in 1937, originally in German, *Menschen ohne Vatherland*, or *Men without a Fatherland* in English. The very name suggests the ideological burden of postwar Germany: regiments of soldiers who have suddenly lost everything they had fought for. It is a German propaganda feature film that talks about the battles of the German Freikorps in the Baltic in the first half of 1919. It is a 1937 film made by the German film studio UFA, based on a novel by the writer Gertrude von Brockdorff. In terms of mood, the film is perhaps even comparable to the 1942 American romantic drama Casablanca. Discarding the German propaganda narrative about anti-German intrigues and the heroic story about the Germans as the only force capable of standing up against the Bolsheviks, the film portrays several essential positions that describe the German soldier's understanding of the developments in the Baltic region, or at least it is displayed

[13] BELLEZZA, Simone A. Choosing Their Own Nation: National and Political Identities of the Italian POWs in Russia, 1914–21. In *World War I in Central and Eastern Europe: Politics, Conflict and Military Experience*. Ed. by Judith DEVLIN, Maria FALINA, John Paul NEWMAN. London, 2020, p. 123.

[14] Ibid., p. 119.

[15] GRASMEDER, Elizabeth M. F. *Brothers in Arms: Foreign Legions, National Armies, and Re-Examining Citizenship and Military Service.* Dissertation. Washington, 2020, p. 565.

in this episode. At the beginning of the movie, there is a scene where German volunteers, the Iron Division, march into the town of Liepāja, and a dialogue takes place between the soldiers and Baron Maltzach, a first-class lieutenant, the main character in the movie. He comes out of the building where the Latvian Provisional Government is situated, and one of the soldiers in the column shouts, starting a dialogue:

'Good morning, Maltzach!'
'Where are you going?'
'To the front, Baron. Where else should we go?'
The conversation continues between soldiers in the column:
'We know that guy! He's with the Latvian government.'
'Oh, so he is Russian.'
'No, a German.'
'He really doesn't know where he belongs.'[16]

Of course, it is debatable whether the movie includes an episode which, even if partly true, could form the basis for the claim that part of society was disoriented by the events of 1919. However, without claiming to be a source, this episode shows and actually defines the problem of a large part of the population in the Courland region and those who belong there. As national self-confidence emerges, empires and systems of governance crumble, new states emerge, ideologies and sections of society compete aggressively with each other while experiencing a dramatic decline in the quality of life, questions about individual identification and taking sides are logical.

Courland was a province of the Russian Empire from 1795 to 1915. It was occupied by the German army in 1915, establishing a militarised system of administration called the Supreme Commander of All German Forces in the East, or Ober Ost. Until the First World War, about 79% of the population was Latvian, 8.4% Baltic Germans, 8% Jews, and a few percent were Russians, Lithuanians and Poles. During the First World War, the civilian evacuation and refugee movement, as well as the devastation of the war, reduced the population of Courland by two thirds, from just under 760,000 to around 245,000, besides two counties.[17] During 1917 and 1918, as the refugees gradually returned, the population increased again to 510,000.[18] The most important aspect is, of course, the socio-political views and economic activity of the people living in the area, as well as imperial views on the territory's belonging.

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[16] *Menschen ohne Vaterland,* directed by Herbert Maisch (UFA, 1937), 0:03:50–0:04:19. Available on URL <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzgMNVQ3ChU> [accessed 04.10.2024].

[17] ZARIŅŠ, Klāvs. Dzīve okupacijā. Vācijas militārā pārvalde Latvijā 1915.–1918. gadā. In *Karš un sabiedrība Latvijā 1914–1920*. Atb. red. Ēriks JĒKABSONS. Rīga, 2021, 140. lpp.; ZARIŅŠ, Klāvs. Vācijas okupācijas politika Latvijas teritorijā 1915.–1918. gadā: izpētes iespējas un liecības Latvijas Kara muzeja krājumā. *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, 2022, XIX, 98. lpp.

[18] JĒKABSONS, Ēriks. Latvijas iedzīvotāju skaita un sastava izmaiņas militāro un politisko procesu iespaidā. In *Karš un sabiedrība Latvijā 1914–1920*. Atb. red. Ēriks JĒKABSONS. Rīga, 2021, 36. lpp.

In the 19th century, Germany gradually advanced the idea of Courland belonging to the German sphere of interest, despite being part of the Russian Empire and the active Russification policy in it. The reason was to take advantage of the important historical role of the Baltic Germans in the administrative and economic sphere of Courland. At the same time, a national awakening and self-determination were also taking place in the numerically larger Latvian society, where the issue of land ownership gradually became important, as Latvians owned numerically less land than the Baltic German noble families. However, all attempts at political nation-building ended with the final stabilisation of the political spectrum in 1917. The historian Jānis Šiliņš points out that 1917 was a time of great searching, in which Latvia's future directions were decided: with the Germans, with the Bolshevik-internationalists or with the civic-nationalist forces.[19]

This set of circumstances is important in explaining the events of 1918 and 1919 in this region, as it defines the motivations of both the inhabitants of Courland and the members of other countries' armed formations who came to Courland to fight, both during the First World War and in the subsequent Latvian War of Independence. Political, military, national, ethnic, economic and social interests thus collided at very different and disparate levels. And in the middle of it all was a war-weary, tormented and poverty-ridden society. The battle for the hearts and minds of participants in these events suddenly became one of the main battlegrounds.

The Bolsheviks and the struggle against the counter-revolution

Although internally multi-faceted, externally the motivations and aspirations of the Bolsheviks are all but self-explanatory, as are the reasons that allowed them to attract relatively greater public support in late 1918 and early 1919. The Bolsheviks' rise to power and their popularity in the Latvian social democratic community in general, especially in the first months of their rule, was based on several historical conditions. First, the ideas of socialism were generally quite popular among Latvian workers, and had an impact on farmers. The time after the Bolsheviks came to power, without knowing all the circumstances, seemed to many in Latvia to be an intimate time with positive prospects for the future. Ansis Galdnieks, a carpenter working in the parishes of Grobiņa, Dunalka and Tāši, writes in his diary on 31 October 1917 that although the Germans had taken Riga and were advancing further into Vidzeme, and many refugees were beginning to return to Courland, he would still like to be in the new

[19] ŠILIŅŠ, Jānis. Lielais meklējumu gads: Vidzeme 1917. gada politiskajos procesos. *Jauno vēsturnieku zinātniskie lasījumi*, 3/2017. Valmiera, 2018, 17. lpp.

post-revolutionary Russia and see its fruits.[20] This was particularly evident during the 1905 Revolution, when the radicalisation of relations between society and the authorities led to bloody clashes between rebels and the local administration, supported by the army, and followed by harsh punitive expeditions. The events of the Revolution had a significance at the outbreak of the First World War: Latvians saw it as an opportunity, above all, to take revenge on everything German. Its high point was the formation of national troops within the Russian army, Latvian rifleman battalions and later regiments, and the fighting on the Riga front.

When Germany occupied Estonia and Livland in February 1918, the riflemen of these regiments were forced to leave Latvia and retreat eastwards with the Russian army. It means that they had to leave their homeland for a long-hated enemy to enter a foreign land in times of chaos. Moreover, it was reinforced by the flowering of national feeling and the hope of establishing a Latvian state at some point soon. The riflemen became an easy target to influence for the Bolshevik movement, which at that time was trying with all its might to hold on to the power it had seized in Russia. These conditions and the Riflemen's calculation to support the Bolsheviks are described well by Colonel Jukums Vācietis, the commander of the Soviet division of the Red Latvian Riflemen.[21] Although the origins of the personnel of the Rifleman Regiments were very wide, and it is impossible to categorise them all as supporters of socialism, the active politicisation of the troops during 1917 and the successful Bolshevik agitation formed a core of riflemen who were inclined to support the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks proclaimed the transfer of all power to councils of workers, soldiers and landless peasants, with the aim of implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat through them. This also allowed for the creation of an independent Soviet Latvia, which, overall, could satisfy the ordinary Latvian population, as it would guarantee the autonomy of Latvia and ensure that ordinary strata of society were brought into the administration of the state.

