

Negotiating gendered transnationalism and nationalism in post-socialist Latvia

Mara Lazda*

*Department of History, Bronx Community College, The City University of New York, New York, NY,
USA*

(Received 26 August 2016; accepted 9 June 2017)

This article examines how gender equality activists in post-socialist Latvia negotiate national and transnational frameworks in their campaigns. The case study for this analysis is the 15-year evolution of one gender equality non-governmental organization (NGO), the Resource Center for Women, Marta, in Riga. RCW Marta's work has resulted in significant steps in policy reform and broader social awareness regarding questions of gender equality. In doing so, it bridges essentialist, patriarchal conceptions of the Latvian nation-state and a transnational European feminist narrative. The experience of RCW Marta affirms the continued relevance of the nation, though a redefined one, within transnationalism, which in turn contributes to a rethinking of post-socialism as a spatial and analytic category.

Keywords: nationalism; transnationalism; NGOs; gender; democratization; post-socialism; Latvia

In January 2015, Latvia took its turn holding the presidency of the European Union (EU). A member of the EU since 2004 and of the eurozone since 2014, this designation affirmed Latvia as a full-fledged member of Europe since the reestablishment of its independence.¹ At the same time, Latvians have had concerns about how membership in the transnational community may undermine the stability of the nation. Open borders and limited economic prospects have encouraged Latvians to leave: 20,119 people emigrated in 2015 with the EU as the destination for the majority of emigrants (Central Bureau of Statistics n.d.). The government's decision to accept North African, Middle Eastern, and Asian refugees in Latvia has also met resistance and fear of a culturally different population that may not assimilate (Martyn-Hemphill and Doerbeck 2015). Politicians and private citizens see pressures to incorporate European directives into national legislation as threats to Latvia's founding values. Recently, a perceived threat was the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). In the legal analysis commissioned by the Ministry of Justice, attorney Baiba Rudevskā objected to several instances where she found the convention in conflict with the Constitution of Latvia and its founding principles. In particular, she was concerned that the Convention undermined Latvian men's rights and honor. The preamble of the Istanbul Convention, Rudevskā reported, states that "violence

*Email: mara.lazda@bcc.cuny.edu

against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women and men, which has led to domination over ... women by men” (Rudevska 2016, 23). She argued that this statement on gendered power relations contradicted the preamble of the Constitution, which declares that “the nation of Latvia honors its freedom fighters.” The freedom fighters in the wars of independence were primarily men, Rudevska pointed out – then how can Latvians support the idea that men historically have dominated women? Further, she asserted, Article 1 of the Constitution states that Latvia is a democratic republic, which forbids the government to impose any ideology – in this case “radical feminism” – on the republic’s population (2016, 28). Not all government officials were persuaded by this argument, and the Convention was signed by the Minister of Welfare in May 2016. It has not yet been ratified, however, and debate continues (“Reirs” 2016).

The ongoing controversy surrounding the Istanbul Convention is indicative of how national and transnational politics are played out through campaigns for gender equality in post-socialist Europe.² Transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been central players in these campaigns, and their support of local NGOs in the introduction of gender equality legislation is generally recognized (Johnson 2009; Fábíán 2014). This article traces the evolution of a Latvian NGO: The Resource Center for Women, Marta (RCW Marta) to examine the on-the-ground negotiation of transnational and national narratives.

The first part of the article reviews the scholarship on gender politics in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Second, I define the context of RCW Marta’s founding and work in the gender and national landscape of Latvia since 1991. Then, I discuss the evolution and work of RCW Marta to examine how activists engage transnational and national gendered narratives, focusing on their campaigns against gender violence. Finally, I consider how the experience of RCW Marta provides insight into the reciprocal relationship of national and transnational identities but also contributes to a rethinking of post-socialism as a spatial and an analytical category, challenging the dichotomy “West” and “East.”³

Why select RCW Marta as a case study? There are several gender equality NGOs in Latvia, including the Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia, Women’s Rights Institute, and the Women’s NGO Cooperative Network of Latvia. These organizations have contributed significantly to promoting gender equality and merit discussion in a broader study on gender equality activism. The aim of this article, however, is to focus on gender activist engagement of national and transnational narratives, and RCW Marta is a particularly useful case study for several reasons. First, while RCW Marta is a Latvian NGO, the impetus for RCW Marta’s founding came from Marthaförbundet, an association of Swedish minority women of Finland. Transnational negotiation between West and East was integral to RCW Marta’s founding. Second, RCW Marta’s founding mission statement linked an inclusive definition of the nation with gender equality. It sought both to “foster the development of gender equality” and to “lessen social and ethnic tension” (Report 2001, 6). Third, RCW Marta has had a consistent presence for over 15 years. As such, it provides a considerable source archive: evidence used in this article includes RCW Marta’s staff meeting minutes, reports, press articles, and interviews. Finally, RCW Marta’s experience is a useful case study for understanding national and transnational narratives as its clients represent all groups of Latvia’s diverse population.

Gender and post-socialism

There is a well-established body of scholarship of gender politics in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Much of this work addresses two ways in which national and transnational actors have shaped ideas of gender in the post-socialist context.

First, post-socialist national leaders promoted “neotraditional” gender roles, which established for women and men distinct roles in society.⁴ This generally meant the feminization of the domestic sphere and the masculinization of the public sphere, often excluding women from positions of political power. Women were idealized as mothers, keepers of tradition and family but also objectified and sexualized (Watson 1993; Johnson and Robinson 1997, 10). Debates on reproductive rights and pronatalist policies became opportunities for governments to distinguish themselves from their socialist predecessors and to “reclaim” national narratives (Funk and Mueller 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000, 22). After decades of gender equality activism, neotraditional gender values are still held by government representatives as well as promoted by increasingly vocal and organized “anti-gender” movements (Heinrich Böll Foundation 2015; Kováts and Põim 2015; Cleuziou and Drenberger 2016).

Second, transnational gender equality NGOs flooded from “West” into the “East” as part of a general “NGOization” of civil society (Lang 2012, 13, 63–64). The influence of NGOs has received both praise and criticism. Scholars observe that the funding and transnational support brought by Western NGOs made it possible for activists, especially working-class women, to commit to the work they do (Guenther 2011, 876–877). The external recognition by Western NGOs contributed to the legitimacy of Central and Eastern European activists within their own countries (Roth 2007, 474). The relationship between transnational and local NGOs has influenced directly gender equality policy, especially legislation against domestic violence (Hemment 2007; Johnson 2009; Fábíán 2010a, 2014; Ivancheva 2015, 46).

Scholars and local activists identify also detrimental consequences of the role of transnational NGOs in gender equality politics. Western organizations imposed their own ideologies and agendas, often through a neoliberal framework, that failed to consider fully the experiences of women under socialism and how that informed their approaches to feminism (Funk 1993, 2006; Šmejkalova-Strickland 1995; Watson 2000; Ghodsee 2004; Ivancheva 2015). The “clash of feminisms” (Ghodsee 2004, 732), between West and East resulted in the deradicalization of feminism and the failure of a broader grass roots feminist movement to take hold (Ivancheva 2015). The expansion of the EU and gender mainstreaming directed from above exacerbated existing divisions and tensions between East and West (Weiner 2009).

There is also a growing body of scholarship that identifies the emergence of a less hierarchical relationship between East and West and greater “mutual exchanges” (Funk 2007; Cerwonka 2008; Fábíán 2010b, 2014; Fuchs and Hinterhuber 2015, 9; Pares Hoare 2016). In post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, Aksana Ismailbekova sees more dialog within national ideologies as well, where women, while limited to the domestic sphere, as the keepers of tradition have negotiated “powerful influence nationally” (2016, 278).

