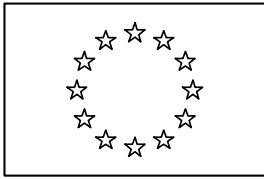


**THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA  
IN (RE)DISTRIBUTION OF POWER**

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### **About the project**

The project “Mass Media in (Re)Distribution of Power” is executed in terms of the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005). It seeks, by challenging and changing the existing stereotypes, to reach a situation when both genders are motivated and enjoy equal opportunities to participate in decision-making on issues important for the whole society. The project partners are the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, the Danish Research Centre on Gender Equality, the Giacomo Brodolini Foundation (Italy), the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Estonia.

More information can be found at the project website: [www.medijuprojekts.lv](http://www.medijuprojekts.lv)

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# INTRODUCTION

Nowadays media play an important role in building gender as the axis of public power relations. A „politician’s” social identity is built and maintained in continuous interaction. Building an image of a competent politician one needs a certain kind of dominance, and with that – the use of a specific gender discourse for the image. A similar argument could be applied to modern journalists creating gender schemes in their professional work.

## Key Definitions

**Gender** has various definitions – both in research projects and in daily use. The aim of J.Lorber’s (J.Lorber, 1994) initial definition of gender was to separate the biological and social aspects of the difference between men and women. In this case „sex” is related to biological aspects of women and men (chromosomes, hormones, physical appearance) while „gender” refers to those features that build social impact or the meaning that the public grants to biological differences. In accordance with this definition, one is speaking of sex differences during life analysing biological differences in lifespan indicators while of gender differences when discussing social impact on the life of a person in relation to the status of being a „woman” or a „man”. The definition of this term has three parts:

- 1) Gender is a social institution with reference to the argument that gender is the central public organising factor. Gender defines behavioural models in reciprocity with other institutions, for instance, social class and economics.
- 2) Gender indicates differences in terms of power. Just like race and social class, gender organises social relations so that some individuals have more power than the others. Gender has an impact both in terms of „power to do” and „power over somebody”. „Power to do” refers to one’s ability to act and in this case this is needed in cases when access to social resources is being discussed, for instance, in accessing education, money, property or time. „Power over somebody” refers to a situation when individuals are able to define their wishes and objectives and act accordingly even at the backdrop of opposition from the others.
- 3) Gender is a cultural construction that differs depending on the specific society. Possibly, these differences are the best illustration for intercultural comparisons on what is being viewed as „men’s” or „women’s” behaviour, for instance, in relation to „acceptable” or habitual forms of occupation. These cultural constructions are often tightly linked to religion, ethics, traditions, etc..

Gender is built and rebuilt in reciprocity with people and according to social and cultural interpretations of femininity and masculinity or in contrast with the two.

In media studies femininity and masculinity are interpreted as „a product and process of representation” (T. de Lauretis, 1987). Constructivists view representation and meaning, masculinity and femininity as signs and as one of subjectivities (or subject positions) building a person’s social identity (D. Saxe, 1992). In gender representation studies and in media discourse special attention is paid to bodily representation thus bringing about discussion on its cultural meaning, political valence and materiality. In civic society, in popular national culture specifically, various agents of hegemony (shapers of culture, for instance, journalists, politicians, TV producers and filmmakers) influence people’s understanding including „natural/self-evident” definitions of femininity and masculinity. Hence, in a study of modern media „masculinity” and „femininity” are bodies of instrumentalised representative practices making the man’s and woman’s sex non-controversial – *simple and natural*.

**Stereotypes** – popular systematic views on individual characteristics on the basis of group characteristics.

**Gender stereotypes** – a set of popular views on individual features on the basis of gender. Even if gender stereotypes prove to be true, they still do not relate to everyone in the group.

**Power** – material and symbolic resources obtained with an aim to control impact.

**Politics** – we view the sphere of politics as a process of decision-making in society; it is on-going both in the public and private sectors and includes a wide spectrum of problems in various areas: employment, sexuality, reproduction, governance, family (home), gender equality.

**Mass media** – popular means for constructing/modelling information and opinions as well as for constructing stereotypes. The term includes printed media, radio, television and electronic media.

### **Study objective**

The study objective is to analyse gender stereotypes and methods of constructing female and male genders in media representation as well as to analyse their impact on power distribution processes in decision-making and with regard to opportunities for men and women. Thus, two sides of the process were looked at: gender stereotypes (aspect of representation) and gender stereotyping (as a constructive-discursive aspect) in media-power relations. In order to analyse gender stereotypes in media as results of existing cognitive schemes and resulting social “products”, the main focus was on how power is being constructed with the help of gender in media policy. Ethnicity is yet another aspect in the process of stereotyping gender. In other words, we were interested in how the representation of men and women in political elections encodes power as gender construction and how the ethnic aspect intertwines with gender stereotypes.

## **Questions posed in the study**

The study posed several central questions:

△ Gender stereotyping in media – traditional/new. If there are new stereotypes in media, to what extent is the gender aspect in them expressed? How are these stereotypes transferred and introduced in political discourses?

△ Women in politics – does their presence change the meaning of “femaleness” and “power”?

△ The media of ethnic minorities – what are the discourses of gender, ethnicity and power in this space?

△ Were gender differences viewed and taken into consideration when discussing politics during the pre-election campaign? How did gender stereotypes influence policy building discussion and the discussion of which problems specifically?

△ If gender and gender related issues were taken into consideration what were the main driving forces and factors that influenced them? What role did the media have in this process?

△ Did politicians/journalists look at gender related problems discussing politics in media?

### **Study areas and object of study**

Δ Media, gender and power analyses in politics were done regarding the sector where the interaction of these factors was most evident – in pre-election campaigns. Media discourse in the *Saeima* election campaign (Parliament of the Republic of Latvia – *translator's note*) in 2002 and the Presidential election (in 2003) campaign was analysed.

Δ The discourse of pre-election campaigns in this study was done “not only as that of a symptom reflecting the specific features of the speaker but more like an active modelling of the image of each politician – the image of a competent and reliable politician”. (*K. Gomard and A. Krogstad, 2001*).

Δ Analysis of media, gender, politics and power has several directions in this study. We wanted to see whether **agenda** (spectrum of issues) **building, priority-setting and discussions** in various media types and genres included (or marginalised or excluded) issues pertaining to gender as well as to men and women with respect to gender.

Δ We were interested in discursive similarities and differences between men and women as process stakeholders, party leaders representing and presenting programmes of their parties, ideological positions, etc., as well as in those observed between party politicians of both sexes in the process of constructing gender stereotypes.

Δ In media, television and radio specifically, the social and gender identity of the specific participants is actively moulded and maintained in interaction. Analysis of media **language** in interviews and discussion and special programmes focused on the behaviour of the participants and gender stereotypes or gender related problem awareness with regard to specific issues and political questions. Special attention was paid to the language of the political area used in debates and discussions, communicative styles of men and women as well the behaviour of journalists (men and women) and language during interviews with women-politicians and men-politicians.

Δ In print media – newspapers – analysis of both the texts and **visual materials** was used (political advertising, caricature, photographs).

Δ Analysing materials from press and radio programmes both in Latvian and Russian the **ethnic aspect** was taken in consideration. Relying on Benedict Anderson's notion of the “imaginary communities” (*B.Anderson, 1983*) our objective was to do a comparative analysis on how gender is instrumentalised in the sphere of political power in Latvian and Russian language media in Latvia.

## **Methodology**

Analysis was done on the basis of qualitative research methods resulting from various methodological perspectives: sociolinguistics, analysis of rhetoric, discussion analysis, critical discourse analysis and argumentation analysis. Analysis of gender from a cultural perspective is a theoretical and methodological precondition for study and analytical purposes.

Critical discourse analysis. Discourse is defined as use of language and it is viewed as social practice in certain cultural-social contexts (*N.Fairclough, 2003*). Political discourse may be viewed as an organised set of discursive practices linked to the political sphere. The aim of discourse analysis is not only to analyse the speech of politicians at the textual and interconnected levels in light of certain discursive practices, but also to take into consideration the “context”

from a wider perspective: institutional level, situation and participants in constructing power discursively – social class, ideology, gender and ethnic aspects.

This is the main methodological approach used in combination with elements from other kinds of analysis.

Evidence based theory methodology. Qualitative analysis within the framework of this approach is defined as a “non-mathematical interpretation process performed with an aim to discover terms and relationship in unprocessed data and to further organise it within a theoretical, explanatory scheme” (A. Strauss and J. Corbin, 1997). For D. Altheide the aim of a qualitative approach was to understand the social life process and nature and to understand its meaning (D. Altheide, 1996). Thus, media production as an object of qualitative study would allow an understanding of the types of media documents, their characteristic features and organising aspects as a social product *per se* as well as with regard to what they represent.

Frame analysis. In addition to an evidence based theory approach and discourse analysis, frame analysis is used as well. Frame analysis looks at the most important subjects in text and indicates how culture defined themes influence our understanding of events. Frame analysis in media studies shows how language aspects and new structures would focus on one kind of aspect omitting others. Frame analysis is used to define themes related to representation of both genders in Latvian and Russian media as well as analysing what factors influence the way journalists and other public groups interpret (see within a certain type of scheme) specific issues.

The study focuses on ways of representing men- and women-politicians in mass media. Media messages were viewed from a gendered perspective; it was analysed how: 1) male and female politicians “do” gender – that is, how they show themselves and “speak” as being gendered; 2) how male and female politicians are placed in a certain context and showed as gendered or how in interaction a certain attitude towards them is demonstrated as to politicians of a certain sex (gender) – both from the side of journalists and experts as well as viewers/listeners/readers and other persons surveyed; 3) the gender aspect is being reflected in media, that is, is material on gender equality or non-equality published or broadcasted therein.

The following thematic variables were considered while studying all the materials:

- a female politician;
- a male politician;
- family;
- the role of a mother;
- the role of a father, sexuality;
- work and labour market;
- politics;
- violence
- roles/images attached to politicians or “done” by politicians depending on their gender.

Also analysed was *how* the politicians spoke and also *what* they were talking about, how they addressed one another, how the media referred to them – about men and women in politics. Thus, we paid particular attention to whether women spoke more about social and cultural issues (which could possibly be viewed as “more feminine” areas) and whether men focused more on military areas, foreign affairs, etc.. Of equal importance to us was to pay attention to who is shown/shows themselves to be the permanent problem solver of a specific area - in other words, what are the areas of a woman’s responsibility and those of a man’s in the media discourse. Thus, the discourse of politics as a gender area is revealed.

In the course of text and programme analysis the respective genre was specified that often determines the rules of interaction between politicians and journalists as well as defines to what extent politicians act or are interpreted as representatives of a certain gender or as gender subjects. “Framing” or perspective, visions were analysed that (most often – implicitly) is accepted – both with textual means or using pictures.

The focus in printed media was on photographs, caricatures, in radio materials it was the specific way of posing questions, in a certain order. The same was applied to TV materials – in adding the visual component we were interested in how politicians of either sex were presented. Both politicians and journalists tend to emphasise various notions differently, some more than others – hence we paid attention to what notions were used with regard to female politicians and male politicians and how they brought those issues up themselves.

Special attention must be paid not only to what the politicians of both sexes said but also to what they were not saying – this is another aspect analysed in the present study. Assumption analysis is yet another aspect of the overall analysis – if no other alternatives are offered and assumptions are offered as an “objective” description, we pay special attention to this. Politicians – both male and female – and also as agents (in some cases) as passive “objects” - we looked at how in various media texts the active and passive verb constructions were used– how a male or female politician was described within a certain context of the specific activity/sphere. If offence was used in a particular article of the programme, we paid attention to how the gender of the politician was used in this. The formal or informal nature (the register) of the text and its relation to the representation of the politician of either sex or their characteristics are analysed in this study, too. The modality of the text – the degree of certainty or hesitation of the tone – could be determined both in the printed and also – perhaps even more so – in radio and television. Attention was also paid to the voice and its modulations depending on the gender of the politician.

### **Media analysis and the plan for analysis**

The study analysed gender discourse in politics as reflected in media during the following periods of time:

September 3, 2002 – October 15 – a period of almost one month before Parliamentary elections and a week long period after Parliamentary elections (that took place on October 5, 2002);

May 22, 2003 – June 26 – a period of almost one month before Presidential elections and a weeklong period after Presidential elections (that took place on May 22, 2003).

Three newspapers in Latvian, two newspapers in Russian, programmes on Latvian Radio 1 in Latvian and on Latvian Radio 4 in Russian as well as programmes on LTV 1 in Latvian were analysed.

Printed media in Latvian analysed for the purposes of this study were the following: “Diena”, “Lauku Avīze” (“LA”), “Vakara Ziņas” (“VZ”) – all aimed at different target audiences and having distinct and different informative [market] niches. „Diena” and „Lauku Avīze” are the so-called quality media that are published in relatively large batches, however, they are aimed at different segments of the population in terms of social-demographic backgrounds – „Diena” is orientated more at the young/middle-aged, analytical urban reader while „Lauku Avīze” covers

rural residents (though including the urban population) that could belong to an older age group and may be more conservative than the „Diena” reader. „Vakara Ziņas” represents the so-called yellow press reflecting elections to a much lesser extent than the two above mentioned press editions.

Out of the body of newspapers published in Russian in Latvia, „Čas”, Vestī Segodņa” („Vestī”) were analysed and material from „Telegraf” was examined. These newspapers are considered to be the most popular among the Russian speaking audience in Latvia. Minority media is not a unique phenomenon in Latvia; however, it is a specific phenomenon due to the historical and post-Soviet situation in which the media and general public are developing in this country. The language and agenda building strategies for these media account for having the target audience that the Latvian media do not possess – either in terms of language used, or in terms of ethnicity or the „non-citizen” status. The formation of the so-called two media „communities” in Latvia has been influenced by the two media-producing communities.

Representations of politicians were analysed on the whole, pointing out the differences between the two. We paid attention to genre, themes, language, framing strategies and pictures in all the newspapers – how the aforementioned papers constructed the gender of a politician, how they emphasized their attractiveness or the lack of it using traditional and new gender stereotypes. Political advertisements published in the newspapers were analysed as well.

Minority media have neither been studied nor analysed from a gender perspective at all. We agree with S.Kruks who argues, „Russian newspapers are not homogenous, which proves the diversity of the „Russian” public. „Telegraf” is quite moderate; „Vestī Segodņa” is distinctly „yellow” and populist. Succumbing to the pressure of competition from the „yellow” „Vestī”, „Čas” is much more reserved. At the same time in the Latvian discourse „the Russian speaking” are viewed more like a homogenous mass because following tradition it is the ethnic identity that is stressed. A Russian is first of all expected to learn how to play *balalaika* because ethnic identity is the basis for social identification. Even following naturalisation he becomes the “new-citizen” – different as per definition and still an awkward one. Nevertheless, the Russians have no specific ethnic interest that could stimulate their solidarity. There are social, political, economical interests that coincide with those of the Latvians while in these issues the ethnic background of participants soon becomes the instrument of manipulation. What it means is the following: if these interests contradict those of the leading elite (whose interests, by the way, are always correct and therefore no subject for further discussion) then the opinion carrier is defined in ethnic terms and excluded from politics as the bad stranger. Should these interests coincide, the ethnic factor is not mentioned at all. What are left over are only the bad deeds of the Russians”, (S.Kruks, [www.politika.lv](http://www.politika.lv)). A very important factor absent from this argument though is that of gender – women are the majority of the media target audience while it is mainly men who constitute the leading elite.

The material broadcasted by Latvian Radio 1 in Latvian and Radio 4 in Russian encompassed programmes on political subjects: discussions, interviews, political debate, analytical programmes, news releases, live broadcasts, popular surveys, political satire. Party political advertising during the pre-election period was analysed.

TV material in Latvian included special, free pre-election canvassing programmes broadcasted by LTV 1; a talk show hosted by Jānis Domburs “Kas notiek Latvijā?” (“What is happening in Latvia?) as well as a sequence of political discussions “Milžu cīņas” (“The Battles of the Giants”) where parties having exceeded the 4% minimum threshold in pre-election ratings were invited for a public debate.

First of all, the analysis was divided on the basis of media types. The gender and political discourse produced in various genres was looked at separately, as were the two election periods –

that of the Parliamentary elections (voters – residents of Latvia) and that of the President of the State (voters – members of Parliament). At the end more general comparisons were made. All the researchers involved in the study used detailed questionnaires and study guidelines in the process of work.

We would like to particularly acknowledge the assistance of Finnish researchers (at Helsinki University) for their help regarding the study methodology, most specifically, we would like to thank Eeva Raaevaara (gender and politics), Minna Aslam (Media and gender) as well as researchers from Denmark, Estonia and Italy; we would also like to thank our project partners for their cooperation and exchange of ideas, their knowledge and expertise in the course of doing the first study of its kind in Latvia. We would like to also express our special thanks to our research assistants for their wonderful and productive support, making gender visible in Latvian media.

### **Study context**

The political context of the study is the period of post-Soviet nation formation and state building, transition to market economy and accession to supranational organisations: the European Union and NATO.

An essential feature of Latvian media space is its segmentation: there are media for Latvian and Russian speaking audiences. This situation has resulted in having two distinct target audiences. At the moment, quite probably, the situation is changing as access to national and transnational media has increased and has become more diverse. It is also evident at the moment that those media that present messages in different languages are different also in terms of the issues being discussed therein. The Latvian press has turned its attention to political topics, though mainly – to the issues pertinent to the Latvian-speaking target audience – such as, municipal and Parliamentary elections, problems with education, social issues. The focus on issues about Russian schools is somewhat smaller.

Russian press focuses more on discussing the issues of citizenship and those related to the school reform; it shows a more critical stance on political and economical developments in the country. Both media communities, in fact, communicated contrasting opinions on issues like the programme for ethnic and social integration in Latvia; thus reflecting both the contradictory stances that existed in the country and constructing the social split between the people of various languages and cultures.

This proves the existence of strong media political power in the modern world when media, in fact, take over the function of social and political mobilisation of the target audience and borderline formation – either that of the majority or minority. The strongest efforts of these papers are devoted to building ethno-social and ethno-political division among the residents. This points to the power of certain political forces standing behind the media publishing in either of the languages and at the same time leads journalists astray from building a common discussion on the common social issues, including aspects of gender equality. In fact, it is related to S.Kruks' argument, "(...) The problem lies in the dominant view held in Latvia that journalism is yet another market player and only that or that it has no particular social responsibility" (S.Kruks, [www.politika.lv](http://www.politika.lv) ).

Mass media are working in definite social contexts producing certain gender stereotypes in the political realm, too. In theory – even if this does not always hold true in practice – women have the right to an equal attitude and treatment in all spheres of life and equal public representation, including politics. The result of the Soviet “gender equality” was the denial of such social agenda that would draw attention to gender at all. The formation of a woman as an agent of a political

collective with her own rights, opinion on the equality between men and women as well as her political impact, activity and opportunities for making change has taken a controversial course of development.

Problematisation of gender as a politically complicated space is marginalised in the political agenda. Even though gender/sex issues have been included in the nation building process (documents on gender equality and EU pressure), they still equal some mythical „space” and never show up in the spectrum of dominant political interests for building the nation. Nevertheless, a woman in politics is not a “foreign” body; she is actually in high demand in the capacity of “target audience” for dominant politics and, at the moment, the most clearly marked minority status is that of ethnicity (not gender or anything else). This situation presents itself in two facts: first of all, women in elite politics do not associate themselves with gender politics and secondly, the leading media in Latvia actually ignore issues pertaining to gender, gender equality, gender mainstreaming, especially in politics.

Emergence of women in the political world is not a radical process as they habitually do not bring about a serious alternative *status quo* in formal politics – in the “men’s club”. Instead, women are given the “right” to partake in symbolic, representative positions wherein they occasionally take the traditional female role – that of a participant in the subordinate and passive political process. Some male politicians openly suggest that Latvia could make a better impression in the international arena if women held leading positions like those currently held by S.Kalniete, I.Vaidere, I.Ūdre as well as that of the President of State, V.Viķe-Freiberga.