In fact, Soviet power in Latvia was the dictatorship of the Latvian Social Democracy (LSD, from March 1919 the Latvian Communist Party, the LKP), since the Bolsheviks recognised only those councils which they had set up or which had submitted to their dictates. As in other Soviet regimes, also in Latvia, legislative and executive structures merged with Party structures.[22] And this is important, because in the Soviet Latvian army it was the communists who formed the backbone. The core of the Bolshevik forces was clearly made up of committed communists, with military knowledge, ideological rigidity, underground and combat experience.[23] Some civilians who joined the ideology were inspired by romanticised motives, to fight for the

[20] ZARIŅŠ, K. Vācijas okupācijas politika..., 103. lpp.
[21] VĀCIETIS, Jukums. *Latviešu strēlnieku vēsturiskā nozīme.* Rīga, 1989, 185. lpp.
[22] ŠILIŅŠ, Jānis. *Padomju Latvija 1918–1919.* Rīga, 2013, 100. lpp.
[23] SAMSONS, Vilis. *Deviņpadsmitais – sarkano partizāņu gads.* Rīga, 1970, 60. lpp.

fate of the common and poor people, the working and the landless classes. Although this is said of Soviet partisan units, it applies to the full range of the armed forces. The Latvian communists also had international ambitions: to create a large army not only to drive the Germans out of the Baltic, but to reach Germany and support the German communists.[24] So in the first stages, for political reasons, German soldiers, workers and peasants were not the enemy, but the goal, by impressing which it was possible to 'light the fire' of revolution throughout Europe.

As there were not enough resources to mobilise a large army, until mid-February 1919 the only way to replenish the army was through volunteers. It is estimated that the number could have been around 7,000, but most of them made this choice for social rather than ideological reasons. Between February and March, several mobilisations were carried out, totalling between 15,000 and 22,000 soldiers.[25] The total number of people serving in the army of Soviet Latvia by May 1919 was officially around 105,000, but in reality it was probably smaller.[26] However, a characteristic element of these forces can be found in the memoirs of the French Lieutenant-Colonel Emmanuel du Parquet, in which he described his visit to Riga Central Prison on 8 June 1919. He points out that, for example, prisoners whom he visited and interviewed on 8 June stated that they had been forced to serve in the Red Army.[27]

Without knowing the true identity of the Bolshevik administration, and moreover, given the overall positive attitude of Latvian society towards socialism, reinforced by successful Bolshevik agitation which exploited both historical Latvian-German conflicts and the desire for self-government and independence, the arrival of the Bolsheviks was perceived, if not positively, then neutrally by a large part of society. The Bolshevik mobilisations in the conquered territories also had a positive impact because they partly solved another major problem: the previous years had yielded poor harvests, and there was no way to procure food supplies, so the army was a place where it was possible to get the basic food needed to survive.

This frustration from unemployment and hunger is also noted as very important in the reports of a British naval fleet, which observed the situation in the Baltics in late 1918 and early 1919. It repeatedly pointed out that unemployed workers in the port of Liepāja were turning towards Bolshevism because of hunger. The same applied to other inhabitants of the city, and even to Russian prisoners of war who were brought

[24] ŠILIŅŠ, J. *Padomju Latvija...*, 151. lpp.
[25] Ibid., 54.–156. lpp.
[26] Ibid., 158. lpp.
[27] JĒKABSONS, Ēriks. Francijas misija Latvijā 1919. gadā: ieskats darbībā. In *Franču pulkvežleitnanta Emanuela Diparkē atmiņas. Misija Latvijā, 1919–1920*. Zin. red. Ēriks JĒKABSONS, Kaspars ZELLIS. Rīga, 2019, 23. lpp.

to Liepāja to form the Russian White Army.[28] The problem of hunger and its relation to support for the Bolsheviks in late 1918 and early 1919 is also noted by many other witnesses of events.[29] It is important to specify exactly that cities and towns where the majority of the population were workers and they could not feed themselves, since the unemployment caused by the war was a heavy burden on the government, exposed these people to effective Bolshevik propaganda.[30]

Sometimes it is more important not even to look at support for the Bolsheviks, but to identify the reasons why other alternatives seemed more unacceptable to society. A small example is the student community, which is considered to be an educated and active part of society. Even there, in November 1918, scepticism towards the Latvian Provisional Government was still evident. This attitude is well described by the general meeting of Latvian students on 23 November 1918, which was attended by 150 to 200 students from different universities. During the meeting, it became clear that a large part of the students was rather sceptical about the Latvian Provisional Government and the independence of Latvia. Despite this, on the following day, at another meeting of the Baltic Technical University, an open conflict between German and non-German students took place, at the same time expressing support for the Provisional Government of Latvia, and then for the Germans.[31]

It can therefore be assumed that a relatively small part of society showed undivided support for the Soviets, while the majority simply joined the then most powerful regional player and were driven by a simple survival strategy. When the Soviet army withdrew from Riga on 22 May 1919, a significant number of soldiers deserted from the army and went over to the side of the Latvian Provisional Government. Even those who had been imprisoned under Latvian rule because of their previous activities served in the Latvian army after their release, although later, under the Soviet occupation after Second World War, they indicated this as a negative experience.[32]

One of the determinants of public perception, I think, was whether they had been exposed to real Bolshevik power. The general situation and mood in Courland is also characterised by the remark by Lieutenant Antons Gramatins about the reception of Latvian volunteers at the Aizpute station on 25 January 1919: local women allegedly

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[28] *Latvijas Neatkarības karš 1918.–1919. gadā: Lielbritānijas kara flotes ziņojumi = Latvian War of Independence 1918–1919: Reports of British Royal Navy*. Sast. Ēriks JĒKABSONS, Klāvs ZARIŅŠ. Rīga, 2019, 111., 113., 127. lpp.

[29] GRĀMATIŅŠ, Antons. Latvijas rītausmā. In *Latvijas rītausmā: trīs atmiņu stāsti par Latvijas Neatkarības karu 1918.–1920. gadā*. Red. Juris CIGANOVS. Rīga, 2022, 138.–139. lpp.

[30] Ibid., 140.–141. lpp.

[31] ŠČERBINSKIS, Valters. Starp ierakumiem un auditoriju. Latviešu studenti ilgstoša militāra un politiska konflikta apstākļos 1914.–1918. gadā. In *Karš un sabiedrība Latvijā 1914–1920*. Atb. red. Ēriks JĒKABSONS. Rīga, 2021, 283.–284. lpp.

[32] For instance, after spending a few months in prison in Ventspils, K. Kaģis, a partisan in the Piltene Red partisan group, was drafted into the Latvian army and did not evade it.

swore at them and called them traitors and servants of the barons.[33] The hatred of part of society against the Germans and those who collaborated with them, as well as the hope of the fulfilment of Bolshevik promises, prevailed at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919, and was the most dangerous factor in the activities of the Latvian Provisional Government.

Colonialism, the German Freikorps, anti-Bolshevism and soldierly brotherhood

An important point should be mentioned, so it may seem that Germany and the Baltic Germans share common interests, but in fact it should be remembered that these ties were more cultural, but not political until the end of the First World War. The Baltic Germans were still subjects of the former Russian Empire with their own ambitions. Mostly in commonwealth with Germany, but still independent. Of course, looking at the possible alternatives, close political and economic ties with Germany were self-evident. It also set the stage for later developments, as Germany sought to seize and hold on to influence in Courland.