This article builds on previous scholarship to analyze the interplay between national and transnational ideas in the work of gender equality activists. I use transnational to refer to organizations and networks that transcend the borders of a nation-state. In Latvia, as through much of East Central Europe, transnational has come to mean “West,” “US,” or “EU” entities with “supranational” feminist ideas (Fábíán 2014, 2; Fuchs and Hinterhuber 2015, 3). I understand transnational as a “category of analysis” that emphasizes the

constructed, “hybrid” nature of categories such as gender and nation (Scott 1999; Briggs, McCormick, and Way 2008; Fábíán 2014, 26). The work of RCW Marta highlights the multidirectional interactions between national and transnational ideas in gender equality campaigns. These interactions affect not only how policies are made, but also the concept of the nation. In other words, in engaging national and transnational understandings of gender equality, RCW Marta suggests alternative conceptualizations of the nation itself.⁵

Defining terms: the Latvian⁶ nation

Before turning to RCW Marta itself, we must define the context that informs its work. These gender activists negotiate a complex narrative of the nation in which ethnicity has a central role, a role that has been shaped by the Latvian experience of socialism under Soviet occupation.

Latvia’s population has always included significant ethnic communities. During the interwar independence period, ethnic Latvians made up 77% of the 1.9 million population, Russians represented 8.8%, Germans 3.3%, and Jews 4.7%, Poles 2.6%, with smaller Estonian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and other communities. When World War II brought the end of independence, many of these communities were devastated.⁷ During the Soviet occupation that followed from 1945 to 1991, Soviet population policies⁸ resulted in further losses so that by 1989, ethnic Latvians made up 52% of the population, and Russians 34% (Lazda 2009, 522). The decline in the Latvian population and the increase in the Russian population were accompanied by Russification policies that privileged Russian language over Latvian, which are very different languages; Latvian is not a Slavic language. By 1989, the majority of Latvians (68.3%) knew Russian in addition to Latvian, while a minority of Russians (22.3%) reported knowing Latvian (Mežs 1994, 25).

While there was tension between the two largest ethnic groups, there was little open conflict. The lived experience for many Latvians was that members of all ethnic communities worked and lived together; the marriage rate with a partner of a different ethnicity was about 20% for ethnic Latvians and 35–40% for ethnic Russians (Monden and Smits 2005, 333). Ethnic minorities, including Russians, were prominent members of pro-independence organizations in the 1990s (Pabriks and Purs 2001, 56; Lazda 2009). Ethnic Russians and ethnic Latvians shared an antipathy to Soviet policies and were sufficiently united to come together to vote for independence in 1991 (Ginkel 2002, 426).

However, despite this significant cooperation and interaction among ethnic groups, the particular Latvian experience of socialism left a legacy of division that challenged both national unity and the formation of a transnational feminist movement after 1991. First, Soviet population politics resulted in a “binational” society, with parallel Russian-speaking and Latvian-speaking sociocultural worlds (Rozenvalds 2010, 52). Second, feminism became associated with the Soviet internationalism that had suppressed the ethnic Latvian nation. In a 1995 “dialogue with or about post-Soviet feminism in Latvia,” Latvian sociologist Ritma Rungule linked women’s hesitation to welcome transnational solidarity with Western feminists to Latvian women’s embitterment with the Soviet internationalism that had “severed” them from the nation. Rungule (1995) argued that the nation was central to a woman’s identity, and without “this source of consciousness, [she] becomes submissive, patient, and humble like a Soviet woman.” The Soviet experience was an aberration in the history of the Latvian nation. RCW Marta had to consider this complex interrelationship of nation, ethnicity, and gender in building support for its work.

Ethnicity, gender, and nation: first years of post-socialist Latvia

The founding of RCW Marta is part of a longer history of Latvian women's and women's organizations' activism.⁹ During glasnost in the 1980s, women of all ethnicities had been visible participants in the pro-democracy and independence movement. The League of Women, founded in 1989, made it a point to defend the rights of all draftees into the Soviet army, regardless of their ethnicity or home republic (Karklins 1994, 71–72f). The Popular Front of Latvia included prominent women leaders of Latvia's Russian, Polish, and Jewish ethnic minority communities.¹⁰

This activism did not translate directly into corresponding political power. In the elections to the first post-socialist parliament (*Saeima*) in 1993, 14% of delegates were women; in the second parliament, women's representation fell to 8% (*Saeima*, "Latvijas Republikas Saeimas Deputātu Skaits"). This underrepresentation of women in politics coincided with a "return" to traditional gender roles associated with the interwar independent Latvian nation-state. In this idealized understanding, a woman's main role was caring for the family and the private sphere.¹¹ This image of women was promoted in media and reinforced by government policies that, for example, increased provisions for maternity leaves but cut public pre-schools (Koroļeva 1994, 36–37). The reestablished nation-state "submerge[d] the 'woman question' beneath the nation question" in what Daina Stukuls Eglitis has described as a "masculinized public sphere" (2002, 202, 210). This discourse that portrayed women as "keepers of Latvian tradition" may also have excluded women of other ethnicities from the national narrative (Neimanis 1999, 10).

In this narrative of national restoration, ethnic minority women faced particular obstacles to political power. In 1991, the Latvian parliament adopted a definition of citizenship that was based on the legal continuity of the state established in 1918. Citizenship was granted automatically to anyone who had been a citizen of Latvia before 1941 (the beginning of the Soviet occupation). There was no ethnic component of the citizenship law, but in practice approximately 64% of the 740,000 people excluded in the immediate post-independence years from automatic citizenship were ethnic Russian because they or their parents had arrived during the Soviet occupation (Muižnieks 2006, 15). Irina Novikova has argued that the 1991 citizenship law divided Latvian-speaking and Russian-speaking women, effectively weakening women's solidarity and limiting their influence on gender equality policy (2006, 103).

The first period of post-socialism in Latvia was, therefore, a period of ambiguity for gender equality and national unity. On the one hand, women of diverse backgrounds participated in the reestablishment of the democratic nation-state. Women mobilized support for their causes through their own organizations and political candidacy. On the other hand, women, and especially ethnic minority women, faced cultural and institutional obstacles to political and socioeconomic power. When RCW Marta was founded in 2000, it explicitly connected gender equality and national inclusion.

Gender and national landscape at RCW Marta's founding

RCW Marta was founded at a particular turn of national and transnational events, which saw a development both of an awareness of gender as a category of analysis and realization of national integration policies.

Latvia's application for EU membership in 1995 provided, in part, the impetus for policy changes. Discussions with the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe resulted in recommendations for citizenship reform (Lamoreaux and Galbreath 2008). Citizenship requirements were amended in 1995, 1997, and 1998,

becoming less restrictive (granting citizenship to children born to non-citizens, for example) and simplifying the naturalization process (waiving requirements for language and history exams for select groups) (Brands Kehris 2010, 97). Although there was a slight increase in applications for naturalization, in 2000, 22% of Latvia's population did not have citizenship.¹² Most were Russian-speakers (RCW Marta 2001, 4).

While Latvia had begun to participate in transnational discussions regarding gender policy (it signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1992), and sent a delegation to the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, actual changes were minimal; no National Plan of Action was created (Neimanis 1999, 31). The EU candidacy process, however, placed more pressure on Latvia to incorporate gender mainstreaming. In 1999, the Ministry of Welfare became responsible for overseeing gender equality policy, but was allotted few resources: one civil servant was assigned to gender equality implementation (Neimanis 1999, 31–32; Ras-trigina 2015, 6).

This transnational pressure was accompanied by growing national support for women activists and political leaders. The Women's Rights Institute (established in 1996), the University of Latvia's Gender Studies Center (est. 1998), and Center for Feminism Studies (est. 1999) provided forums for discussing gender equality on a nation level (LU Dzimtes Studiju Centrs 2015; Balga 2013). The number of women representatives in the parliament increased to 17% in the 1998 elections, and to 21% in 2002 (Latvijas Republikas Deputātu Skaits Pēc Dzimuma 2013). While women were on the candidate lists of all parties, the majority of women delegates elected represented conservative parties (Central Election Commission 2014).