From a political point of view, power includes gender dichotomy as it is political power and women specifically that are still incompatible terms. In cases when women have really proved themselves in the political process and have actually brought about changes within this process, like Margaret Thatcher for example, ambivalence of the woman-leader’s status and of a traditionally patriarchal country (with its various feminine and antithetic masculine “amalgamations”) may be observed. As a result, following the argument of Estonian researcher Raili Poldsaar (Raili Poldsaar, 2002), a new hybrid or the “honourable man” emerges, to borrow R.Lakoff’s (1990) description, somebody who remains within the male dominated order and who does not stimulate the emergence of women in the public sphere and politics. When a woman – “the unique”, the “only” one, the “special” one – is accepted by the power realm, the rules of the game or the requirements set for its participants in decision making, remain unchanged.

The whole election procedure is complicated by women entering politics. Women are rarely included in the leading positions in party lists, that is, among the candidates who will later become members of Parliament. If a party gains a larger share of votes, there are few women who win enough support to be elected outside party listings. Women are rarely party leaders, particularly leaders of major parties. Finally, women are more visible in smaller parties that are often less successful in the whole election process. Minority leaders are men while the less important ones have less chance of being noticed on the political stage. The emergence of T.Ždanoka in the capacity of a party (PCTVL) leader is an exception. There are no efforts observed to create inter-party women’s groups or movements with an intention to unify women of various national or ethnic backgrounds.

Women in Parliamentary Committees and in public debates are not widely represented and women tend to remain unseen within the party system. The presence of women in the status of “signs” does not allow for blaming the power in gender discrimination, while positioning women in secondary roles does not give an impression of their presence in decision making at a political level wherein women’s problems have become an “untouchable” issue. Even being appointed to a serious political post does not account for active women’s participation in significant decision-making in terms of

gender politics. Activities of a woman politician are often described so that the description implies their lack of seriousness, for instance, with terms like, “woman’s emotiveness”, “sentimentality”, and “ambitions”. Women in politics, in the best case, disclose ambivalent feelings regarding their position in the sphere of men’s activities.

The described trivialisation and marginalisation of women in the political realm is habitual practice in the dominant role model of the modern world (Witt et al., 1994). At the same time, it is evident nowadays that the sphere of interaction between gender and politics is one of the areas where a specific human model is reproduced: an achievement-orientated one, trusting the free market principles and believing in survival of the fittest. This brings to life the still classic, though influenced by liberalism, “male” values – success, achievement, individualism, “authentic” right to power. In this respect there are no alternative visions offered either for women’s or for young men’s politics, nor for new ideologies of masculinity or new balanced models of gender politics. The result of attitude to gender as insurmountable differences is the political impossibility to attain social changes and gender equality. The general public lists the so-called “weak” and “women’s” values – harmony, spirit of cooperation, care – in secondary or even final place in the marginalised daily aspects of the modern market world. Read this way, gender politics possess limitations not only for female discourse but also for male discourse, assigning unequal value to the private sphere in the eyes of both sexes. This kind of strong differentiation in politics between genders (defined as hierarchical) complicates changing family policies and equal involvement of men in housework and childcare as well as in manifesting one’s own gender identity in the “weak” sphere of human values.

If society is predominantly masculine, it is clear then that success in the public realm is incompatible with the notions of “anti-pole”, that is, femininity and even biological femaleness. A woman, imagining that she does not have the right to power becomes a deviant in relation to traditional stereotypes on femininity and becomes a man in the public realm – woman’s political figure may be feminine from the perspective of sex while being masculine from the perspective of gender. However, should the woman be compared against the standards for both genders, it often turns out that she is lacking something in one respect or another. Women’s representation in mass media currently is orientated by this “double gap”, hence they try to persuade the audience that a typical woman is incapable of having a public career, economical independence and socially equal evaluation for any work that she is doing. At the same time mass media shows the value of true femininity that indirectly is equalled with the power of non-existence. Thus, in a certain way asymmetrical representations are selected not only in terms of showing inequality among men and women but also in maintaining this inequality in the consciousness of both sexes. Models of representative ethnic minority women are positioned in the following ways: hypervisible (should she be a successful businesswoman or wife/daughter of a representative of the business elite), sometimes visible (if holding some public or political post) or completely invisible (any other woman).

There are other essential power balance aspects in the political area, too. Women form the majority of the total electorate and along with positioning women in other spheres, they frequent election offices more even if they have major difficulties in getting to the top of the political Mount Olympus. In particular, detailed analysis of their private lives and negative (often indirectly) publicity is a part of the female candidate representation process, which is not favourable all in all. In a time when the public realm in Latvia is masculine and mainly involves women in the capacity of “honourable men” – exceptional experts on certain issues (I.Vaidere) or “honourable women” (S.Kalniete) they, in the capacity of professional experts, represent the dominant party views. A statement by a politician during a TV debate attests the above said when discussing S.Kalniete’s appointment to the post of Euro-commissioner, “She is a woman and they, in Europe, are struggling for gender equality so they will like her”. On the other hand, female groups in the Latvian context

have not gained legitimacy within the political realm. At the moment women do not form a unified voting group, however, the population group that they represent makes their votes in the party competition process very valuable. It would appear that Latvian mass media and politicians are proud that women are not making coalitions using it as proof of the special nature of our women meaning that they are not to be carried away by the “craze” of feminism. Since femininity is viewed as genetically and hormonally determined and social-political aspects remain unseen at that, the gender nature of women’s political objectives and social objectives is excluded from the dominant political discourse. A woman as a political figure is never viewed as representing a group of women, as an ideologist of new politics of gender, a re-evaluator of roles of women and men; she is viewed rather as an individual persona who has managed to enter “big” politics from a marginalised position and only thanks to her individual achievement.

Neither have women forged an efficient political minority as this political (minority) position is offered to those who arrived in Latvia after the year 1940, labelled as a result of the use of nationalistic rhetoric in the early years of reinstating independence. Women, an illegitimate “minority” in the political realm, have not managed to take over the ethnic split to unite with minority women and to make a public voice. In other EU countries women are viewed as serious political opposition forming a body of voters that are able to manifest their own, definite opinions. In contrast to that women in Latvia are being subjected to the perception of women as little political figures who may be moved on the chess board as the State or men – making political decisions – may fancy.

On the labour market the women’s situation is characterised by *discrimination and segregation of professions*: both horizontal and vertical segregation, accompanied by differences in terms of remuneration. Asymmetry in gender can be seen through the increasing numbers of part-time employed women – this is a part of the feminisation process of this market segment. At the same time the gender aspect remains undisclosed through the comparative data of workload and remuneration. Norms stipulated in legislation cannot eliminate *de facto* unequal treatment of women and men in the labour market, manifest, for instance, in job announcements wherein jobs are offered to one of the genders as well as in terms of sexual harassment. On the whole, even though women are discriminated against on the labour market, men have fewer rights in terms of family issues, particularly in contact with children and childcare opportunities after divorce. Discriminating practices are aimed at young women entering the labour market, and at women in pre-retirement age who are particularly vulnerable against being hired to work part-time and poverty.

## STUDY AND ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

### I PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

#### Male and female politicians: numerical ratio

Table 1. List of candidate parties to win Parliamentary seats

Name of party	Support before elections (%)*	Election results (%)**	Number of women in party lists (%)***	Number of women elected ****
“Jaunais laiks” (JL) (The New Time)	15,4	23,9	40,7	9 / 17

Tautas partija (TP) (People's Party)	14,1	16,6	25,5	5 / 15
Politisko organizāciju apvienība "Par cilvēka tiesībām vienotā Latvijā" (PCTVL) Union of political organisations "On Human Rights in United Latvia"	12,7	19,0	23,4	0 / 25
Apvienība "Tēvzemei un brīvībai"/LNNK (TB/LNNK) (Union "For Fatherland and Freedom")	7,2	5,4	16,9	1 / 6
Zaļo un zemnieku savienība (ZZS) (The Union of the Green and the Peasants)	7,0	9,4	14,5	1 / 11
Savienība "Latvijas ceļš" (LC) (Union „The Way of Latvia")	5,5	4,9	21,4	
Latvijas Sociāldemokrātiskā strādnieku partija (LSDSP) (Latvian Social Democratic Worker's Party)	4,8	4,0	22,2	
"Latvijas Pirmā partija" (LPP) (The First Party of Latvia)	3,8	9,5	37,3	2 / 8
Latgales Gaisma (LG) (The Light of Latgale)	2,6	1,6	50,0	
Sociāldemokrātiskā Labklājības partija (SDLP) (The Social Democratic Welfare Party)	1,2	1,3	43,6	
"Sociāldemokrātu savienība – SDS" (SDS) (Union of Social Democrats – SDS)	1,0	1,5	17,5	
Krievu partija (KP) (Russian Party)	0,9	0,5	6,3	
"Brīvības partija"	0,4	0,3	25,7	

(BP) (Freedom Party)				
Latvijas Atdzimšanas partija (LAP) (Party for Rebirth of Latvia)	0,3	0,2	19,1	
Latviešu partija (LP) (Party of Latvians)	0,3	0,4	42,9	
Partija "Mūsu zeme" (Party „Our Land”)	0,2	0,1	38,1	
Māras zeme (The Land of Mara)	0,2	0,2	54,5	
“Politiskā apvienība “Centrs” (Political union „Centre”)	0,2	0,6	31,7	
“Progresīvā CENTRISKĀ partija” (PCP) (The Progressive Centric Party)	0,1	0,1	42,4	
“Latvijas Apvienotā Republikāņu partija” (LARP) (The United Party of Republicans in Latvia)	0,1	0,1	18,4	

\* support before elections – data from *Vēlēšanas '02* (2002);

\*\* - election results – data of the Central Office of elections committee (<http://www.cvk.lv/cgi-bin/wdbcgiw/base/sae8dev.vel8meg.sa3>). Parties who were elected into Parliament are shaded.

\*\*\*Proportion of women in party lists – data of the Central Office of elections committee (<http://www.cvk.lv/cgi-bin/wdbcgiw/base/sae8dev.cvkand.otra>).

\*\*\*\*<http://www.cvk.lv/cvkserv/sa8/ieveletie.pdf>

Table 1 shows support to all 20 parties attempting to win seats in Parliament during the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary election process; it also shows election results as well as the proportion of women in the list of every party and the number of elected women and men. It must be noted that the number of women above 50% was mainly in the smaller parties; however, if 40% of women’s representation is viewed as the cutting line in party lists, there were more of the so-called larger parties in this category, including the *JL* who won the majority of seats at the end. However, if we look at the number of women elected, the number of women changes from party to party. The largest number of women elected represented the *JL* while there were no women elected from the *PCTVL*.

Even though this study method is qualitative and the most essential thing is to find out *how* gender and gender stereotypes are “done” in politics, it must be noted at the same time that men who were represented both in political advertisements and materials and commentaries as well as on TV and radio programmes were represented in much larger numbers than women and thus made more of an impact on the perception of the political realm – first of all it was represented as a male sphere due to the great majority of male politicians in these materials. Men were also dominant among the party leaders (Among 21 party leaders, 16 were men and 4 were women).

## Political advertising

The genre of political advertising is notable for its capacity to “show” politicians as they “show” themselves or as their images are constructed (with their own participation or that of their PR specialists). We have taken into consideration that between candidate parties for Parliamentary seats there were no significant ideological differences, party advertisements were grounded on personalities as well as on stressing the “product” qualities and differences were shown using psychological and emotional (instead of rational) methods to influence the voter, for instance, through a specific shade of colour instead of informative strategies. Evaluating the political pre-election campaign, it must be noted that even though party advertisements often mentioned various themes and problems to be solved, strategic development formulations were absent, there were no specific political solutions offered either. The new and the small parties mainly pointed out the existing problems with the parties in power, criticised the situation and promised to solve everything as soon as their respective parties were elected. The parties in power in turn stressed what they had achieved (for instance, V.Krištopans in ZZS advertising, A.Bērziņš in LC advertising).

Pre-election campaigns showed that the representation of male politicians was more diverse, in the political discourse more male types could be identified than female types. The division between the two genders was distinct – women politicians and men politicians had features that were particularly pronounced, they had a certain appearance, interests, issues to be discussed that, most probably, was a conscious choice, to some extent, and had impact on the choice of the voters. It is quite possible to speak about a certain dominant (hegemonic, to use R.Connell’s term (1998)) image of a male-politician as well as the image of a female-politician or the successful (elected in Parliament) image of a politician. R.Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as a form of masculinity, “which in a certain context is the most respectable one or viewed as the most desirable one” (R.Connell, 1998). Hegemonic masculinity, as interpreted by R.Connell, is summed up by the following, “Where this notion is being used, [it] points out to a general idea about assumptions and opinions on masculinity, opinions that have become generally accepted and that may be absorbed uncritically or agreed spontaneously with, but that, following assumption, are imperative in their nature in terms of affecting consciousness, norms of behaviour, affections or desires” (R.Hanke, 1998)<sup>1</sup>.

Essential issues and themes that were mentioned during pre-election campaigns and that showed clear differences among the parties were issues pertaining to foreign affairs: attitude to accession to EU and NATO integration. Corruption elimination, social guarantees and tax issues were at the centre of pre-election promises. The spectrum of the aforementioned issues was noted using terms of rationality, responsibility and order that were shown as prerequisite in political, economical and social issue solving that are traditionally viewed as “man-like” and “political”. At the same time these notions served to characterise a male politician who met the aforementioned characteristics and hence could do a lot on behalf of Latvia.

Visual representation of a male politician in Latvia was quite typical – it comprised a man sporting a suit and tie. Some advertisements showed a man in casual attire but that was used far less

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Hanke’s definition of hegemonic masculinity refers to a „superiority of a special version or model of masculinity that, operating within generally accepted and conventional scheme of morals defines, „what it means to be a man”” (R.Hanke, 1998). It means that one version could be the most clearly expressed one in media discourse. His and other studies have found that „hegemonic masculinity is maintained not only through repeated focus on dominance-based masculinity, but also with the help of a „new vision on masculinity” that is defined in relation to women’s liberation and woman „as the new woman’s” image (R.Hanke, 1998).

frequently. Clothing demonstrates a politician's responsibility and his serious commitment to work in politics. The image of a male party leader is linked to the ideas of seriousness and responsibility not only in visual representation but also in the texts – party slogans. For instance, Einars Repše (*JL*) was pictured as an unsmiling, serious politician promising to bring to life the principles of openness, honesty, professionalism and responsibility. The same is stressed in the party's slogans: "Honoured to serve Latvia" and "Power is responsibility". Leader of the *LPP* Eriks Jekabsons, former boxer and minister was pictured along the following lines: a physically fit man wearing both a white shirt and a suit. The slogan of this party "A man is his word" stressed the gender aspect – a real man (politician=man) will always keep a promise. The rhetoric of "serving" used in *LPP* political advertising was used in the *TB/LNNK* advertisements as well "The State shall serve the person". The use of this notion of "serving" may be linked to several aspects: the religious idea of serving (that, possibly, was closer to *LPP*) and serving as service provision related to the masculinity image in the business of politicians (*R. Connell*, 1998; *M. Kimmel*, 2001). A male politician as an experienced person was positioned in the centre of *LC* advertisement texts.

The image of politics as a team of men was used in *TP* advertisements. These ads showed a group of politicians (in almost all advertisements – men only with the exception of one, less frequently printed picture where two women were included) – often three men sitting around a table with their back towards a bookshelf. Note books and an omnipresent – in terms of advertisement – cup with red sharp pencils symbolised the willingness of these men to work on behalf of the country as well as the competence of a "men's club" in fulfilling the promises made. The only word that was used as a comment to this picture was "The Team". Being a member of a professional, predictable and reliable team of politicians a man supposedly meets these standards at around the age of 50, being formal and reclusive at that. Association with a sports team is in place here in relation to which the dominant (male) values in politics are stressed: competition, training, achievements, discipline, and health. Even the *JL* advertising text positioned the party as a professional team. The image of a men's team is a great illustration to politics as a "contract of brotherhood" policy model. Carol Pateman defines this as public space viewed by a man as an "individual" and being constructed "excluding women and everything that they may symbolise." (*C. Pateman*, 1989:52).

Sample political advertisements:



jaunais laiks



### Einars Repše par ekonomiku un nodokļiem

Latvijas ekonomikas attīstību ietekmē daudzi faktori – pārākīga birokrātija un korupcija, atbilsta trūkums mazajiem un vidējiem uzņēmumiem, nepārdomāta nodokļu politika un milzīgs ēnu ekonomikas apjoms. Šo problēmu risināja iestādēm ir partijas *Jaunais laiks* nestieckamo darbu saraksts.

Lai nodrošinātu strauju tautsaimniecības izaugsmi un labklājības pieaugumu, *Jaunais laiks* samazinās nodokļu slogu un veiks virkni pasākumu uzņēmējdarbības vides uzlabošanai Latvijā.

Nodokļi tiks samazināti, vienlaikus radikāli uzlabojot to iekasēšanu. Tāks parādīs, ka maksā visi, bet samazināta būs. Nodokļu nemaksātāji tiks sodīti un valsts neatmaksātās parādu situācijā. Ieguvēji būs visi. Pirmkārt, iegūs Latvijas tauta, jo valstij būs vairāk naudas izglābāt, veselības aprūpei, sociālajai drošībai. Otrkārt, iegūs godīgie uzņēmēji, jo viņi maksās mazākus nodokļus un nebūs pakļauti negodīgai konkurencei no nodokļu nemaksātāju puses. Nodokļus maksājošie uzņēmumi saņems valsts atbalstu un aizsardzību – tās skaitā pret ierādņu parvaju, negodīgu konkurenci, kontrabandu, korupciju un birokrātiju.

Ar nodokļu politiku neilgi tiks veicināta mazo un vidējo uzņēmumu attīstība, jo tie rada lielāko daļu darbu vietu un nodrošina viduslīmeņa paplašināšanos un nostiprināšanos Latvijā. Visām investīcijām valsts atbalstamajās nozarēs mēs piemērosim uzņēmumu ienākuma nodokļa atlaidi 60% apmērā no kopējās investīciju summas.

Nepietri tiks strādāts pie nodokļu iekasēšanas un ēnu ekonomikas izskaušanas. Prioritāri darbu virzieni būs cīņa pret kontrabandu, ar PVN atmaksu saistīto krāpšanu un apliecinājumu algām. Vienlaikus mēs nodrošināsim valsts pasākumu konkursu atklātību un godīgumu, kas ir svarīgs faktors gan budžeta līdzekļu lietderīgas izlietošanas nodrošināšanai, gan uzņēmējdarbības vides sakārtošanai.

Lai paveiktu iecerēto, mums ir svarīgi uzņēmēju un visas tautas atbalsts. Mēs esam pārliecināti, ka Latvijas tauta arī bez oranžu priekšvēlēšanu režīma palīdzības pati spēj lemt savu nākotni. Un vienīgi kopā mēs spēsim sāktot mūsu valsti.

Gods kalpot Latvijai

*Repše*

Einars Repše,  
partijas *Jaunais laiks* vadītājs

Saraksts Nr. 7

Partijpasa izveidošana aprakstā punktā Jaunais laiks



## Komanda Rīgai

Saraksts  
Nr. 8

Mēs esam nacionāla partija, kurai ir izvērtas programma, profesionāli un zināši cilvēki Rīgā un visā Latvijā, kā arī pieredze darīt grūtus darbus – zemkopība, izglītība, ekonomika, iekšlietās, bezdarba samazināšanā, reģionālajā attīstībā. Tagad būs jālabo situācija medicīnā. Kurš to darīs, kurš to prasīs? Tas jālemj jums.



LC political advertising promised security that textually referred to integration into NATO while visually picturing a child hiding behind and holding a man's leg. Military security, traditionally men's domain, was shown as politically the most essential one; hence creating the association that politics is a man's field as well. TB/LNNK advertisements also stressed security and NATO (military organisation) as security guarantors even though the text denied that weapons could be a guarantee for security.

A politician from LC, K.Lībane was positioned as an equal among politicians. Her clothing was more colourful in contrast to that of the men, in the text she propagated that she would "work and achieve" – just like her male colleagues. TV advertisements of this party pictured politicians of both sexes as equals without stressing or constructing specifically the features of female politicians. A new image was forged in this case – one that had not existed before – a young female politician entering politics on equal terms with men – like a "sister" in their team. In this case politics was a road of professionals "without gender"; however, roads to politics are never gender neutral – only a few get into the leading positions in politics. The target audience of this specific politician was young women building their careers in urban environments, in business – in a man's world. A young, successful politician was shown as a model for any woman working in business or politics (that are still traditionally male-dominated areas).

