

## *Departments and Discourses*

# Mapping the discourses of nation, state, society and knowledge in the departments of Humanities and Social Sciences in the University of Latvia

## Introduction

Challenges faced by universities in different transition societies in the 1990s were often of a similar nature. Thus, the World Bank's *Lessons of Experience* report in 1994 identified severe quality problems resulting from overcrowding, from insufficient control over the quality or behavior of the teaching staff (stemming in part from low pay), or from inappropriate curricula, unrelated to the needs of the emerging economies. Since then, governments and academic communities dealt with this problem in different ways. The aspects of their successes and failures frequently analysed in policy studies on higher education are the transformation of management and funding structures, the changes in legislation, the conflicting interests of autonomy and centralisation, and the reform of academic curriculum. Less attention, however, has been devoted to the reproduction and transformation of discourses in academic milieu.

Teaching and research in Humanities and Social Sciences at university level has inevitable impact on the reproduction of significant social and political discourses in society.<sup>1</sup> Scholars of Humanities and Social Sciences are the ones who produce the bulk of academic texts touching on issues of importance for political debate. They are also the ones who react to various challenges in the public policy community globally and nationally, by transforming dominant discourses according to the logic, or 'culture' of their disciplines or 'tribes'.<sup>2</sup> It is important, therefore, to see what kind of discourses these scholars produce and reproduce in society.

The case of Latvia serves well for this purpose for a number of reasons. Its academic community and higher education system is large enough to be diverse, and small enough to be observable within a single study with the potential for demonstrable conclusions. It is also of a size that make clear assessment of structural factors influencing transformation of academic discourses – such as the effects of funding - feasible.

Latvian higher education system faced most of the challenges described in the *Lessons of Experience* report in 1994. Since the early 1990s, reforms in its academic sector have been considerable and, to a large extent, successful<sup>3</sup> It is also a country that has achieved a remarkable record of democratisation and economic growth for a post-Soviet transition society.

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1 J. Ellison, *The Humanities and the Public Soul*. (Center for Democracy and Citizenship, University of Minnesota, 2001),

2 On the reaction of academic discipline communities to globalisation and other challenges in politics and society, including absorption and transformation of discourses, see P. Trowler, ed. (2001) *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines*, Open University Press, and Id. , ed. (2001) *Captured by Discourse*.

3 See for example A. McGuinness, Jr. (2001) 'Reforms in the Baltics', *International Higher Education*, Fall 2001.

At the same time, the issue of spreading of exclusionary, nationalist and statist discourses is not irrelevant to Latvian society. Often politicians' statements in the media and journalists' observations concerning policy-making processes provoke questions about the depth of democratic orientations in among opinion leaders. Part of political elite still reproduces nationalist and exclusionary discourses that have an impact on ethnic polarization of society.<sup>4</sup> The debate about normative implications of the involvement of 'external' actors – such as Soros Foundation Latvia - in political agenda-setting has been sparked in the summer of 2004 and is still going on, with members of Saeima (Parliament) and National Security Council sometimes labelling the work of networks such as Open Society Institute as a 'threat' to national security. This debate has shown that the concept of open exchange of normative and intellectual influences across national borders in the area of public policy is by no means taken for granted by the public.

In a society with a certain extent of ethnic polarization, it is especially important that intellectual elites and media provide an arena for political debate, thus ensuring the existence of what Habermas terms the public sphere, where informed and responsible critique of dominant elites would be possible.

After more than a decade of political, economic and academic reform, this may be the right time to focus on the discourses produced and reproduced in the academic milieu of Humanities and Social Sciences. One of the questions arising out of the mapping of academic discourses is: what role does the record of university departments' involvement with external actors play in this process?

The goal of this paper is an assessment of the impact of international actors – both EU-related and other (Civic Education Project, International Higher Education Support Programme, Robert Bosch Stiftung, UNDP and others) - on academic departments of Humanities and Social Sciences in Latvia and through them – on discourses produced by scholars across this range of disciplines. The aim is to see to what extent this impact is visible in the introduction of 'new' or 'international' discourses in the academic and educational milieu, whether there is a different extent of absorption or rejection of those discourses in Humanities versus Social Sciences, and what factors limited this impact and led to reproduction of exclusionary, nationalist or racist discourses in some cases.

In the beginning of this research project, it was assumed that when a university department in Latvia in the 1990s chose to engage teaching staff affiliated to organisations with an articulated democratising mission, or participated in projects funded by organizations with democratising agenda, it could be expected that not only new practices, but also new discourses would be introduced. However, there are factors normally influencing educational transfer and the borrowing of discourses. Structural factors, including first of all the existing teaching and research infrastructure, policies and funding patterns, are important, and so are 'cultural' factors, such as the dominant discourses which exist in a given society.<sup>5</sup> It takes effort to introduce new discourses, and even when structural reforms point in the direction of democratisation, disappearance of exclusionary discourses cannot be taken for granted.

## 1.1 Research methods and criteria of analysis

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4 B. Zepa (2005) *Etnopolitiskā spriedze Latvijā: konflikta risinājuma meklējumi*, Baltic Institute of Social Sciences

5 M. Emirbayer and J. Goodwin, Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency, *American Journal of Sociology*, 99 (6) 1994, p. 1447

Through discourse, social actors constitute objects of knowledge, social roles, as well as relations between different social groups. Discursive acts are largely responsible for the construction of particular social conditions. As pointed out by Wodak, de Cillia et al., discursive acts ‘can contribute to the restoration, legitimisation or revitalisation of a social status quo’<sup>6</sup>. Discourse analysis becomes critical when it examines the relationship between language and power, especially focusing on the texts created by representatives of elites.<sup>7</sup> Analysing discourses produced and reproduced by Latvian academics in Humanities and Social Sciences, this paper will strive to map the loci where exclusionist and nationalist discourses are reproduced within the Latvian higher education system (and academic research system associated with it).

In order to see, to what extent academic departments in Humanities and Social Sciences participate in the introduction of liberal discourses in society or, on the contrary, reproduce exclusionary, nationalist or statist discourses, a small systematic study of texts produced by academic personnel working at the departments of the University of Latvia was undertaken. This included analysis of a body of texts produced by scholars in Humanities and Social Sciences – including conference papers, journal and newspaper publications and policy documents produced by the scholars or by government institutions in cooperation with the scholars. Taking into account that it takes time for new discourses to be introduced and developed, publications from the early 2000s – following approximately ten years of political and academic reform – were selected. The methods developed by the school of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) were used to analyse these texts.

The texts selected for analysis had to meet the following criteria:

1. For each department, two academic and/ or policy articles were selected at random from the list of articles produced by lecturers or doctoral students of given department and meeting the criteria described in 2. One policy study or policy document text produced by/ with participation of respective department was analysed as Text 3 of each department sample. In one case, when no policy study or policy document produced with the visible participation of department's lecturers between 2002 and 2005 could be identified, two articles dealing with policy issues were substituted for it.
- 2.
3. The articles had to be published between 2002 and 2005 in one of the academic journals for humanities and social sciences in Latvia – *Latvijas Zinātņu akadēmijas vēstnesis*, *Latvijas vēsture*, *Kentaurs XXI*, or *Letonica*, or in the literary journal *Karogs*, and/or in a national newspaper or on the Internet website of the Latvian policy community – *politika.lv*. Also articles from the conference paper collection *Negotiating Futures*, in which many Latvian researchers took part, were added to the list from which selection was made. When articles had several authors from more than one department, their selection on one department's list automatically selected them for analysis also at another department.
- 4.
5. The lists of identified articles for each department were different in length, because representatives of some departments published more articles than others in the selected sources. (For the full lists of articles from which selection was made, see Appendix I)
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6 R. Wodak, R. de Cillia, M. Reisigl and K. Liebhardt, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, University of Edinburgh 1999, p. 8.

7 T. A. Van Dijk, 'Principles of critical discourse analysis', *Discourse and Society*, 4 (2).

7. The policy studies/ policy documents could have collective authorship and in one case the co-authors came from more than one department. The CDA results for this text were entered under both departments.

Since some of the lecturers published several texts in the eligible sources between 2002 and 2005, and others did not publish any, the samples for some departments contain 2 texts by the same author.

Texts that had as their main topic the issues of citizenship or nationalism were systematically excluded from the selection.