Even before the First World War, Germany under Chancellor Otto von Bismarck had already formulated the idea of internal colonisation: the methodical expulsion of other ethnic groups from Germany, initially targeting Poles living on German territory, by subsidising German farmers to buy up land available to foreigners. However, by the outbreak of the war, this policy was not very successful. The situation changed with the outbreak of active hostilities in 1914, when these colonisation plans became considerably more radical, and applied to the territories conquered by Germany. With the advance of the German armed forces towards Russia and the occupation of Courland in the summer of 1915, these colonisation plans were extended to Courland, especially because the German invasion had caused a significant part of Courland's population to leave their homes and flee to Russia. Throughout 1915 and 1916, the Baltic German Silvio Broedrich (Silvio Alois Max Broedrich a.d.H. Kurmahlen, 1870–1952) was publishing articles in the journal *Archiv für innere Kolonisation* pushing greater German colonisation of the Baltic, and later to extend it not only on Courland but also Lithuania.[34] The gradual directing of these colonial ideas in the overall direction of German policy was reflected in the realisation of Ober Ost, which in fact served as a testing ground for German colonial policy and locals viewed as

[33] GRĀMATIŅŠ, A. Op. cit., 164. lpp.

[34] NELSON, Robert L. The Baltics as Colonial Playground: Germany in the East, 1914–1918. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 2011, Vol. 41, No. 1, p. 13.

colonial subjects by the German military serving there.[35] An indication that Germany was attempting to use the practices of its colonies in occupied Courland was the appointment of a Prussian, General Rochus Smith, who had participated in the suppression of the resistance in German East Africa and had extensive colonial experience, as commander-in-chief of the gendarmerie in Ober Ost.[36] In the context of the establishment of the Duchy of the Baltic in 1918, the attitude towards the territory can also be seen in the process of selecting a possible duke, with the former governor of the German protectorate of Togo, Duke Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg, seen as 'a man with good colonial experience', being mentioned as a candidate.[37]

The carefully constructed attitude towards the inhabitants of conquered and colonised lands, including Latvians, also plays a role. The attitude towards the Russian Empire and the nations living in it is exemplified in 1915 when the German anthropologist Georg Buschan published an address to his peers in *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*. He wrote that there were so many different tribal overgrowths in the German prisoner-of-war camps in the East that he would never be able to collect for research.[38] Dr Hans Naujoks later describes the Latvians as an unpleasant society, mostly belonging to the poor class, hence their hatred of the educated, wealthy Germans. This attitude was also cultivated by the Ober Ost administration, and can be seen in the impressions of many German soldiers on Latvian territory.[39] Latvians were an 'object', the attitude was chauvinistic with racist overtones.[40] The formulation and implementation of such a policy clearly had an impact on the rank and file of the armed forces, as it was they who had to implement it, for example by ensuring control of the occupied territories. Of course, the logical question is whether and how such an ideology influenced ordinary soldiers. The answer to this question is not clear-cut. It should also be noted that such a review would lack the scope of the sources. Most memoirs are written by officers, many of them members of the nobility, who were not exactly ordinary soldiers. So we can judge and compare with other examples from later years, where the impact of ideology on the treatment of the inhabitants of subjugated lands can be quite harsh. It should be remembered that in the armed forces, alongside training, there is also educational work, which is in fact the direct way in which ideology is transmitted to the soldier. What can be identified is the sudden brutality of the treatment of the inhabitants of the settlements

35 NELSON, Robert L. The Baltics as Colonial Playground..., p. 17.
36 ZARIŅŠ, K. Dzīve okupacijā..., 157. lpp.
37 CERŪZIS, Raimonds. *Vācu faktors Latvijā (1918–1939). Politiskie un starpnacionālie aspekti.* Rīga, 2004, 61. lpp.
38 GÓRNY, Maciej. Racial Anthropology on the Eastern Front, 1912 to the mid-1920s. In *National Races. Transnational Power Struggles in the Sciences and Politics of Human Diversity, 1840–1945.* Ed. by Richard McMAHON. Lincoln, 2019, pp. 271–293.
39 ZARIŅŠ, K. Dzīve okupacijā..., 283.–284. lpp.
40 CERŪZIS, R. Op. cit., 60. lpp.

occupied by German forces, which, for example, at the time of the capture of Riga on 22 May 1919 and in the days that followed, came to be known as the White Terror in Latvia.[41] Among the many Bolsheviks, innocent civilians were also shot.

It was often not so important for a German Freikorps soldier to know that he was fighting in Latvia or Russia, the most important thing was that he was not fighting in Germany, but in the East, against the Bolsheviks, for Germany. Such an assessment, for example, can be found in Medem's memoirs. The most important thing was 'us' and 'them'.

Although Germany in the East is considered the de facto winner of the war, having outlasted Russia, its main opponent, the defeat in the West and the subsequent collapse of the German Empire and revolution in Germany contributed to the demoralisation and collapse of the armed forces in the conquered territories. During the war, millions of Germans were subjected to systematic warfare, which seriously changed the mindset of the soldiers. Unable to integrate into civilian life, they looked for opportunities to continue fighting, and it was the struggle against Bolshevism that gave them these opportunities. The end of the war created many new challenges and problems: how to bring back soldiers from the occupied territories, how to employ them, how to reorient the national economy from war to a peacetime economy, and how to feed society.[42] These processes were parallel to, and had a significant impact on, military-political processes in the Baltic.

The German 10th and 8th armies stationed in Lithuania and Latvia could not provide efficient resistance to the Reds, due to the removal of the best German divisions to the Western front in mid-1918. For example, the German 8th Army was unable to fight and had to be reformed. Another, even more dangerous, weakness was the rapidly declining morale among German troops. Germany's defeat in the First World War and the gradual demobilisation of its soldiers desperate to find a way home, combined with the spread of Bolshevik propaganda, served as powerful disintegrating factors within the army. Their main demands were the cessation of all military hostilities, the removal of all officers, and the immediate evacuation of all German troops to their homeland.[43]

Colonel Pavel Bermont-Avalov describes the situation in the German-occupied territory in November 1918 in his memoirs from his point of view as a monarchist and an anti-Bolshevik. Generally in a very negative light, he sees the Germans experiencing the same revolutionary chaos and anarchy that Russia experienced

[41] LIULEVICIUS, Vejas Gabriel. *War Land on the Eastern Front. Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I*. Cambridge, 2004, p. 231.

[42] CARSTEN, F. L. *Revolution in Central Europe 1918–1919*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1972, p. 18.

[43] BALKELIS, Tomas. Demobilization and Remobilization of German and Lithuanian Paramilitaries after the First World War. *Journal of Contemporary History,* 2015, Vol. 50, No. 1, p. 50.