The leader of the ZZS party, I. Ūdre was pictured as a woman-politician (unique, special). Both advertisements printed in newspapers and the TV commercial used showed her wearing a dress and high-heeled shoes walking down a meadow next to two children riding a horse. She was holding a balloon in her hands. This joyful, sunny picture was strengthened by the slogan, "Female strength and Femininity of Strength. Ingrida Ūdre. The Union of the Green and the Peasants". Femininity in this commercial was in the centre contrasting masculinity stressed in the previous political ads mainly dominated by men. Femininity was associated with children, family, and the private sector, education, nation, emotions, care in this advertisement was shown as women's "power" areas in contrast with political advertisements of men whereby politics or the public sector were central or where they were pictured with neutrality, stressing their vision with textual aids. Yet another advertisement showed the face of I.Ūdre with her lips half open that could create an association with sexual undertones or another set related to a lack of seriousness in the protagonist of the commercial. It must be noted that in cases when interviews served as political advertisements for the candidates of this party, most frequently the opinion leaders were the men from the party (I.Emsis, A.Brigmanis).

It is interesting that, for instance, in the advertisement of the “Brīvības partija” the woman (M.Kostaņecka) was positioned in the role of a caring mother. Another female politician V.Lāzo in the LSDSP advertising material was shown as a woman wearing a national costume and knitted mittens saying, “Good work must be kept, the bad – cast away!” (protector of the morals in politics).

In the PCTVL advertisement women were shown as participants at a political meeting protesting against something. This was meant to indicate that women are politically active while they have their own limitation in voting for power representatives – because they are not quite the decision-making part of society. It is interesting that the advertisement of the political union “Centrs” showed a child’s face (that of a girl) in contrast with small men’s portraits. Here women/nation/children were positioned as weak and dependent on the man/politician/doer. Yet another LC political advertisement describing activities to be done and to attain welfare showed man as the doer. TB/LNNK, “Brīvības partija” political advertisements – interviews let the men dominate in the discourse of power division. Men were the ones who spoke about the development of the State and making it complete. For instance, in a TB/LNNK advertisement J.Dobelis addressed the electorate by saying “Our Fatherland is experiencing hard times; its sons must come and help the Fatherland”. Fatherland here is equal to a mother while the saviour is a politician/doer – man (son).

We must note here that the genre of advertising representing men – leaders of parties positioned with the strategy of personalisation as the primary means for setting something in the foreground with the help of visual framing, hence allowing the audience to see his individual value as well as the man politician that teams up with others hence becoming a “nation” that has an aura, metaphor. Bringing personalisation to the foreground in the course of the pre-election campaign was so powerful that it turned the party discussions on problems in party programmes into secondary issues. Bringing issues like accession to EU and NATO integration to the foreground simultaneously made secondary or “overlooked” any serious discussion on internal affairs, for instance, on social issues, gender equality, etc.. Questions on gender equality are a good illustration of how in the course of such discussion during the pre-election campaign professional politicians did not view [avoided] them as important unlike the EU and NATO accession processes. On the other hand when gender equality politics was stressed as a part of harmonisation with *acquis communautaire*, the elected part of the Parliament marginalised it in the public and political discourse as something enforced/affixed to the nation and State from outside.

Nomination in the foreground is so clearly expressed it enables manipulation with the target audience using assumptions. The assumption is such use of language that certain ideas seem to be self-evident without any alternative possibilities. In this case nomination in the foreground is based on an assumption that a politician or a team of politicians that are shown in the advertisement has no competitors.

Problems with corruption, social issues and others were stressed as those that require rationality, responsibility and order in the solution-finding stage that were shown as traits inherent in men hence legitimising them as belonging to the political realm. Hence political advertisements in fact indirectly constructed the relationship between the *agent (doer)-recipient* between a male-politician, *agent* of rationality, order and responsibility unifying a collective on the one hand and the target audience or the *recipient* on the other hand. It was all done with the help of personalisation – building psychological and emotional attitudes against the figure of the male politician. The indirect *feminisation* of the target audience in the familiar gender stereotyping dichotomy – subject (man): object (women) – brings out yet another way of manipulation at the level of images, an exclusion of alternative possibilities and indirect indication to the *dependence* of the target audience from one or another politician or team of politicians.

Images of women politicians reflect the very well known stereotypes about the mother in a family, a mother, a wife, a weak citizen of the nation who is strong enough to represent a target audience but no more. Modality of the text constructs the traditional position of women in the political world.

### *Positioning politicians in printed media in Latvian*

#### *“Diena”*

Comparing the three analysed newspapers, there are several differences to be noted. “Diena” published critical opinions on party pre-election programmes and political activities more than the others. However, it must be also noted that the paper showed a dominant negativity towards left parties and parties that could be related to the so-called “Ventspils grouping”. Hence, the paper published vituperative criticism against ZZS and their leader I.Ūdre. It must, however, be noted again that other leaders of ZZS – V.Krištopans, A.Brigmanis, I.Emsis had not received an equal amount of ridicule. “Diena” pictured I.Ūdre as an unreliable, unprofessional politician who lacks seriousness. In principle, the paper did not manifest condemnation regarding women’s participation in politics, but neither did the paper publish any support for it. There were no articles in the newspaper focusing on the politics of gender equality, the paper didn’t analyse gender equality aspects in Parliament or the election procedure (the only material where reference to gender equality could be sensed was material on the past – pre-election posters from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century among which there was a pre-election poster by Women’s National League). In the parallel discourse – background material that is not directly linked to the activities of politicians – a woman was shown as an exception; if she had completed something that was unusual and in such a case woman’s bravado was in focus.

Discourse of politics as that of an environment of activity was strongly masculine (the same could be observed in radio programmes and TV shows). Politics was shown as a man’s sphere of life often mentioning only male politicians (*only* women politicians as autonomous, independent politicians were mentioned with exceptional rarity) – for instance, in the context of political intrigues to obtain power (September 26, 2002 “Šķēle shall fight Repše to win impact”) thus picturing politics as an “unclean game” where men rule and act.

The following genres used in the paper must be noted as being essential for analysis of the discourse in politics, power and gender: interviews (a column “Biting Questions”, brief pre-election interviews, two “duels”), articles devoted to discussing specific problems from the point of view of party promises and offers, analytical articles, photographs, caricature. The following themes were in the foreground: foreign politics, economics, education, health care, taxes, pensions.

In the column “Biting Questions”, which the newspaper presented as an interview with uncomfortable questions for politicians, a change in the register regarding male and female politicians was observed. For instance, the questions put to the leaders of JP, E.Repše (09.09.04., “Mana personība ir garantija” (“My personality is a guarantee”)) and of TP, A.Šķēle (13.09.02., “Lēnām tiksīm galā” (“Slowly we shall overcome”)) mainly originated from the party programme with chances to implement what had been promised. It is interesting that the interview with I.Ūdre (as well as her responses) were left in a conversational form without editing redundant phrases (21.09.02. “Kas notiks ar cilvēkiem?” (“What is going to happen with people?)). Likewise I.Ūdre was the only interviewee to be asked a question on a more personal note, inquiring whether she was wearing real furs. In addition, next to the interview text was a picture showing only half of her face. These two elements – both the textual and the visual – possibly work to diminish the authority of I.Ūdre as a female politician. Interestingly enough, the cases were typical when female politicians

were mentioned while photographs that illustrated a text were absent as with party advertisements where women were not pictured. For instance, S.Golde and V.Muižniece were mentioned in an article about the TP (09.09.02., “Tautas partija tautā bez Šķēles” (People’s party among people without Šķēle)) while the „team” picture did not show either one of the two women. Even during the address on election night that was illustrated with an abundance of pictures, only men “took part” therein. I.Ūdre and G.Krasts were not present; hence they were shown in very small pictures. After elections discussing opportunities for coalition, only men were shown taking part in round table discussions. Likewise, in the text “Repše veidos valdību bez Šķēles” (13.10.02. “Repše shall form a government without Šķēle”) politics was constructed as a man’s area of work. The image of a male politician was contrasted to that of a female politician as a symbolic party representative only.

Pictures where politicians were present in formal functions or in a less formal environment, for instance, visiting a pensioner, such as A.Šlesers (10.09.02., “Pirmā partija iepazīstina ar sevi pansionātā” („The first party introduces itself at an old-people’s home”) or setting out on a bike ride like I.Emsis (09.09.02. “Zaļie un zemnieki reklamējas velobraucienā” („The green and the peasants advertise themselves on a bike ride”) or visiting events such as Poetry week like representatives of the SDS, did the same – mainly illustrated men. Men in formal attire were illustrated much more frequently not only in political advertisements but also in pictures illustrating interviews and in other photo material. Also in extra-political activities – documenting welfare activities before elections – men in suits and ties were the dominant image. A photo report on LSDP activities could be singled out as evidence here, a shot taken during cemetery renovation (06.09.02. “Sociāldemokrāti atjauno partijas biedru kapus” („Social democrats work to renovate the graves of their former members”)) a photo report on the inauguration of a computer class by K.Leiškalns in Tukums area, Cere primary school (07.09.02.), SDS attending Poetry Day events (12.09.02.). A politician in informal attire was a rarity in photo materials illustrating the party activities.

Caricature – visually ironic material – often similarly pictured politics as an area of men’s activities (sometimes *only* men were represented – as figures embodying “politics” in contrast to the voters) (04.10.02., 10.10.02.).

All the genres independently from male party members granted politicians the position of political agency, activity, rationality, decision making. Like in the case with strategies of political advertising, here the relationship between the agent-recipient was evidently gendered. More often than not women in the audience were listeners and voters (for instance, the “Brīvības partija” is equally represented by women and men in the rural areas while the pictures showed mainly women) – “the active and the strong rural women” (23.09.02., “Čevers Alojā ieinteresē 10 vēlētājus” “Čevers ignites interest in 10 voters in Alojā”). The gender stereotype “the strong woman” was related to the country identity and it meant that only certain, specific women’s ethnic and social groups were looked at. In the realm of politics it is a well-known strategy – to disallow any alternative women’s mobilisation opportunities outside the politically stabilised boundaries. Rural women were viewed as politically active; nevertheless, the stress was placed on how their political agency was constructed with the help of notions that were not selected by them. Among voters in Latgale who were interviewed before elections (25.09.02., “Latgales depresiju izmanto kreisie” („The left party make use of the slump in Latgale”)), mainly women were represented. This article too relied on the image of the „strong woman” – the image of the teacher, farm owner, and leader of business support centre (and one man with no specific professional occupation). Hence, the strong woman is the decision maker and the doer in the countryside, in regional territories, in cases of specific problems and in lower positions but there is less of her in „great” politics. She is a political agent only within certain boundaries – in the high, elite political management. All in all on this well constructed “bridge” there were no signs of influence to be noticed among women in local politics and men in the elite politics. Had there been any, the party agenda would try abstaining from

personalisation strategies and would try to show precise programmes in the sphere of social welfare and gender politics.

Politics was described as men's domain and texts used the following characterisation of politicians: "the honourable men" (*LPP*, expressing gratitude to their political competitors, 05.10.02., "Paldies!" "Thank you!"), "wars of brothers in the party" (positioning the power parties who had lost the elections as men's organisations, (11.10.02. "Caurkritušie", "The failed")), "the old soldier" (describing LC after the election failure, 12.10.02., "*Latvijas ceļa* spožums un posts" ("The splendour and misery of *Latvijas ceļš*)). These descriptions helped to indicate indirectly that political and power areas were men's playing fields where man was a self-evidently accepted agent. It was implicitly accentuated that politics as a fighting area was better suited to men – warriors who could bring themselves together as "brothers" and wage war against one another. Writing about politics in a general descriptive manner aimed at women directly was not used.

The descriptive labels attached to women politicians in the paper are significant, too. For instance, an article on I.Ūdre used a title "snowflake" (in childhood she wanted to be the best snowflake while the fact that the description was borrowed from a woman's magazine was not mentioned; (14.09.02., "Nauda nāk" ("Money's coming"))).

One of the genres from the body of materials originating from "Diena" were problem articles inviting politicians from several parties (usually 6-7) to voice their opinion; this genre was also the one wherein the position of men and women in public came to the surface quite evidently. Hence problems in education were discussed by 5 men and 2 women (06.09.02., "Milze uz dārgām māla kājām", "An expensive clay legged giantess"). Discussing EU related issues, the proportion was equal (13.09.02., "Latvia will be able to influence EU"). It is quite typical that men were experts in all areas except education. Even though women traditionally worked in the sphere of education (women teachers), politically this area was again under the men's decision-making minds. Discussing the state language 4 men and 3 women were present (14.09.02, "Valodas apburtais loks", "The vicious circle of language"). Only men took part discussing traffic security issues. In this case men tried to discuss and offer solutions to the male initiated (traffic rules are mainly violated by men) problem. Civil service and national administration, as is quite characteristic for issues of this kind, were discussed by five men and one woman (30.09.02., "Stipru pārvaldi vajag šodien" ("Strong administration is needed today"))).

Naturalisation (27.09.02. "Naturalizācija šķeļ un tuvina" ("Naturalisation divides and brings closer") was, in fact, the only question on which mainly women politicians expressed their views – two men and five women were interviewed. The actual text did not show a gender perspective – none of the issues, notwithstanding the number of women represented was viewed from a gendered perspective. Issues on drug addiction (28.09.02 "Narkomāni kļūst jaunāki" ("Drug addicts are getting younger")) interviewed five women and two men (in relation to problem solving all politicians stressed similar things: activities of the police, as well as the importance of educational work at school and in families). Here the women were more represented in terms of number, which could be explained by the social nature of the problem.

Themes that in these articles devoted to specific subjects were not discussed (were "omitted"), pertained to gender issues, from those of the social realm only a few were selected: issues that were left aside related to problems of violence in the family, family politics, marginalised social groups in the labour market.

The moment of undertaking responsibility is essential as well. Women more often than men were represented as responsible for a lack of success in problems from the "men's sphere of competence", a good illustration here being the ZZS framing regarding corruption issues (05.09.02.,

“Zaļganie ņem un nevaicā”, (“The green-ish take but don’t ask”). The party was reproached for having had unclear funding, and the article mentioned several party representatives while the picture showed only I.Ūdre, hence showing her as the central (“visible”) culprit-politician. Textual representation of M.Poršņova in an article on the bad luck of TB/LNNK politicians while heading the Ministry of Welfare is comparable in this sense to the one on Ūdre; (06.09.02., “Šveicar, neapstājies!” (“Bell boy, don’t give up!”)). The article showed a desire to position the named woman as the responsible one. In contrast to that after the failure of *LC* during elections the men from the party expressed their opinions in an article on the party and the picture focused on I.Bērziņš, even though K.Pētersone was in the foreground, hence he was positioned as the responsible one (10.10.02., “Valdība atkāpjas” (“The government is stepping back”)).

Therefore, it is essential to note that male politicians were shown as decision makers able to solve the largest variety of issues – all related to economics and foreign affairs that are traditionally man’s areas, even in areas where women dominated in terms of number (education, health care). The same might be said about the “Duels” (03.10.02., 04.10.02.) where representatives of two different political parties took part in a lengthy discussion that was presented yet again as another political “combat” method since only men were present: A.Bērziņš – J.Jurkāns, E.Repše – A.Šķēle.

Bringing to the foreground the symbolic, representative functions of women, in comparison with men, positions them as less serious politicians. For instance, one genre used in the pre-election material was sweepstakes. When women took part in this “combat”, for example, L.Vikmane (SDL) and A.Kantāne (JL), the title communicated “The actresses fight” (11.09.02) or “theorists of art” (25.09.02.). Men, on the other hand, were “the former mayors” (28.09.02.), “ministers of the last government of the Soviet Latvian Republic (12.09.02.), “the zigerites” (13.09.02.), “violators of road traffic accidents” (14.09.02.), “The message delivered and signatory to support letter for I.Haritonovs” (03.10.02.) “uncle and nephew” (24.09.02). Men’s descriptions were dominantly related to politics, the public sector which served as a “theatre” to women; this was not their fundamental area of work, while for men it was a “natural” sphere of activity where they were the doers – either the former or the existing ones, scandalous or less scandalous.

The President of the State V.Viķe-Freiberga was shown in the media discourse as a politician with respectable authority, who was outside the pre-election combat. She addressed the citizens of Latvia before the elections and invited the voters to weight their choices as they would have an impact on the further development of the state as well as on the future of each person and family. The President also stressed the importance of elections not only in Latvia but also in the European and global context of development appealing to the conscience, “We all stand today in front of our conscience and take responsibility for our land” (05.10.02., “Katra balss ir pieņemts lēmums” (“Each vote is a decision made”)).

### **„Lauku Avīze”**

In the newspaper “Lauku Avīze” it was quite hard to separate news from commentaries; the “other news” genre was not a dominant one. Reflecting on pre-election development, the paper mainly avoided focusing on news or party opinions; it opted rather for publication of promotional material forged by the parties. In terms of numbers, there were more promotional articles published than news material on the pre-election period.

It could be stated that “Lauku Avīze” opted for the following genres with regard to the pre-election campaign and post-election period: report, interview (sometimes a method for political advertising), express interviews, newspaper satire, and caricature. The spectrum of themes looked at was the most diverse: economics and trade were stressed as the most important ones, as were the foreign affairs related problems, however, there were articles on social and ethical aspects as well.

In a report on the meeting between the TP and electorate (03-09-02, “Dobelē un Saldū lenc Tautas partiju” (“TP pursued in Dobeles and Saldus”)) A.Šķēle was pictured as a charismatic party leader, a working man and strong politician; while other party members were not mentioned in the article at all. In this case the so-called personalisation strategy was used, particularly stressing the features and ability of the male-party leader. Just like the material in “Diena” this newspaper accentuated a responsible, working, serious political leader (naturally, a male one). Other reports reflected political fights or exchanges of opinion between two men politicians (19.09.02. “Repšes un Godmaņa cīņas vidusskolā” (“The fight between Repše and Godmanis at high school”). A report on the meeting between the Party of Socialists and electorate in Kuldīga (26.09.02. “Sociālisti Kuldīgā” (“Socialists in Kuldīga”)) was interesting in the fact that one of the party’s candidates for an MP post who took part in the discussion was not presented at all, neither was she introduced by her colleagues. This is an example of an indirect attitude being demonstrated towards a woman as a less important politician than a man. Another report on the JL meeting with the electorate in Jēkabpils (01.10.02. “Repšem Jēkabpilī – vētraini aplausi” (“Repše receives passionate applause in Jēkabpils”)) portrayed E.Repše as a leader and somebody who would be able to put the country in order.

Yet another genre – that of an interview – allowed E.Repše to position himself as the measure for all things and centre for all events (05.09.02., “Repše nāk ar principiem un “melno sarakstu” (“Repše comes with principles and a “black list”)). Speaking of JL politics, E.Repše talked about “my government” and mainly relied on using the personal pronoun “I” (“I am gathering information on who is who”). He repeatedly stressed that the honest and responsible civil servants and others are “my friends and support”, “our friends”. Another illustration of this is an interview with A.Bērziņš, leader of LC (19.09.02., “Latvijas ceļš sola stabilitāti” (LC promises stability”)) who positioned himself as an experienced politician who would ensure continuation of Latvian development on the basis of accomplished work (that was discussed in the interview).

A political advertisement for LPP – interview (01.10.02. “Šlesers: mēs iesim līdz galam” (“Šlesers: we will continue until the end”)) focused on building the image of A.Šlesers as that of a courageous champion and fearless politician. A peculiar observation – which was drawn from this newspaper and political advertisements – a call for a “strong hand” was voiced – a call for a hand that could put things in order in Latvian politics, mainly dominated by a lack of honesty. The discourse of the “strong hand” was built with the help of personalisation discourse of gender construction – historically the man’s hand was the one that was perceived to be the “strong” one. In context with the most often mentioned political leaders – men – it must be concluded that even in this case, as could be expected, the strong hand belonged to a man.