As criteria for analysing the texts the following principles were used:

I. The scale of nationalist/ exclusionary discourse:

1. The analytical category of *access control* as defined by T. Van Dijk was used to identify texts with exclusionary rhetoric. Access control is the extent to which a text can speak of others without including any opposing voices or ambiguities. In other words, access control is control by the authors of a discourse of others' access to its authorship, the control of the 'we' category of the text.<sup>8</sup> The extent to which the author(s) of a text use access control (e.g. use constructions that imply that only one group in society is included in policy debate over some issue) shows whether the text could be described as producing/ reproducing exclusionary and nationalist discourses. The analytical categories of *presupposition* and *justification strategy* as defined by T. Van Dijk were sometimes used to analyse particular ways nationalist or statist discourse was constructed.<sup>9</sup> *Presuppositions* are beliefs or concepts accepted in the text as axioms which do not need further explanation or discussion – i.e. are held by the authors to be self-evident.
2. In texts where a high extent of access control was in evidence, exclusionary strategies of *discursive construction of national identity* (as described, for example, by R. Wodak et al.)<sup>10</sup> were identified.
3. Elements of *racist discourse* as defined by T. Van Dijk were identified.

II. The scale of statist discourse

Instances of *statist discourse* – constructions creating hierarchies in which state is the primary agent of politics and social/cultural change while society is constructed as the object of state interference rather than as a plurality of agents – were identified in analysed texts. In conjunction with nationalist discourse, statist discourse constructs power relations between state and society and between majority and minority groups in society in a hierarchical way, stabilises existing power relations and justifies them.

III. The scale of commercialisation/ internationalisation and professionalisation/ internationalisation discourse.

The texts were also grouped according to the presence of *commercialisation/ internationalisation discourse* (describing processes in society, research and education as driven by market and globalisation, both constructed as threats, and thus 'deviating' from what is assumed to be true values of education and culture), or to the *professionalisation/ internationalisation discourse* (describing processes in society, research and education as moving in the direction of increasing professionalisation

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8 T. A. Van Dijk, 'Principles of critical discourse analysis', p. 270.

9 Ibid., pp. 263, 272.

10 See R. Wodak et al., *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, pp. 10-13.

in adherence to European and international standards). The *professionalisation/ internationalisation discourse* is characterised by frequent references to exogenous examples and theories as discursive framework used for legitimisation of the authors' conclusions. Another type of discourse often present in the analysed body of texts could be described as the *communication discourse*, constituting public policy as a field of informed debate (characterised, for example, by frequent references to 'forum' or 'fora', 'standpoint', 'opinion', 'dialogue' as desirable or existing conditions for making qualified policy choices).

## 1.2 Social Science Departments

1.

### **Department of Sociology**

Of the three texts analysed here, two (one article and the larger-scale policy study) represent the *professionalisation/ internationalisation* discourse, characterised by the extensive use of international academic terminology and frequent references to exogenous examples and theories as references used for legitimisation of the authors' conclusions. Both are characterised by low or negligible extents of access control, avoidance of blaming strategies in regard to minorities, and adherence to strategies problematising the exclusion of ethnic minorities or socially vulnerable groups in the public domain (e.g. 'Analysis of qualitative data indicates that support for political forces in accordance with the ethnicity of politicians is a strategy in shaping ethnic relations... This, in turn, must be seen as a factor which hinders the political participation of the Russian speaking community'). The policy study makes extensive use of collocations such as 'ethnicity as power resource', 'conflicts in ethnic policy as political and social constructs', thus confronting traditional building-blocks of nationalist discourse with analytical categories deconstructing their symbolic power.

One text, on the contrary, displays some extent of *access control* while dealing with issues of ethnicity, language and politics. Terms such as 'ethnic disloyalty' are used without further qualifications, or without problematising their implications. Some groups in society are occasionally described as objects, and not as subjects of public policy, and elements of *statist* and *nationalist discourse* are used, e.g.: 'Involving Russians in cultural projects would significantly foster positive attitude of the members of this group towards the state, greater loyalty towards it... Their joy would be our joy.' In this construction, the writer identifies himself and his 'we-group' with the state, while positioning other group as outsiders who need to develop loyalty (presupposing asymmetric power relations) towards the state as a higher entity.

### **Department of Communication Studies**

Texts produced by the representatives of the Department of Communication Studies and analysed here fall, for the most part, into the category of *professionalisation/ internationalisation* discourses. Frequent references to exogenous examples and concepts are part of discursive framework used to support the validity of the authors' conclusions when describing Latvian situations and contexts in two of the three texts.

One article analysed here, however, differs from the other two texts owing to a greater extent of *commercialisation/ internationalisation* discourse. The discourse of endangered culture/ identity is constructed through the heavy use of the topos of loss and ruin, as in the following examples: 'media no

longer support the temporal and spacial landmarks of culture – on the contrary, those are destroyed by them', 'borders are slipping away', 'traditional communities begin to disappear'. The topos of helplessness is created by the frequent use of passive constructions, such as 'in these circumstances, individual's ability to participate is significantly limited'. The discourse of endangered identity is reinforced by the reference to 'threats', posed by globalisation to 'the development of information space in the context of national culture'.

The text of the larger-scale study analysed here falls within the category of *professionalisation/internationalisation discourse*. It makes extensive use of academic language and international terminology of communication studies, occasionally modifying some terms to suit local dominant discourses: thus, instead of 'nationalist rhetoric' the term 'ethno nationalist rhetoric' is used, since there is no general consensus about the negative connotation of the term 'nationalism' *per se* among the Latvian academic and policy community. At the same time, the text is full of analytical constructions undermining the key elements of nationalist discourse, such as the myth of unity and social homogeneity of the ethnic group, e.g.: 'After the period of ideological homogeneity ('unity'), public discourse gradually recognises that society is a heterogeneous entity, it consists of different social groups that seek to express themselves through the medium of language...'. The study undermines also some of the elements of nationalist discourse that are not problematised in one of the articles analysed above. Thus, it legitimises pluralist value systems, from which plural perspectives on existing power relations can arise: 'Diverse social groups can have different value orientations, they may challenge the dominant discourse, expressing their discontent with the power relations.' It has to be noted, that terms such as 'power relations' and 'dominant discourse' are relatively rarely used in Latvian academic texts, thus the use of these terms here (in a published study supported by the Ministry of Justice and UNDP) is a step towards their legitimisation in Latvian academic and policy discourses.

## **Department of Political Science**

The texts produced by the lecturers of Political Science Department represent *professionalisation/internationalisation discourse*, applying existing reference frames of international relations discourse to the political situation of Latvia in Europe and in international organisations, with frequent references to debate and participatory decision-making both in national and international contexts (*communication discourse*). The texts legitimise the use of exogenous frames of reference to describe Latvian situations and contexts.

The two articles analysed here both demonstrate a lack of stringent access control, and 'open' or pluralist definitions of notions such as 'state', 'sovereignty', and 'citizenship'. Both make extensive use of constructions problematising 'closed' or unilateral interpretation of these notions, e.g.:

'Answering these questions, representatives of both approaches often refer to the notion of sovereignty. I will now try to describe some problems connected with the usage of this term which are relevant especially in the context of constitutionalisation of the European Union.'

The text of longer policy study analysed here also contains many elements of *communication discourse*, legitimising participatory approaches to policymaking and constructing policy as outcome of open debate. Since the study was supported by Soros Foundation Latvia and the author cooperated with the Latvian chapter of Transparency International, the policy discourse promoted by these organisations is also evident in the text. While the study deals predominantly with issues concerning

government policies and legislation, no elements of statist discourse are present in the text.

### **Department of Psychology**

All three texts produced at the Psychology department demonstrate a high extent of *professionalisation/ internationalisation* discourse, with characteristic features including the use of international academic terminology and frequent references to exogenous examples and theories as discursive framework used for legitimisation of the authors' conclusions. Statements that could be interpreted in a unilateral way, characterising a group in society in essentialist terms, are avoided or relativised, e.g. : 'At once, for the sake of clarity, it has to be noted that I speak of a tendency. This should not be taken to mean that every Latvian who took part in the referendum relied primarily on these arguments.' The texts are free of statist discourse, presenting society as plurality of groups with distinct interests as the primary locus of public policy.

The analysed policy study, while supported by a ministry run by a conservative Christian party, maintains discursive independence by consistently avoiding both the discursive framework of decline of traditional values (as maintained in the *commercialisation/ internationalisation* discourse in some humanities departments), and the popular variety of this discourse reproduced by politicians. No elements of nationalist discourse, such as describing lower birth rates as 'decline of the nation', are evident in the text. The text's pragmatic construction presents a balance between the public policy discourse as practiced in Latvia today (speaking of 'marriage' rather than 'relationship' or 'partnership' is one characteristic feature) and the discourse of contemporary gender policy in Western Europe and the USA (thus, the authors state that while promoting the message about the value of marriage, government institutions should avoid 'stigmatising children growing up in single-parent families').