after the 1917 Revolution. The parallel formation of German soldiers' committees (*Soldatenrat*) was a very unstable and dubious governing body. In this case, it exposes well the reasons why Germany sought to deploy the then still-forming Freikorps as rapidly as possible in the Baltic.[44] However, the fighting capacity of the Freikorps should also be assessed with caution. The German Captain Ralph von Heygendorff describes the arrival and deployment of Saxon volunteers in Lithuania in the winter of 1919 as a challenge to German officers. Many Saxons volunteered simply because they were jobless. They were heavily influenced by Bolshevik ideas, despised their officers, and had most trust in their soldier councils. Their low morale was reflected in their conviction that, as volunteers, they needed no proper training. On their arrival, they sold army materiel on the black market. The situation improved after the arrival of more motivated Saxons and the beginning of fighting that sifted out the unwilling, as well as dispersing the demoralised German soldier councils.[45] The mercenary nature of the German volunteer troops was seen in their unwillingness to fight outside their contractual obligations. This was the case in Lithuania, and also no doubt in Latvia. Only very capable, confident and firm commanders were able to bring order and combat capability back to such units; for example, in Courland it was General Ridiger von der Goltz, who had already demonstrated his agility and organisational skills in Finland. At the same time, his methods in Courland indicate that the aim was of course to defeat the Bolsheviks, but that other tasks were to stop the processes that the German Revolution set in motion, and to continue the colonisation of the territory.[46] Moreover, at first it was mainly an internal struggle with the German soldier councils, which in principle was against the very essence of the army: hierarchical commander-subordinate relations.[47] Preventing some of the disorganisation and demoralisation of the forces, as well as the soldiers' reluctance to fight, and disarming potentially dangerous formations, were the first tasks of the Free Corps commanders when they arrived in the region.[48] The political objective of the German leaders was firstly to protect the German people, and secondly to take moral responsibility for a country liberated from its former rule, which should be accompanied by the remark that this was also a demand of the Entente based on the terms of the Armistice at Compiègne. However, this demand, which asked for German boots on the ground, was the reason why the Germans insisted, and the Latvian Provisional Government demanded, citizenship for those who fought against the Bolshevik forces.[49] Alongside the alternative statehood of the Duchy of Courland,

[44] BERMONTS-AVALOVS, Pāvels. *Cīņā pret Boļsevismu. Pāvela Bermonta-Avalova atmiņas par 1919. gada notikumiem Latvijā.* Rīga, 2015, 100. lpp.
[45] BALKELIS, T. Op. cit., p. 53.
[46] LIULEVICIUS, V. G. Op. cit., p. 230.
[47] BALKELIS, T. Op. cit., p. 52.
[48] BISCHOFF, Josef. *Die letzte Front. Geschichte der Eisernen Division im Baltikum 1919.* Berlin, 1936, S. 30–31.
[49] *Latvijas Neatkarības karš 1918.–1919. gadā…*, 105. lpp.

the German military administration tried to sway German opinion towards the annexation of these territories.[50]

The almost complete collapse of the fighting spirit among the German troops stood behind the decision to rapidly form volunteer units that could replace the disintegrating army in the East. In early December 1918, the German high command in Grodno issued a call for volunteers in special volunteer corps. Meanwhile, in January 1919 the German defence minister Gustav Noske ordered to establish the German Recruitment Office for the Baltic Lands (*Anwerbestelle Baltenland*) in Berlin, and started registering volunteers, so-called Freikorps. Their main task was to enforce the anti-Bolshevik military campaign in the Baltic. The plan was to recruit officers and NCOs from the Kaiser's army who found themselves jobless after the war. In the 'Call for Volunteers to the 10th Army', they were addressed as follows: 'Comrades! Those who are unable to adapt to the transition from military service to civilian life; those who still want to see foreign countries; those who see their future in them; they must all join the volunteers of the 10th army!' It also attracted young Germans who had no experience of fighting, and were frustrated at Germany's defeat and the lack of economic opportunities at home.[51]

One of the ways of restoring discipline among existing units of the German armed forces in the Baltic was the formation of the so-called Iron Division. Thanks to an influx of volunteers, some of whom were rejected as 'morally unfit', the Iron Division reached a size of about 14,000 men by the summer. Its personnel can be roughly described as a mixed bag of adventurers, hardened veterans and very dubious characters, commanded by officers with strong reactionary views, and its influence far exceeded its real capabilities until the autumn of 1919. These forces allowed von der Goltz to become involved in the intrigues of the Baltic Germans in order to restore their domination.[52]

At the most critical moment, at the end of 1918, Kārlis Ulmanis, the head of the provisional Latvian government, desperate for military assistance, had concluded an agreement with the plenipotentiary of the German government August Winnig. This offered Latvian citizenship to all soldiers of foreign states who joined a voluntary unit to fight against the Bolsheviks for a minimum of four weeks. The terms of this arrangement were publicised in Germany. In a few weeks, the recruitment offices were overwhelmed with requests to join, partly because the agreement was taken to mean a promise of land. As Walter von Medem pointed out in his memoirs, what was not on the posters was said by the recruiter.[53] The prospect of settling on Baltic

[50] ZARIŅŠ, K. Vācijas okupācijas politika...,106. lpp.
[51] BALKELIS, T. Op. cit., pp. 48–49.
[52] KIRBY, David. 'The Last Front' of the Freikorps. *History Today*, 2019, Vol. 69, No. 7, pp. 62–65.
[53] MEDEM, Walter. *Stürmer von Riga*. Leipzig, 1935. Digital transcript of the text.

land became a powerful impulse for thousands of volunteers, who saw the region as a space of unlimited colonial opportunities. This was an escape plan for their unpleasant transition to civilian life by unleashing their anti-Bolshevik and colonial ambitions in the East. However, in the autumn of 1919, when the German forces were forced to retreat, first under Allied pressure and then with the battles against the armies of Latvia and Lithuania, this hopelessness manifested itself in a sharp decline in morale and the brutal violence that accompanied it.[54]

The Baltic Germans and the *Landeswehr*

Due a lack of research on the topic, the role of the Germans and the Baltic Germans in the liberation of Latvia has been, and still is, at the centre of the historical debate. The historiography through the years has been dominated by three points of view, each representing the direction of its own opinion. This is largely based on later socio-economic and political processes in the interwar period. The three strands are: the Germans fought to seize power in Latvia; the Germans and the Baltic Germans liberated Latvia from the Bolsheviks, the Latvian national forces could not have done it alone; both the Germans and the Latvian civic part of the army fought against the Bolshevik majority.[55]

This symbiosis of the Baltic Germans with Germany in the first half of 1919 is a separate and broad topic, the roots of which go back to long before the First World War, but finally ended with Germanophobia and the disassociation from the Germans sown in the Russian Empire's own society during the First World War, such as the closure of German institutions and the banning of the German language, and finally the Bolshevik upheaval that closed the Russian direction altogether.[56] However, they were in the worst situation at the beginning of 1919, because every other possibility for future development, the victory of the Bolsheviks or the victory of the Latvian state, threatened their prospects. From the point of view of the Baltic Germans, one would think that the *de facto* recognition of Latvia by Germany in November 1918 basically did not worsen, but improved, the position of the Baltic Germans in the eyes of Germany, because local German representation became a significant tool in the hands of the makers of German foreign policy.

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[54] LIULEVICIUS, V. G. Op. cit., pp. 242–243.

[55] *Etnisko attiecību vēsture Latvijā: metodiskā literatūra vēstures skolotājiem*. Sast. Leo DRIBINS. Rīga, 2000, 30. lpp.

[56] BLANKENHAGENS, Herberts fon. *Pasaules vēstures malā: atmiņas no vecās Vidzemes, 1913–1923*. Zin. red. Gints APALS. Rīga, 2018, 10.–11. lpp.