A positive exception singled out was an interview with S.Dreimane, LPP (“Politikājiem vajadzētu vairāk mēra sajūtas” (“Politicians need a better sense of proportion” – masculine form of the noun was used in the title)) demonstrating that a woman can be knowledgeable and work successfully in politics (11.09.02). S.Dreimane stressed responsibility in contrast to the dominant spirit of achievement in politics, “A person working well in one’s profession could think: now I’ll get into Parliament and will reach an even higher level of flying; but I’ve always liked that a person has a good sense of proportion and responsibility. At the moment I am speaking of myself against this backdrop.” However, she also stressed that after participation in politics as a member of the *Jaunā partija* (The New Party) she wanted, at least for a while, “to step aside from politics, to be in the role of an expert, observer”.

The “LA” of 27.09.02. contained a survey in which questions were posed mainly to men. Among the persons surveyed the opinion was raised that politics was not quite the most pristine area of work. On top of that, one of the persons surveyed indicated that in TP advertisements there were no

women and called the party “women haters”, saying, “People have noticed that on the streets of Riga there is this “team”, advertising only men, women have disappeared. So it must be concluded that this is a team of women haters”.

“Lauku avīze” was also notable in its use of a great quantity of caricature-type material. Caricatures, like the articles, positioned a man in the role of politician while a woman was dependent on him. It is interesting that in the caricatures the women, even though they were politicians were shown as the fulfillers of women’s “duties” in the family. So a caricature entitled “8. Saeimas ieņemšana” (“Occupation of the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliament”. 05.10.02) pictured representatives of all parties trying to protect their fortresses from the respective occupants – representatives of those parties who were willing to get into Parliament. In the drawing K.Lībāne was pictured as a person delivering food (roast meat) to the front line (of men). In another caricature (05.10.02.) illustrating men who had opted for a great diversity of fighting methods on the field of politics (on a river shore), including bulldozers, a horse with a sword, I.Ūdre tried not to get her feet wet carrying her high-heeled shoes in her hand (a reference to ZZS political advertisement) and T.Ždanoka, representing PCTVL, was shown shooting from a machine-gun though this was under the control of a male politician – J.Jurkāns.





In humorous genre – newspaper satire that was also represented in „LA” – politicians were named „the man of honour” (03.10.02., “Noslēpumu vairs nav” („No more secrets”)); hence implicitly describing politics as a man’s realm while the politician I.Ūdre – in contrast to male politicians – was the „welcoming housewife” (08.10.02., “Kam jautri, kam sērīgi” („Some are happy, some sad”)).

It must be noted here that in „Lauku Avīze” politics were also illustrated as a man's domain both directly and indirectly. In "LA" materials men were mostly presented as politicians; for instance, in the column entitled "Select your leader" the text introducing the reader with *JL*, mentioned five men and four women. Criticism aimed at the power parties of the moment and discourse of blackmailing the other parties showed politics as a dirty (man’s) game where parties have not managed to do as they promised and have succumbed to corruption. For instance, in an article “Par kādu partiju es balsotu” (“For which party would I vote?”) the parties of the previous government and the parties forming the government were referred to as dishonest and an audience was called to vote for a party who could deal with all the problems successfully. The Social democrats in a party-paid interview also blamed the other parties for national problems (05.09.02., “Sociāldemokrāti pirms tautas izvēles” (Social-democrats before the choice of the nation is made”)). Criticism was related to the power parties of the moment and attempts to expose them were clearly evident in the party paid advertisement by the United Party of Republicans published in an appendix to "LA" (14.09.02). A voter survey communicated an opinion of politics not being squeaky clean (26.09.02).

Politics being a man’s area was presented indirectly as well. For instance, in a commentary (interview with psychologist Arturs Utināns) a politician was positioned as a „man of state” and only the masculine form was used; a politician may have a wife, not a husband (03.09.02, “Vai balsosim par acīm, frizūru un žestiem?” („Are we going to vote for eyes, hair-style and

gestures?"). In an *LPP* political advertising-interview (21.09.02 "Atgūt nozagto, samazināt nodokļus" "To regain what was stolen, to decrease taxes") A.Laksa named two women ("should women become honourable men to take part in politics?"). In the article entitled "The hard choice of the voters" (03.10.02) politicians were referred to as suitors, hence only men were meant as being in politics and a woman therein was ignored. A positive exception to this rule must be mentioned - an advertising article for the United Party of Republicans of Latvia – in it both men and women were represented by referring to them as men and ladies of power (12.09.02).

On the whole it may be concluded that the analysed media texts are a striking illustration of how women through language are excluded from politics as language users are not used to employing gender inclusion principles or respect gender in their vocabulary either in the spoken or written word; the use of masculine pronouns and endings can even be accentuated as a continuation of tradition, taking and positioning national politics, decision making as well as the sphere of building politics as a man's area of work.

Like in several „Diena” articles, „Lauku Avīze” positioned women more as voters than politicians (or policy builders, decision makers). A striking illustration here is political advertising for LC – an interview with L.Muciņš (14.09.02., „Labs jurists ir līdzīgs prasmīgam dakterim” „A good lawyer is like a skilled doctor”) communicated an idea that LC voters are „smart and intellectual citizens, mainly women with the medium, highest or professional education, women-teachers, women-librarians, women-lecturers”, which is quite a clear indication that the electorate is a "feminine" body of voters. I.Ūdre, in contrast, a woman who was active in pre-election battles has „overshadowed many experienced male-politicians from LZS and LZP” and she was placed in a somewhat negative light (03.10.02., „Zaļš un daudzsološs projekts” („A Green and Promising Project”). It is possible that here is an indication that in accordance with stereotypes of power and politics, if a woman enters politics she loses her „femininity” and attempts to beat men with the help of various strategies – hence she gets involved in a man's game that on one hand is not quite suitable for a woman and is not „woman-like” while on the other hand turns a woman into a „lady with balls”. From the point of view of subjects discussed men politicians spoke about various issues. An analysis of party programmes respectively entitled „What do party programmes promise?” (12.09.02) analysed mainly economic related issues: pensions, health care, taxes, agricultural policy. One of the themes for *Latvijas Atdzimšanas partija* was finding a solution to demographic problems (12.09.02 „Atdzimšana vēl nedraud” („Rebirth is not yet a threat”). One of the articles focused on health care (17.09.02., „Kā partijas mūs ārstēs?” („How shall parties cure us?")); even though the article actually became a description of battles between politicians. Yet another party programme analysis was included in an article „Pensioners are promised a brighter future” (17.09.02, „Pensionāriem sola gaišāku dzīvi”) - party promises were mainly populist and vague.

Among the so-called „women's themes” there, no doubt, were issues like ethics and care for maintaining the highest standards of morals – parties had delegated the duty to attend a conference on politics and ethics to their women MP candidates. Though it must be noted that I.Vaidere spoke about economical and trade issues in an interview (political advertising for *TB/LNNK*; 03.10.02., „Vaidere: Mēs nevaram būt tik lieli liberāļi” („Vaidere: We can't be liberals only”).

Among issues that were omitted completely were gender equality problems and attention to gender aspects in general. In-depth and well-considered discussions of social issues were absent as well. Nothing but vague promises and statements of the position of the party with regard to foreign politics was offered.

In the period covered by analysis the top ranking politician, on the basis of MP candidate surveys, was the President of State, V. Viķe-Freiberga.

Material in „Lauku Avīze” presented man as a politician. A woman politician and her appearance on the pages of the paper was an exception rather than the norm. Female politicians were mainly pictured in party advertisements or in caricatures. A notable fact is that in contrast to „Diena”, „Lauku Avīze” positioned V. Krištopans A. Brigmanis and I. Emsis as leaders of the ZZS instead of I. Ūdre who appeared in very few materials in her capacity as party leader. In „Lauku Avīze” the image of a male-politician-the-fighter was more expressed – both directly and indirectly a man was positioned as the one who would bring „the state to order” and to whom, in fact, the respective public expectations are directed. The parallel discourse of the paper showed women to a very small extent - mainly as active rural women. Two articles were linked to the theme of gender equality - one on women in military services and politics of gender equality in Finland (01.10.02., “Dāmas pilnā kaujas ekipējumā”, („Ladies fully equipped for battle”) 10.09.02., “Stipro sieviešu zeme Somija” („The land of strong women – Finland”). The subjects of these articles are exceptions against the backdrop of discourse in articles published in the paper; however, the mentioned articles did not initiate discussion and did not manifest the intention to topicalise initiation of critical gender discourse. The first of the mentioned articles indicated that military service is an exotic occupation for women while the second reflected the Finnish situation without making any parallels with Latvia.

The articles analysed indicated the following categorisation: men – active, independent agents in “big” politics, decision making and political building process at a macro-level, on one hand, and women as supporters (K. Lībāne) or beings too feminine to be involved in dirty politics (I. Ūdre) or those who have given up their femininity transforming into men (T. Ždanoka) or just nice housewives (I. Ūdre) on the other hand. Along with superficially analysed social issues (which served for advertising purposes more than any other) one of the "omitted" themes was gender equality, gender aspects in politics and other spheres, new gender roles for women were not offered, nor was a new political vision. Gender stereotyping was a tradition with regard to this paper. The presence of women in political power did not change the meaning of “femininity” and “power”. While gender was not discussed directly within the pre-election campaign framework in reference to construction of politics, the main issues considered to be "knowledge", "important" and "priority" of men in the elite of power echelons were examined.

## **„Vakara ziņas”**

„Vakara ziņas” did not look at the upcoming elections, party pre-election activities either in news materials or in terms of comments and political advertisements. The newspaper turned to pre-election activities only when the scandal with LC leaflets broke out.

The only woman-politician – who was described as one of the most attractive politicians – that the paper mentioned was I. Ūdre (08.10.02., “Simpātiskākie Latvijas politiķi” “The most attractive Latvian politicians”). In the background material women were portrayed as sex objects both in pictures and in texts. The paper also wrote about women-celebrities, more specifically, about their private lives. The dominant image of a woman in the paper was that of a half-dressed young woman recounting her sexual experiences and adventures. Only some articles gave a neutral description of a woman’s image (mainly in interviews) which was the only material where there were no stereotypes about a woman as a sex object. This indicates the “actual” structuring of interests towards a young woman (as a representative of the target audience) – private relationships and lovers were set as more important than politics. This is an instance of women’s “neutralisation”

strategy with regard to active involvement in politics. Women and politics are presented as mutually foreign.

One of the articles looked at during the respective time period (25.09.02., Jānis Teteris: “Latvijā varai jābūt sieviešu rokās” (Jānis Teteris: Power in Latvia must be in the hands of women) focused on gender equality issues: a man who was labelled as a “feminist” in the article stressed the necessity for equal gender representation in Parliament along with the favourable impact of women-politicians on the overall development of the state. It is interesting to note that this idea was presented in the tabloid press that has no power to influence public opinion and win respect (the format of the paper requires viewing the interpretation of this idea as weird and scandalous). Other studies showed that the “yellow press” demonstrated a larger interest and larger stylistic freedom with regard to discussing topical issues for Latvian society than the so-called quality press (*Latvia National Report...*, [www.cromenet.org](http://www.cromenet.org)).

The dichotomous discourse “politics/life”, “pure/unclean”, “man/woman” constructing the dominant stereotypes in the political realm was quite characteristic for this paper as well. One of the articles on pre-election battles (18.09.02 “Repše karo pret konkurentiem” (“Repše fights with his competitors”)) presented politics as an unclean game wherein the central aim was to blackmail one’s competitors. All the politicians mentioned in the article who had been involved in the “war” sending out messages aimed at staining the other’s reputation, were male. With regard to the LC and TP leaflet scandal, “Vakara Ziņas” presented politics as an area of men’s mutual battles (02.10.02., “Segliņš nesteidz sadot pa purnu premjeram” (“Segliņš is not in a hurry to beat up the Prime Minister”)). In other ironic material on TP (21.09.02 “Atrodi desmit atšķirības” (“Find 10 differences”)) the imaging of the “Team” was compared with a painting picturing Lenin and his comrades hence drawing an implicit parallel between the past and the present and politics being only a man’s area – both then and now. Men as foreground politicians were presented in an article on LC members (02.10.02. “Ceļinieku aktīviste ir brīva, viņas kolēģis ir aiz restēm” (“The activist of LC is free, her colleague – behind bars”)) as being involved in the scandal with leaflets. Women mentioned in the article were office workers, hence – men’s helping hands and coordinators. Comments on election results were obtained only from men, ZZS was also represented by a man – V.Krištopans (07.10.02. “Uzvar Repše. Jauns laiks Latvijai?” (“Repše wins. New times for Latvia?”)). Likewise, the parties having lost the elections were represented only by men ((10.10.02., “Kā ar bezmaksas alu, torti un paštaisītu naudu balsis zvejoja” (“How with the help of free beer, cakes and self-made money the votes were fished”)).

Activities of politicians in “Vakara ziņas” were largely presented from the point of view of scandals and a person’s private life. For instance, this paper argued that E.Repše could not be trusted on the basis of the fact that he had broken the marriage oath, a promise to God (parallels were drawn between the oath he gave as a politician and that to the institution of marriage), that he has been divorced twice (07.09.02., “Repše lauzis Dievam doto solījumu” (“Repše has broken his promise to God”)). Another article in the same edition of this paper presented material on the current private relationship of E.Repše stating that he preferred to keep it secret (07.09.02., “Pie tagadējās sievietes ierodas slepus” („Arrives in secret to see his current woman”). A conclusion was drawn – once there is something to hide, it’s clear he is not a reliable politician.

A male politician is heterosexual by definition. One of the materials in „VZ” (15.10.02., “Maskavas geji Šleseru atzīst par savējo” (“Gays in Moscow think of Šlesers as one of them”) voiced opinion based on rumours about the possible homosexual orientation of the LPP leader A.Šlesers – information that was presented as scandalous. The article also mentioned his wife reiterating that she was a former beauty queen.

It is interesting to note again that V. Vīķe-Freiberga who has become famous in one of the “VZ” articles (21.09.02) was presented as an exception, which is unusual not only for the Latvian but also for the global experience. The very title (“Vairas Vīķes-Freibergas dzīve vīriešu ielenkumā” – „The life of V. Vīķe-Freiberga surrounded by men”) prompts us to believe that politics is a male dominated area. The very term of being “surrounded” implies that the President must fight a certain battle to be a woman-politician.

### **Positioning politicians in Russian printed media**

Mass media sources published in the Russian language aim towards a complicated target audience, the majority of which did not partake in the elections falling beyond that party interest spheres. Non-citizenship became the principal mechanism for being excluded from political life; it also had an impact on the internalisation process of exclusion and political expulsion which must be viewed in the context of the so-called Soviet citizenship. Soviet citizenship as a political institute was an “automatic” vote without the right to choose. Several generations grew up in this mode and faced yet another regime of political exclusion. The experience of democracy meant conscious qualitative changing of this situation from the side of the political elite, intellectuals and mass media but without the use of such language, rhetoric, practices and experiences that enforces manipulation with public awareness and that of its communities.

Mass media published in Russian in this process of market economy finds itself faced with a difficult political and professional choice. Since press is aimed at non-citizens of both sexes, it assumes a para-political function. It has undertaken a cultural function as well as drawing attention to the identification process in the Russian speaking community which has become a part of the post-Soviet Diaspora process. Such factors as the social responsibility of minority media as well the professional competence of those who produce it are the most essential components for media development along with their role in discussing ethnic, gender and power issues in Latvian society.

In the course of the election campaign the Russian speaking section of the electorate was a comparatively marginal audience for the campaigns of the leading political parties and, in fact, it became the object of activities for *Tautas Saskaņas* party and *PCTVL*.

When interested in making an event less significant, both papers “Čas” and “Vesti Segodņa” independently from one another used “feminine” and “sexualised” parallels, images and language in representing political figures. For instance, one can compare the titles of the following editorials:

01.10.02. “Čas” – “Hysteria”;

01.10.02. “Vesti Segodņa” – “Milžu cīņa. Pirms vēlēšanām noskaidrojās, ka Tautas partijas apmelojums safabricēja [“strjapal”] Latvijas ceļš” („The battle of the giants. It has become clear before the elections that Latvijas ceļš has blackmailed Tautas partija”);

03.10.02. “Vesti Segodņa” – “Vara ir izgājusi uz paneļa” („The power on the panel”)

The “feminisation” of the political process during the elections was used as a strategy for building negative attitudes and enforced with lexical means, linked on the basis of stereotypical politics with “women’s” characteristics – emotionality (hysteria), working in the kitchen (“forged” referring to the Russian “Strjapala” or “made up”) and loose behaviour (“went on a panel”). This illustrates very well the two-faced strategy regarding gender and power in politics. On one hand, language that denigrates something is based on traditionally negative gender stereotypes of a woman (she is hysterical, gossips in the kitchen, a prostitute). This is how implicitly the presence of real men in politics is stressed. In the process of the dominant gender stereotyping a man cannot be hysterical, may not be a gossip, a prostitute while the political process is viewed as a male-only sphere: if there

are women (“aunties”) in this area, then there are no politics at all. The result of such “feminising” use of language, the perception of modern politics is degraded and equalled to the level of kitchen squalor.

## “Čas”

The dominant discourse of this paper positioned politics as a man’s area hence – as an area dictating universal public values, for instance, men’s values in a column “Jānis Jurkāns Presents” (22 politicians and 3 women). At the same time gender neutralisation was maintained: the paper was a place where team partners were addressed in masculine forms of address only. Tatjana Boguševica was positioned as the *new* politician (02.09.02., “Jaunie ienāk varā” (“The new come to power”)). Men’s politics are accepted as a self-evident fact and are taken as natural and gender neutral. Gender neutrality is stimulating for the use of a popular cliché on the non-existence of gender discrimination in Latvian society; however, both women and men in real life situations tend to “ignore” the fact that in the “women’s” professions, salaries are tremendously low because these are “women’s” salaries and because the respective professions are traditionally “women’s” professions. Neutralisation in representation of politicians from a gender perspective allows one to escape from discussing the impact of gender stereotypes with regard to the labour market, value based attitude to women and men, women’s and men’s work, family sphere, child care, housework, parental care. However, all these *micro-subjects* are common for the whole public and professional politicians are needed for solving these problems in the process of social integration.

“Čas” as well as “Vesti” gave maximum space to the party of J.Jurkāns, from the point of view of the paper, he had best met the interest of their audience (even though in many cases it was noted that the respective material was paid for). The party was presented as *powerful, man-like*; hence – able to win power.

This openly masculine picture with regard to who can own power was fermented with morality matching political speeches. Interviews and arguments expressed by party representatives showed clear moralising traits. For instance:

17.09.02. Andrejs Aleksejevs: “ We need a socially orientated public!!”;

24.09.02. Jānis Kavarskis: “ I *want* our team to win!!”;

28.09.02. Andrejs Jakovļevs: „I *want* to change the image of Latvia”;

30.09.02. Jānis Urbanovičs: „This is our country”;

02.10.02. Dainis Turlais: „It is *time* to separate the state from criminal circles [of society]!”.

This is a clear illustration that the language-related expressions during the pre-election campaign in this paper equalled war vocabulary, just like in the case with “VS”, though to a lesser extent:

07.09.02. Jurijs Sokolovskis: “We are now moving into counter-attack”;

04.10.02. Jānis Jurkāns: “ We are doing our summaries before the battle”.

## “Vesti Segodņa”

It is quite symptomatic that the first pre-election campaign review in the main column of the paper (09.09.02.) “Elections 2002” started with an article “Don’t vote for Ostap Bender! Boriss Rastopirkin is warning you: you will be cheated again!” in which a deputy from Jēkabpils (*PCTVL*) appealed to the audience not to become background actors in the political show, and called to start real work. On Sept 12, ’02 more material was published picking up the thread in a column “Elections 2002” – “opinion of a candidate – has a quarter of Latvian residents been forgotten forever? Tomorrow is the first day for the “Non-elections” event”. In the mentioned event Natālija

Jolkina (*PCTVL*) spoke about the fact that almost one fourth of the residents in Latvia had been stripped of the right to vote (the event mentioned in “Čas” was not reflected at all even though *PCTVL* as a party had a priority). On 02.10.02 the same column “Elections 2002” contained yet more material “We are not guests anymore and we have rights! We must bring the state to order ourselves” which was developed as promotional material for *PCTVL*. Again – interesting to note that in the course of one advertising campaign the same image was used in different situations, for instance, in an article on the meeting of euro-experts, material devoted to national minorities (04.09.02) referred to one and the same image: “We are not guests, we have our rights!”