But perhaps the most public signal that testified to the significance of women in post-socialist Latvian politics was the election of the first woman president of Latvia, Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga.¹³ Vīķe-Freiberga's own story traversed the national and transnational. Born in Latvia, she fled the Soviet occupation with her family during World War II, first to Germany, then Morocco, finally settling in Canada in 1954 ("Biography" 2007). Vīķe-Freiberga represented both continuity with the first period of independence as well as discontinuity from the socialist past. Equally significant, unaffiliated with any political party, she was an outsider to the political system.

In 2000, when RCW Marta was founded, therefore, there was an emerging gender awareness and a nascent infrastructure for gender and ethnic inclusion, supported by both transnational and national institutions.¹⁴ Gender-aggregated studies drew attention to the gender pay gap, unequal division of labor, and the feminization of poverty (Neimanis 1999, 35; Baltijas Datu Nams 2000). Still, despite this evidence, and despite the election of a woman president, discussion of gender equality remained at the level of elite policy. The lived experience of both women and ethnic minorities was that of marginalization.

RCW Marta's founding: transnational impulse, national context

The inspiration for the founding of RCW Marta in Latvia came from western neighbor Marthaförbundet, the Swedish Women's Association of Finland, established in 1899 by upper-class, educated women of Finland's Swedish community, during a period of growing Finnish nationalism in the Russian empire (Marthaförbundet). The founding story of RCW Marta contains moments of stereotypical "East-West" feminist interactions and misunderstandings that have been the subject of much of the scholarship discussed above. Marthaförbundet's new Baltic Project director Inger Schauman, recalled she had "some difficulty" negotiating the Swedish-Finnish women's expectations of what RCW

Marta in Riga would be. The Board of Directors assumed that RCW Marta would follow a program similar to theirs in Finland, providing “cooking courses and environmental education.” The board was eventually convinced to allow the staff of RCW Marta to determine the center’s agenda. Iluta Lāce, a Riga-based NGO activist who spoke English and Swedish in addition to Latvian and Russian, was hired as the RCW Marta director, a position she holds to the present day. Lāce and Schauman worked together to secure funding from the EU, which they received in 1999 to support the first two years of work (Schauman 2016).

RCW Marta’s founding mission was the social integration of women who remained outside the democratization process. The center identified several causes of women’s marginalization, including poverty, the gendered wage gap, and low education levels (Report 2001, 3). For the first two years, RCW Marta focused on providing low-cost or free services, including language courses in Latvian, English, and Swedish and skills development workshops. Clients could also receive consultations with an attorney, psychologist, and social worker (Report 2001, 9–10, 19–24, 36–37).

RCW Marta recognized the specific needs of ethnic minority women; ethnic, gender, and social marginalization were all interlaced challenges for national integration. The greatest client demand was for Latvian language courses; several hundred women were placed on a waiting list (Report 2001, 10–14, 20). Sixty-two percent of clients identified themselves as ethnic Russian, 20% as ethnic Latvian; the remaining 18% included Belorussian, Ukrainian, and Polish women (Report 2001, 32–34).

RCW Marta’s first annual report highlighted its success in fostering integration on a national and transnational level: “Latvian, Russian, and women of other nationalities have, through education and recreation, taken part in the integration process. ... [and] cooperation among organizations in Latvia and other Nordic countries is developing” (Report 2001, 30). The report pointed out that the language courses had helped 20–30 women pass the naturalization test (Report 2001, 11). While only a small percentage of the women who took the courses are known to have taken the next step of gaining citizenship, it is significant that RCW Marta saw the naturalization process as a component of its gender equality work, directly linking gender equality activism to citizenship.

RCW Marta’s evolution: expanding transnational networks and activism

Despite its apparent success, RCW Marta began to change its form in its second year of work. It expanded its network of national and transnational partners (Report 2002, 13).¹⁵ As the numbers of partners grew, so did the nature of its activism. RCW Marta still provided resources and services, but also lobbied and took a more direct role in shaping gender equality policy both in Latvia and in EU institutions. RCW Marta has had a seat on the Ministry of Welfare’s Gender Equality Committee since 2010 (Republic of Latvia Ministry of Welfare 2010).

This evolution of RCW Marta follows a pattern found elsewhere in post-socialist Europe, where “feminist organizing ... takes the two-pronged approach of offering services and engaging in advocacy work” (Guenther 2011, 870; see also Fábíán 2014). But RCW Marta’s evolution mirrors that of other post-socialist countries in another, more significant, way. As the center expanded its sources of funding transnationally, much of its work became devoted to combating gender-based violence: physical violence in the forms of prostitution, domestic violence, human trafficking, as well as emotional violence in the forms of sexual harassment and sexual bullying. The shift began in the center’s second year with seminars and information hotlines; by 2012, eight of 11 projects addressed

gender violence and the safety of women and children (Report 2002, 15; Report 2012). This attention to violence reflects what Keck and Sikkink have called a “transcultural consensus” of women’s movements from the 1980s, that protection against violence was a basic, universal human right (1998, 196; see also Fábíán 2014, 9). This consensus influenced funding, as transnational NGOs allocated resources for countering gender violence – and gender equality activists in the post-socialist region adopted gender violence as a focus of their work (Fábíán 2014; Fuchs and Hinterhuber 2015).

RCW Marta staff members are aware of this transnational consensus and recognize it as a source of financial security. “If we are considering Marta’s future,” one staff member proposed, “we can attract the most financial support through human trafficking projects.” But, she suggested, that these transnational human trafficking projects could “give us focus,” that is, help RCW Marta as an organization at a time when they were rethinking their politics and strategies (Minutes, 4 January 2011). Director Lāce emphasizes that the center’s focus on gender violence comes from within, rather than transnational directives. “Work with clients,” she says, made clear that “much of the economic, social, and ethnic marginalization of women was the result of violence against women” and women’s lack of knowledge about their rights to protection from this violence (2012).

The problem of gender violence had been neglected by both socialist and post-socialist governments. When RCW Marta was founded in 2000, there was still little data collected and no specific legislation against domestic violence (Fábíán 2013). Media reports drew attention to domestic violence, but often explained the cause of these attacks as women “provoking” their husbands or families with “questionable backgrounds” (Zaķe 1997, 63–64). Transnational institutions offered critical support that resulted in domestic violence legislation across East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union (Johnson 2009; Fábíán 2010a, 2014). In Latvia, RCW Marta’s work against domestic violence contributed to recent changes in the Civil and Criminal Law (Luksa 2014; Report 2014, 3; Report 2015).

Clearly the focus on gender violence had local roots in addition to transnational nudging in this direction. However, the link Lāce makes above between all types of marginalization and violence points to a more interesting question: How did RCW Marta’s change in agenda – from focusing on gender equality through skill-building and social integration to focusing on gender equality by countering gender violence – affect its stated goal of national integration? It is striking how central gender violence has become to RCW Marta’s identity. The banner of the center’s webpage (marta.lv) features a young woman, brushing her hair, looking detachedly at her reflection in the mirror. Behind her, we see two forlorn children, holding empty bowls. The caption reads, “You, too, could be hurt.” This “face” of RCW Marta is an example of what Miriam Ticktin has identified as a global phenomenon of violence against women becoming the “face of many humanitarian campaigns.” Ticktin is critical of this phenomenon, which she sees linked to a “depoliticization” of gender violence that limits the effectiveness of humanitarian work, but she also identifies potential for a “disruption of an established order” (2011, 250). A closer look at RCW Marta’s campaigns against gender violence reveals how they directly engage post-socialist national and transnational narratives – and disrupt them.