### **Department of Teacher Training**

The first two texts demonstrate low levels of access control and fall into the category of *professionalisation/ internationalisation* and *professionalisation/ communication discourse*. Important features of this discourse, such as the use of international academic vocabulary and high incidence of references to international academic and policy practices, are evident in all three texts. The emphasis on communication, participation and debate, expressed through signifiers such as 'forum' (as locus of debate and public policy), 'participatory decision-making', 'sense of inclusion or exclusion', 'exchange of ideas' is also prominent.

In terms of *statist discourse*, the policy study text differs significantly from the first two. While in both articles the term 'society' (as the locus of agency and policy-making), sometimes with the qualifier 'civil society' is prominent, the policy study speaks at least as frequently of 'the state', producing constructions that imply a statist bias, as in the following example: 'An individual's 'language basket' is to a great extent defined by the needs of society, in other words – by the language policy of the state'. The presupposition in this sentence equates the needs of society with state policy, thus constructing the notion of infallibility of the state. Individuals in society, on the other hand, are supposed to comply with the guidelines provided by state when making their private choices, as in the following sentence:

The image of the state, in its turn, is constructed in exclusionary terms, as in the following quote:

'... in Latvian schools' everyday life (during the breaks, etc.), because of a big number of Russian students, children speak almost only Russian. Schoolchildren at school get used to Russian mentality, and thus a process contrary to the interests of the state happens – Latvian children integrate into Russian society.'

The choice of the term 'state interest', rather than 'state policy', is based on a presupposition that state interests are known, generally accepted and immutable. Thus the policy options taken by political elites are raised to the status of the only legitimate scenario of linguistic interaction. Access control in the sentence suggests that only unilateral movement from alien to Latvian 'mentality' (the casual use of the term itself presupposing consensus and clarity as to what 'mentality' is) and language is legitimate in the context of Latvian school system. Any other variant (including minority and majority students learning from each other, as in the multicultural model of education) is thus delegitimised. The unequivocal use of 'mentality' as an essentialist category in many places throughout the study puts the text within the framework of *nationalist discourse*.

### 1.3 Humanities Departments

#### **Department of Practical Philosophy**

The selected texts are not homogeneous in terms of the extent of access control: thus, while one lecturer in his article problematises the term 'loyalty' and its applicability to political debate, another uses this term in political context without further qualifications thus presupposing its stability and validity for political discourse. At the same time, with some degree of generalisation one can say that levels of access control to categories such as 'nation', 'state', 'society' and 'knowledge' tend to be low in selected texts. Open clauses pointing out that definitions used by the author are not finite, are frequent, and clichés of statist discourse (such as the collocation 'normal civilised state') are subjected to critical analysis. The policy document examined here, due to its different format (draft legal document), does not contain 'open' constructions, however, the prominence of *statist discourse*, though present, is relatively low (one instance of 'state interests' as mentioned separately from 'society interests' and one instance of 'loyalty to the state' without further qualifications, presupposing that these are pre-defined notions). The policy document also contains elements of *professionalisation/internationalisation* and *professionalisation/communication* discourse: e.g. 'the Deputies continue their education, learning about their and other countries' political culture and democracy theory and experience'; 'opposing other person's opinion, Deputies keep in mind human rights principles, and do not use arguments pointing at their opponents' ethnicity, gender, religious convictions or social origin'.

#### **Department of History of Philosophy**

The selected texts suggest that the Department of History of Philosophy is a locus where *nationalist* and *statist discourses* are produced and reproduced, and ideological constructions underpinning these discourses are consciously created. Two of the analysed texts not only reproduce many elements of statist and nationalist discourses, but also provide an explicit framework of ideological justification for them, as in the following quotation:

'National sciences work for the whole society. Parallel to their educational function, they form the theoretical basis for state



ideology and guidelines for cultural events. At the moment, state ideology for the most part develops spontaneously, as a sum of different ideological theses of political parties, but developed states devote much greater attention to the clarification of basic values.'

Demanding the function of 'forming the ideological basis' of the Latvian state for 'national sciences' which they claim to represent, the author also makes heavy use of negative epithets ('debris', 'rubbish') to describe endeavours of individuals who do not conform to 'specifically Latvian spiritual attitudes and values' (thus positioning themselves as arbiter of what belongs and what does not belong to this category):

„National sciences today are increasingly obliged to analyse the relations of globalisation and regionalisation. On the one hand, to do ‚what is not done elsewhere‘, but on the other hand, to shape communication with other cultures and regions. It is the realisation of specifically Latvian spiritual attitudes and values, and the ability to introduce other nations to those... Humanities have to teach wider society, how not to wonder among cosmopolitan debris, and not to get carried away by destructive approaches. There is this impression, that in Latvia at the moment there is no place or money for supporting such intellectual, humanitarian culture, but there is enough money in the country, for active perusal of civilisation's ‚rubbish‘.“

The same text demonstrates high awareness of the role of discourse in communication, including political communication:

„For national sciences, the discourse in which we speak, write and interpret is important... In the Humanities environment, we speak in such pre-historic terms as 'the spirit of the people', 'nationalist values' and so on, while post-modern terms, such as, for example, 'the culture of human rights', we have left for political usage by our opponents – T. Ždanoka [politician from the opposition party *For Human Rights in United Latvia*] and others. Therefore national sciences are a delicate thing – they imperceptibly, but significantly impact society's thinking and political events.“

*Statist discourse* is prominent also in the analysed policy document, which is a project of a priority funding programme for Humanities and Social Sciences *Letonica* (an equivalent of Latvian Studies), which was developed with the participation of representatives of History of Philosophy and Baltic Philology/ Latvian Literature departments. The same tendency to establish stringent access control to what is and what is not legitimate in the study of Latvian culture and society is evident here, as in the following extract:

'With the help of *Letonica* programme it would be possible to found a coordinating centre for preparing fundamental publications in Humanities, in order to avoid the paradoxical situation when the biggest encyclopaedia in Latvia is compiled by a private publishing house, with many ideological and scientific mistakes, while the state does not reflect its 'face' in encyclopaedias...'

The state is thus constructed as the only legitimate source for authorisation of academic and 'ideological' knowledge.

On the commercialisation/professionalisation scale, the texts produced at this department represent the pole of *commercialisation discourse*, e.g.: '(It is necessary) to study specific values and tendencies of life that enter Latvia together with the development of consumer society, materialism and cult of money'; 'to provide a scientific evaluation of changes in Latvian society, thinking, system of values connected with the change from the classical paradigm to the modernity paradigm... de-traditionalisation, new-made values, nihilism, mass society.'

The commercialisation discourse is prominent in the interviews with department lecturers:

'Today there is [among the students] a negative phenomenon – the wish to achieve not academic success, but to get immediate access to money, that is why many bright students go to study more pecuniary professions, for example, at the

Faculty of Economics and Management... Today education is not being perfected, but the main thing is only number of students, number of students, money, money, money.' (Lecturer, interview)

**The differences between the discourses produced by the two philosophy departments – Department of Practical Philosophy and Department of History of Philosophy** – becomes obvious also in the text that represents a dialogue between the members of these departments on the functions of education in relation to knowledge and society. In a discussion entitled 'What does it mean to be educated' the representatives of History of Philosophy department reproduce the *commercialisation/internationalisation* discourse with strong negative connotations attached to the notions of 'market' and 'Europe':

'It seems that the development of higher education programmes is dominated by local professional interests and 'bread' – that is, employers' interests. But this leads to asocial thinking. The only thing all universities have in common is only declarations and rules coming from Europe, where the content is not subjected to doubt or corrected according to our situation. The philosophy of education policy which Europe offers at the moment is oriented towards human being as labour resource, not towards the orientation of human being in the world... The individuals, with their differences and different needs, are as if unnoticeably sacrificed to the dictate of market ideology, which is wrongly identified with democracy and freedom.'

OR

'Latvia is digesting what has started in Western Europe: pragmatism in the word's narrowest sense, devaluation of values goes hand in hand with social policy which believes in the primary meaning of economy for the shaping of human life... In order to balance this ideologically, clichés are invented – for example, about sustainable development. I do not believe in economic determinism, because it only concerns the superficial level in life. The lack of spiritual values makes these other values empty. Read our glossy magazines, and behind the glossy interviews you will see stupidity and shallowness.'

The response of the representative of Practical Philosophy department does not attach less value to the study of Humanities than the previous speakers, but reproduces a different discourse, that of *professionalisation/ communication*:

'I do not agree to this... It is a different matter that we do not clarify sufficiently what is and will be the role of humanities in everyday life, we do not discuss sufficiently how the so-called humanities are understood today and how those should be perceived. I do not think this is the time to feel pleased with ourselves. Quite the opposite – today totally different standards of information are expected from an educated person (even though it sometimes seems that even at the level of European institutions we reduce this to the knowledge of 'right persons', I do not think that such simplification will be effective for a long time), and those standards do not work if not based on critical thinking, capacity to communicate, capacity to analyse complicated problems in one's field... Opportunities for project education should be developed, which, in my opinion, could lead to the disappearance of the acute, old-fashioned opposition between Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences.'