An article published on 05.09.02 was introduced with a phrase from Russian literature “Guys, don’t you think Moscow is behind us?” A teacher (man) had won a prize named after A.Pushkin among Russian literature and language teachers in CIS and Baltic countries. Information on this served as a reason to interview him and the main idea in the discussion was, “We have to know that we are Russians and we mustn’t fear being such. We are not guilty in front of anyone and we may be proud of our nationality”. On the same day another article was published with the following title “The long road to the city of the Sun or we shall take another path”.

It may be concluded that the discourse in discussion, themes and genres, as well as the modality shaped the agenda of the Russian speaking electorate as well as the parallel agenda of the non-citizens. First of all, it was a reform pertaining to relationships between Latvian and Russian relations wherein Russia was viewed as the protector of Russian speaking residents in Latvia (and in the West). All the rest was of secondary importance, at the level of declarative statements even though, for instance, the future after accession to the EU was also looked at. This, in fact, showed the conceptualisation of the political sphere as that of opposition instead of being a space for discussing different ideas. The language of the text and its modality enhanced the military imprints of the language used in the political sphere. The “no alternative”, “no discussion” attitude, must be brought to attention when we look at the ways in which media constructs boundaries between the two language communities in Latvia; however, in both cases women are the social and economical majority.

Speaking about themes and genre, the militarisation of language, modality (in discussions, editorials, titles), increasing aggressiveness of the political discourse, etc., has traditionally highlighted politics as an area for war-interested men protecting the interests of their voters (who are being “feminised” as objects of such politics). On the other hand, the idea of politics and power and experience are viewed as self-evident terms, hence bringing up the other side of gender – reproduction of the special masculinity discourse. Although in party programmes representing the Russian speaking audience, politics were viewed as a man’s sphere of activities and mass media in this case had the role of war-interested support. Men protected schools and residents. Here several articles must be mentioned. On 11.09.02 material was released on a debate regarding international relations, TV debate “You will have to answer for everything!” wherein Nikolajs Kabanovs (*PCTVL*) warned the TB/LNNK and TP supporters, summing up the discussions by saying that the right wing parties were not prepared to meet the non-Latvian residents of the state. On 16.09.02 a major article was published entitled “The ones who take the schools will take the whole country! The Russian speaking parents are prepared for radical forms of fighting for the rights of their children!” It was a report from a parental conference with subtitles “Reform is like a bulldozer! It does not give rights, it only takes them” which again illustrates the specific situation framing.

There were almost no recognisable politicians with the exception of Tatjana Ždanoka; though - interestingly again - an article entitled “It’s women’s turn to take over power!”, published on 10.09.02, interviewed Gita Frolova (*PCTVL*) while the journalist did not differentiate between the presence of women in politics (the level of representative functions and representing party interests)

and politics of women (a level of participation and impact defined by the voices and interests of women as a certain social and political category).

.Yet another interesting example is an interview with Ingrīda Rumba (20.09.02. "Sociālajai sfērai jākļūst par politikas mērķi" („Social sphere must become the target of politics")). As Chairperson of the „Brīvības partija” board she was interviewed (she is a doctor by profession) and for the first time issues like women and politics and women’s discrimination were discussed.

With a few exceptions (in the above examples) the „political” presence of men, their voice and opinion (as universal, common-to-all and comprehensive) were related to the so-called *macro-themes*: regional development, construction of motorways, tax reduction, Latvian accession to the EU and NATO integration, problems of the Russian speakers in Latvia, study language, citizenship, identity, social protection), Latvian democratic society and consciousness („republicans”), introduction of the majority system in Latvia, a state elected President, criticism pertinent to the leading coalition, development of small and medium size enterprises, consolidation of society on the basis of mental values, regional representation in Parliament, political scandals and gossip, economical improvement, national security, history of Latvia, nationalisation and denationalisation, demilitarisation of Latvia, problems with (caused by) occupants, health protection, socio-economical layering of the society, liberal values. The issues that did not fall under the „macro” category, for instance, unification of women as a group of certain social, regional, age and other categories, segregation of the labour market on the basis of gender, age, place of residence, differences between genders in terms of salaries received, the problem of violence, including sexual violence and sexual harassment were *excluded* from the spectrum of political issues. In some cases these issues were expressed as declarative political statements.

The Russian paper „Telegraf” differed from „Čas” and „Vesti” with the fact that it was not prone to causing hysteria and using language of militarisation in the political process as representative of power manifestation. It mainly provided polite first page reports and very briefly commented on the pre-election campaign and its results, it published comparatively few political advertisements (for instance, that of *JL*) and all the other pages in the paper were devoted to discussions and problems: mainly to business, regional politics, and issues of integration, sports and Russia. The lack of the following genres was observed: interview, analytical essay, portraits, problem articles, etc..

This neutrality in abstaining from emotional judgments was combined with a slight ironical modality in reports published on the first and second pages which was created using quotations from familiar sources, like from the novel „Twelve chairs” or using body parts as labels for pictures (see the respective pictures).

# У "народников" отняли органы

Внутренних дел

Андрей ПОРТНОВ  
Данута ДЕМБОВСКАЯ

Вчера премьер-министр Андрис Берзиньш отправил в отставку министра внутренних дел Марека Сеглиньша. По убеждению главы правительства, шеф МВД использовал служебное положение для опорочивания образа Латвийс *цельш*, которую возглавляет премьер-министр.

## Банда или партия?

Скандал, приведший к отставке министра внутренних дел, разразился вчера утром. В первой половине дня Бюро по борьбе с коррупцией и организованной преступностью задержало исполнительного директора партии *Латвийс цельш* (ЛЦ) Эрвина Страупе и координатора рижского отделения ЛЦ Беннию Арбергу в связи с тем, что они якобы распространяли ложную информацию о кандидатах в депутаты от *Народной партии*.

Напомним, что еще в сентябре Бюро по борьбе с организованной преступностью и коррупцией (ББОПК) завело уголовное дело по факту распространения в Риге, Цесисе и Валмиере листовок, в которых *Народную партию* называли "бандой". В листовках избирателям напоминали об истории приватизации Андрисом Шкеле *Latvijas balzams, Laima* и других предприятий, о создании на их базе концерна *Ave Lat Group* и последующей продаже его россиянам. Говорилось в листовках о том, что на избирательную кампанию *Народная партия* тратит около 6-7 млн. латов, которые украдены у населения.

## Задержаны с листовками

В ходе расследования "дела *Народной партии*" полицейские из ББОПК вышли на типографию, которая находится в Риге на ул. Бривибас. В ней и печаталась подозрительная агитация. Вчера стражи порядка устроили ловушку — проследили, куда от ул. Бривибас поедет легковая машина *Ford Escort*, груженная листовками.



Окончание на стр. 2 Судьбу министра внутренних дел Марека Сеглиньша премьер-министр Андрис Берзиньш решил за несколько часов.

This example is quite a good illustration of the above statement that men embody politics as a power sphere. The low judgment „losing the organs” implicitly indicates castration, in addition; the lack of organs indicates weakness and an inability to act which are „feminine” characteristics.

There is only one woman represented as an equal to men – I.Ūdre; even though the picture accompanying the article (see the next picture) exemplifies that the political relationship between two parties is encoded in the gestures and postures of E.Repše and I.Ūdre.



On the whole, when speaking of the place of a woman in the political discourse of the pre-election campaign in printed media, the conclusion must be that a woman politician was not positioned as the “norm” but rather as an exception. Both the textual as well as the visual material testify this (pictures, caricature) – in all the aforementioned a male politician was the dominant one.





Analysing themes about which women politicians spoke; it must be concluded that specific “women’s” themes did not exist (even though in some cases ethics and social issues surfaced as clearly “feminine” themes); hence two immediate impressions were made – the unimportance of women in political power was stressed and the lack of importance of the women’s question in politics.

It must be concluded that women were shown to a very small extent (viewed) as presenters of a party’s position, the faces standing for the party. A woman in political discourse was not viewed as an equal partner to men, and in the power hierarchy she did not have a high position. There is an impression that a woman in politics is not viewed seriously, she is rather a mere addition, assistant or exotic phenomenon. Descriptions of women in politics were related more to their personal features, less to their professional experience, hence indicating their gradual professional separation from women as gender. This is related to “men’s” and “women’s” professions and the scale of evaluation for economical areas as well as to the increasing differences in women’s and men’s salaries that are gender constituted.

The press accepted the knowledge and professionalism of a woman politician to the minimum degree possible. The image of the female politician earned ironical descriptions in contrast to the image of a man who constituted the norm of power and politics. The material analysed showed that in the election campaign women-candidates did not speak about the problems of women as a social group and did not address the electorate of women. Gender equality issues had not earned any place in the political discourse – they were not referred to either in the text spoken by the MP candidates nor included in the party programme reviews.

### **Radio programmes**

## Radio programmes in Latvian

The radio programmes analysed formed diverse material in terms of genre; in this body of material it was grouped accordingly and subsequently subjected to gender and political discourse analysis to note the following: pre-election canvassing, discussions, political satire. An idiosyncrasy of pre-election campaigns was the fact that politicians of either sex could choose or could have an impact on how they were going to be pictured. In discussions, of course, they manifested their opinions albeit within the spectrum of questions asked by the interviewer. In political satire though the irony of radio journalists surfaced and politicians had no impact on this area whatsoever.

It must be noted that as with printed media, radio material portrayed man as politician. Often during the pre-election canvassing the parties were represented by men only (for instance, 5 men in canvassing for *Latvijas Atdzimšanas partija*, a man representing *PCTVL*, a man representing *SDS*, etc.). even in the “story” part of pre-election canvassing the voices of women were heard much less frequently than those of the men. Political advertisements and free-of-charge pre-election canvassing on the radio was often linked to the images and descriptive labels of politicians in the printed media. For instance, the “Team” advertised themselves with the same text they used for printed media.

It was also most often men who took part in discussions, even from those parties where the *majority were women* (the small parties). Interesting to note that in a discussion (10.09.02) where representatives of one party (TB/LNNK) took part – one man and one woman – the journalist – when choosing the speaker sequence - preferred V.Balodis, the male speaker, allowing him to concentrate on what the party had accomplished in terms of national issues as well as on criticism regarding other parties on these issues. V.Balodis himself introduced I.Gulbe, the leader of the party’s youth organisation, who stressed the interests of young people in national issues (the interview did examine other issues as well). A similar situation – from the gender perspective – was observed in the pre-election canvassing process for *Latvijas Pirmā partija* – the main character in the programme was the leader of the party, the woman who took part in it supported his opinion as well as himself. A trend could be clearly seen – woman was granted the role of an assistant, supporter, the role of the representative, that of the person who takes part, hence – a secondary role.

On the other hand experts in radio discussions were mainly women. This could again indicate that women were mainly observers from the side, rather than those actively involved in politics. An exception was the case when the experts at the “Review of the week” comprised only men (06.10.02).

In political satire (register – not serious) “Rīta rosme” (The Morning Exercise) men (M. Bendiks, Dz. Kolāts, E. Liniņš) gathered to chat about and make fun of the theme of politics. A programme discussed, with a great degree of irony, how two party representatives (“representatives of the opposite sex”) had done some work to enable Latvia to access EU. The authors joked on how “nothing” had happened between the two candidates. This is an illustration of how the relationship between man and woman is sexualised – quite a “natural” turn of the conversation in relation to politicians, though gender did appear as a significant aspect. In another programme the following was said, “A lady, an actress, always prone to screaming, she should be allowed to float in the air as an Olympic bear. This is going to be the role of her life.” One of the programme hosts imitated screams of the lady on air; “the lady”, unquestionably, was A.Kantāne. Hence, the actress was ridiculed on-air as being unserious, and politics were presented yet again as a theatrical show.

Descriptions of men and women also indicated what place the politicians of both sexes had in the discourse of politics. The expression that politicians should become Atlantean holding the earth (“Rīta rosme”, 18.09.02) even though ironic, indirectly included men and excluded women from the

political realm. A question from listeners was posed using the term “the man of state” – hence, in popular consciousness a politician is a man. Politics as an environment of aggressive masculine fights – and this is a clearly expressed gender stereotype – was demonstrated through a statement by O.Kostanda as he argued that if it concerned a pick-pocket, he could “beat him up, give him a black eye” (04.10.02. “Krustunkti” (“Cross-roads”). A.Šķēle, A.Slakteris and A.Ārgalis were characterised as “real Latvian men; ‘been through everything, they’ll keep it up, one hundred per cent guaranteed” (05.10.02., “Ekspertu un politiķu viedoklis” (“Opinions of experts and politicians”). Hence a “real man” is a real politician and vice versa. An exception must be noted, when quoting the “men and women of power” (24.09.02, Latviešu partija) even though this party demonstrated masculine discourse – this same free pre-election canvassing programme focused on war: both saving food in case of war and the necessity to build an arms factory in Latvia and to have military training for “the people of Latvia”.

Subjects discussed were quite diverse. Male politicians covered quite a wide spectrum of subjects: both regarding interior affairs and foreign policies, social issues, principles of ethics and morality. One could not say though that women discussed a limited spectrum of ideas, though in some cases there was a clear separation of spheres: for instance: in LC pre-election canvassing two men spoke about external affairs (aggressive, attacking and persuasive voice) and regional development (balanced and persuasive voice) while a woman spoke about language and culture (soft and sensitive voice).

Gender equality issues were not paid any attention whatsoever either during the pre-election canvassing period or in radio programmes after the event. The most topical issues at hand were those pertinent to family affairs (assistance for new families, particularly to families with children, as stressed by the *Latvijas Atdzimšanas Partija*, increase of child-care benefits and necessity to maintain the people of Latvia as stressed by the SDS). In a discussion (I.Emsis) was asked a question about abortion. The response did stress woman’s right to choose and in principle the issue was viewed as a woman’s problem and decision.

A.Šķēle, the leader of the TP, stressed that the advertisements presented a programme and people who had been “tested” and were predictable (it must be concluded that the aforementioned are solely male MP candidates). TP was positioned as a Latvian and nationalistic party. At the same time the address of *JL* was read by a woman, in a sensitive and kind voice telling about E.Repše’s “team of conscience” and their meeting with the electorate. The *LPP* politician (A.Šlesers) positioned his party as the “organisers” of the country, who would put things in order. A man of the pre-election canvassing commercial sounded serious, determined and persuasive and was so positioned with his tone of voice (*LPP* and *TB/LNNK* used male voices in their advertisements).

In contrast with men in advertisements for the *ZZS*, I.Ūdre spoke in a soft voice focusing on children who should live in a green Latvia. The voice of this politician corresponded to the “typical” requirements for a woman’s voice in commercials – it showed the characteristic softened tone, kindness, sweetness and lack of tense seriousness in intonation. *ZZS* pre-election canvassing campaign imitated an interview (pre-prepared questions and answers) where I.Ūdre was shown as the leader of the party. A question related to medicine was asked – a theme that is relevant when speaking of care for others – an area that I.Ūdre actively prescribed to be idiosyncratic for her. Her interest in medicine showed a woman’s traditional role to take care of others.

Another type of politician is the self-confident scientist R.Karnīte who was positioned at the beginning of a political discussion (17.09.02 “Krustpunkti”) as somebody of whom the experienced politician A.Bērziņš (LC) was scared and hence failed to show up for the discussion. This situation was described as unusual by some listeners who asked what they should make of a politician, his strength and weakness, if he was scared of a female politician.

Speaking of the tone of male/female politicians, in the use of commercials one could discern three main types of male voices: 1) aggressive and attacking; 2) balanced and self-confident; 3) sensitive (with an exception of SDS advertisement in which an elderly and unclear voice was used) and two main types of women's voices: 1) gentle and sensitive; 2) loud and nervous. In women it was mainly a "motherly" or non-persuasive (nervous) register while in men – a more aggressive or calm or confident tone of voice – better suited for the rules of politics. It is interesting again that in discussions where both men and women took part women tried to persuade the listeners and partners of their conversation opting for a more aggressive tone of voice but it always turned into nervous (hysterical) talking versus the men's tone of voice. The voices of men again were audible at a larger spectrum, covering nuances from aggressive and attacking to sensitive ones.

Even in radio programmes the President of State was shown as an expert – for instance, an expert on foreign policy issues (03.09.02, "Mūsu viesis" ("Our guest")). It is interesting again that advocating for the idea of national Presidential elections the title of this position was used in feminine form (free pre-election canvassing by the political union "Centrs"). In this case V.Viķe-Freiberga was pictured as an eternal President, the mother of Latvia, courageous woman, fighter whose adversaries were politicians on whom she depended as they could elect her.

On the whole, it remains to be concluded that radio material also showed man as the main entity on the political stage – the male voice dominated advertising material, pre-election canvassing campaigns, political discussions. Prejudicial attitude towards a woman in politics was manifest to a lesser extent than in the press; however, it is quite likely that it depends on a slightly lower number of commentaries and commentary-like material on radio. What is more dominant on this kind of media is the so-called "hard" news which is gender neutral material. Stereotypes and prejudices were shown on the politically-satirical programme "Rīta rosme"; judgmental positions came via listeners' commentaries. It must be noted that the average listener of Latvia's radio is an elderly person, supporting the traditional gender models and roles. The only exception to cases when the traditional gender roles were stressed was the case of V.Viķe-Freiberga who was portrayed less as a politician, but more like Mother Latvia. Critical gender discourse was not shown – gender equality issues were not discussed in the radio programmes analysed.

## **Radio programmes in Russian**

For discourse analysis before the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary elections the following radio programmes were selected: party advertisements, political debate, analytical programmes, news, live broadcasts, and popular surveys ("Tautas tēzes" ("The thesis of the people")). The following radio programmes broadcast in Russian were included in the analysis: "Aleksandra studija" ("Alexander's studio") (23.08.02.), "Ceļā uz 8. Saeimu..." (On the way to the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliament" programmes in the genre of political advertisements, speeches of the Head of the Election Committee, "Septiņas dienas" ("Seven days"), "Tautas tēzes" ("The thesis of the people"), politically analytical radio programmes, news, live-broadcasts of the elections process.

The programme "Tautas tēzes" belongs to the popular survey genre broadcast live. One could say that this programme like any other was constructed on the basis of gender neutrality. However, in the expressions, commentaries and discussions politics was shaped as a mutually aggressive (implicitly – masculine) image of actions (29.08.02) hence reproducing the stereotype of the real Russian masculinity which was discovered in war-related activities and protection of honour – that of one's own or the lady's. The cultural code of the "noble, Russian aristocracy" was clearly expressed. For instance, the programme hosts A.Aleksejevs and Natalija commented the following

on a duel as a genre of the lost “masculinity”, “(...) how relevant is an opportunity during our, that is, the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in fact, a desire to call someone for a duel? See, a person has invited another one for a duel” (on the basis of a call from a national-bolshevik from Daugavpils addressed to A.Garda). A fight between Zemphira and a photographer was interpreted by A.Aleksejevs as a woman’s wish to protect her, if there are no men around, calling the photographer to a duel.

It must also be noted that the audience representatives calling the studio were mainly women, “I am very happy that there is at least one knight in our country...when we are going to put an end to purchasing citizenship...I would duel...” or “One must protect oneself...morally I could kill...”. A.Garda was selected as the main political opponent, “I don’t like Garda...it’s not a problem for me to go and beat up his face...tell him what you want and leave...”, “Notions like respect and honour do exist nowadays, too...Garda would run away and hide...”. The reaction of men was the following, “Duel – it is noble, it is the position of a normal man...” or “I would call for a duel, but it would require lots of guts...” Since *emotions* did not allow the women interviewed to express themselves in a constructive way, the programme host had to interrupt them asking not to go off track.

Several times the programme host A.Aleksejevs reproduced gender stereotypes, for instance, “*men are still more realistic in their thinking, while women – they are still more emotional*”, “the majority of listeners thought it was a commercial trick, while *quite a large majority of listeners, including women...*”. A.Aleksejevs got involved in a dialogue and in lengthier discussions on issues at hand with men while trying to get a clear and straightforward answer from women straightaway.