This dilemma of the Baltic Germans in the spring and summer of 1919, when the *Landeswehr* had to remain relatively neutral, if not against German units, after the Battle of Cesis, is described well in his memoirs by Herbert von Blankenhagen, a volunteer in the *Landeswehr's* 3rd Squadron.[57]

Perceptions of Baltic Germans still tend to be mistaken. One of the prevailing myths is based on the Baltic German nobility and its considerable land holdings in Latvia. This view significantly underestimates the overall influence and spheres of activity of the Baltic Germans until the First World War. The German population in the territory of Latvia and Estonia stood out as one of the most urbanised ethnic communities in the Russian Empire. In 1881, nearly 72% of them inhabited urban areas, but that had surged to 80% by 1897. They occupied the upper echelons of the social ladder, and were the main organisers of commercial and industrial activity. They oversaw the municipal administrations of the towns, which only rarely fell into Latvian hands before the First World War. German was also one of the main languages of business, culture, education and administration, even despite the Russification policy of the Russian Empire at the end of the 19th century. This means that the Baltic German factor should probably be considered in addition to the ethnic, but also the social, spectrum, meaning mainly the urban population,[58] against a background that made the German minority look more homogeneous.[59] The historian Raimonds Cerūzis, who has studied the history of the Baltic Germans most rigorously, points out that, with their distinct identity and mentality, the Baltic Germans also occupy a special place among other foreign Germans. This was formed by a long period of separation, but not isolation from their territory of origin, next to a nationality that was alien to them, the Latvians. It should be noted, however, that a large part of the Baltic Germans migrated there relatively recently, and did not form the Baltic nobility that had existed for centuries. During the period of Russification in the late 19th century, self-identification was particularly important, so the term Balten was used to indicate one's belonging as a political nation.[60]

So the idea of an independent Latvian Republic did not satisfy the Baltic Germans also, as it meant that they would no longer be a dominant part of society in the region, and would in fact destroy the Baltic German traditions. The establishment of Bolshevik rule in the Baltic was utterly unacceptable to the Baltic Germans, and threatened them as a social group, so it was important for them to establish any other form of government that would preserve their privilege as a social class. Given that they generally regarded the Latvians as Bolsheviks, and a threat, their first

[57] Ibid., 196.–198. lpp.

[58] HENRIKSSON, Anders. Minorities and the Industrialization of Imperial Russia: The Case of the Baltic German Urban Elite. *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 1982, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 115–127.

[59] GRĀMATIŅŠ, A. Op. cit., 141. lpp.

[60] CERŪZIS, R. Op. cit., 24.–26. lpp.

search naturally turned to cooperation with Germany and the creation of a Baltic state.[61]

These organisational advantages of the Baltic Germans were vividly demonstrated in November 1918 with the formation of the first *Landeswehr* units, when the independence of Latvia was not on the agenda. Soon it changed. One of the key factors of the Landwehr was its command composition, which was made up mainly of officers from the former Russian Empire. It is also true that intellectuals and whole generations of families joined. However, quite a few also fled to Germany.[62] A key point in the characterisation of the German units is that they were composed of both officers of the former Russian Empire and officers of the German army, between whom there were quite significant qualitative differences. In addition, some of the German officers had only gained military experience towards the end of the war, and so saw the Baltic mission relatively as an opportunity to reap the rewards and adventures of war.[63] Baltic German student corporations played a significant role in the formation of the *Landeswehr*; however, most of them joined these units because of the idea of a German Baltic state, not a democratic Republic of Latvia.[64] Describing the mutiny of companies of the Latvian Home Guard in December 1918, Artis Buks reconstructed quite accurately the rather harsh and unstable situation in Riga at the end of 1918.[65] Among other things, he points out that although armed units of the Latvian Provisional Government were formed on the ethnic principle, the soldiers paid little attention to it and joined both Baltic German and Russian companies. Presumably, this was due to an individual sense of belonging. Whether he is Latvian, German or Russian, the individual seeks to find and join a familiar circle of people. If he had become close to a group of people while studying or working, he would join it in a crisis, regardless of his ethnicity. This reason could also be why some Latvians were Germanised when they entered the German environment while living in Riga. This is evidenced, for example, by the names of those killed, injured or missed in action in the Battle of Inčukalns on the night of 1 January 1919. These include surnames such as Selting and Osoling, which are typical Latvian surnames, or Oskars Strauts.[66] Similarly, in Landwehr documents from later months onwards, Latvian surnames can sometimes be seen; for example, Johan Purakaln in the Hanh

[61] CERŪZIS, R. Op. cit., 57. lpp.

[62] BLANCKENHAGEN, Herbert von. *Am Rande der Weltgeschichte: Erinnerungen aus Alt-Livland, 1913–1923*. Göttingen, 1966, S. 210–211.

[63] CERŪZIS, R. Op. cit., 216.–217. lpp.

[64] Ibid., 75. lpp.

[65] BUKS, Artis. 1918. gada decembris Rīgā – Latvijas zemessardzes rotu dumpis. *Latvijas Universitātes Žurnāls. Vēsture*, 2018, No. 6. Rīga, 2019, 62.–85. lpp.

[66] Krituši pēdējās kaujās. *Kurzemes vārds*. 2.01.1919, 2. lpp.; BUKS, Artis. Pirmā kauja par Latvijas neatkarību. In Arta Buka Vēstures enciklopēdiskā vārdnīca, red. 09.04.2016. URL: <https://vesture.eu/Pirmā_kauja_par_Latvijas_neatkarību> [skatīts 27.05.2024].

Detachement.[67] Captain Hugo Helmanis, who is famous for his reconnaissance on the Latgale front, transferred from the *Landeswehr's* Malmede Battalion to the Latvian Army's 1st Liepāja Infantry Regiment only in July 1919.

Latvia's provisional government and the search for supporters and allies

Although Latvia proclaimed its independence on 18 November 1918, its government did not actually control even a small part of the territory of the state for more than half a year, from the first days of January 1919, when the Provisional Government of Latvia withdrew from Riga to Liepāja, to 8 July 1919, when it returned to Riga.

Although there was bitterness and anxiety underground, Latvian civil society in general had already begun to get used to the German regime under the occupation and to come to terms with it. The defeat of Germany changed this situation: it was followed by hopes for support from the Entente countries and Germany's own efforts to oppose the Bolsheviks. Civil society, being more conciliatory, was not prepared to actively stand up for its own cause.[68]

When the Provisional Government of Latvia was formed, one of its basic principles was the creation of a democratic, national, but not nationalist state. At the same time, its economic and economic platform was gradually formed similar to the socialist platform, as it included the redistribution of large assets in favour of the citizens of the new country, or so-called 'land reform'. Nowadays, it is evaluated ambiguously; however, it should be remembered that it was actually the only resource available to the Provisional Government to sway public opinion in its favour. It should be added here that it also included the destruction of the remnants of the economic system of the old Russian Empire. In order to justify this, it would be worth mentioning that the nobility of the Vidzeme region was to a certain extent responsible for the territory of Latvia becoming part of the Russian Empire, and received direct material benefits from it, which also manifested itself as the approbation of serfdom and bringing the population into actual slavery. From this point of view, the Latvian land reform carried out in the 1920s, in which the nobility of the Vidzeme and Courland regions were the unequivocal losers, acquires a different assessment.

The importance of land reform appears in the fact that it was one of the issues to which the first commander of the Latvian armed forces, Colonel Oskars Kalpaks,

[67] Detachementsbefehl Nr. 31 [Battalion under the command of Major Karl Freiherr von Hahn. Order of the day: Soldiers cancelled from the personnel list], 13.08.1919. *Latvijas Nacionālā arhīva Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs* (The State Historical Archive of Latvia of the National Archives of Latvia, hereafter *LNA LVVA*), 5627-1-46, 37. lp.

[68] GRĀMATIŅŠ, A. Op. cit., 134.–135. lpp.

persistently attached special importance in his correspondence with the Ministry of Defence in the first months of 1919.[69] The resolution of the issue and public communication was a critical factor in motivating the soldiers of the new Latvian armed forces. Of course, the question here would be more important: national self-confidence and the opportunity to realise it, or land ownership. Moreover, it should be viewed individually: clearly for key people, a large part of whom came from a politically and socially active environment, it was the realisation of national self-confidence; and for a large part of society, efforts towards physical and economic security, the centre of which is land ownership.