Gender violence and legislation: conceptualizing the Latvian nation

One of its most prominent and controversial campaigns has been combating prostitution, which RCW Marta sees as linked to human trafficking and a form of gender violence, asserting that “violence generates prostitution” (Tentere 2013).¹⁶ Since the reestablishment

of independence, prostitution in Latvia is regulated, but not legalized. Adults may offer sexual services for payment as long as they observe certain restrictions; coerced prostitution, organized prostitution, or prostitution by minors is illegal and punishable.¹⁷

Debates on prostitution are connected to the integration of ethnic minorities. Studies suggest that more ethnic Russian women than ethnic Latvian women are involved in prostitution and human trafficking. Experts claim that this is due to their citizenship status and fewer employment opportunities for those who do not speak Latvian (Zariņa 2001, 236; Dean 2014, 98–99). There is evidence, however, that more significant than ethnicity or citizenship is the lack of economic opportunity and the influence of other socioeconomic factors such as a history of violence in the family; men and boys as well as women and girls of all ethnicities are represented in the sex trade (Zariņa 2001; Karnīte 2014, 8). Still, Daina Stukuls Eglītis suggests that the societal impression that prostitutes are not “mothers of the nation” has contributed to a lack of broader alarm about prostitution (2002, 193).

In 2010, prostitution gained attention because of support raised within “academic circles” for its complete legalization. Supporters of legalization argued that it would protect prostitutes as well as add to the state’s tax base (Lūse 2010; Minutes, 9 March 2010). RCW Marta itself advocates the “Swedish model,” which criminalizes the purchase of sexual services, not the provision of them. My focus is not on the merits of RCW Marta’s proposal, but rather how RCW Marta uses this discussion, supported by a “transnational consensus” against violence, to engage and disrupt understandings of what Latvia as a nation represents.

After failed attempts to reach out directly to the President’s Cabinet and ministers, RCW Marta took its campaign to the media in several forums (Minutes 20 April 2010). In July 2010, the executive director was a guest on a popular interview show, “Conversations with [Māris] Zanders.”¹⁸ Zanders asked, “Do you really think [considering this is the so-called world’s oldest profession] that Latvia won’t have prostitution?” Lāce disagreed with the premise of calling prostitution a “profession,” and then said Latvians had to ask themselves a question: “If we [Latvians] do not like it when sex tourists come and deride our country, and would rather that they come here to visit cultural objects ... then that is our choice. What kind of a country do we want?” This was not only a question about a protecting women and girls, but also about Latvia’s global image as a country, and how its people – the nation – want to be represented. She argued further that RCW Marta’s proposed model of legislation was informed by a specific vision for social equality and democracy, “we want a society with integrated people, who can think critically and make choices [based on this critical thinking].” Within this conversation on prostitution legislation, Lāce took transnational principles of countering violence against women and social equality and made them part of a national narrative. This was not a narrative of neo-traditional gender roles, but one in which a society was based on critically thinking citizens. Moreover, Lāce’s use of the word “integration” is significant, as in the Latvian context, integration politics is connected to ethnic minority integration (Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia 2015).

The television interview was linked to a multi-part satirical social media campaign, where RCW Marta created a webpage that invited Latvians to do their “patriotic duty:” “Buy a Girl, Save the State.” This was a response both to the call for legalization as well as criticism of the inability of police to do anything about internet trafficking of women, which was already criminalized. The campaign was short-lived, as the police quickly shut down the website and issued a fine to RCW Marta. However, the issue gained broader attention when RCW Marta set up a webpage: www.seksapolicija.lv [sex police]

and invited Latvians to report websites that seemed to engage in illegal activity. Within a month, RCW Marta had received notification of 19 “virtual bordellos” (Hauka 2010).

As a second component of its social media campaign, RCW Marta created a short animation “Save the State: Become a Prostitute” (2010),¹⁹ made available on RCW Marta’s website and on a now-defunct page “save the state.lv.” The film begins “Latvia is dying! Help Latvia! Become a Prostitute!” The male narrator lists the “benefits” of this profession: For the individual: “No experience necessary! Active and dynamic work!” For society and the state: “Provide jobs for eight people! Provide for the state with your taxes!” And for Latvia’s position in the world: “Latvia will be rich and famous! International tourism will increase – and our business will blossom!”

Throughout the short, caricatures of prostitutes (poorly dressed, blank stares, and hunched positions) and men suggesting questionable character (leering glances and dirty, shabby clothing) pass along the screen on a background of Latvian national symbols. The call, “Become a prostitute!” appears on the background of the maroon-white-maroon colors of the national flag. The inclusion of the new National Library in the background of several scenes had particular significance. The library – a structure of gleaming glass overlooking the Daugava River – became known as the “Castle of Light” in reference to a nineteenth-century Latvian “national awakening” poem (Plakans 1995, 89–90). The film concluded, “This could happen, if legalized prostitution becomes a reality in Latvia. Think about whether we need this.”

The text of the film questions the logic of economic arguments put forth at the time, while the imagery implies the fragility of national symbols. Together, text and film challenge post-socialist national narratives shaped by neotraditional conceptions of gender, which paradoxically promote women as “keepers of national tradition” and as sexualized objects (Johnson and Robinson 2007). While this is a national conversation, explicitly inscribed with national symbols, it also bears the mark of transnational influence. The final credits flash the logos of the funders of this project – Baltic regional and EU organizations. Engaging in a national conversation is part of a transnational one as well.

These social media campaigns led to discussions in the Gender Equality Commission of RCW Marta’s proposal.²⁰ For Lāce, this was a question of the national welfare of Latvia. She pointed out that “every person’s life and health is significant for Latvia, even girls’ and women’s lives.” To strengthen her argument, she also invoked Swedish and Norwegian polices as models for this legislation, and, by implication, as models for national gender policy.

Committee members countered Lāce’s proposal with their own understandings of national and transnational models. The head of the police unit to combat human trafficking and prostitution, Artūrs Vaišļa, dismissed the legitimacy of the proposal by arguing that criminalizing prostitution, “was a Soviet method.” Making the connection to a discredited Soviet system characterized the proposal as incompatible with post-socialist Latvian democracy. The head of the Gender Equality committee Ingus Alliks questioned the applicability of Sweden’s experience to Latvia. “Sweden,” he argued, “has a different societal model ... [We must also consider] that Latvian societal perceptions and environment are different.” Rather than engaging the terms of the proposal itself, or evaluating its effectiveness using data available from countries with this model, both Vaišļa and Alliks based their arguments on perceptions of Soviet, Swedish, and Latvian societies. They resisted RCW Marta’s attempts to unsettle these national narratives and to submit them to critical analysis. Yet, despite this resistance, the discussion suggests the existence of an ongoing negotiation between national and transnational frameworks (in this case, arguing against the transnational applicability of gender violence policy) as well as the ongoing relevance of the socialist experience as a point of reference.

Corroboration or cooptation of gendered nationalism?

When asked directly how the evolution of their work – becoming more transnational in scope, and focusing on gender violence – has affected their work toward integration, Lāce responded “We have integrated integration” (2012). Other RCW Marta staff members use similar language: “[Marta] does not operate on an ethnic level” (Tentere 2013), “we are open [to all]” (Tetere 2013); “we don’t distinguish between Russians and Latvians” (Lāce 2013). The integration of all members of society into the Latvian nation is implicit in its work and not a distinct project. Staff members recognize the specific needs of ethnic minority women; providing information and instruction in Russian is essential, despite a growing fluency in Latvian in the Russian community (Minutes 23 May, 2006; Gātere 2013; Tentere 2013).

Yet, while RCW Marta campaigns against gender violence have challenged Latvian national symbols, references to traditional ethnic Latvian values are woven into the center’s own narrative about its work. The most visible articulations of these traditional ethnic Latvian ideals are expressed in the music disk *Marta*, which RCW Marta produced when the 2008 economic crisis added extra pressure to think creatively about fundraising. Executive Director Iluta Lāce and her sister, Dita Lāce, sang new arrangements of ethnic Latvian folk songs. The album description explains the origins of the album and the particular connection to women: “Ethnic Latvian (*latviešu*) folk songs reflect a predominantly matriarchal system. The songs that celebrate a woman’s work are poetic, soulful, and uplifting. The songs about war are sad; they illustrate how utterly unacceptable women find war.”