Another peculiarity is that A.Garda was mentioned in the Russian mass media more than in the others and, even though being quite a marginal personality, on one hand, he gained political cache while on the other hand he blurred the diversity of the political playing field. He became a “point of reference” in building the likes and dislikes of the audience for the Russian media, particularly when parties representing interests of the Russian-speaking minorities were viewed from an emotional point of view. A theme was introduced, “would compromising opinions published in the press on one or another party have an impact on your decision to vote for this party and to what extent would you take this compromising stance into consideration, would it change your point of view...” Women called in and one of them expressed her love for *PCTVL*, “They have this positive bio-energy, I feel that” or “what lack of respect...everyone is against them, hence, they are good...” while another woman argued, “I’m totally disappointed with *PCTVL*”. This example illustrated quite well how with the help of gender and ethnicity an emotional form of citizenship was constructed.

The theme of the programme broadcasted on 07.10.02 was “Parties who have won the race will attempt to ignore *PCTVL*... Is better cooperation between the right and the left possible in the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliament and on what basis must this cooperation be built?” This brought up something essential – in discussing political power specifically (seats in Parliament) from a gender perspective, the following proportion of audience-callers was observed: six men to two women. Men stressed that one had to “cooperate”, “cooperation is possible following the EU and NATO pressure”, “nothing will change if the mechanism of survival is destroyed”; while women thought that “it is possible to cooperate on an economical basis”, “Latvia must be brought to order”. The concluding line uttered by the programme host was, “Only on the basis of unification is it going to be possible to develop culture in the country”. The programme on 09.10.02 entitled “As the power changes, will anything change in our lives or, in principle, don’t you care?” reproduced populist clichés, “everything depends on the President while the President depends on the West...”, “it is not important how we voted, what matters is who will count the votes”, one team, the show of “SSCP (Soviet Socialist Communist Party)”, the government is worth its people”, “the people want changes, politicians are not prepared”.

The 09.10.02 theme “If you were President whom would you choose as Prime Minister?” offered participation in a game on politics. Five female and two male respondents mentioned that they would trust J.Jurkāns. The programme host A.Aleksejevs got involved in a discussion with a young woman and speaking with her in a very favourable tone, pointed out her mistakes, “Thank you, Ksjuša, *I would simply like to tell you that you had better stay out of politics as you are speaking like a normal person, and on top of that, like a woman while these ideas on the whole are not compatible with the idea of politics.* It is not important what you like and what you don’t like, what you need is rough calculations of advantage to be gained free of any emotions”. Another woman suggested A.Šķēle for the position of Prime Minister, “He is smart,” and the host commented, “See, something more reasonable even though this time [the one who was speaking] it is a woman...” Politics – it is a jungle without laws and rules, it is a sphere where violence rules, “Šķēle shall *eat Repše*”, “The best government is that of Šķēle – *heads will roll, the income shall slump!*”

The gendered nature of breaking the laws of communication in this programme was evident – both in terms of the programme host which is partially related to the limited on-air time, and in terms of the callers. The most emotionally satiated genre was used. In almost all cases neither men nor women gave a direct answer to the question posed, including instead a story from their own lives; women, more often than men, spoke about what they felt instead of tackling the question, often swear words were used, disregarding the gender of the speaker from the audience.

The host paid little attention to party programmes, to discussing serious problems in need of political solutions. Like in any other programme broadcasted in Russian the problem of men and women as a discussion on gender problems did not take place.

The idea of politics being *the battlefield for men* was voiced through the direct speech uttered and advocated indirectly – with the help of framing. For instance, journalist A.Hutorov reported from the LC headquarters, “Lots of people, popular journalists, well-known politicians...laid tables”. I.Bērziņš, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia was interviewed. He said, “I am speaking as a man who has children, Ruta and Reinis. The most important issue is not how many seats LC wins, but rather the guarantee that Latvia will follow the same course of development that we started 12 years ago...our party has suffered (leaflets, though there will be no punishment)...I will be one of the LC warriors, how people vote, so be it”. During the musical interval, building a more distinct understanding on politics as men’s sphere of trying to win the battle, the following text was broadcasted, “Well, this is a new turn...and there is no reason to fear *if you are still a man...*” Another, quite striking illustration, was the song aired after the addition from the programme host I.Madesova about hope to start a new life tomorrow, after elections (“Farewell, I hope till a new life starts): “Forgive me, dear Aksinija, though your blue skirt shall not hold a warrior; Don’t cry, you obscurant woman, there are lots of us with Budionni, our first cavalry shall proceed till the end...stop the hysterics, I am still alive...”. The sort of militarisation of elections as a “battle” with the help of respective framing pictures, a hero of the civil war after the October Revolution – in a modern, partially paradoxical situation.

Another programme host (at 22:00) Igors Kvaskovs devoted the whole programme to economics, “Economics is the most important thing...like members of the 7<sup>th</sup> Parliament dealt with it, so will the MPs of this Parliament...” Opinions of well-known business people were broadcasted in this programme. It must be noted that the business people were men only. After this a musical sequence followed called “Neveiksmju sala” (“The Island of the Unlucky ones”) expressing necessity to change (“if you are still men”) thus creating a specific type of hero, who is aggressive and, of course, attacking those not to be held back by the “obscurant (uneducated) woman (“baba”).

The media broadcasting in Russian gave a very good example of how gender stereotypes are built on the basis of gender neutralisation. At the same time a parallel strategy on gender neutralisation that was discussed before was the gender personalisation of a female (particularly – of a successful one), in fact, granting full validity to the same old stereotypes. For instance, Valdis Paeglis had prepared an interview on the *green party* of Latvia, in which I.Ūdre said, “We are very grateful for the support... We were supported by the peasants, young ones, who support the idea of the green, for supporting the entrepreneurs”. Journalist Voroncovs, responded with the following, “I admire you as a woman and as a politician...it is your *personal* achievement”. A.Aleksejevs again asking I.Ūdre a question stressed that she was something special, exceptional in the politics of men, “I have one question to you as a woman...what is the opinion of your husband, a foreigner about how you as a Latvian are involved in politics...”. I.Ūdre said, “It’s very good, he is helping me a lot...as a consultant, auditor, as a person who loves Latvia...I think it is a good example of social integration...” A.Aleksejevs, “This is about top-qualities...Does he even understand how it could happen that his spouse could chair, for instance, the Cabinet of Ministers, and will not see you at all...” To which I.Ūdre’s response was fully in line with the spirit of feminism, “And where is the problem? If a man becomes Prime Minister nobody questions it, but if a woman does...” Here A.Aleksejevs interrupted, “Well, men become Prime Ministers more often...” Though I.Ūdre switched to a gender neutral tone, “Let’s not differentiate between people on the basis of nationality...whether a person’s a *man or a woman*,” A.Aleksejevs interrupted her again saying, “Is he going to be jealous?” and I.Ūdre commented, “What are you talking about?”... “There are women in the expanse of Latvia...”

The reference in the last quotation is a paraphrase on the Russian poet N.Nekrasov’s (late 19<sup>th</sup> century) that was spontaneously used to mark gender in a very specific way. On one hand, the original text, “Есть женщины в русских селеньях...”. In Russian culture this poem has always been perceived as an example of glorifying a strong Russian woman – the symbol of the nation (a woman who shall enter a burning house, will stop a galloping horse). On the other hand it has been used in misogynistic contexts with the aim of demonstrating an ironic attitude towards women who pretend to be indifferent and independent among men. This controversy in connotations – simultaneous glorification and irony – is a well-known strategy in gender and power relations. It accentuates implicitly the dual nature of women’s positioning in respect to the real power. By using the quotation in a spontaneous response, the journalist turned to the Russian speaking audience as it is quite unlikely that I.Ūdre has an in-depth knowledge of the cultural connotations of the phrase. Hence, in that very same moment without recognising it herself, she was objectified and irony was aimed at her as towards a “woman who has power” even though she was recognised as being unique. This illustrates the indifference of media professionals towards the gender issue.

Just like in the press writing in Russian the situation was discussed among men – experts, politicians, journalists. The negative attitude in response to one or another situation was voiced through gender-prejudicial vocabulary. For instance, N.Kabanovs said about the *LC*, “They prostitute...increased their impact, too bad for them...”.

The semiotic space of Russian Radio 4 was mainly created on the basis of man’s voice (in about 70% of the programmes concerned), less with the help of a woman’s voice (in about 30% of cases). The main players of the political realm were: the programme host or hostess, a correspondent, head of the party, politician, party representative, politician, expert-analyst, a competent person (a businessman, or businesswoman, an expert in a certain area) observer of election, head of the Central Elections Committee, head of the elections department, an employee from the elections department, representative from a law enforcement institution, a woman, a man. The political consciousness of men and women, their behaviour as a certain stereotype was most evident in observing the genre of political debates and pre-election advertising and it was constructed not only with the help of voices of politicians and the respective texts used, but also with the help of radio

programme hosts. A. Aleksejevs had a special role in marking the role of women in politics, breaking norms of politeness he reproduced and maintained a gender-prejudicial, judgmental attitude as a discursive norm.

A woman was represented only as a part of a team of male professionals; a woman never spoke of women politicians as colleagues or competitors.

On the basis of what problems and subjects were discussed by male and female politicians during the debate and pre-election advertisements, one could conclude that the “special” women’s issues were those of the Latvian language and culture, that of family and children, problems of the low income section of the population (on the basis of the length and proportion versus other themes discussed), overall human mental values and ecology. The image of the female politician was shaped in similarity with that of a male politician and it was constructed with the help of the same notions: professionalism, honesty, openness, competence, activity and readiness to change the situation to solve problems; partly it was constructed with the help of the care idea which is also the idea of the mental values – trust, hope, love. However, firstly the emotional form instead of contents of the argument was used as the special “femininity” of expression. Secondly, when speaking in public women referred to leaders, male politicians that was not characteristic for male speakers. The attitude of male politicians was: they must be protected and they must keep silent.

In the genre of analytical radio programmes there were three programmes (each one of them hosted by a woman), among the programme visitors there were PR specialists, political scientists, experts in communication and sociology (2 women and 3 men). The discourse was the so-called popular-scientific, gender relationships – neutralised and the hostess did not reproduce gender stereotypes.

The live on-air broadcasting lasted six hours, it had one hostess, both male and female correspondents took part; a woman’s voice was heard commenting on the election process. Women in comparison with men were more emotional as they spoke and they were asked questions of this kind; they were asked about being tired though more optimistically; the role of the woman was that of an *assistant* in the course of elections, she was the helping hand for a man in strengthening man’s power, strength and competence. Authoritative opinion on the on-going activities was usually asked for and requested from men, businessmen and experts.

“On the way to the 8<sup>th</sup> Parliament, who will vote for the first time” comprised three presentations by men – informative, educational, dry – and a presentation of one woman, that sounded more emotional, caring, seemed more educational and better argued.

In the genre “The thesis of the people” the host did the gender construction commenting on the opinion of the people – women. Though the true gender difference “in political grassroots” was the emotional interest of the women and their desire to express themselves in detail and specifically, however, not always on the subject being discussed; often elderly women called in and were more interested in presenting themselves.

The news themes were mainly in line with those most often discussed by politicians; the peculiarity of this genre was the voice of the President via the programme host. However, the specificity of all political discourse is the fact that the voice of the President was not present in it.

### **TV programmes in Latvian**

For analytical purposes of this study LTV 1 broadcasted pre-election canvassing was selected (the timeframe of 10 minutes was a rule applicable to all parties), the form of the aforementioned

activity took the shape of both in-studio presentations and video materials; pre-election advertisements, pre-election programme “Milžu cīņas” (“The Battles of the Giants”) in which politicians from the most-popular parties had to answer questions for half a minute; having the occasional opportunity to speak in a somewhat freer discussion and to add to what had previously been, sometimes though to a limited extent. Another study object was the sequence of programmes “Kas notiek Latvijā?” (discussion hosted by a TV journalist Jānis Domburs on topical issues in Latvia, the journalist being the main discussion “frame” organiser and the only deciding force on which of the politicians participating in the discussion could speak, in what sequence and for how long).

In the pre-election canvassing on TV the main and most often represented politicians were men. In some cases political parties were represented by men only (Latvijas Atdzimšanas partija, SDS, LARP). TV commercials also stressed a strong, professional team, which was the case with the small parties as well. One of the expressions by the representative of the “Brīvības partija” was, “We come with a team of professionals and we know why we sacrifice ourselves when entering politics.” The majority of TV programmes and canvassing activities featured men in suits and ties.

However, the image of a man in a suit and tie was accompanied by something else, linked to the idea of responsibility. The rural scenes used in advertisements and the image of Latvia – nation of peasants – served as a context for showing a man – a strong and patriarchal farmer. Descriptions of strength and experiences were used. Hence the “historical” type of Latvian masculinity was created. For instance, in advertisements of the ZZS a well known actor was shown chopping and piling up firewood. Similarly the LC pre-election advertising relied on the image of a man chopping firewood. The text that was used in this commercial against the backdrop of activities of A. Bērziņš was the following, “There are things that have to be done today. (...) All people of Latvia – in warmth and welfare.” The politician was shown wearing the boots of a simple Latvian man, quick to do the work that needs to be done. A house was shown in the background resembling a characteristic rural property where the duty of a man is to take care of his family.

TP in TV commercials used a conversation between peasants in which TP leaders were mentioned as real “Latvian men with a strong back – ‘been through everything’”. This advertisement, most probably, was aimed at the rural population attempting to make the party more attractive in its eyes. The very word “veči” (men in a strongly conversational tone) was used to stress the strength and experience, the roots of the nation and continuity. Ethnic aspect plays an important role here – Latvian men were mentioned whose strong bodies (the back being used as the symbol of endurance) were the support for the nation. Hence this vision about the nation has a gender aspect – it will survive if supported and maintained by the strong backs of men. Interesting to note that the motifs of the back also appeared in the printed advertisements for LPP, “Only a new generation of politicians can bring order to Latvia. People with a backbone. People who think that a thief is a thief even if he has not been caught. That it is bad to lie even if nobody will find out. That you don’t have to do what you don’t want to be done to yourself.” Strength, honesty and ethical principles were associated with the existence of the back and in context with men who showed in LPP advertisements and their slogan, “A man and his word”, that is the back of the man on which the new order in the country will be founded.

These images, quite like the images of men in suits and ties, are usually linked with the idea of responsibility. However, the advertisements used the image of Latvian rural and agrarian areas as the image for Latvians as a nation of peasants. This type of masculinity that, quite likely, was not that widely used during the pre-election period of the 7<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary elections (S.Kruks and I.Šulmane, 2002:9) is still of great importance (it has a number of supporters depending on the age, ethnic background and place of residence of part of the electorate) even though it is being replaced by the business type of masculinity.

The aspiration to put things in order is idiosyncratic for both types of masculinity, accentuating the authoritarian attractiveness of the leader. After independence was reinstated in the early 1990s, the nationalist discourse attempted to build a link between the modern Republic of Latvia and that of 1930 with its political and economical stability. This kind of link sometimes surfaced in the context of parliamentary elections – for instance, trying to find valuable parallels with the first Republic of Latvia as was done by the LPP (*J.Peters, 2002*). Nowadays when there are so many unresolved issues at hand, the voters are not happy with the work of the government and the promises that directly or indirectly point out to the necessity for order with the help of “man’s strong hand” as it was in the “good, old days” still has a fruitful soil in the opinion of voters.

The division of subjects under discussion was more dependent on the party development and the accents created by it, not by the fact whether a male or female politician was speaking. However, in the canvassing activities the stress was on the position regarding accession to EU and NATO as well as on the position in social issues. It is quite characteristic that NATO and security issues were mainly stressed by men. In addition, the issues looked at by men were very widespread.

In the pre-election canvassing process the link between women and nature surfaced. First of all, it was evident in terms of the themes reviewed like in the text for ZZS advertising (a woman’s voice), “Will our children be willing to live in Latvia or will they try to leave this country as soon as possible? We have inherited this green land from our ancestors. It is our duty now to maintain it and to leave it for our children as an inheritance.” The central character in the pre-election campaign for the ZZS was I.Ūdre, who was positioned as “different” as a woman who is more linked with the private sphere. In the canvassing material she contemplated the very same issues of women’s strengths and weaknesses that showed in the printed text as a slogan, “Woman’s strength is in woman’s weakness. It is hard to say what is strength and what is weakness, as it is a philosophical issue – one must admit. Does it mean strength or weakness that a woman is able to achieve a lot, for instance, to bring up her children, to build a church (...). I think that any Latvian person, who is close to nature, will find one’s responses both in nature and in the Christian teaching as trust has always been together with the people of Latvia – and this is the kind of advice that our grandmothers and mothers taught us and what I teach my children”. This quotation shows the link between woman and nature that is quite characteristic for Latvians as well as the continuity of the women’s line. It is also interesting to note that I.Ūdre was in a room, sitting at a fireplace – again, in a visually private setting. In this material I.Ūdre mentioned not only that she loved making meat pies, but that she also spent lots of time working and, as she admitted herself, wanted to have more time for her children.

More statements of women were to be seen in the pre-election canvassing for the “Progresīvā Centriskā partija” (“Progressive Centric Party”). A woman representing the party said, “I think that a woman who is, maybe, a little more romantic and hence – a little more of an idealist – a woman goes more realistically with an idea to reach *something like that*. whatever comes out of it is something that life proves and the real path one has taken”. This statement puts the difference between women – versus men – in the focus – that is, her moral characteristics in politics. The representative of the same party stressed that she was not in politics against all cost, substantiating it with the fact that she already had a wonderful job and the ground beneath her feet. Women as more moralistic, as ones who were working in politics on less selfish grounds than men, were shown in canvassing activities for Māras zeme – the party leader used the following expression, “Coming from the heart!” that is, not to fulfil the never-satisfiable selfishness; “Māras zeme is a political organisation that has included in its programme a true path of love – not that of people against people but all united together against the darkness”. The stress on the moral aspect was to be perceived in the text spoken by Viola Lāzo (LSDSP) that was presented by the speaker dressed in national costume, standing against the Daugava and Shroud bridges with the river in the

background, “Everything is going topsy-turvy, helter-skelter. But who is going to care for a person if the person is not going to take care of itself?”

Gender equality issues were not mentioned in the pre-election canvassing, family issues were linked to the demographic crisis.

The tone of voice in pre-election canvassing was similar for men and women – most often it was calm and narrative, self-confident though sometimes – declarative.

“The Battles of the Giants” were idiosyncratic with the fact that parties were represented by self-selected members who were mainly men. Interesting to note that in a programme devoted to the areas of economics, transportation, telecommunications, interior affairs as well as legal affairs *only* men took part (in the last case it was noticed and commented upon by the journalist expressing hope that in the next programme there would be more women present). The themes looked at in this programme fluctuated from internal politics, ecology, municipalities, national relationships, security, foreign affairs – hence – they were most diverse. The rhetoric in terms of strategy both for men and women was quite similar – the position of the party was clearly demonstrated. It must also be noted that even when comments from the programme hosts (who most often comprised a man and a woman in a pair) were not encouraged, this right was most often exercised by men. However, women, too were eager to interrupt the speaker and continued speaking even when asked not to do so. Another interesting thing is that the Russian speaking politicians usually worded their responses in a shorter form in a shorter period of time than the Latvian politicians (possibly, due to language considerations).

In the TV programme “Kas notiek Latvijā?” the political parties were mainly represented by men. After the election, discussing the possible coalitions, only men were present. Substantiation for building a coalition with the LPP and in the capacity of response on strengthening the coalition E.Repše said the following, “The slogan of my colleagues from the *Pirmā partija* is “A man and his word””. He also stressed that it was not important whether the coalition agreement is concluded in writing or not – the most essential is the word given in agreement. This indicates that the man’s word can be trusted and used as the basis for building a “fraternity”. Interesting is the fact, that E.Repše substantiated his confidence in his partners being “men of honour” (!) with his own, individual and subjective observations, “I have known Mr.Lagzdīņš for quite a long time and I know him as a man of honour” (09.10.02). The programme turned into a political battle between two men – E.Repše and A.Šķēle – even though there were four men and one woman invited to take part in it. The experts invited to partake in programmes most often were men, too, with the exception of one programme on the theme “Whom should we vote for today” in which three women and two men were in debate. One of the experts, N.Ločmele indicated that voters can see that politics is not clean nowadays (02.10.02).