It can be seen from the above quotes that the first two speakers mostly make statements that are 'closed', i.e. pre-defined and not open to debate, thus ensuring a high degree of access control: the meaning of market in relation to democracy, or of sustainable development is not open to alternative interpretation, but set in circumscribed terms, placing the speaker in the position of truth. In contrast to these, the quote from the third speaker contains several 'open' statements implying the need for debate over the definition of key terms and functions, and greater relativisation of the statements made by the speaker, thus implying a critical distance towards one's own utterances. As a result, there is no stringent access control.

**History Departments (History of Latvia + History of Western Europe and USA)**

Three out of four texts produced by the representatives of History of Latvia and History of Western Europe and the USA departments contained cases of stringent access control to the categories of ‚nation‘ and ‚state‘, as in the following example:

This work attempts to reconstruct the history of Latvia in the last century as objectively as possible. Great attention is devoted to dismantling the myths created by Nazi and Soviet propaganda, offering a clear conceptual approach to the explanation of complicated historical sequences and problems, which should foster such understanding of Latvia’s history, which is free from various prejudices and stereotypes. All important historical facts, events and phenomena are examined in the context of European history and evaluated from the perspective of Latvian state and people. Therefore, the most important events of Latvia’s history during the whole century are analysed, based on national, democratic and liberal values.

It can be seen from the above extract that the notions of ‚objectivity‘, ‚people‘, ‚state‘ are strictly circumscribed by the author, permitting only one reading of what it means to be ‚objective‘, and of who ‚the people‘ are, thus excluding those who do not happen to support the version of history presented in the book from the symbolic nation. The construction 'based on national, democratic and liberal values', by lumping 'democratic' and 'liberal' with 'national' de-legitimises alternative readings of 'democratic' and 'liberal' that would not include a nationalist perspective. The quoted text is particularly consistent in reproducing *nationalist discourse*, containing many ‚closed‘ statements establishing access control not only to categories defining the study of history as a scholarly endeavour, but also to categories defining the teaching of history as a subject, e.g.: ‚If only we do not maintain orientation towards articulated Baltocentric view of history, it will be difficult, in the framework of a general history course, to ensure stable knowledge of Latvian history.‘ It is thus made clear that the knowledge of Latvia’s history is only possible through assuming a certain axiological cognitive perspective – the ‚Baltocentric‘ view. The text in question demonstrates also a close link between nationalist and *statist discourse*, as in the following quotation:

‚Also educating and political aspects are important. The teaching of Latvian history as a separate subject would foster the young generation to look at the world and to evaluate events from the position of the Latvian state, thus getting a better awareness of their national identity.‘

The statist bias, expressed through the presupposition that the knowledge of history should imply support for given political system, is a widespread element of dominant discourse concerning interethnic relations in Latvia. Thus, a declaration accepted by the organising committee of the conference 'History of Latvia: an Episode or the Roots of the Nation?', contains the presupposition that the protests of Russian-speaking schoolchildren against the reform of minority education prove that the teaching of history of Latvia in minority schools has been insufficient.<sup>11</sup>

Other instance of access control in selected texts is connected with definitions of historical phenomena and processes, e.g.:

‚The recent research of U. Neiburgs, Dz. Ērglis and Ē. Jēkabsons on resistance movement has on the whole brought new and recognisable results. However, it is incomprehensible why none of these young historians attempts to solve the theoretical aspects of resistance movement... So far no sufficiently clear answer has been given, what was resistance movement in Latvia during World War II, and which groups can and which after all should not be included in this movement, in order not to discredit the movement's notion... In this aspect, local Communist underground remains outside the movement... From the point of view of Latvia's national interests they were rather collaborationists.‘

It can be seen from the above that the author not only puts himself in the position of arbiter as to the ultimate interpretation of history, but also claims the right to define single-handedly what the country's 'national interests' consist in. Historians who do not happen to completely conform to his view, on the other hand, are lumped together as 'young' historians (all historians mentioned in the quotation are

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11 *Latvijas vesture*, 2004, 4 (56)

between 30 and 40 years old). The same text makes extensive use of the *shift of blame* strategy as described by R. Wodak et al. The use of 'territory', as in 'German occupation power was fully responsible for the crimes against civilians on Latvia's territory', and of passive voice constructions, as in 'local inhabitants were drawn into the repressive system', are typical discursive elements of this strategy.

An important element of nationalist discourse in Latvia is the construction of a negative stereotype of migration. The usage of collocations such 'flooding', 'search for better life conditions' to achieve negative characterisation of migration is widespread. Two of the four analysed texts make use of collocations constructing a negative image of migration and groups that had become part of Latvian society as a result of migration. One of the texts constructs a causal link between the existence of negative ethnic stereotypes in Latvian society and the results of migration, thus normalising the social perception of ethnic stereotypes.

One of the four analysed texts falls into the category of *professionalisation/ internationalisation* discourse. It problematises some of the presuppositions actively used in the other texts, such as the collocation of knowledge of history/ loyalty to Latvia, while not problematising the construction of 'loyalty' as political category.

## **Departments of Baltic Philology and Latvian Literature**

Cases of *access control* in the analysed texts are mostly connected with defining the legitimacy/hierarchy of cultures in the territory of Latvia, as in the following examples: 'in late nineteenth century, the Latvian language, one of the small languages of czarist Russia, in its own land was like a grain between the millstones of russification and germanisation', 'our regions... defining what is specifically theirs, at the same time construct the new Latvian identity, which is looking for allies in the traditionally stronger English or German culture and language'. In both cases, the access control is mostly exercised by omission, limiting the construction of Latvian linguistic, territorial and cultural identity to the ethnic Balts, and presenting interaction with other cultures as either conflict (the metaphor of millstones), or a matter of survival in a conflict - English and German cultures as 'allies' in defining the new Latvian identity. The need for 'allies' becomes clearer if put in context with repeated references by one of the country's leading linguists and current Minister of Education, Ina Druviete, to the struggle or 'competition' of languages for domination, in which the wide spread of Russian is still viewed as the main threat.

The described cases of access control point at the presence of *nationalist discourse*, reinforced by a discursive framework opposing tradition and modernity, and the discursive construction of Otherness as an essential or quasi-essential category. These elements are more articulated in the texts of philologists educated in the Soviet period, e.g.: 'In today's dynamic, unstable world, in order to survive, to adapt, the knowledge of other languages is a plus. In the old, traditional worldview, it was important to preserve what is one's own, not thinking much of the foreign and the different, also in the language.' The coexistence and interaction of cultures in modernity is presented as a necessity connected with survival, not as a positive value per se. The notion of 'struggle of cultures' itself is received uncritically – earlier texts (from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), using this metaphor, are quoted without critical distance.

One of the analysed texts reproduces *racist discourse* in relation to Latgalians – the inhabitants of the eastern part of Latvia. According to T. Van Dijk, elite discourse, including research discourse, plays a fundamental role in the perpetuation of racism. Racism, on the other hand, is not limited to discriminating attitudes towards immigrants – it can as well express itself as emphasising differences of minorities from 'us' and de-emphasising similarities, as well as enhancing the exotic, 'strange' nature of the Others. As Van Dijk points out, many of these characteristics may not be explicitly racist, but contribute to an overall stereotypical image of 'our' monocultural society and of 'them' being different and subtly inferior.<sup>12</sup> In the case described here, the author states the purpose of her article as the study of everyday stereotypes, and initially reminds the reader that the term for Latgalians she is going to study - *čangalis* – is in fact pejorative.<sup>13</sup> However, she immediately mitigates the negative perception of the discursive practices involving the use of this word by noting that 'All things strange get noticed, and ridiculed at all times; this is healthy, if, of course, this does not go beyond some subtle borders which cannot be described by words.' In the rest of the article, the author freely uses the word *čangalis* both as an object of linguistic study and – interchangeably – as a synonym to the word 'Latgalian', as in this example: 'Čangalis is not an ethnicity, but partly it is one, because along with other national minorities' culture societies there is also a Latgalian culture society.' The discursive practice of using the pejorative term thus is made neutral, and acceptable. Also another term which, due to the influence of Russian in post-WWII Latvia, today has racist connotations – *žīds* for 'Jew', is used in the article as a neutral word. Psychological 'specificity' of Latgalians is described in essentialist terms in the article:

'As one of the most significant differences, A. Milts mentions that the Latgalians, compared to the Latvians in other districts, have more articulated development of the right hemisphere than the left one. This may be the reason for the Latgalians' irrationality, religiosity, sensitivity, sentimentality... The actress X, whose mother was Latgalian, in fully Latgalian spirit said in her interview to magazine Y about her grandmother: "She is my ideal. Almost without education, but what intelligence of the heart!..."'