The proof of this opinion is the fact that until the middle of March 1919, the citizens mobilised in Courland, who were later included in units of the Southern Latvian Brigade, already after the war, were defined as volunteers, because the Provisional Government of Latvia actually had no way to punish those who did not obey the mobilisation.[70] Knowing the doubtful and left-wing mood of society, we must admire the courage of those officers to stand in front of a crowd and say they were being mobilised, knowing that they did not actually have the resources to implement any tangible sanctions. The mobilisations became effective only after the Provisional Government decided, and the minister of agriculture Jānis Goldmanis ordered, to provide the landless with land on 26 February, as well as support for the families of conscripts.[71] Even then, only with intensified agitation, in which several officers were sent to convince the population, was the number of mobilised people increased.

In order to mobilise the necessary number of soldiers, Colonel Oskars Kalpaks did not rely solely on the Ministry of Defence, but actively organised his own agitation, selecting from among his forces suitable but very diverse officers who would be able to appeal to the public, such as Lieutenant Janis Privka, a student with a good education and experience in public activities, with a good and active speaking style, who blended in visually with the locals and did not arouse suspicion; his hair was often shaggy, and he wore a tattered Russian army *shinel* (military coat).[72] The newspaper *Latvijas sargs* (Defender of Latvia) was also an important means of reaching out to the public, as it tried to supplement and dilute the news of German and Bolshevik agitators with its own news and polemics.

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[69] 1. Latviešu atsevišķā bataljona komandiera O. Kalpaka ziņojums apsardzības ministram par karavīru apgādāšanu ar zemi nepieciešamību, 1919. gada 19. februārī. *LNA LVVA*, 1515-1-1683, 3. lp. Published in *Cīņa par brīvību: Latvijas Neatkarības karš (1918–1920) Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīva dokumentos.* 1. d. Sast. Ēriks JĒKABSONS, Jānis ŠILIŅŠ. Rīga, 2019, 169. lpp.

[70] DAMBĪTIS, Kārlis. Latvijas Pagaidu valdības bruņoto vienību formēšana 1919. gada pirmajā pusē. In *Liepāja Latvijas Neatkarības karā 1918–1920*. Sast. Inna GĪLE. Rīga, 2019, 84.–85. lpp.

[71] Latvijas Pagaidu valdības sēdes protokols. Liepājā, 1919. gada 26. februārī. *LNA LVVA*, 1308-1-277, 87. lp. Published in *Cīņa par brivību...*, 181.–182. lpp.

[72] GRĀMATIŅŠ, A. Op. cit., 177. lpp.

The understanding of Colonel Oscar Kalpak that an un-equipped army breaks up into gangs, which was totally unacceptable because it would have instantly inclined all of Latvian society against the Latvian Provisional Government, was critical. This was also one of the biggest challenges, because it was the inability to provide soldiers with basic necessities, mainly food, that caused Captain Janis Balodis to refuse to take command of the Latvian units in the last days of December 1918.[73]

In the events of 1918 in Riga and 1919 in Courland, the main challenge for the Latvian Provisional Government was to find an ally, in this case anyone who could help it stand on its feet against the opponent, which at that time held almost all the cards, Soviet Russia and its satellite, Soviet Latvia. There were several such allies: first of all Great Britain, but it had no military power in Baltic region until December 1918, and its main task was to restrict Bolshevik movement to West. The second ally in the region was Germany with the 8th Army with declining military power.

The inability of the Latvian government to organise the defence of the territory was also reflected in the agreement with August Winnig, the German authorised representative in the Baltic, which was signed on 7 December 1918.[74] It provided for the creation of a Landwehr with 6,000 soldiers in 26 companies, of which 18 were to be Latvian, seven German, and one Russian. Winnig and the Germans regarded this force as a guarantee for the protection of German interests. Also important was the agreement of 29 December on the involvement of German volunteers in the defence of the Baltic, which stipulated that Latvian citizenship could be granted for four weeks' participation in the battles against the Bolsheviks. Although partially signed, the treaty was never concluded, but its significance for subsequent events remained considerable.[75]

Britain also supported it, as it wanted to stop the spread of Bolshevik ideology to the West, so German forces were seen as the only hope of realising this. However, the British navy reports on the situation in Latvia show that they could see clearly the differences between Latvia and Germany, and the mutual mistrust, which in no way contributed to the formation of a united anti-Bolshevik formation. This was even clear to the members of the Latvian Provisional Government, who pointed out that neither the Russians nor the Germans were prepared to fight under Latvian leadership, and therefore proposed the appointment of a British representative as commander-in-chief of the anti-German forces in Latvia.[76] The issue was a hot topic

[73] DAMBĪTIS, Kārlis. Pirmais Latvijas Pagaidu valdības bruņoto vienību komandieris pulkvedis Oskars Kalpaks. In *Pulkvedis Oskars Kalpaks: veltījums Latvijas simtgadei.* Sast. Kārlis DAMBĪTIS. Rīga, 2018, 151. lpp.

[74] Latvijas Pagaidu valdības un Vācijas ģenerālpilnavrotā Baltijā A. Vinniga līgums par Latvijas zemessardzes (landesvēra) izveidošanu, 07.12.1918. *LNA LVVA*, 1515-1-1682, 152.–156. lp. Published in *Cīņa par brivibu...*, 52.–55. lpp.

[75] Latvijas Pagaidu valdības un Vācijas ģenerālpilnvarotā baltijā A. Vinniga līguma projekts. Rīgā. 1918. gada 29. Decembrī. *LNA LVVA*, 6033-1-16, 2. lp. Published in *Cīņa par brivibu...*, 106.–107. lpp.

[76] *Latvijas Neatkarības karš 1918.–1919. gadā...*, 85.–87. lpp.

throughout the spring and early summer of 1919, and ended in the summer of 1919 with the appointment of British Lieutenant-Colonel Harold Alexander as commander of the *Landeswehr*.

The conflict between the Latvian Provisional Government and the Germans

As the power and the popularity of the Latvian Provisional Government strengthened, it posed a challenge to German efforts to maintain its political positions in the eyes of Western countries, so it was logical that attempts were made to hinder the mobilisation of Latvian units.

Although the opponent was one and the anti-Imperialist forces were well organised, military and political differences and divergences were clearly visible from the outside. In this respect, the conclusion of the Lithuanian minister of trade and industry Jonas Šimkus to the chairman of the Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers on 9 March 1919, reporting on the success of the Commission in Liepāja, is significant. He described the military situation: 'The operational commander-in-chief of the whole front is General Golz, Commander of the 6th German-Volunteer Mercenary Corps, under whose command are three separate forces, each of which has its own separate operational headquarters.'[77]

However, the most extreme example of the attitude of the Baltic German political elite towards the national Republic of Latvia was the so-called 'von Strike Conspiracy', an affair that was intended to overthrow the Latvian Provisional Government and change the state system. This conspiracy came to light on 18 February 1919, when a bundle of documents containing a plan for the change of power in Latvia was found at the customs in Liepāja in the possession of the Swedish Lieutenant-Colonel N. Edlund.[78] The purpose of this was to overthrow the governments of Latvia and Estonia, and create Balteland instead, an independent country based on the principle of Swiss cantons.

This attempt was realised in a coup of 16 April 1919 when, using military power, Baltic Germans replaced the government of Karlis Ulmanis with the pro-German government of Oskars Borkovskis and later Andrievs Niedra. It could be called an attempt to redefine the Latvian Provisional Government: Latvia would still be independent in the eyes of the Allies, but in reality it would be a Baltic German-ruled

[77] JĒKABSONS, Ēriks; TRUMPA, Edmunds. Situācija Liepājā 1919. gada martā: Lietuvas tirdzniecības un rūpniecības ministra Jona Šimkus ziņojums. *Latvijas Universitātes Žurnāls. Vēsture*, 2020, No. 9/10. Rīga, 2021, 145. lpp.