Interestingly on some occasions indirectly and – quite likely – unintentionally – politics and power were viewed as a man’s sphere of activity. For instance, in the Sept.5 ’02 programme “Milžu cīņas” a journalist asked a group of male and female MP candidates, “So, maybe the first question to *all* of you, sirs”.

In this respect the programme devoted to environment and regional development was an interesting one, in that politicians were invited to separate waste. Both journalists chairing the discussion (S.Plūme and M.Olte) spontaneously commented on the activities of a woman ( S.Šimfa) as follows. “A woman will always figure out how to open the lid” (speaking of a trash can). Journalist: “This is a political decision (jokingly). She opens the lid so that she can throw everything inside and is not obliged to open and close it again”. A woman was portrayed as being the more practically-minded one. The joke was about the woman as the different one in politics, at the same time her

“feminine” rationality was ironically labelled as political – this is how an indirectly dual attitude towards a woman in politics was expressed.

It is interesting that even in TV canvassing the President was mentioned – again in the feminine form. For instance, the *Progresīvā Centra partija* stressed that they are for a “united Latvia and President”. In the “Milžu cīņas”, when the President was mentioned, she was named “God’s gift to politics” (V.Lāzo, 05.09.02), it was reiterated that she was an authority not only in Latvia but also abroad (J.Straume) “our President is good minister of foreign affairs (J.Jurkāns, using the masculine ending) and her activities were commented on with appreciation.

## II PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Evaluating the material on Presidential elections it must be noted that there was a significantly smaller body of material than prior to the Parliamentary elections. This could be related to several factors: first of all, before the elections it was clear that V.Vīķe-Freiberga would be re-elected; secondly, the President is not a scandalous personality and she did not have to confront politicians in public; thirdly, the fact that the President was elected by the MPs could have had some significance on the total output, as due to the procedural aspects there is less public activity before this type of election. In the course of the pre-election period information analysis comments on other politicians were provided and included as it was deemed to be essential contextual information for the needs of this analysis.

### Printed media in Latvian

#### “Diena”

The respective period of time was the moment when the government was in crisis, when A.Šķēle abandoned TP, leader of the *LPP* E.Jēkabsons asked E.Repše to give up his seat as head of the government. Other significant events to be mentioned were the Eurovision song contest and the battle between A.Laksa and A.Lembergs. Politics was still presented as a man’s “playing field”. Study material on *LPP* activities and developments were dominated by the image of a man as an image of politics – dirty game (31.05.03 “Pirmā partija oligarhu kaujā” (“The first party in the battle of oligarchs”)). Here one could note the similarity with the Parliamentary election period wherein politics was represented as a dirty sphere of men’s activities. An article devoted to the President’s changes for re-election was dominated by information on internal conflicts in the coalitions instead of focusing on the President.

Material on the President in this paper was neutral, informative, for instance, on Presidential activities in foreign politics, on a press conference, on meetings with political parties (02.06.05. “Latvian and Russian Presidents agree on closer ties between the countries”, 07.06.03 “Prezidente gatava strādāt tikpat intensīvi”, “The President is prepared to work just as intensely”, 10.06.03., “Šaubās par prezidentes braucienu uz Jordāniju” („Doubt about President’s trip to Jordan”, 19.06.03., “Otrais termiņš paver iespējas” („A second term opens up a window of opportunities)). In an interview with the President – also presented in a polite and neutral style – the only instance indicating the importance of the appearance of the politician was the first question about why four years ago when she was elected she had not had a formal suit and hairstyle for which she made the excuse (19.06.03 “Enerģijas koncentrēšanās”, (“The concentration of energy”)).

There were some interesting caricature drawings published on V.Vīķe-Freiberga in “Diena”. One of these played around the folk song studies of the President, while the idea manifested in that was that

the President without the assistance of others (men) would have not been elected (31.05.-06.06.03., "Sestdiena", 14.06.-20.06.03., "Sestdiena").

### **“Lauku Avīze”**

Informative material on the President was the dominant form of material in „Lauku avīze”, too. An article on the President's meeting with parties – in contrast with that in other papers – paid more attention to national issues (10.06.03., “Prezidente tiekas ar “vēlētājiem” („The President meets the „voters”)). In another article on the impending Presidential elections the text was quite neutral explaining the election procedure while in a caricature published along with it the President was pictured wearing a national costume, hence, resembling a form of Mother of Happiness (19.06.03., “Rīt vēlēs valsts prezidenti” („Tomorrow the President shall be elected”)). An illustration used in another article (informative as well and neutral on the accomplishments of V.Viķe-Freiberga during her first term of presidency; 19.06.03 “Valsts prezidentes veikums” „The accomplishments of the President”)) pictured the President against green pastures creating an association with the strong rural woman.

Several articles voiced support to re-election of the current President and prized her previous activities. With regard to a book presentation on V.Viķe-Freiberga one of the articles wished her not to lose her „ever-present charms” (18.06.03., “*Lauku Avīzes* grāmata par Latvijas prezidentiem” („A book of „Lauku Avīze” on the President”)).

It is interesting to note that the background material or the so-called parallel discourse showed a strong woman's image in a column duly entitled "Be successful!" - a woman can and is able to do everything and at the same time she does not lose her femininity and primary interest in family of the private sphere.

### **“Vakara Ziņas”**

In this media the President was pictured as an independent personality who had proved herself even before she became the President – in an article “Prezidentei tuvāki ir apbalvojumi par zinātnieces darbu” (“President thinks more of prizes for scientific work”) in which the President stressed her interest in science, hence showing herself not only as an elected official but as a personality. She was described as a pure image in the dirty world of politics, hence it was noted that “smart and kind persons don't aspire for power”, thus indicating that something was not quite as it was supposed to be (21.06.03).

Women as the “beautiful sex” were accentuated not only in the article mentioned, it was an underlying subject line showing that women were different, they were more interested in beauty care than anything else. The main idea in an article (“Vairas Viķes-Freibergas stila sindroms” (31.05.03.) “Vaira Viķe-Freiberga Style Syndrome”) was that the President was the one dictating style in the circles of women politicians. The article argued that in a woman-politician the public sought external beauty – this shows the stereotypical views of a woman: that a woman could get into politics on the account of her looks not her professionalism and ability.

A woman being an exception in politics hence – someone in need of special abilities to get into that realm was illustrated in material on V.Viķe-Freiberga as a witch (18.06.03 “Prezidentes slepenā pagātne” (“The Secret past of the President”)) describing the possible link between the President and secret organisations; it was suggested that the President had achieved a lot due to “unholy connections”. Later an article was published denying this information; however, without trying to revoke the message of the earlier text between the lines (19.06.03., “Prezidentei vairs netiek slepenas orgijas” (“The President is not interested in secret orgies anymore”)).

It seems that “VZ” is the paper – versus the others – where the President was pictured as a *woman-politician* – and a sexualised one. Indications of this kind were shown in a title (“Prezidente koķetē ar valsti” 07.05.03 (“The President is flirting with the State”)). This article stressed the President’s self-confidence that was positioned more as pride and arrogance towards one’s own abilities and oneself. “Prezidente ņem mutē skarbus vārdus” 16.06.03, (“President takes rough words in her mouth”)) is yet another example – the phrasing of the headline “to take in...mouth” is a popular denotation for oral sex hence consciously derogating the President as a woman. In this article the President was pictured as having a self-righteous and arrogant personality.

Gender discourse was not a problem and articles on gender equality as a problem were not seen. On the contrary – the link with the fact that the President was a woman ““Daiļā dzimuma uznāciens” 31.05.03. („The entrance of the fairer sex”) propagated the idea that in Latvia there is gender equality as in national positions there are women (both the President, the Parliamentary speaker and other) and women could be represented in all areas in contrast to women in Islamic countries.

### **Printed media in Russian**

#### **“Čas”**

The election process was presented as a *collage* in combination with other informative or scandalous materials, i.e., there was just as little or even less space devoted to elections than other subjects, for instance, the budget reform and adoption (a 20.05.03., article “Prezidentu ievēlēs līdz Līgo svētkiem” (“The President shall be elected before the Ligo festival”)) informed that “there are few who doubt that the favourite will not be the current President” and an article in the subsequent edition “The President shall be voted for on June 20”) claimed that Parliament had decided to unify the vote for the budget with the election; however, since it was clear who the winner would be, *the main intrigue was the budget issue regarding which a realistic decision was needed*). It must be noted that on 20.06.03. the day of elections an article was published entitled “„Saeima pabeidza sesiju un palielināja nodokļus” (“Parliament finished its working session and increased taxes”) in which the elections were not even mentioned.

References to the President and elections were brief and in a weird way were combined in the editorial column with pictures demonstrating how picture framing constitutes the “age” and the “sex” of a female politician.

The keywords in the papers of this period were “reform” (Russian speaking minority), E.Repše and the power crisis (political situation), Eurovision (“window to Europe”), a festival in St.Petersburg (Russian) – these were paid greater attention and all these events were more important, hence presented to a more detailed extent and commented upon accordingly.

During the governmental crisis V.Vīķe-Freiberga was presented as somebody unrelated to it and having no impact upon it. The crisis could be avoided and was being avoided by male politicians (for instance, since the pre-election campaign before the Parliamentary elections E.Repše was positioned as a strict politician, “the strong hand”).

On 17.05.03 a meeting of V.Vīķe-Freiberga with teachers of the native (both the state and national) language took place. Any positive features of this event were “erased” with the help of the framing strategy which is quite characteristic for both the “Čas” and “Vesti Segodņa” papers. On 21.05.03 and 28.05.03 an ironic overview on public discussion was given, the title being “Latvian – the

language of the future” wherein a description was included on the audience (mainly “aunties in their better years”). V.Viķe-Freiberga had given an emotional speech (the vocabulary level for reflecting the event was “future” but turned out to be the past, *audience of aging women*, the emotionality of the usually-calm V.Viķe-Freiberga). Hence the image of V.Viķe-Freiberga as an “auntie” was modelled, as that of someone bringing along a nation of “aunties” that, quite likely, was stimulated by her address a year ago during the Midsummer festival (again the categories of gender and age are merged).

It is clear that some female politicians – either I.Ūdre, I.Vaidere or T.Ždanoka were “neutralised” with the help of the men’s collective whose interests they represented. The post of the President in this case was the only one and hence – obliged to represent the whole nation. V.Viķe-Freiberga’s vision on the Latvian nation nowadays falls outside this message; nevertheless, there is something else of good interest – the manipulation of mass media with the post of the President from a gender aspect. The “auntie” image of the President’s activities within the country was balanced against the image of the lady she presented abroad. For instance, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St.Petersburg was widely reported along with the meeting of the world leaders during this event. The unimportance of V.Viķe-Freiberga as the First Lady from Latvia was stressed on her first visit to Russia (for instance, 02.06.03 congratulated that she spoke for 20 minutes (!) with V.Putin on strengthening the society). When J.Jurkāns visited V.Putin before the Parliamentary elections on 2002, there was much more material and the intonation was laudatory and victorious (23.09.02 “Jurkāns Kremlī” (“Jurkāns in the Kremlin”, ”Latvieši atkal Kremlī” (“Latvians again in the Kremlin”)). Along with the “unimportant” visit of V.Viķe-Freiberga wide commentaries on the visit of J.Jurkāns were published stressing that the conversation lasted about half an hour instead of only 20 minutes, quite man-like – which refers to “Vesti Segodņa”). The political preferences of the paper were clearly dressed in gender differences between real politicians - men and women. The following material on informal conversations between politicians-leaders in St.Petersburg did not even mention V.Viķe-Freiberga. It was implicitly assumed that real politics were done by men behind her lady-image which fulfilled representative functions only. On 03.06.03 another article on V.Viķe-Freiberga was published featuring an account on her participation and that of the Finnish President Tarha Hallonen in an international conference “Down with children trafficking” in Helsinki, i.e., two ladies doing their house chores while men made decisions on the fate of the world.

V.Viķe-Freiberga was presented both as an “auntie” and as a lady-professor with status (her visual image demonstrated this as well – she was always well-presented, in a suit, without the already-folklorised cardigan) which is testified by centring attention on language and popular art; the number of representations. It was also stressed that she was a foreigner and hence – not competent – for example, on 28.05.04 V.Viķe-Freiberga was characterised as a “Canadian of Latvian origin” who swims “with no confidence” in the internal problems. On 18.06.03 material was published mentioning that at the end of her first term the President had admitted that there are problems in the country.

Publications in the paper “Čas” demonstrated irony in the tone used when writing about the President; plus, the irony was only in the titles while the article was quite neutral; however, since many people don’t even read the paper “cover to cover”, the titles were enough to create and to *make banal* a certain image.

### **“Vesti Segodņa”**

The attitude of this press edition towards the President’s election campaign was quite similar to that of the paper “Čas” – the outcome was clear to everyone and there were no politics in it. Nevertheless, in terms of quantity there was more information (even the kind of information that was reiterated, for instance, pieces of news on the elections were published on 14.05., 20.05.,

21.05., 23.05., 04.06., while on 21.05. on 04.06. it was published with titles not corresponding to the status of the President). This paper featured more analytical articles that were mainly published on the last days of the pre-election campaign (07.06., 17.06., 20.06.) and were quite ironic, though it was admitted that there was no alternative. Central events, quite understandably, were the same as in the paper "Čas" though "Vesti Segodņa" had slightly different accents.

In terms of visual representation V.Viķe-Freiberga looked worse than in "Čas", the negativity of the sequence of visual images ("aggressiveness" of her portraits) was enhanced with the lexical sequence of titles (for instance, on 03.06.03. "Don't mix a party with negotiations!", "VVF is bargaining with EU", 10.06.03 "panopticum-Vaira-no-Stalin", "Latvia has decided: *Forward! To the past!*")

As a result the image of a *lady* (i.e., with the *status, representation, taken care of, of an unfamiliar lady*) was used though degraded with additional effort (even though admitted in some official announcements on visits, in an interview with US ambassador on 23.05.03 who described V.Viķe-Freiberga as a global leader). The "foreignness" resulted rather from the relationship of the President with the Russian speaking part of the residents and was yet another "feature" of the lady in the portrait. The aforementioned sequence of associations was impossible with regard to the former President G.Ulmanis. On the other hand, being shown as an "auntie", visually – unattractive, foreign, past orientated (for instance on 13.06.03., "VVF ir apraudājusi Latviju. Prezidente – galvenā "maz saprotošo leģionāru" aizstāve!" („VVF has mourned over Latvia. The President – the main advocate for the little-understanding legionnaires!) while on 17.05.03. in the column „Memories” material "VVF ir zaudējusi iespēju" („VVF has lost the chance”) was published arguing that she had lost it by not attending the Day of Victory events during which journalists talked to the veterans of WWII ).

The negative attitude of V.Viķe-Freiberga (the "not our", "Vesti Segodņa" featured a very popular juxtaposition of the "our" and the "not our") to national minorities was manifest in all the above (for instance publications in 04.06.03., 16.06.03; 20.06.03. argued that V.Viķe-Freiberga thought of herself as being the President of Latvians not that of the residents of Latvia).

In this situation it is quite evident (on the level of associations, allusions, comparisons, clichés) that certain gender, ethnic, class stereotypes were used within the frame "our-foreign" to build an image of the President as that of a woman who – like any other woman – had no place in politics. The framing of V.Viķe-Freiberga together with other visual images was of importance, some of the first page publications from "Vesti Segodņa" may serve as illustrations.



Фото: Боржиса Копеличюка, А.П.

## Президент

Вчера фракции парламентской коалиции и оппозиционной фракции Иной партии выдвинули кандидатуру на пост президента Латвии — нешнюю главу государства Вайру Ке-Фрейбергу. Новая коалиция и

### КРАСОТА

ера поздно вечером в Панаме... мые красивые девушки планеты принимали участие в финальной части международного конкурса красоты Мисс Вселенная — 2013». По мнению журналистов, выигравшие шансы Мисс Венесуэла — представительница из Венесуэлы. В финале конкурса Мисс Венесуэла — представительница из Венесуэлы. В финале конкурса Мисс Венесуэла — представительница из Венесуэлы.

### АКТУАЛЬНЫЙ ОПРОС

## «КТО-ТО ДОЛЖЕН УМЕРЕТЬ»

Депутаты Сейма прогнозируют результаты войны

На войне как на войне. Сегодня Айварс Лембергс собирает в Риге срочную пресс-конференцию, чтобы нанести ответный удар по своему обидчику — Арнолду

Лаксе. И так, война между олигархами продолжается. Чем она закончится? На этот вопрос по просьбе «Вести Сегодня» отвечают депутаты Сейма и политологи.

Кришьянис Петерс, депутат Сейма (Первая партия): «Для меня очевидно, что на сей раз противоборство не закончится перемирием.

Обязательно одна победит. Честно даже опасаясь дефляционные прогнозы — кто же вверх. Только очевидно, что война буд

### СОСТОЯНИЕ

## Их цена — миллионы

Опубликован очередной список латвийских миллионеров, уже седьмой год подряд составляемый журналом Klubs. В нем представлены 10 самых богатых людей Латвии,

100 человек, стоимость имущества которых превышает 1 млн. латов и 200 человек, которые имеют состояние не менее 1 млн. евро или долларов. Самыми богатыми людьми Латвии названы учредители и ру-

ководители крупнейшего коммерческого банка страны — Parex Bank — Валерий Каргин и Виктор Косовицкий: на каждого из них приходится по 70 млн. латов. Rossob



### рекорд

## 72 километра... на ходулях

В Крыму установлен новый мировой рекорд. Актеры евпаторийского Театра на ходулях прошли на деревянных ногах 72 километра — расстоя-

ние от набережной Евпатории до центральной площади Симферополя. Свой необычный марафон евпаторийцы посвятили родному городу, которому в этом

году исполняется 2500 лет и надеются попасть в Книгу рекордов Гиннеса. Дисциплину актеры преодолели за 7 часов и 51 минуту. News.Battery.R

### ТРАГЕДИЯ

## Сгорели во сне

За прошедшие сутки в столице произошло два пожара, в которых погибли

### БРАТЯ МЯ

Минувшей весной в Эдинбургском зоопарке случилось счастливое прибавление: у амурских тигров Саши и Юры родились трое котят. Редких кисок назвали Влад, Шилка и Зея. Долгое время их держали в закрытом помещении. Пока тигрята подрастали, вольер расши-



# Вайра — не Сталин?!

Вчера Вайра Вике-Фрейберга на встрече с парламентскими партиями (в данном случае — с «ТБ»/ДННЛ) второй раз за несколько дней оценила свое 4-летнее президентство как «выдающееся». Чисто американо-канадский ход: себя не похвалишь — ни кто не похвалит. Кстати, хвастаясь знанием истории, ВВФ, видимо, забыла, что диктатор Сталин сам себя никогда не хвалил, хотя похвалю других поощрял. Но Вайра — не Иосиф Виссарионович. Как говорится, какая страна...

мир звезд



## В ПУСТЫХ

В Москве задержан 121 чл ристической организации исламского освобождения

В результате комп-лекса оперативно-розыскных мероприятий ФСБ совместно с под-разделени Москре за человек — члены яче

## Пора!

Не забудьте продлить подписку на «Вести Сегодня». Полугодие заканчивается скоро. Будем вместе!

Кайли Миноуг названа самой сексуальной звездой в мире музыки. Певица собрала треть всех голосов участников опроса — зрителей британского канала VH1. На втором месте — Бритни Спирс. Третье место занял Робби Уильямс. А вот признанные красавицы Дженнифер Лопес и Холли Вэлэнс оказались на 7-м и 12-м местах соответственно.



# ВВФ посчитала русских

Подробности — на стр. 4 →

КРАСОТА



Очаровательная актриса Бейонс появилась в супернаряде на главной аллее Голливуда, чтобы поприветствовать великого Роберта де Ниро в честь вручения ему очередной киношной награды. Впрочем, появление такой красотицы — и без того праздник. Что-то, а делать шоу из ничего Америка умеет...

## Анекдот

— Не понимаю, дорогая, чем ты недовольна. Каждое утро я подаю тебе кофе в постель... И тебе остается только помолоть его...