Even though positive qualities (sincerity, emotionality) are mentioned, the overall construction is hierarchical, implicitly presenting Latgalians as irrational and less educated, as compared to other Latvians. The article maintains the discursive framework of forced coexistence and opposition of cultures. This is reflected also in the statement:

'Not only Latgalians, who had to coexist with Russians and Belorussians, have flexible backs [metaphor for servility in modern Latvian usage - M.G.], also the people of Kurzeme, whose once quasi-Germanness had at its basis the need to coexist, to apply German culture to their own, put them together. Some preserved their own, enriching it with the foreign, others lost their own, which dissolved in the foreign.'

The policy document produced with the participation of a representative from the Departments of Baltic Philology and Latvian Literature is analysed under the Department of History of Philosophy.

## 1.4 The big picture: departments and discourses

Summing up the conclusions of discourse analysis, the 'maps' of discourses produced by respective departments emerge. Taking first the presence of nationalist discourse as a criterion, one can see that while some individual texts reproducing nationalist discourses have been produced at Social Science

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12 T. Van Dijk, 'Racism, Discourse and Textbooks', <http://www.discourse-in-society.org/teun.html>, last visited on 16.08.2005.

13 An analogue for this would be the word *Paddy* used to describe an Irish person. In the British education system, the term is recognised as racist.

departments, the absolute majority of such texts 'gravitate' towards the Humanities departments, with the important exception of Department of Practical Philosophy (Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1** Nationalist discourse

<i>Department(s)</i>	<i>Text I</i>	<i>Text II</i>	<i>Text III</i>
Communication			
Political Science			
Sociology			
Psychology			
Teacher Training			
Practical Philosophy			
History of Philosophy			
History			
Baltic Philology/ Latvian Literature			

The 'map' of statist discourse more or less repeats the same pattern (Table 1.2)

**Table 2.1** Statist discourse

<i>Department(s)</i>	<i>Text I</i>	<i>Text II</i>	<i>Text III</i>
Communication			
Political Science			
Sociology			
Psychology			
Teacher Training			
Practical Philosophy			
History of Philosophy			
History			
Baltic Philology/ Latvian Literature			

A slightly different picture emerges if one attempts to map the spread of professionalisation/internationalisation and commercialisation/ internationalisation discourses (Table 1.3).

**Table 1.3** Professionalisation/ internationalisation and commercialisation/ internationalisation discourses

<i>Department(s)</i>	<i>Text I</i>	<i>Text II</i>	<i>Text III</i>
Communication			
Political Science			
Sociology			
Psychology			
Teacher Training			
Practical Philosophy			
History of Philosophy			
History			
Baltic Philology/ Latv. Literature			

**It can be concluded that while the professionalisation/ internationalisation discourse permeates most of the texts produced by Social Sciences departments, it is not evident in the texts produced by Humanities departments with the exception of Department of Practical Philosophy. Also the presence of nationalist and statist discourses is much more visible in the texts produced by lecturers at Humanities departments.**

**This may have to do with two factors:**

- 1) the lesser exposure of researchers in Humanities to international academic discourses and public policy discourses (through externally funded activities) and**
- 2) the ideological and discursive frameworks set for government-funded research in Humanities.**

Whether this is indeed so can be seen from the following analysis of activities funded during the 1990s by international donors, and from the analysis of the infrastructure of available funding for research.

## Part II. Funding policies, ideologies and discourses.

### **1.2 International donors and the funding of academic activities: a cross-cut**

In order to make any conclusions concerning the evidence of impact of external donors on academic discourses we first need to see, which departments made use of available external funding from international organisations that came to the country with a democratising mission, and for what types of activities they used it.

For this part of research, expert interviews with at least 2 representatives of each department analysed here served as a basis for analysis and conclusions (for a list of expert interviews, see Appendix 2).

**Table 2.1** Involvement of external (international) donors in the activities of departments and individual lecturers/researchers at the departments. University of Latvia, 1990s.

<i>Department(s)</i>	<i>Department created anew in the 1990s</i>	<i>Types of activities sponsored by international donors (according to interviews)</i>	<i>OSI-related agencies, US and EU government agencies, UN agencies up to 2000</i>
Political Science	Y	Curriculum and programme development, library development, international conferences, international research projects, individual, departmental and interdepartmental research projects, visiting lecturers❖ ('several every year'), exchanges, creating German-Latvian centre for social science literature (DELA), creating Eurofaculty (with the assistance from several EU countries and US), individual mobility	SFL, CEP, HESP, CEU (CRC) UNDP, TEMPUS, Phare, Fulbright, Volkswagen Stiftung
Sociology	Y	Curriculum and programme development, individual, departmental, interdepartmental and international research projects, conferences, visiting lecturers, individual mobility, participation in CEU summer schools/ seminars	SFL, HESP, CEU, UNDP, Phare, Fulbright, DAAD or Robert Bosch  'all donor organisations that there have been in Latvia'
Communication Studies	Y	Curriculum and programme development, library development, individual, departmental, interdepartmental and international research projects, conferences, visiting lecturers, exchanges, individual mobility, participation in CEU summer schools/seminars	SFL, CEP?, HESP, CEU UNDP, Nordic Council, Phare, Fulbright
Psychology	Y	Curriculum development, individual, departmental, interdepartmental and international research projects, visiting lecturers, individual mobility	SFL, CEP, UNDP, Phare, Fulbright
Teacher Training		Curriculum development, book projects, development of state standards of education for schools, individual and international research projects, visiting lecturers, individual mobility	SFL, TEMPUS, World Bank, Robert Bosch, DAAD, British Council, Katolisches Akademisches Austauschdienst



<i>Department(s)</i>	<i>Department created anew in the 1990s</i>	<i>Types of activities sponsored by international donors (according to interviews)</i>	<i>OSI-related agencies, US and EU government agencies, UN agencies up to 2000</i>
Baltic philology/ Latvian literature		Book projects, one course development, visiting lecturers, international conference, individual research projects (also individual involvement in international research projects), individual mobility	SFL, Fulbright, UNDP, TEMPUS, DAAD, Nordic Council, NORFA
History of Latvia/ History of Western Europe and the USA		Book projects, individual research projects, German-Latvian information centre – library, visiting lecturers, individual mobility, conferences	SFL, Robert Bosch, Humboldt Stiftung, Volkswagen Stiftung
Practical Philosophy		Curriculum development, book projects, individual research projects, visiting lecturers, international conferences, individual mobility	SFL, HESP, DAAD, Nordic Council
History of Philosophy		Book translation projects, individual research projects (also individual involvement in international research projects), visiting lecturers, individual mobility	SFL, Fulbright, DAAD, Volkswagen Stiftung

❖ By 'visiting' lecturers here meant only lecturers (Fulbright, CEP, others) teaching for at least one semester  
Abbreviations: SFL – Soros foundation Latvia, CEP – Civic Education Project, HESP – International Higher Education Support Programme, CEU – Central European University, CRC – Curriculum Resource Centre, UNDP – United Nations Development Programme, DAAD – Deutsches Akademisches Austauschdienst

**The nature of activities mentioned by representatives of departments and implemented with the help of external international donors can be roughly subdivided into 2 categories:**

- 1. individual activities involving academic mobility, research, book translation**
- 2. department-based activities involving development of new curricula, programmes, procedures and collective research projects (also involving several departments), as well as organisation of inter-departmental and international conferences.**

**It can be seen from Table 2 that while representatives of both Humanities and Social Sciences departments have taken part in the first (individual) type of activities, the difference lies in the extent of involvement in larger-scale curriculum development and collective research projects (going beyond the boundaries of one department), where the Social Sciences Departments have been more active. This especially concerns activities aimed at the (re-)construction of curriculum and of whole study programmes.**

While changes of curriculum and, to a lesser extent, of teaching methods have taken place in virtually all study programmes of the departments included in this study, the scale of change (including

organisational aspects such as restructuring or creation of new departments, number of international exchange lectureships, such as CEP or Fulbright Fellowships, per department, creation of new departmental libraries) has been greater in the case of Social Science departments.