RCW Marta used this essentialized depiction of matriarchy and woman’s nature to explain the center’s larger goals that include gender equality, but also aspire to social equality more broadly. Based on “feminine wisdom,” RCW Marta aims to “create a more empathetic society, to defend the need for ideals and humanity, for harmony and individual stability.” In this project, the center tapped into the core of the traditional ethnic Latvian national narrative. Since the nineteenth century, Latvian national song festivals have embodied the “power of song” as a symbol of national unity, and as a channel of non-violent resistance (Šmidchens 2013). *Marta*’s celebration of women’s values is, at least in part, a concession to traditional gendered nationalism. The target audience for the disk seems to be ethnic Latvians and – with English translation – a transnational audience, appealing to conceptions of “maternal thinking” (Ruddick 1989).

Yet the nation that RCW Marta says it represents is not strictly an ethnic Latvian one. The album’s description emphasizes that the center “supports all women of Latvia,” specifically listing “non-citizens and immigrants, poor and unemployed, victims of human trafficking and domestic violence.” That RCW Marta claims this broader vision of the Latvian nation does not necessarily mitigate concern about traditional narratives as exclusive, celebrating one tradition at the cost of another. However, it does suggest the role that RCW Marta tries to play as a bridge between civic and ethnic conceptualizations of the nation.

Marta was sufficiently successful in raising funds that a second album *Words of Power*, again with Iluta and Dita Lāce singing folk songs in new, contemporary arrangements, was produced in 2011. The album has become a part of RCW Marta’s message and its own image throughout Latvia. Iluta and Dita have traveled outside the capital to rural Latvia to sing and share news about the center’s work, directly linking folk songs to campaigns against gender violence. The album received the official “Product of Latvia” designation, a campaign that asks Latvians to help the country’s economic development by “showing more patriotism toward locally made products” (Latvijas Produkts 2017). RCW Marta

took advantage of this designation to sponsor a contest on the “Product of Latvia” website, asking visitors a multiple choice question to identify the center’s mission. Correct answer: To foster gender equality in Latvia (Konkurss no Marta Centra 2012). This quiz reinforced the “brand” that RCW Marta projects: that gender equality is an integral component of Latvian national identity.

Conclusion: the fluidity of gender, nation, and post-socialism

The evolution of the Resource Center for Women Marta is a specific case study of a particular set of national and transnational circumstances. I do not claim that RCW Marta represents all gender equality NGOs in East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, or even gender equality NGOs in Latvia. Nevertheless, examining the particular experience of RCW Marta is valuable because of the insight it provides into the disruptive role gender political activism has had. This disruption is most evident on the national level, where RCW Marta challenges patriarchal, essentialist definitions of gender, using gender violence campaigns to provide an alternative conceptualization of the nation – one that bridges traditional gender narratives and transnational ones.

The rethinking of the national narrative has broader unsettling effects beyond Latvia. It challenges the framework of an “East and West” dichotomy, revealing a process of negotiation and reflection. This is evident in the relationship between RCW Marta and Marthaförbundet. RCW Marta’s work has prompted its transnational partner to reflect on its own national narrative. Marthaförbundet’s current director sees their founding stories were “quite the same;” both organizations were founded at a time that the nation-state was taking shape. Further, the director sees RCW Marta’s work in Riga shaping Finland’s own national and transnational image. In 2014, the Finnish ambassador in Latvia presented the Knight of the Order of the Lion of Finland to RCW Marta (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland 2014). This act, says Anna, was important as it communicated to the other ambassadors in Riga that Finland supported the Marta Center, which was particularly meaningful “because ... [A] lot of the [sex] traders come from Finland, Norway, and Nordic countries” (Anna 2016). This connection the director draws to Finland’s own national image underscores the reciprocal relationship between East and West.

In unsettling these two hierarchies – the national and the transnational, and the East and West – RCW Marta demonstrates how gender political activism shifts discussions of post-socialism as an analytical and spatial category. While there is no consensus on the specific definition of what post-socialism is, there is considerable agreement that post-socialism is at risk of being “subsumed” into, or “marginalized” by, discussions of transnationalism and globalization. The post-socialist experience is “unique” and has a specific contribution to make to understanding broader processes, namely the evolution of hybrid spaces between post-colonialism and post-socialism and within the “three-worlds metageography” (Suchland 2011, 838, 854; see also Stenning and Hörschelmann 2008; Chari and Verdery 2009; Owczarzak 2009; Rogers 2010). The experience of RCW Marta affirms the continued influence of the particular legacy of socialism as it informs understandings of the nation and gender. It also makes clear the continued salience of the nation, though in redefined forms. The gendered nation in its evolution, interacting with local and transnational frameworks, has itself become a hybrid space that contributes to changing definitions of post-socialism.

Interviews and personal correspondence

Marthaförbundet

2016. Anna (pseudonym, Current Director of Marthaförbundet). May 4, Skype.
 2016. Schauman, Inger. Email correspondence. May 2.
 RCW Marta, Rīga, Latvia.
 2013. Gātere, Liene. July 1.
 2013. Lāce, Dita. July 9.
 2012. Lāce, Iluta. November 7. Skype.
 2013. Lāce, Iluta. August 5.
 2013. Tentere, Gundega. July 1.
 2013. Tetere, Annele. July 4.

Other NGOs:

2013. Balga, Laila. July 10. Women's Rights Institute, Riga. Latvia.

RCW Marta Archive:

- RCW Marta Annual Reports 2001–2015. In text as Report
 RCW Marta Minutes of Weekly Staff Meetings 2004–2013. In text as Minutes

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the guidance and support of the FFPP mentor, Mojúbàolú Olufúnké Okome, and for the collegiality and critique of my FFPP colleagues, Hara Bastas, Min Hee Go, Anne Kornhauser, Stephanie Laudone, Ana Ozuna, and Michael Yarbrough. Daša Frančíkova provided valuable suggestions. This article benefitted from the insightful comments and recommendations of two anonymous *Nationalities Papers* reviewers.

Funding

This research was supported by PSC-CUNY 44 Research Award [grant number 66756-00 44]. Writing of this article was supported by the City University of New York Faculty Fellowship Publication Program (FFPP) in spring 2015.

Notes

1. Latvia won its independence in 1918 after the end of World War I. World War II ended Latvia's independence. The Soviet Union occupied it from 1940 to 1941, Nazi Germany from 1941 to 1945, and the Soviets returned in 1945. This last occupation lasted until 1991 and the collapse of the Soviet Union (Plakans 1995).
2. I use post-socialist to refer to the countries of East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, while I recognize scholars' concerns about the vagueness of this term, which applies also to countries in Asia and Africa (*inter alia* Pitcher and Askew 2006; Hladik 2011; Rajkai 2015). In the Latvian case, post-Soviet more precisely recognizes that the 50-year Soviet occupation both continues to shape Latvia's socioeconomic and political challenges and informs its relationship to Russia and its neighbors. I find "post-socialism" useful in the sense defined by Zsombor Rajkai as the "common experience" of the state holding "unprecedented levels of control over the economy, civil society, and the family, which was then followed by the withdrawal of state responsibility and state control over these sectors" (2015, 5). I argue that the experience of RCW Marta provides insight into the politics of gender and nation of post-socialism in the broadest sense, building on Douglas Rogers's concept of "post-socialisms unbound" (2010).
3. I use "West" to denote Western Europe and North America and "East" to denote Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, but these are not absolute categories and significant variabilities exist within these regions.

4. Janet Elise Johnson and Janet C. Robinson differentiate neotraditional from traditional in that neotraditional gender ideology celebrates women's roles in the private sphere and domestic life, but it is not wholly a throwback to presocialist ideas. It is also informed by the experience of Communism, which did not fulfill its promises about gender equality (2007, 11).
5. Ranjoo Seodu Herr's work on feminism and nationalism in the "Third World" identifies potential strengths of a similar process in the post-colonial context. She argues,

As "social critics," Third World feminists must engage in a constant dialogue with androcentric nationalists, taking an active part in the transformation of their own national culture, collaborating with them when national dignity is at stake, but at the same time resisting patriarchal constructions of nationalist discourses. (2003, 151)

See also Herr (2014).