[78] CERŪZIS, R. Op. cit., 70.–75. lpp.

state. The putschists tried to steal the country of Latvia and merge it with the original Baltic German idea of a Duchy of the Baltic, in this way selling the idea to the Western Allies, and at the same time not jeopardising Germany's recognition of the Republic of Latvia. However, being under German command could not contribute to the support of local society, and the military struggle against the Bolsheviks, including the capture of Riga, was not a struggle for an idea, but against the Bolsheviks, in which the Latvians, the *Landeswehr* and the German Freikorps stood side by side.

After the events of April, the hatred between the Latvians and the Germans increased, and both sides tried at every opportunity not only to oppose each other, but also to destroy each other physically. The Germans considered all Latvians to be Bolsheviks, and tried to destroy them. On 15 May, Baron Manteifel-Zeuge, the commander of the Landwehr's assault unit, even called on German soldiers not to return to Latvia but to stay as colonisers. The main thing was that they should help to liberate Courland from the Latvians.[79]

Even before, the relationship between the Germans and the Latvian Provisional Government soldiers was clearly illustrated by a case in Liepāja in January 1919, when Lieutenant Antons Grāmatiņš tried to get equipment from the Germans, including known *Landeswehr* officers, to supply and arm a small group of Latvian officers to go to the front near the River Venta. The dialogue shows clearly both the German concern that the Latvians were Bolsheviks and therefore untrustworthy, and the Latvian resentment of the German colonisation plans and the allocation of land to German immigrants instead of to the local landless.[80]

Even for the Western missions in the Baltic this was clear. The situation in Liepāja around 20 May and early June is described as follows. The Germans hated the French, so they had to go to the city armed and in groups of three. There were many soldiers in the streets armed with grenades. And, as Colonel Du Parquet described, if you know the mentality of these men, you can understand the toughness that had to be shown to restrain them.[81] This description also shows the morale of the German soldiers and the sense of pride at the liberation of Riga from the Bolsheviks on 22 May 1919.

These Baltic German attempts to take power actually only ended after the Battle of Cēsis in June 1919 in the Vidzeme region, and the Armistice of Strazdumuiža on 3 July 1919. It can conditionally be considered that Bermont's adventure was also a reference to these ideas, but with a completely different execution, hiding behind plans for the restoration of the Russian Empire.

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79 *Franču pulkvežleitnanta Emanuela Diparkē atmiņas. Misija Latvijā, 1919–1920*. Zin. red. Ēriks JĒKABSONS, Kaspars ZELLIS. Rīga, 2019, 66.–67. lpp.

80 GRĀMATIŅŠ, A. Op. cit., 160. lpp.

81 DU PARQUET, E. Op. cit., 63.–64. lpp.

Conclusions

This article is unlikely to fully reveal every detail of everyone's choice in the events of 1919, but it does provide an insight into the determining factors that shaped an individual's perception of what was happening around them in early 1919, and led them to choose one of the belligerents or armed formations. Among other things, it also allows us to point to circumstances that are important in the contemporary context, in order to enable society to be sustained in pursuit of common goals and to prevent its desegregation and disintegration.

The motivation of the population to join one of the warring sides in Courland can be compared with the example of Lithuania. For example, a critical move that strengthened the morale of the Lithuanian troops was the government's decision on 20 June 1919 to promise land to all its soldiers. In contrast to the Bolsheviks, who tried to nationalise it, this policy became a powerful draw to peasants. Another prevailing motive for joining the army was material deprivation. The volunteers included many landless, for whom military service could offer shelter, food and a salary of 100 marks. In addition, their families also received 50 marks a month.[82]

The relatively smaller, more educated and mostly wealthier part of local society, as well as officers and former officers, perceived the entry of the Bolsheviks into Latvia as a threat. Considering the cooperation of the Provisional Government of Latvia with the German forces, it automatically came to the side of the opponents. The Provisional Government of Latvia were known in society as the so-called 'grey barons'. Of course, Bolshevik agitation and propaganda also played a role, which ensured support among doubters by making such comparisons. In addition, the ideology of the class struggle also worked perfectly for Germany: it is not for nothing that Germany's withdrawal from the war was closely related to the revolution in Germany itself. Support for the Bolsheviks plummeted after learning of their methods of action, which were reckless and violent. The fact that the Latvian Provisional Government was able to offer a logical and reasonable alternative to the idea of an independent Soviet Latvia was also of particular importance. It is also undeniable that the withdrawal of the Red Army from the Vidzeme region at the end of May and June 1919 made a significant part of its conditional supporters reassess their prospects, to leave their native land and family again, without any guarantee of ever returning. The internationalism declared by the Bolsheviks was also unacceptable to a large part of Latvian society, which formed most of its life around local centres, goals and measures. The very idea of their own country, even in a Soviet context, confirms this. Of course, this did not change the views of key people.

[82] BALKELIS, T. Op. cit., pp. 48–49.

In order to gain public support, each of the powers had to give up something, but this would undermine the fulfilment of the power's own goals. The Bolsheviks did not want to give up socialist ideology, the Germans did not want to give up the seizure of power or the colonisation of Courland, and the Baltic Germans did not want to give up their dominant role in the region. The Provisional Government of Latvia therefore had all the means in its hands to sway the public in its favour, but this required very great powers of persuasion, because motivating someone to fight for an idea is extremely difficult, especially, in postwar conditions, in a situation where the war has already exhausted all local resources.

I agree that in this case we need to talk about the term 'remobilisation of society', which makes us look at these processes with slightly different eyes. The process was not simply motivated by a refusal of some soldiers brutalised by wartime experiences to become civilians. First, the process of remobilisation took place within the context of the breakdown of the state, which made the return to peaceful civilian life a precarious option. The threat of Bolshevism, or its opposite, the fear of counter-revolution, notions of civic duty and patriotism, as well as material considerations and career options in the military, all encouraged veterans to sign up again. Their wartime 'nationalisation' in ethnic units, as well as their radicalisation during the final years of the First World War, considerably stimulated the process of remobilisation.[83] As in Lithuania, the last motive was clearly shared by both Lithuanian and German war veterans, and Latvians as well. After the war, all of them became targets of nationalist and Bolshevik agitation and propaganda. Faced with the choice of going home or joining the Reds or the nationalists, many chose the last. Their motives to join, besides anti-Bolshevism, ranged from idealistic notions of patriotism, civic duty and military pride to practical expectations of avoiding deprivation, seeking material benefits, or cultivating their military careers.[84] Although this example is from Lithuania, very similar and even identical processes were taking place in Latvia.

Lacking adequate armed forces and materiel, and with little prospect of support from the Allies, the provisional governments of the new states faced new challenges, not only the Bolshevik advance, but also the threat posed by the presence of German troops. Article 12 of the Compiègne Armistice made the evacuation of all former Russian territories contingent upon the 'internal situation' in these areas. In allowing German troops to stay, however temporarily, the Allies created a headache for themselves. With a revolution raging at home, the discipline and morale of German soldiers in the Baltic declined rapidly.[85]

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[83] Ibid., p. 55.

[84] Ibid., p. 40.

[85] Germans in the Baltic States: How von der Goltz and Bermondt Gained a Foothold in Russia, and How They Were Driven Back. *Current History*, 1919, Vol. 11, No. 3, Part I, pp. 483–488.

It should be concluded that in the topic at hand, there are a number of similar circumstances between the different parties that mobilise each particular belligerent. At least four of these motives can be identified: ideology, survival, hopes for the future, and brotherhood.