**Four out of five analysed Social Science departments have been subject to greater organisational transformation than Humanities departments analysed here.** They or the study programmes they implement were created anew, with significant role in this process played by funding and other support from external international donors. In 2000, the departments of Political Science, Sociology and Communication Studies became part of the newly created Faculty of Social Sciences. Thus their administrative and symbolic separation from their earlier 'roots' in the organisational structures of disciplines such as History, Philosophy and Philology was complete. The department of Psychology, likewise a product of transformations that came with democratisation and independence, is part of the (also largely transformed) Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology, so is the Department of Teacher Training. The Faculties of History and Philosophy and of Philology, on the other hand, have preserved their administrative structure from the Soviet times largely unaltered, not counting some restructuring and the disappearance of 'ideological' departments. This leads us to the conclusion that **the impact of external donors on Social Sciences departments was combined with the impact of structural innovation and change.**

The following conclusions are relevant for the present study:

**1. The types of activities implemented with the support of international donor organisations at Social Science departments differed from the types of activities implemented at Humanities department, and more often concerned major structural changes in the organisation of teaching (such as development of new programmes) and collective research projects.**

- **2. Social Science departments have been created anew or underwent great structural changes, including development of study programmes in new disciplines, in the 1990s. This is for the most part not the case with Humanities departments.**
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## **2.2 Attitude towards changes in academic life since the early 1990s**

Interviews with department heads and lecturers have revealed a difference in evaluation of the main aspects of organisational and academic changes that have taken place in Latvia since the late 1980s. While individual lecturers of the Social Sciences departments interviewed for this study differ as to the extent of impact external donors had on the transformation of teaching and research practices at their departments, almost all assessments coincide in describing the changes that took place in their area in the 1990s in terms of *internationalisation* and *professionalisation*, moving towards what many called 'international' or 'western' standards in teaching and research. Internationalisation is mentioned also by the lecturers of the Humanities departments, however, in their interviews processes connected with the opening up of their academic domain towards the west are seen as more contradictory, often with negative connotations of *commercialisation* and erosion of what is viewed as 'true' standards of scholarship. The impact of external donors is evaluated differently, with more emphasis on the funding inequalities inherent in the positions of Humanities and Social Sciences and sometimes with emphasis on the internal inequalities of funding in international projects, e.g.: 'I know the rules set by the European Commission, I know that a certain Heinrich from Denmark is getting several times as much for the same work that I am doing' (Lecturer, departments of Baltic Philology/ Latvian Literature).

While the reconstruction of study programmes has taken place everywhere, in the Humanities the interviews reveal that it was first and foremost viewed as reconstruction/change of ideological approach. When asked about the main changes in academic life since 1991, 'creative freedom, demise of Marxist ideology' and 'disappearance of ideological pressure' were mentioned first of all, along with complaints about imperfect and scarce funding systems, lack of interest/ understanding on behalf of politicians and – at least in two cases – disorientation and moral problems arising either from 'the lack of common state ideology' or from 'the new ideologies' of the free market. While they deplored the presence of the Soviet ideology, many lecturers in the Humanities are the ones who express explicit or implicit desire to participate in the construction of a new state ideology, as both the interviews and the texts analysed in the current study reveal:

'Moral problems are left on the margins, at the moment we lack a common state ideology. I sometimes say – we have minister for this and minister for that, but there is no minister for ideology... Some new state ideology has to be created, and that needs a scientific basis' (Lecturer, Department of Baltic Philology).

A quotation from Robert Bosch Lecturer Anuschka Tischer, speaking of the History Departments, illustrates a situation which is common, with some exceptions, also in other Humanities departments:

'Historical research in Latvia is extremely nationally oriented. At the moment, there is a general consensus between society and historians, that identity should be constructed of national categories. 'On the territory of today's Latvia' is a typical extension to the titles of research papers, even if the research is about burial culture in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, as if the political transformation processes, ethnic migrations and everything that usually makes up history, have left no traces, as if borders themselves are not first of all a product of historical development... This national self-limitation, however, is an obstacle to the integration into international academic community, which would have improved the academic level (Tischer, 2005).'

Putting this statement in context, it is important to add that while historians stressing their adherence to the 'international' or 'European' paradigm are also represented at the History departments, their impact is less visible in public debate, since they are compartmentalised within the (scarcely funded) areas of Medieval or Early Modern History, not in the prioritised (in terms of policy debate and research funding) area of twentieth-century history.

Interviews with some lecturers and researchers confirm the existence of the belief that peculiarities of Latvian culture, language, literature and history cannot be easily 'translated' into the language of international scholarship:

'We have to consider access to literature. I assume that for political scientists or economists there is no great difference, if you read a good book which is published in England or America, but in our faculty, where many things are connected with *Letonica* studies, there are no such textbooks, and we still have to practice the oral genre and to work proceeding from the real situation.' (lecturer, Department of History of Philosophy)

The existence of a similar attitude to the uniqueness and 'untranslatability' of Latvian experience also among the younger generation of future researchers is critically noted in an interview by a lecturer of a Social Science department:

'In a seminar in Denmark, students from different countries were given a task – to solve an imaginary problem in an editorial office. Students from other countries came back, each group with their solution. The Latvian group came back without a solution, saying that the situation described in the task was untypical for Latvia and therefore not relevant to them.' (Lecturer, Department of Communication).

Those representatives of Humanities departments who view these developments more critically and who analytically distance themselves from the aspects of stagnation in their disciplines, tend to speak

of 'insufficient openness', 'the lack of interaction between Humanities and Social sciences', pointing out that 'each discipline is in its own shell'.

A very different picture emerges from the interviews at the Social Sciences departments. There, the emphasis is on the internationalisation of academic content and research and teaching processes, and on the growth of professional standards (viewed also, essentially, in connection with internationalisation – e.g. 'now we gradually reach western criteria'). The word 'internationalisation' itself was mentioned by some interviewees. Creation of study programmes and new curricula, sometimes from scratch, is described as a process that involved the influence of external donors and international academic associations, while also involving participatory approach (e.g., consulting with students in the process of curriculum development).

Two conclusions concerning the attitude of academic staff towards changes in academic life in the 1990s are particularly relevant for this study:

- **1. There is a difference in attitude towards the changes that took place in academic life during the 1990s between the lecturers of Humanities and Social Sciences departments. While the lecturers of Social Sciences departments for the most part evaluate the impact of internationalisation of academic life as positive, lecturers in the Humanities express concerns about the commercialisation of academic life which, in their opinion, undermines academic standards.**
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- **2. Lecturers at the departments of Humanities frequently view external forces, such as international influences and free market, as a source of threats for the social and cultural mission of their disciplines, and occasionally express regrets that 'the state' or politicians do not support them sufficiently in order to create new ideological framework for the preservation of 'national identity' or 'traditional values' from these perceived threats.**

### **2.3 Research funding infrastructure: university-based researchers in Humanities and Social Sciences in Latvia vis-à-vis government and international donors**

As a locus of academic teaching and research, the development of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University has to be viewed from this dual functional perspective. The lecturers interviewed in the course of this project are also active researchers – it is important, therefore, to see what kind of policy and funding infrastructure defines the priorities of their research activities.

**As in most countries of CEE, towards the end of the 1990s international donors that came to Latvia with funding specifically earmarked with the message of (re)constructing democracy – such as OSI-related agencies – have decreased in their relative importance in the spectre of available sources of funding.**

Today, EU funding sources and, in some cases, government sources of funding are at the top of priority list. These, however, are more readily available to researchers in Natural and sometimes Social Sciences, and only in specific areas are accessible to the researchers in Humanities. The Latvian Council of Science – the body responsible for distributing government research funding in Latvia – offers grants across a number of disciplines, including Humanities and Social Sciences.

Research priorities in Latvia, according to policy documents, include the so-called *Letonica* – what

could be described as 'Latvian Studies', covering areas of linguistics, literature, cultural anthropology, history, ethnography, and philosophy. As can be seen from the policy document describing this programme, the social, political and educational function of *Letonica* is at least partly ideological and viewed as such by the authors of this programme. Funding made available to Humanities through the Latvian Council of Science is also selective and does not cover topics of research going beyond Latvian subject-matter (e.g. European literature).<sup>14</sup>

Modest, but symbolically significant Latvian government funds are available to historians studying the events of the Second World War (including the Holocaust) and the ensuing Soviet repressions during the 1950s.

Within the modest limits of available government support, the creation of funding guidelines for research is at least partly in the hands of the administrative and academic elite of Humanities departments of the University of Latvia, which often coincides with the administrative elite of Humanities research institutes. The institutes (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Latvian Language Institute, Latvian History Institute and others) are separate administrative entities of the University, which formerly functioned under the auspices of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, and embodied the Soviet principle of administrative separation of research and teaching. After the recommendations developed by the Danish Research Council in 1992, the process of integration of research institutes into universities was started. The reform of the administrative system of research in Latvia was also influenced by the report of National Science Foundation European bureau (1996), by a report prepared by Coopers and Lybrand in 1997 (commissioned by the EC) and by the European Commission 'Agenda 2000' conclusions.<sup>15</sup>

The extent of integration of humanities research institutes into University of Latvia differs on individual basis. Some lecturers at University departments have spent most of their academic career at the institutes, and some are not connected with the institutes at all. For researchers in the Humanities employed both by University departments and the institutes, funding opportunities through government grant schemes such as *Letonica* are a significant source of support for their research. Their inclusion in these grant schemes, on the other hand, depends on the same administrative elite which leads Humanities departments and research institutes. Coordinators of departmental sections of grant projects awarded by the Council of Science can often be heads of University departments or research institutes, and the same administrators sometimes act or acted as Latvian coordinators for EU-funded projects under the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Frameworks. What is more, the chairperson and several members of the United Expert Commission on Humanities and Social Sciences, responsible for approval of project applications for Council of Science grants are also heads of Humanities departments or institutes. The transparency of this system is limited, because one researcher can be involved in many projects funded through different channels, even though most of the government funding would be coming from the same source. The concentration of decision-making powers in the hands of a limited circle of leading researchers, on the other hand, is very high.