6. The Latvian language makes a distinction between Latvian as an ethnicity (*latviešu*) and Latvian as of the state (*Latvijas*). To make this distinction clear, I use Latvian to mean all people of Latvia, of any ethnicity. I use ethnic Latvian (or ethnic Russian) when discussing a particular ethnic community in Latvia.
7. From 1940 to 1954, the Soviet regime deported approximately 140,000 Latvians (ethnic Latvians, ethnic Russians, ethnic Germans, and Latvian Jews) to Siberia (Strods 1993, 11, 148; Strods 1995, 20). The Nazi regime and Latvian collaborators murdered approximately 90,000 Jews in Latvia, of whom 70,000 were Latvian citizens (Ezergailis 1996, 70, 356–357).
8. In addition to military personnel and party elite, Soviet demographic policy supported the immigration of ethnic Russian workers to Latvia. It is estimated that about 400,000 Russians emigrated to Latvia after 1960 (Monden and Smits 2005, 425; citing Zvidriņš and Vanovska 1992). Emigrants were given housing support and ensured a full education system in Russian (Rudenshild 1992, 614).
9. This activism had roots in the interwar republic. See Koroļeva and Trapenciēre (1992, 241–242).
10. Ruta Šaca-Marjaša was one of the founders of the Latvian Jewish Cultural Association in 1988 (Šaca-Marjaša 2013). Marina Kosteņeckā is a popular Russian writer and advocated for Latvian independence in the ethnic Russian press (Kosteņeckā 2012, 246–261). Ita Kozakēviča was head of the Latvian Polish Association and led discussions on minority rights in the formation of People's Front (Miķelsons 2013).
11. Daina Stukuls Eglītis points out just one way this idealized version of women conflicted with the lived experience of women in interwar independent Latvia. In 1935, 84% of women between the ages of 20 and 59 held paid employment (2002, 190).
12. Studies have revealed varying reasons for this, in addition to instances of not knowing the Latvian language or history. Non-citizens could travel to Russia without a costly visa, for example (Pilsonības un Migrācijas Lietu Pārvalde 2011).
13. In Latvia, the parliament elects the president.
14. This timing has parallels in other Central and East European movements. Katalin Fábián notes that 2000 marked a "second, transnational wave" of feminist activism in Hungary (2014).
15. A non-exhaustive list of RCW Marta's partners based on reports and minutes: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, S-Kvinnor, Latvian State Language Agency, Latvian Ministry of Welfare, Latvian Social Integration State Agency, Olof Palmer International Labor Center (Sweden), International Organization of Migration, EU DAPHNE II Program, European Women's Lobby, Finnish Foreign Ministry, Swedish Cultural Fund in Finland, Embassy of the Netherlands, Baltic-American Partnership Program, Open Society Foundation, Equality Now, OAK Foundation, AVON, The Body Shop, Air Baltic, and Madara Organic Cosmetics.
16. Policy-makers and activists primarily refer to "prostitution," not sex work, as do transnational organizations (e.g. International Organization for Migration 2001).
17. It is illegal, for example, to advertise or solicit clients in public spaces. Full texts of legislation are available in Latvian: likumi.lv.
18. Interview available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLuWFfnxohA>.
19. "Save the State: Become a Prostitute" (in Latvian) available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wsx_vHztZNI.
20. All Commission meeting minutes available here: <http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/1651>.