Did the Baltic German, the Bolshevik supporter, the Freikorps soldier and the Courland peasant know who they were and with whom they identified? Yes. The soldier's sense of individual belonging to a group is evident in both sources and literature. However, their assumptions about the other groups were inaccurate. On these four sides, the most unsuitable was the Freikorps warrior, because he had no historical connection with Courland, and he had, more than others, strong ideological convictions. But among the soldiers of the Latvian Provisional Government, the Bolsheviks and the pro-Baltic German units, this issue, the decision to join one of the units, was closely linked to other circumstances: survival, and hopes for the future. This leads to the conclusion that ideology is clearly an important factor in persuading people to become soldiers, but even more important is the ability of the belligerent to provide a measurable objective. The examples of Latvian and German soldiers who became disillusioned with Bolshevik ideology, and the relatively simple suppression of these revolts, show that the Bolshevik propaganda was not effective.

The Latvian War of Independence, and especially, the events of the beginning of 1919, show clearly that a state's existence is ensured by its ability to appeal to hearts and minds. Only by winning this struggle was the remobilisation in the armed formations of the new state possible. And as modern warfare proves, these methods are still used, and continue, through propaganda, fake news and deception in hybrid forms of warfare. What were the factors that determined membership of one of the forces? We are used to looking at it from a political, economic or ethnic point of view, and while they matter, in these times of confusion, the values of Maslow's pyramid of needs played a central role. Physical needs and security were more important to society, followed only by the need for political or ethnic belonging. The power that could provide this, or at least the power to transcend the first of the two levels of the pyramid, won over hearts and minds. And even if this is not explicit in many of the testimonies, an assessment of the overall situation in the region shows it. That is why leaders and intellectuals played a special role, but without a collateral base these efforts would have been impossible to realise.

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KOVA UŽ ŠIRDIS IR PROTUS: GRUMTYNĖS DĖL VALDŽIOS LATVIJOJE 1919 M. PRADŽIOJE

Kārlis Dambītis

Santrauka

Šiuo straipsniu siekta aptarti veiksnius, kurie 1919 m. pavasarį, vienu iš Latvijos nepriklausomybės karo etapų, Kurše (Kuržemėje) lėmė tapatybę ir motyvaciją, nes jie taip pat padeda paaiškinti karinius ir politinius įvykius regione. Nors straipsnyje aptariamos ne visos tuo metu susidūrusios šalys (pvz., Rusijos baltųjų armija ar mažesnės etninės mažumos), daugiausia dėmesio skiriama kelioms karių ir jų civilių rėmėjų grupėms, kilusioms iš skirtingų sluoksnių ir turinčioms skirtingus politinius įsitikinimus, su savitu, dažnai unikaliu, priklausomybės jausmu. Tai – Vokietijos kariai, Pirmojo pasaulinio karo veteranai; bolševikus rėmusi Sovietų Latvijos kariuomenė; vokiečių savanorių daliniai, kuriuos iš dalies suformavo Baltijos vokiečiai; Latvijos laikinosios vyriausybės rėmėjai ir sąjungininkai. Kiekviena iš šių jėgų bandė įsitvirtinti platesniame regione ir tuo tikslu motyvavo civilius, tačiau jų poveikio rezultatai buvo skirtingi.

Bolševikai siekė sukurti Sovietų Latviją ir paremti revoliucijos eksportą į Europą. Jų pagrindą sudarė įtikėjusieji bolševikai, kurie per propagandą kreipėsi į vidurinę klasę ir skurdžius darbininkus bei bežemius. Ši propaganda buvo veiksminga dėl visuomenės neapykantos Vokietijai ir jos rėmėjams. Tačiau ji nepajėgė iki galo atliepti pagrindinių visuomenės poreikių, todėl, veikiant karo spaudimui, Sovietų Latvijos armija prarado iniciatyvą, o kartu ir vietos visuomenės paramą.

Vokietija stengėsi pasipriešinti bolševikams ir išlaikyti savo įtaką Baltijos šalyse. Todėl ji reorganizavo Vokietijos VIII armiją, atsikratydama demoralizuotų ir bolševikiškai nusiteikusių karių, o vietoj jų į regioną nukreipdama savanorius, motyvuotus nacionalistinių ir antibolševikinių nuotaikų bei pažado gauti žemės nuosavybės Baltijos kraštuose ir, tikėtina, juos kolonizuoti. Jų kovinį veiksmingumą lėmė palyginti stabili materialinė ir techninė parama, taip pat savanorių dalinių kultūrai būdingas bendruomeniškumo jausmas.

Landesverą sudarė pirmiausia vietos (Baltijos) vokiečiai ir jų rėmėjai. Juos vienijo baimė dėl bolševikų valdymo – galimo turto, savitos kultūros praradimo ar net sunaikinimo fiziškai. Bet kartu jie siekė įveikti Latvijos laikinąją vyriausybę ir sukurti Baltijos valstybę, kuri būtų pripažinta tarptautiniu mastu, bet išlaikytų buvusias Baltijos vokiečių privilegijas.

Vietos (Baltijos) vokiečiai turėjo bendrą priešą su Latvijos laikinąja vyriausybe, bet tarp šių dviejų jėgų būta stiprios konkurencijos, mat Latvijos laikinoji vyriausybė siekė įtvirtinti Latvijos Respubliką ir latvių tautos apsisprendimo teisę.

Latvijos nepriklausomybės karo istoriografijoje dažniausiai akcentuojami politiniai ir nacionaliniai šių jėgų tikslai, bet, norėdama juos pasiekti, kiekviena jėga iš tiesų turėjo imtis veiksmų ekonominėje ir socialinėje srityse. Tik jie galėjo užtikrinti visuomenės paramą

vienai iš kariaujančių pusių, nes visuomenė buvo nualinta karo, vyravo pokario skurdas ir politinio nestabilumo jausmas, kuris buvo svarbesnis už bet kokias idėjas. Tačiau, norėdama užsitikrinti visuomenės paramą, dažna iš šių jėgų turėjo atsisakyti to, kas būtų pakenkę šios jėgos esminių tikslų įgyvendinimui. Bolševikai nenorėjo atsisakyti socializmo ideologijos, vokiečiai nenorėjo atsisakyti Kuršo kolonizavimo plano, o Baltijos vokiečiai nenorėjo prarasti savo dominuojančio vaidmens regione. Šiame kontekste Latvijos laikinoji vyriausybė savo rankose turėjo visas priemones palenkti visuomenę savo naudai, tačiau tam reikėjo labai didelių įtikinėjimo galių, nes motyvuoti žmogų kovoti už idėją yra nepaprastai sunku, ypač tuo metu, kai karas jau buvo išeikvojęs visus vietos išteklius.

Apibendrinant straipsnyje konstatuojama, kad skirtingas šalis, 1919 m. pavasarį susidūrusias Kurše, vienijo panašūs motyvai, mobilizavę kariaujančių šalių atstovus ir jų rėmėjus. Galima išskirti bent keturis tokius motyvus: ideologija, išlikimo instinktas, ateities viltys ir bendruomeniškumas. Bet lyginant visas susidūrusias jėgas tarpusavyje, galima sakyti, kad vokiečių karys savanoris buvo labiausiai „nemotyvuotas“, mat jis neturėjo jokių istorinių ryšių su Kuršu, o išskyrė jį labiau nei kitus stiprūs ideologiniai įsitikinimai. Visus kitus – Latvijos laikinosios vyriausybės, bolševikų ir Baltijos vokiečių dalinių – karius ir rėmėjus siejo pirmiausia išlikimo instinkto ir vilčių dėl ateities motyvai. Tai leidžia daryti išvadą, kad nors ideologija yra svarbus veiksnys įtikinant žmones tapti kariais, dar svarbesnis yra kariaujančios pusės gebėjimas pateikti apčiuopiamą tikslą. Kalbant apie jį, visuomenei buvo svarbesni fiziniai poreikiai ir saugumas, tik po jų buvo tikslai, susiję su politine ar etnine priklausomybe.