**The infrastructure of government funding for research in Social Sciences and Humanities inevitably circumscribes the choice of legitimate research topics to areas that are viewed as significant to the Latvian state identity.**

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<sup>14</sup> Data about project topics and grants awarded by the Latvian Council of Science is available in Latvian and partly in English at <http://www.lzp.lv/latv/centr.htm>

<sup>15</sup> National Concept on the Development of Research in Latvia, 1998, <http://www.lzp.lv/latv/centr.htm>

It would be a mistake to state that government funding in the Humanities is equally available for research on all 'Latvian' topics – the likelihood of a serious grant being awarded for the study of the political culture of aristocratic landowners in Courland during the Enlightenment is not high. A cursory analysis of the topics of research selected for funding in the 2004 project of *Letonica* programme and of the grants awarded by the Latvian Council of Science confirms this conclusion.<sup>16</sup> Some Humanities researchers at the University of Latvia research institutes (e.g. the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology) take part in applied research projects – for example, those funded by Society Integration Foundation (EC (Phare)/ Latvian government), however, their participation in such projects is proportionately lower than that of social scientists.

In the Social Sciences, on the other hand, priority is given to research on the political, social and cultural phenomena in today's Latvia from the perspective of development, European integration or internationalisation. The titles of research projects are influenced by EU institutional discourse and the discourse of other international organisations, such as UNDP. Government funding may be limited, but owing to the international political context and membership in the EU and NATO it is available for studies of topics such as European integration, cooperation for development, gender equality, or even for the study of the influence of elite discourses on interethnic relations. It may come in different shapes: through government institutions commissioning policy research, or through the University itself.<sup>17</sup> And it is still supplemented by EU, UNDP and other international funding sources for applied research, available through tenders and open competitions. These sources are mutually independent and only seldom the channels through which they are available coincide with the triadic hierarchy of Department - Research Institute - Council of Science. **The ideological limitations effectively imposed through the configuration of available funding on researchers in the Humanities are thus virtually non-existent in the Social Sciences.**

As a result, the chances of a researcher in the Humanities to acquire funding for research on a topic not previously circumscribed for him or her by an ideological programme, embodied in government funding guidelines, are much lower than the chances of a social scientist who chooses to adapt a more international and possibly more critical approach to the Latvian social and political reality.

On the other hand, many of the funding opportunities for applied research that offer themselves to scholars in the Social Sciences, come from international organisations that promote international policy discourses – e.g. human development discourse (UN, UNDP), European integration discourse (European Commission, other EU agencies), social and ethnic integration discourse (Phare via Society Integration Foundation – co-funded by Latvian government), human rights discourse (OSI, Council of Europe, UN, EU agencies, other organisations), gender equality discourse (EU, UN, OSI) and others.

## **2.4 Involvement in policy debate**

It was observed above that researchers in Social Sciences are under greater pressure to engage in applied research through their practical involvement in applied projects funded by Phare, UNDP and other international funding sources, with no equivalent exposure in the Humanities. This implies that representatives of Social Sciences are pragmatically involved in policy debate involving diverse

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.lzp.lv/latv/centr.htm>

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Larger-scale interdisciplinary research projects in Social Sciences at the University of Latvia in 2003 and 2004 included topics such as Conceptual framework of Europeanisation, Innovation policies in the EU, Social processes in Latvia and the influence of European integration.

communities and social groups, and the debate has been until now stimulated by UNDP and other international agencies. The involvement of Humanities scholars in the Latvian policy debate has been predominantly of a different character – through conferences and publications in the media, as well as through applied projects in more limited areas (compared to, e.g., public administration reform) – such as improving the methods of Latvian language teaching. The two types of involvement imply different models of interaction.

**While presenting research results at conferences or publishing articles in the media is unquestionably important, the impact of direct involvement in applied research, such as preparation of UNDP Human Development Reports, on the transformation of academic discourse may have been greater because it implied direct engagement and dialogue with diverse groups within the policy community, as well as a more direct engagement with discourses represented by international agencies.**

The exposure of researchers from selected Social Science departments, for example, to human development discourse, can be traced from a brief analysis of their involvement in the preparation of Human Development Reports for Latvia. The Report for 2000/2001 was prepared by a team headed by the head of Sociology Department, with representatives of Sociology Department and Political Science Department. Sociologists and political scientists from other universities in Latvia also took part in the project. The Human Development Report 2002/2003 was prepared by a team including head and several representatives of Psychology Department, as well as two lecturers from Political Science department. Interviews with participants of these research teams in the press support the conclusion that they were aware of the critical role their research will play in the public sphere: thus, head of Sociology Department called the Report which he edited 'a weapon for the defence of public interests'.

Whether the discourses promoted by OSI were as effectively absorbed by departments, is a more complicated issue, since this support, as a rule, came through individual channels such as CEP and Robert Bosch lecturers, trips to CEU events, or book and conference projects supported through Soros Foundation Latvia. Interviewed representatives of departments had difficulty identifying the impact specifically of OSI-supported activities, even though at all selected departments some activities were implemented. Some of the texts included in analysis sample and demonstrating unequivocal presence of statist and nationalist discourses in fact come from former grantees of OSI-funded education development projects, whose political or institutional embeddedness (at the centre of government funding system for Humanities) makes them unlikely promoters of open society ideas.

We can thus conclude that:

- 1. The configuration of research funding infrastructure available to Latvian scholars in Humanities and Social Sciences differs significantly, with funding for Humanities coming from the most part through the Council of Science with distinct ideological guidelines attached to it. The sources of available research funding in Social Sciences are more diversified.**
- 2. The exposure of researchers in Social Sciences to international policy discourses (such as human development discourse, human rights discourse, gender equality discourse) was and is much greater owing to their involvement in applied research projects funded by UNDP and other UN agencies, EU agencies and programmes, and other international organisations promoting those discourses. No equivalent exposure is evident in Humanities.**

## Conclusions

In the first part of this paper, it was argued that two factors:

1. lesser exposure of researchers in Humanities to international academic discourses and public policy discourses (through externally funded activities) and
2. the ideological and discursive frameworks set for government-funded research in Humanities

influenced the limited spreading of internationalisation/ professionalisation discourses and the relative proliferation of nationalist and statist discourses in the Humanities milieu.

At this stage, it is not to be expected that a large amount of international funding will descend on Humanities departments in Latvia with the aim of promoting liberal discourses. Nevertheless, there are several ways in which the discursive separation between Humanities and Social Sciences milieus could be overcome and the sense of 'external threat' from the forces of free market and internationalisation among Humanities academic community can be diminished.

One such way is greater interaction and cross-fertilisation among Humanities and Social Sciences milieus. Most lecturers and researchers in Social Sciences interviewed for this study (those who began their career in Latvia before 1990) came from Humanities departments – however, most of them have also 'cut the bond' connecting them to those departments.

Another way is providing a greater incentive for Humanities scholars to get involved in projects touching on issues of public policy in areas other than just funding for Humanities research and ethnic politics (the two areas where their involvement was most in evidence so far) – dealing with topics of development and knowledge-based society, from education policies to adjust to future challenges of the labour market, to Latvia's contribution to EU policy debate. This is not to say that immediate excellence of input from Humanities departments in projects in these policy areas can be achieved. However, the same problem was faced when lecturers from fledgling Social Sciences departments were first involved in public policy projects in the mid-1990s. Many of them have learned by doing – hence their comparative advantage today.

## Appendix I



I. Complete list of texts from which articles were selected for analysis (random selection from each department list)

(The titles of most articles are translated from Latvian)

#### Communication

I. Šulmane, 'Who profits from such media reality', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003)  
<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107705&lang=lv>

S. Kruks, 'Latvia in the Mirror of Turkey', Public policy portal politika.lv (2003),

<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107899&lang=lv>

I.Šulmane, 'Almost nothing new', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004)

<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108383&lang=lv>

S. Kruks, 'Discursive inability', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004)

<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108510&lang=lv>

I. Šulmane, 'Are Russians coming to Latvia?', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004)  
<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=109251&lang=lv>

S. Kruks, 'Information flow in the Soviet Union: synergetic approach', *Negotiating Futures – States, Societies and the Future*, collection of conference papers, Riga 2005.