References

- Baltijas Datu Nams. 2000. *Nabadzības feminizācija: Riska faktoru maiņa Latvijā no 1991. līdz 1999. gadam* [The Feminization of Poverty: Changes in Risk Factors from 1991 to 1999]. Accessed August 15, 2016. http://providus.lv/article_files/2032/original/nabadzfem.pdf?1342702032.
- “Biography of Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga.” 2007. *Latvijas Valsts Prezidents* [President of the Republic of Latvia]. Accessed August 15, 2016. http://www.president.lv/pk/content/?cat_id=16&lng=en.
- Brands Kehris, Ilze. 2010. “Citizenship, Participation and Representation.” In *How Integrated Is Latvian Society? An Audit of Achievements, Failures and Challenges*, edited by Nils Muižnieks, 93–104. Riga: University of Latvia Press.
- Briggs, Laura, Gladys McCormick, and J. T. Way. 2008. “Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis.” *American Quarterly* 60 (3): 625–648.
- Central Bureau of Statistics (Latvia). (n.d.). *Iedzīvotāji un Sociālie Procesi* [Inhabitants and Social Processes]. Accessed August 15, 2016. <http://data.csb.gov.lv/pkweb/lv/Sociala/?rxid=cdeb978c-22b0-416a-aacc-aa650d3e2ce0>.
- Central Election Commission of Latvia. 2014. *Saeimas Vēlēšanas* [Saeimas Elections]. Accessed April 8, 2017. <https://www.cvk.lv/pub/public/30803.html>.
- Cerwonka, Allaine. 2008. “Traveling Feminist Thought: Difference and Transculturation in Central and Eastern European Feminism.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 33 (4): 809–832.
- Chari, Sharad, and Katherine Verdery. 2009. “Thinking Between the Posts: Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography after the Cold War.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51 (1): 6–34.
- Cleuziou, Juliette, and Lucia Direnberger. 2016. “Gender and Nation in Post-Soviet Central Asia: From National Narratives to Women’s Practices.” *Nationalities Papers* 44 (2): 195–206.
- Dean, Laura A. 2014. “Beyond the Natasha Effect: Determinants of Human Trafficking Policy Variation in the Post-Soviet Region.” PhD diss., University of Kansas.
- Eglītis, Daina Stukuls. 2002. *Imagining the Nation: History, Modernity and Revolution in Latvia*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Ezergailis, Andrew. 1996. *Holocaust in Latvia, 1941–1944: The Missing Center*. Riga/Washington, DC: Historical Institute of Latvia/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
- Fábián, Katalin, ed. 2010a. *Domestic Violence in Post-Communist States: Local Activism, National Politics, and Global Forces*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Fábián, Katalin. 2010b. “Open Societies? Connections Between Women’s Activism, Globalization and Democracy in Eastern and Central Europe.” *The International Journal of Diversity in Organizations, Communities, and Nations: Annual Review* 9 (6): 119–130.
- Fábián, Katalin. 2013. “How Have Postcommunist States Negotiated the Norms and Policies of Domestic Violence? Trends and Exceptions of the Baltic Region.” Paper presented at Peace Science Studies-International Studies Association Joint International Conference. Security Challenges in an Evolving World, June 27–29.
- Fábián, Katalin. 2014. “Disciplining the Second World: The Relationship Between Transnational and Local Forces in Contemporary Hungarian Women’s Social Movements.” *East European Politics* 30: 1–20.
- Fuchs, Gesine, and Eva Maria Hinterhuber. 2015. “Introduction: Complex Interrelations of Gender Politics in Eastern Europe.” *Femina Politica* 24 (2): 1–16.
- Funk, Nanette. 1993. “Feminism East and West.” In *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, edited by Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller, 318–330. New York: Routledge.
- Funk, Nanette. 2006. “Women’s NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union: The Imperialist Criticism.” *Femina Politica* 1: 68–83.
- Funk, Nanette. 2007. “Fifteen Years of the East-West Women’s Dialogue.” In *Living Gender after Communism*, edited by Janet Elise Johnson and Jean C. Robinson, 203–226. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Funk, Nanette, and Magda Mueller, eds. 1993. *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. New York: Routledge.
- Gal, Susan, and Gail Kligman. 2000. *The Politics of Gender after Socialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Ghodsee, Kristen. 2004. "Feminism-by-Design: Emerging Capitalisms, Cultural Feminism, and Women's Nongovernmental Organizations in Postsocialist Eastern Europe." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29 (3): 727–753.
- Ginkel, John. 2002. "Identity Construction in Latvia's "Singing Revolution": Why Inter-ethnic Conflict Failed to Occur." *Nationalities Papers* 30 (2): 403–433.
- Guenther, Katja. 2011. "The Possibilities and Pitfalls of NGO Feminism: Insights from Postsocialist Eastern Europe." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 36 (4): 863–887.
- Hauka, Evija. 2010. "Pērc meiteni, maksā nodokli un Latvija būs glābta." [Buy a Girl, Pay a Tax, and Latvia Will Be Saved.] *Kas Jauns* [What's New], July 9. Accessed July 15, 2016. <http://www.kasjauns.lv/lv/zinas/24214/perc-meiteni-maksa-nodokli-un-lv-bus-glabta>.
- Heinrich Böll Foundation. 2015. *Anti-gender Movements on the Rise? Strategising for Gender Equality in Eastern and Central Europe*. Grossbeeren: Arnold Stiftung. Accessed August 20, 2016. <https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/2015-04-anti-gender-movements-on-the-rise.pdf>.
- Hemment, Julie. 2007. *Empowering Women in Russia: Activism, Aid, and NGOs*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Herr, Ranjoo Seodu. 2003. "The Possibility of Nationalist Feminism." *Hypatia* 18 (3): 135–160.
- Herr, Ranjoo Seodu. 2014. "Reclaiming Third World Feminism: Or Why Transnational Feminism Needs Third World Feminism." *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 12 (1): 1–30.
- Hladik, Radim. 2011. "A Theory's Travelogue: Post-colonial Theory in Post-Socialist Space." *Theory of Science* [Teory Vedy] 33 (4): 561–590. Accessed January 22, 2016. <http://teorievedy.flu.cas.cz/index.php/tv/article/view/139/140>.
- International Organization for Migration. 2001. *Trafficking in Women and Prostitution in the Baltic States: Social and Legal Aspects*. Helsinki. Accessed April 7, 2017. <http://cilvektirdznieciba.lv/data/Files/macibspekiem/prostitution.pdf>.
- Ismailbekova, Aksana. 2016. "Constructing the Authority of Women Through Custom: Bulak Village, Kyrgyzstan." *Nationalities Papers* 44 (2): 266–280.
- Ivancheva, Mariya. 2015. "'The Spirit of the Law': Mobilizing and/or Professionalizing the Women's Movement in Post-Socialist Bulgaria." In *Mobilizing for Policy Change: Women's Movements in Central and Eastern European Domestic Violence*, edited by Andrea Krizsan, 45–84. Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Johnson, Janet Elise. 2009. *Gender Violence in Russia: The Politics of Feminist Intervention*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Johnson, Janet Elise, and Jean C. Robinson, eds. 2007. *Living Gender after Communism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Karklins, Rasma. 1994. *Ethnopolitics and the Transition to Democracy: The Collapse of the USSR and Latvia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Karnīte, A. 2014. *Narkotikas Lietojošās Prostitūcijā Iesaistītas Sievietes Latvijā* [Narcotics Use by Women Involved in Prostitution in Latvia]. Riga: SIF. Accessed August 15, 2016. http://www.papardeszieds.lv/attachments/396_WEDworks_WS2_RAR%20country%20report_Latvia_LV_final.pdf.
- Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Konkurss no Centra Marta [Contest from the Marta Center]. 2012. *Draugiem.lv*. Accessed March 25, 2017. http://www.draugiem.lv/latvijasprodukts/news/post/Konkurss-no-centra-MARTA_8494399.
- Koroļeva, Ilze. 1994. "Young Women's Attitude Towards Work: Options, Opportunities and Reality." In *Women of Latvia 75: Researches* [sic], *Statistics, Reminiscences*, 20–39. Riga: Zvaigzne.
- Koroļeva, Ilze, and Ilze Trapenciēre. 1992. "Īss Vēsturisks Ieskats: Daži Dati un Skaitļi par Sievietēm Latvijā." [A Short Historical Overview: Some Facts and Numbers about Women in Latvia.] In *Sievietes Ceļā* [Women on Their Way], edited by Ilze Koroļeva, 235–242. Riga: Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Filozofijas un Socioloģijas Institūts.
- Kováts, Eszter, and Maari Pöim, eds. 2015. *Gender as Symbolic Glue: The Position and Role of Conservative and Far Right Parties in the Anti-gender Mobilizations in Europe*. Brussels: Foundation for European Progressive Studies and Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung. Accessed January 4, 2017. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/budapest/11382.pdf>.

- Kosteņeckā, Marina. 2012. *Vēstules no mājām* [Letters from Home]. Translated by Maija Kudapa. Riga: Jumava.
- Lamoreaux, Jeremy W., and David J. Galbreath. 2008. "The Baltic States as "Small States": Negotiating the "East" by Engaging the "West"." *Journal of Baltic Studies* 39 (1): 1–14.
- Lang, Sabine. 2012. *NGOs, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Latvijas Produkts [Product of Latvia]. 2017. Accessed April 6, 2017. <http://www.latvijasprodukts.lv>.
- Latvijas Republikas Saeimas Deputātu Skaitis pēc Dzimuma* [Gender Representation of Ministers in the Parliament of the Latvian Republic]. 2013. Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia. Accessed January 8, 2016. http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/dzimumu_lidztiesiba/situacija_latvija/politika.pdf.
- Lazda, Mara. 2009. "Reconsidering Nationalism: The Baltic Case of Latvia in 1989." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 22: 517–536.
- LU Dzimtes Studiju Centrs [LU Gender Studies Center]. University of Latvia. 2015. Accessed January 10, 2016. <http://www.lu.lv/par/strukt/studiju-centri/dzimtes-studiju-centrs/>.
- Luksa, Mudite. 2014. "Pagaidu Aizsardzība pret Vardarbību: Mājas jāatstāj Varmākam." [Temporary Protection Against Violence: Perpetrator Must Leave Home.] *Latvijas Vēstneša portāls: Par Likumu un Valsti* [Latvian Herald Portal: About Law and State], March 31. Accessed June 29, 2016. <http://www.lvportals.lv/print.php?id=261934>.
- Lūse, Lolita. 2010. "Prostitūcija Latvijā: Problēmas un Risinājumi." [Prostitution in Latvia: Problems and Solutions.] *Latvijas Vēstneša Portāls: Par Likumu un Valsti* [Latvian Herald Portal: About Law and State], March 19. Accessed August 10, 2016. <http://m.lvportals.lv/visi/likumi-prakse/206804-prostitucija-latvija-problemas-un-risinajumi/>.
- Marthaförbundet. Accessed August 20, 2016. <http://martha.fi/sv/kontakt/english/>.
- Martyn-Hemphill, Richard, and Donna Doerbeck. 2015. "Anti-Refugee Rally Takes on Latvian Government." *Baltic Times*, August 5. Accessed January 27, 2016. http://www.baltictimes.com/anti-refugee-rally-takes-on-latvian-government_26807166755c21627948b7/.
- Mežs, Ilmārs. 1994. *Latvieši Latvijā: Etnodemogrāfisks Apskats* [Latvians in Latvia: An Ethnographic View]. Riga: Zinātne.
- Miķelsone, Māra. 2013. "Trešās Atmodas Kurinātāji." [Stokers of the Fire of Third Awakening.] *Ir*, October 7. Accessed January 28, 2016. <http://www.irlv.lv/2013/10/7/tresas-atmodas-kurinataji>.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. 2014. *Iluta Lāce Honored at the Finnish Embassy*. Embassy of Finland, Riga. Accessed August 14, 2016. <http://www.finland.lv/public/default.aspx?contentid=315254&nodeid=38432&culture=en-US>.
- Monden, Christiaan W. S., and Jeroen Smits. 2005. "Ethnic Inter-marriage in Times of Social Change: The Case of Latvia." *Demography* 42 (2): 323–345.
- Muižnieks, Nils. 2006. "Government Policy and the Russian Minority." In *Russians and Russian-Latvian Relations*, edited by Nils Muižnieks, 11–21. Riga: Latvijas Universitāte.
- Neimanis, Astrida. 1999. *Gender and Human Development in Latvia*. Riga: UNDP. Accessed February 10, 2016. http://providus.lv/article_files/1482/original/Gender_EN.pdf?1331712295.
- Novikova, Irina. 2006. "Gender Equality in Latvia: Achievements and Challenges." In *Women and Citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe*, edited by Jasmina Lukić, Joanna Regulska, and Darja Zaviršek, 101–120. New York: Ashgate.
- Owczarzak, Jill. 2009. "Introduction: Postcolonial Studies and Postsocialism in Eastern Europe." *Focaal – European Journal of Anthropology* (53): 3–19. Accessed August 20, 2016. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2907893/>.
- Pabriks, Artism, and Aldis Purs. 2001. *Latvia: The Challenges of Change*. New York: Routledge.
- Pares Hoare, Joanna. 2016. "Doing Gender Activism in a Donor-organized Framework: Constraints and Opportunities in Kyrgyzstan." *Nationalities Papers* 44 (2): 281–298.
- Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the United Nations. 2015. *Integration Policy in Latvia: A Multifaceted Approach*. Accessed April 8, 2017. <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/newyork/society-integration/integration-policy-in-latvia-a-multi-faceted-approach>.
- Pilsonības un Migrācijas Lietu Pārvalde [Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs]. 2011. *Pētījums: Nepilsoņu Viedoklis par Latvijas Pilsonības Iegūšanu* [Study: The Perspective of Non-Citizens on Acquiring Latvian Citizenship]. Accessed August 20, 2016. [http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/sakums/jaunumi/publikacijas/petijumi/lejupieladet-petijumu-\(pdf\).pdf](http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/sakums/jaunumi/publikacijas/petijumi/lejupieladet-petijumu-(pdf).pdf).