O. Skudra, 'Western model' without vision', *Negotiating Futures – States, Societies and the Future*, collection of conference papers, Riga 2005.

**I. Brikše, 'Understanding information environment in Latvian context', *Negotiating Futures – States, Societies and the Future*, collection of conference papers, Riga 2005.**

S. Kruks, 'Dilemma of representation of continuity and change', *Letonica* 2005, 13

#### Political Science

T. Rostoks, 'Darkness at the end of the tunnel?', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002),  
<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=102913&lang=lv>

T. Rostoks, 'Are politicians guilty of euroscepticism?', *Neatkarīgā rīta avīze*, 10.05.2002.

T. Rostoks, 'Myths about the Kaliningrad area', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002)  
<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=103473&lang=lv>

V. Kalniņš, 'What is the sense of legal presumption', *Diena*, 09.05.2002.

V. Kalniņš, 'Instruments against corruption are not sharp', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002),  
<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=103803&lang=lv>

V. Kalniņš, 'The Hong Kong model against corruption in Latvia', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002)  
<http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=104762&lang=lv>

V. Kaniņš, 'Corruption – the struggle is not yet over', *Diena*, 30.08.2002.

V. Kalniņš, 'The 8<sup>th</sup> Saeima should really start to fight corruption', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=104515&lang=lv>

- Ž. Ozoliņa, 'Does foreign policy play a role in pre-election struggle', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=103709&lang=lv>
- Ž. Ozoliņa, 'Why the EU needs us?', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=105171&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, 'Go there, I don't know where', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=106182&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, 'Latvian corruption will have bad times in Europe', *Diena*, 16.09.2003.
- I. Ijabs, 'About the sustainability of Christian education project', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=106861&lang=lv>
- I. Ijabs, 'The best union money can buy', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107074&lang=lv>
- T. Rostoks, 'No changes in the western front', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=106210&lang=lv>
- T. Rostoks, 'National convention : lukewarm discussion on the future of EU', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=106348&lang=lv>
- T. Rostoks, 'How will Latvia's inhabitants be able to influence decisions in the EU ? ', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107234&lang=lv>
- J. Rozenvalds, 'Democracy in the shadow of Iraq', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=105902&lang=lv>
- J. Rozenvalds, 'Ethnic groups in Latvia in search for normality', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107749&lang=lv>
- I. Ijabs, 'New sovereignty: EU constitution between self-interest and self-reflection', *Latvijas vēsture*, 2004, 1 (53)**
- I. Ijabs, 'Tunnel at the end of the light', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108162&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, 'Was there 'new era' on the anti-corruption front ? ', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108229&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, 'The Corruption Prevention and Combatting Bureau independence trap', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108508&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, 'Citizens as observers and evaluators of party campaigns', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=110013&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, T. Tisenkopfs, 'Responsible administration against hidden politics', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=102885&lang=lv>
- V. Kalniņš, T. Tisenkopfs, 'Public accountability in Latvia's politics and administration', *LZA Vēstis*, 2002, 4-5-6 (56)
- Ž. Ozoliņa, 'Changeable states in a changeable international environment', *Latvijas vēsture*, 2004, 1 (53)**
- T. Rostoks, 'European foreign policy : better with constitution than without', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107234&lang=lv>
- J. Rozenvalds, 'A crisis of the culture of monologues', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=102285&lang=lv>

J. Rozenvalds, 'School reform 2004 – memories about the future', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108349&lang=lv>

V. Kalniņš, 'Lobbying and its disclosure in the parliament', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2005) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=111005&lang=lv>

J. Rozenvalds, 'The evaluation of the dynamic of development of Latvian democracy', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2005) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=111466&lang=lv>

V. Kalniņš, 'The impact of partial interests on policy making in Latvia : challenges for a new democracy and a policy proposal', *Negotiating Futures – States, Societies and the Future*, collection of conference papers, Riga 2005.

F. Rajevska, 'Disorder in the remuneration system – challenge for Latvia's Europeanisation policy', *Negotiating Futures – States, Societies and the Future*, collection of conference papers, Riga 2005.

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T. Tisenkopfs, V. Kalniņš, 'Responsible administration against hidden politics', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=102885&lang=lv>

T. Tisenkopfs, V. Kalniņš, 'Public accountability in Latvia's politics and administration', *LZA Vēstis*, 2002 , 4-5-6 (56)

T. Tisenkopfs, 'Open public policy and participation of society in public administration', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=104797&lang=lv>

T. Tisenkopfs, 'On hopes and escape: science and sustainable development', *LZA Vēstis*, 2002 , 4-5-6 (56)

B. Bela-Krumiņa, 'The life of narrative in the language: narrative strategies in Latvian life stories', *Karogs*, 2003 (10)

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A. Stepčenko, 'Voluntary work in Latvia and in the West', *LZA Vēstis*, 2004, 58 (5)

M. Brants, 'Factors, which defined economic mobility in the time of rapid social change in Latvia', *Negotiating Futures – States, Societies and the Future*, collection of conference papers, Riga 2005.

B. Bela-Krumiņa, 'Interpretation of wedding traditions in life stories', *Letonica* 2005, 13

A. Tabuns, 'Segregation or integration', *Diena*, 20.05.2005.

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I. Austers, 'What were the arguments of Latvians and ethnic minorities for and against EU accession?', Public policy portal politika.lv (2004), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=108318&lang=lv>

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I. Druviete, 'Handbook for overthrowing stereotypes', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=103564&lang=lv>

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D. Markus, E. Papule et al., 'The role of teacher in bilingual education: Latvia's experience and prospects', *LZA Vēstis*, 2002, 1 (58)

**T. Koķe, 'Work without effect', published on Public policy portal politika.lv (2003)**

I. Druviete, 'Framework Convention on minorities: we shall ratify after detailed evaluation', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=106046&lang=lv>

I. Druviete, 'Our language: part of Latvia's or EU's identity?', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004)

**T. Koķe, 'Can history help to live better?', *Latvijas vesture*, 2004, 4 (56)**

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S. Lasmane, 'Panoptism and the revivability of soul', *Karogs*, 2002 (11)

S. Lasmane, 'Ethics and pathology of political activity', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2002) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=104285&lang=lv>

J. Celma, 'Idea as power', *Kentaurs*, XXI 2002 (29)

A. Svece, 'Political correctness and the Others', *Diena*, 17.07.2002

S. Lasmane, 'Communication event', *Karogs*, 2003 (8)

A. Svece, 'Two-room flat of information', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2003), <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=107623&lang=lv>

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A. Svece, 'Subjective thoughts', Public Policy Portal politika.lv (2004) <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=109063&lang=lv>

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I. Šuvajevs, 'Technologies of Power', *Kentaurs XXI*, 2002 (29)

**E. Buceniece, M. Rubene, M. Kūle, 'What does it mean to be educated?', *NRA*, 16.01.2004 – together with the Department of Practical Philosophy**

I. Šuvajevs, 'Eroticisation of the body', *Kentaurs XXI*, 2005 (36)

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I. Feldmanis, 'German times' in Latvia: topical research problems and solutions', *Latvijas vēsture*, 2003, 3 (51)

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A. Stranga, 'Political development of Latvia in the time of parliamentary democracy', *Latvijas vēsture*, 2005, 1 (57)

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E. Eglāja-Kristsons, 'Speaking like a wise man in an oak tree', *Karogs* 2002 (5)

I. Kalniņa, 'P. Brūveris' way home', *Karogs* 2002 (6)

I. Kalniņa, 'God's people in a weary motherland', *Karogs* 2002 (8)

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- S. Radzobe, 'Mystery and the 20<sup>th</sup>-century European theatre', *LZA Vēstis*, 2001, 1 (56)
- A. Cimdiņa, 'Ojars Vācietis' intertextuality', *Karogs* 2003 (11)
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- J. Kursīte, S. Laime, 'Culture signs in Alsunga', *Letonica*, 2003, 9
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- E. Eglāja-Kristosone, 'A poem by I. Ziedonis + krishnaite melody = Latvian folklore?', *Letonica*, 2004, 11
- S. Kļaviņa, 'Karļa Milēnbaha un Josefa Zubatija dialogs vēstulēs', *LZA Vēstis*, 2004, 58(3)**
- J. Kursīte, 'Virka area in legends and tales', *Letonica*, 2005, 13

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S. Kruks, I. Šulmane, *Development of Civil Society and Integration: the discourse of the press and politicians during the 8. Saeima (Parliament) election campaign*, Riga 2002

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