- Pitcher, M. Anne, and Kelly M. Askew. 2006. "African Socialisms and Postsocialisms." *Africa* 76 (1): 1–14.
- Plakans, Andrejs. 1995. *Latvians: A Short History*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.
- Rajkai, Zsombor. 2015. "Introduction." In *Family and Social Change in Socialist and Post-socialist Societies: Continuity and Change in Eastern Europe and East Asia*, edited by Zombor Rajkai, 1–16. Leiden: Brill.
- Rastrigina, Olga. 2015. *The Policy on Gender Equality in Latvia: In-depth Analysis for the FEMM Committee*. Brussels: European Parliament. Accessed August 1, 2016. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2015/510008/IPOL_IDA\(2015\)510008_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2015/510008/IPOL_IDA(2015)510008_EN.pdf).
- "Reirs Latvijas vārdā paraksta Stambulas konvenciju." [Reirs signs the Istanbul Convention in Latvia's Name.] 2016. *Portāls nra.lv*, May 18. Accessed August 10, 2016. <http://nra.lv/latvija/172817-reirs-latvijas-varda-paraksta-stambulas-konvenciju.htm>.
- Republic of Latvia Ministry of Welfare. 2010. *Rīkojums par Dzimumu līdztiesības komitejas izveidi* [Order to Establish the Committee on Gender Equality], May 10. Accessed June 19, 2016. http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/dzimumu_lidztiesiba/dz_lidzt_rikojums2.pdf.
- Rogers, Douglas. 2010. "Postsocialisms Unbound: Connections, Critiques, Comparisons." *Slavic Review* 69 (1): 1–15.
- Roth, Silke. 2007. "Sisterhood and Solidarity? Women's Organizations in the Expanded European Union." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State, and Society* 14 (4): 460–487.
- Rozenvalds, Juris. 2010. "The Soviet Heritage and Integration Policy Development since the Restoration of Independence." In *How Integrated Is Latvian Society? An Audit of Achievements, Failures and Challenges*, edited by Nils Muižnieks, 33–60. Riga: University of Latvia Press.
- Ruddick, Sara. 1989. *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. New York: Beacon Press.
- Rudenshiold, Eric. 1992. "Ethnic Dimensions in Contemporary Latvian Politics: Focusing Forces for Change." *Soviet Studies* 44 (4): 609–639.
- Rudevska, Baiba. 2016. *Juridiskā analīze par Eiropas Padomes Konvencijas par vardarbības pret sievietēm un vardarbības ģimenē novēršanu un apkarošanu iespējamo ietekmi uz Latvijas tiesību sistēmu* [Juridical Analysis of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence Influence on Latvia's Legal System]. Inga Kačevskas birojs [Office of Inga Kačevska], April 25. Accessed April 8, 2017. <https://www.tm.gov.lv/lv/aktualitates/tm-informacija-presei/juridiska-analize-par-stambulas-konvencijas-iespejamo-ietekmi-uz-latvijas-tiesibu-sistemu>.
- Rungule, Ritma. 1995. "Padomju Latvijas Sieviete Sabidrībā un Manī." [The Soviet Latvian Woman in Society and Within Me.] *Jaunā Gaita* [New Way], 200. Accessed August 20, 2016. <http://jaunagaita.net/jg200/JG200%20Janelsina-Rungule.htm>.
- Šaca-Marjaša, Ruta. 2013. *Mans Atmiņu Kaleidoskops* [My Kaleidoscope of Memories]. Translated by Amand Aizpuriete. Riga: Jumava.
- Scott, Joan Wallach. 1999. *Gender and the Politics of History*. Rev. ed. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Šmejkalova-Strickland, Jirina. 1995. "Revival? Gender Studies in the "Other Europe"." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 20 (4): 1000–1006.
- Šmidchens, Guntis. 2013. *The Power of Song: Nonviolent National Culture in the Baltic Singing Revolution*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Stenning, Alison, and Kathrin Hörschelmann. 2008. "History, Geography and Difference in the Post-Socialist World: Or, Do We Still Need Post-Socialism?" *Antipode* 40 (2): 312–335.
- Strods, Henrihs. 1993. "Septītā plauja (1940–1949)." [Seventh Harvest (1940–1949).] In *Via Dolorosa: Staļinisma Upuru Liecības* [Via Dolorosa: Testimonies of Stalin's Victims], Vol. 2, edited by Anda Līca, 10–20. Riga: Liesma.
- Strods, Henrihs. 1995. "Genocīda galvenās formas un mērķi Latvijā 1940–1985." [The Main Forms and Goals of Genocide in Latvia 1940–1985.] In *Via Dolorosa: Staļinisma Upuru Liecības* [Via Dolorosa: Testimonies of Stalin's Victims], Vol. 3, edited by Anda Līca, 9–26. Riga: Preses Nams.
- Suchland, Jennifer. 2011. "Is Postsocialism Transnational?" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 36 (1): 837–862.
- Ticktin, Miriam. 2011. "The Gendered Human of Humanitarianism: Medicalising and Politicising Sexual Violence." *Gender & History* 23 (2): 250–265.
- Watson, Peggy. 1993. "Eastern Europe's Silent Revolution." *Sociology* 27 (3): 471–487.

- Watson, Peggy. 2000. "Re-thinking Transition: Globalism, Gender, and Class." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 2 (2): 185–213.
- Weiner, Elaine. 2009. "Dirigism and *Deja Vu* Logic." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 16 (1): 211–228.
- Zaķe, Ieva. 1997. "The Latvian Press and Violence Against Women in the Context of Gender Equality." In *Invitation to Dialogue: Beyond Gender (In)equality*, edited by Ilze Koroļeva, 56–68. Riga: Institute of Philosophy and Sociology.
- Zariņa, Inna. 2001. "Trafficking in Women: A Perspective from Latvia." In *Trafficking in Women and Prostitution in the Baltic States: Social and Legal Aspects*, edited by International Organization for Migration, 201–276. Helsinki: International Organization for Migration.