## Гро

Наступившая неделя вряд ли побьет температурные рекорды и мало чем порадует истосковавшихся по теплу латвийцев. Так, во всяком случае, говорят синоптики, обещая нам в середине июня и ночные заморозки до -2 градусов, и сильный ветер — порывами до

# Ошибка президента

Сегодня Сейм ЛР выбирает Вайру Вике-Фрейбергу главой государства на второй срок. Конкурентов у неё нет. Но это не означает, что президент у нас безгрешная.



Фото: Шиняра Рудамиса, А.Е.И.

В чем ее главная проблема, читайте на стр. 4 →

## КРАСОТА



## — ИЗ КУЛУДРОВ СЕЙМА —

# Есть группа ЗапЧЕЛ!

**Вчера её депутатам  
сопутствовал успех**

«За права человека в единой Латвии» — именно так, как бы ни злобствовали политические недоброжелатели, продолжает называться депутатская группа Сейма ЛР, в которую вошли В. Бузаев, Н. Кабанов, Ю. Соколовский (председатель) и А. Толмачев. Вчерашний дебют группы доказал, что «пакет» ее голосов может оказывать влияние — а также проходят поправки к законопроекту.....

*Подробности о последнем заседании петней сессии — на стр. 4 →*

**В Голливуде что ни день, то праздник. А что ни праздник, так с обилием мегазвезд экрана. Ну где еще можно одновременно встретить красавиц Камерон Диас, Дрю Бэрримор и Лючи Ли? Только на премьере фильма «Ангелы Чарли», и только в Голливуде!**

# Первый срок ВВФ отыграла

Вайра Вике-Фрейберга считает себя смелой и справедливой. По ее мнению, ситуацию с нацменьшинствами в Латвии нагнетают российские МИД и Госдума!

«Четыре года назад Сейм избрал меня президентом. И это было неплохим решением!» — без ложной скромности заявила вчера Вайра Вике-Фрейберга. Она собрала журналистов, чтобы подвести итоги 4-летнего нахождения у власти. «Я надеюсь, что свое доверие мне депутаты подтвердят и во время голосования по моему второму президентскому сроку», — сказала глава государства.

Подробнее — на стр. 4 →



Фото Дмитрия Душинского (по архиву «РС»)



Вчера в Китае началась конфискация «нехороших» игрушек, которые «вредны для общественной морали». В их число попали и эти эротические свинки. Кстати, стояли они примерно 80 сантиметров. Однако...

«РЕФОРМА-2004»

## Акции протеста продолжаются

Сегодня, в субботу, в 15.00 депутаты от ЗаПЧЕЛ приглашают рижан на Привокзальную площадь. Там же пройдут и акции 11 и 18 июня. В конце августа состоится рок-марафон «За русскую школу», а также молодежные пикеты. Такие пикеты пройдут возле МОН, Сейма и президентского замка.

Начало учебного года тоже станет бурным, так как

### Radio programmes

#### Radio programmes in Latvian

The following programmes on Radio 1 and the following genres were analysed: “Rīta viesis” (“The Morning Guest”), “Krustpunktā” (“At the Cross-roads”) (in both cases – both interviews and discussions), “Mūsu viesis” (“Our Guest”) (discussion), daily events’ overview, news, listeners’ survey.

Notwithstanding their gender, the radio interviewers (on average there are 50/50 male and female journalists) selected male respondents to talk about the governmental structure, power components, secret power divisions, money resources. In cases where women were interviewed, they usually represented lower ranking positions; they were executive officers versus the male respondents usually from higher ranking positions. The only top-ranking position representative interviewed during this period was I.Ūdre. Naturally, there were also brief representative interviews with V. Vīķe-Freiberga or fragments of her speeches were broadcasted on issues pertinent to her re-election; however, it all reflected the general promises of the President regarding her Presidency during the subsequent term instead of demonstrating her opinion, views, interest or desires regarding specific problems to be resolved on a national scale.

Just as in the printed press, the radio presented the “opinion of the people” on politics as a sphere where “the men of power”, “sirs in the government” actively work, etc.. This opinion was voiced by women and men. On the other hand, the surveyed persons tended to refer to the President as to the “final institution” by – “I would like to hear what the President has to say”, “I am interested whether the President knows about this” – which, possibly characterises the image of the President as a reliable politician versus the corrupt, inconsistent and far-removed-from-reality existing politics of men. In this period of time the common attitude towards the President was quite positive as her opinion on the America-Iraq war had not yet been expressed. The association regarding the President was that of “Mother Nation” who cares for her fate and who is interested in understanding and taking care of opportunities for each citizen and full-fledged future development. It must be noted that in 2003 the President was also equalled with understanding of Latvian-ness, its value in contrast to the cosmopolitan trends that are often requested opinions about the attitude to EU.

As to her own opinion, the President thought her activities had earned an “outstanding” prize, in the interviews one perceives she tried to respond to criticism on her ignorance about the situation of the retired, the social life and interior affairs of the country. Expert opinions about further priorities of the President were different: some thought she should pay more attention to interior affairs while others forecasted that this sphere would remain of secondary importance and in the next four years of her Presidency she would focus on external affairs.

Interestingly, in the opinions voiced on the possible candidate for the position of the President of the state on no occasion did anyone admit it could be a woman. It was even said that, “Nobody *himself* is interested in applying for the position, only if the party proposes the candidate”.

In the radio material quite a distinct separation in themes was evident, and these themes were analysed by representatives of both sexes. On issues regarding power division, finances, the national apparatus, the opinions of male officials were clearly dominant, while on issues pertaining to the social sphere, radio journalists tended to interview women. It is possible that it is related to the fairly common situation in Latvia where the problems of children, families, housing, disability, education are mainly under the control and care of female, lower ranking officials. The responses from female respondents on social issues were more structured than the responses from men, they were deeper and in relation to essential details important for human existence while in those of the men (if there were any responses at all) general statements were dominant, often accompanied by meaningless tautologies, profuse talking at great length without even touching upon the real subject. The social sphere was pictured as yet another area of the President’s care which in actual fact is an area in which she has very little say.

During this period of time there was a conference on gender equality and information on the event was presented on the radio interviewing P. Eglīte, a demographer. In this interview a number of gender equality issues were discussed: employment and family, childcare benefits, women’s salaries as well as representation of men and women in Parliament.

## **Radio programmes in Russian**

Five minute news' editions were analysed along with informative programmes, "Tautas tēzes" ("The thesis of the people") – totalling 25 programmes in the course of the aforementioned period. In fact, there was no information on the elections of the President of the state. Neither was there a single "Tautas tēzes" programme discussing the attitude of the Latvian residents about the Presidential elections in Latvia. Against the backdrop of Presidential elections the following themes were looked at: Eurovision, vacations in Latvia, school examinations, street musicians, city transportation, horoscopes, alcohol and above all – the Midsummer festival.

There were three programmes pertaining to Presidential elections; 1) news on the coming Presidential elections or the "Dossier of the President", 2) President was interviewed in Latvian and the interview was translated into Russian, 3) a popular survey on Dom's square on the elections that had just taken place (the survey was done with preparations for the Midsummer's festival in the background). All the aforementioned programmes were broadcasted in the common information flow "before the Midsummer's" as if by chance and none of them were positioned as an even in line with the genre of the event (expectations, intrigue, moments of "live on-air" and various reflections with regard to the newly developed space after the event). Presidential elections were positioned as a narrative of certain genre that must be shown in line with the discourse of the dominant political norms. It was a totally predictable event, equally ritualistic and representative like the Ligo songs for the Midsummer's festival. As a result an apparent coincidence of the Presidential elections (formal level of politics) and the coming Ligo festival (popular level) was used.

These three programmes built the image of the politician/President and woman (Latvian-ness, representative of Latvia, civic society, Latvian accession to EU and NATO, legal system, increasing professionalism of specialists in the respective area, insufficient support to science, good education and knowledge of languages, lack of knowledge on the situation in the country, foreign visits, 500 requests for pardon reviewed, non-judgmental, open to all opinions, compromise, just in principle, fearless in the opinion of the foreign experts); the respective image was constructed with the help of the popular voice (the daughter of the sun, "I think she is very attractive as a woman" "ability to behave, knowledge", "the President seems nice, age has no impact on her"). It was quite characteristic that the image of the President was created either by politicians – men or "gender neutral" experts while the image of a woman – mainly women – by the "voice of the population".

On the whole the image of the President was subject to two descriptions about her "The always attractive Athena" and "what else can one do – there are certain circles who have decided that our President is very attractive".

## **TV programmes in Latvian**

Only two sequential TV programmes discussed the Presidential elections and related issues during the respective time period – out of all the programmes available from TV archives – the two programmes being "Kas notiek Latvijā?" and [www.vērtības.viedokļi.vērtējumi](http://www.vērtības.viedokļi.vērtējumi). ([www.values.opinions.evaluations](http://www.values.opinions.evaluations)). One of the analysed programmes "Kas notiek Latvijā?" turned to the issue of stability. All the participants in this programme were men. A note must be made regarding the expression by K.Kariņš providing for the inclusion of both genders, commenting on the head of the Corruption Combat Office, "She or he must have an education in law". All in all, the programme mainly discussed the possible collapse of the cabinet and the discussion panel tried hard

to offend one another and find each other's mistakes. The theme of the second programme – devoted to political issues only – was the achievements of the government and expectations regarding EU issues. Politicians were not invited to partake in this programme, only experts took part in it (gender proportion: 4 women to 3 men).

“WWW” paid more attention to how to vote during the Euro referendum on September 20. Two men took part in the programme, three experts who were not present but were interviewed beforehand presented their opinions. The discussion turned to pre-election advertisements and EU advertisements were compared against those of the LC. The issue of gay marriage was mentioned and both of the persons invited to take part in the programme agreed that our society was not yet prepared for it as well as adding that it was not an issue in the EU competence. In the “WWW” programme devoted to farming issues, the discussion participants were two women. On the whole the discussion was gender neutral, only one of them interpreted the question “From the point of view of a housewife”.

The Presidential elections had not gained much attention in the programmes mentioned. The politicians interviewed, like the majority of the media mentioned, were mainly men. Gender neutralisation was to be observed here – something that actually “was hiding” gender related issues.

## CONCLUSIONS

A study of the pre-election campaign was done because media as a power instrument and an instrument of public influence is best manifest during political campaigns. Presentation of campaigns in media reproduces existing hegemonic gender stereotypes particularly when those are image-orientated. Pre-election campaign raises and points out gender stereotypes that are popular among the media makers, politicians and target audience where power and gender interact.

Content analyses of newspapers here was in special focus as the newspapers are seen to be a daily phenomenon – their daily nature means that they are the most powerful creators of gender meanings and they have an impact at the *daily, banal, invisible* levels in contrast to “more dramatic” media forms. On the other hand, we did not include internet media for analysis simply because of the situation where media monitoring and control is more clearly becoming an international issue.

It is very important to pay attention to the fact that stereotypes are constantly maintained and that they are viewed in context hence the way in which media use gender stereotypes shows important trends in gender relations developing in society. Due to the limited time frame for project implementation we could not do an in-depth study of general media processes, media audience and media contents' results analysis regarding gender stereotyping in the Latvian public. For instance, it is important to take into consideration the contact degree with gender images in printed and visual media at local and international level as well as to look at the role of the internet in constructing gender stereotypes.

Pre-election campaigns in media demonstrate not only function granting and putting gender in hierarchy in social interaction. These are not isolated instances of gender subordination in political power. Pre-election campaigns in the media are aimed at potential voters, hence – to diverse and different groups and certain stereotypes that would unify them in a certain group of voters for a definite agenda. In cases like these traditional gender order, especially in regard to society that is subject to challenges like these along with the post-modern and post-Soviet agenda, is being re-evaluated along with the notion and experience of the “nation”.

Political media campaigns stimulate gender inequality in all spheres starting with politics. These campaigns are strengthening and maintaining certain stereotypes on men and women, on attitudes, emotions and relationships between men and women as genders. For instance, A.Vigorito and T.Curry have discovered that men's magazines follow the trend, "the larger the percentage of male leaders the more men are pictured in working (hegemonic) roles, hence smaller numbers of men are pictured in the roles of a spouse/partner (care)". Women's magazines again can build a more idealised image of men. This fully pertains to media culture in Latvia in which the gender of politics constitutes other dominant gender types of masculinity, 1) when power is being defined using references to physical strength and control, particularly in gender representation; 2) when it is being defined using professional achievement in post-industrial market society; 3) when it is being represented with the help of the idea of the patriarchal family<sup>2</sup>. In this kind of order the diversity and complexity of men, evidence of the diversity of their roles, images, choices and emotions was not equally reflected and appreciated since politics, business and sports are still the dominant models of knowledge/power that are being used regulating the behaviour of men and women as genders.

The stereotyping of genders as modelled by media in the political realm must be viewed in context with the electorate for the leading parties and interests they represent. Ethnic aspect in this was closely connected with the gender aspect; since the Russian speaking minority is a very marginal block of voters among the residents of Latvia, it is excluded from the target audience of the leading political parties and their political campaigns in mass media.

The factor of ethnicity also had an impact on the media campaign, adjusting to the [expectations of] audience. In-depth studies of interaction between ethnicity and gender are prerequisite in selecting media material, for representation, opinion provision and discussing various issues. However, one can argue at the moment that Latvian and Russian media are subject to ritualisation of subordination, to borrow E.Goffman's term (*E.Goffmans*, 1976), which means that women as gender are stereotypically represented as receivers in the process of making politics and that of decision-making. Women politicians and their achievements with regard to hierarchic division of functions were stereotyped as an exception: in terms of access to politics; women as politicians in certain compromised positions, instead of being in their own "territory". Their portrayals, particularly in presenting I.Ūdre, were tinted with a "touch of femininity" (*E.Goffman*, 1976). This was done by focusing attention on personal traits of her character while in the case of the male politician – concentrating on political issues.

Speaking of women's audience some radio programmes broadcasting in Russian served as a great example to another kind of gender stereotyping that was also used in media – *the permitted exclusion* (*E.Goffman*) when women were presented as being less orientated to the situation (often – as being too emotional or paying attention to unimportant things) and finally being placated by the man's voice of reason.

The study has also demonstrated that gender stereotypes and gender asymmetries produced in media during political campaigns draw our attention to complicated issues of power relations between men and women, taking into consideration the factors of age, ethnicity and class.

Gender differences based on certain gender stereotypes is part of the so-called "gender neutrality" – very popular in newspapers. "Gender neutrality" does not mean that the gender in the text is absent or is not essential. Gender neutrality is an evident and widespread form of representation with the help of which the respective object is represented as if having no gender or as if gender was not important – this so-called gender neutrality is a form of granting gender ([www.cromnet.org](http://www.cromnet.org)). In

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<sup>2</sup> Due to time constraints during the study as well as due to volume restrictions of the study we were unable to look at this issue in detail.

representing male politicians gender neutrality showed the most essential – they are the “right” gender in the political and power realm, hence prove that this is their “norm” even though some “exceptions” exist.

The portrayal of women in media has changed very little: it is still stereotypical and imprecise, accompanied by judgments and demonstrating an intolerance towards women, often linked with scandals hence making some groups of women invisible. Women are still being described on the basis of their looks instead of referring to their abilities. On top of all that the increasing commercialisation of media has made sexualised and home-related women’s images more visible.

Women are insufficiently represented in the realm of politics and power which means that a man is still the standard for politics/culture while a woman is less important or invisible. We discern between this power strategy in differentiating genders and formal “dues” for women as supports for family and culture.

Men and women were presented with stereotypical means reflecting and maintaining the public opinion on gender and including new dominant forms of gender roles. We found in the study that stereotypes on women and men were mainly traditional and are being traditionalised constructing politics as men’s (gender) sphere of activity hence indirectly placing the women as the gender at home, in the private sphere of life. The study has found that research on men in the national media is absent hence this subject should be examined more closely in the future. One has to find out in what contexts men gain validity as gender versus how women are sometimes paralleled with sex/gender.

One may also conclude that in times when gender is being shown in terms of access to power, a traditional view on gender and gender stereotypes are being – consciously and spontaneously – reproduced. On the other hand, from the side of media professionals there are no evident attempts to change the situation in this area, hence there are no initiatives for women to have a positive impact on the situation. Contextual problems are clear – there is no education in this area, neither are there any resources to allocate for educational needs, for stimulating access and control, required forms of knowledge are missing and psychological barriers exist.

Newspapers paid relatively little attention to men’s daily representations. Men were mainly in central roles in events related to politics, economics and sports and were demonstrated as such in the media. Besides, men and “masculinity” and “men’s practices” were viewed as “natural” and popular assumptions on men and politics were often used in journalism. Articles pertaining to pre-election campaigns positioned men only within the framework of traditional gender perspectives.

This surfaced through the seemingly large quantity of media material on gender neutrality. The so-called gender neutrality that was perceived as such is a popular kind of representation in newspapers. It clearly demonstrates that gender is very important in media policy representations. The illusory neutrality in fact is a form of *granting gender* as gender neutrality strategies and, in fact, serve to “neutralise”, to make self-evident (without problematising) the dominant gender relations and gender stereotypes related to them. Hence, the pre-election campaign in the media served to show that there was *only one*, “right” gender in some professions or in labour organisation, for instance, in political activities and in elite politics and if there were any deviations from this track, it could be assumed in the capacity of exception strengthening the traditional viewpoint on gender issues.

Analysis of men as gender media representations in political and power realms has highlighted a complicated sequence of issues on evaluating representational forms of “men”, “men’s practices” and “masculinity” simultaneously revealing the overall accepted or the seemingly existent “gender neutrality” that the media repeatedly relied on. Men in political power positions were taken –

following the habit – as self-evident and never problematised from the gender perspective in media. Besides, there were important media messages and genres with regard to politics that were often viewed as only and solely pertaining to men while men were never looked at as being gendered. This kind of gender neutralisation does not only complicate the aspiration to study men, it hinders the possible liberation from long existing, hegemonic models determining gender stereotyping. This is being combined with the strategy of personalisation constructing a “man in politics” in media hence avoiding the subject on “man in politics” as a political and gender issue.

Similar strategies characterised media publishing and broadcasting in Russian in which gender neutralisation was even more distinct. Political agency of parties representing the Russian speaking minority was represented as undoubtedly masculine and hence – invisible as a gender/ethnic construction. It is not a unique situation in the context of minority politics and in terms of minority media representation. A peculiar case in this respect is that of Tatjana Ždanoka never being represented as a woman politician representing the interests of women from the Russian speaking community. This brings up quite recognisable difficulties for any majority/minority woman in post-socialistic context to turn to issues of women as a political group of electorate in a situation when they are being divided in every political way according to their ethnic background, citizenship, age and class.

These and other strategies work in reproducing women’s representations as very definite and unchanging stereotypes: *explicit* or *implicit* preference for a wife, mother, “sister” (like K.Lībāne), “lady of the frying-pan” (caricature on K.Lībāne), “substitute to Anyka the cannon-girl” (caricature on T.Ždanoka showing aggressiveness and spirit of fighting). The last example is particularly interesting as it proves that gender and ethnicity are constituted in interaction, as gender stereotypes constituting the dominant “differences” in images of female politicians belonging to different ethnic groups and reflecting polarised political opinions, living in one society and state.

Gender, power and politics in media during the pre-election campaign like in other periods of time (in contrast with other studies on gender and media) demonstrate a complete lack of discussion on gender and on men as gendered beings – men’s problems and masculinities, men in the context of social problems and social problematisation of men. Articles mainly focused on one person only. On the whole this demonstrates the well-known media strategy – when a problem is more general in nature and relates to men, for instance, like that of corruption, “the dirty games in politics”, articles tend to bring it up through an individual or group (woman becoming the media objective as the “guilty” one) with the help of narrative but not in gender context.

Images from political advertisements could be viewed as an educational instrument for “ability to read gender”, like an instrument constructing public knowledge on politics as well as that where specifically power lies in politics. Assumptions (ideology) on what does it mean to be a “real man”, “real politics” is being translated into images from political advertisements. It must be noted that the limited genre of political commercials (being developed with the help of advertising campaigns) must be viewed in the context of many other dominant images of men in national media space, for instance, in sports, business, etc..

Analysis of gender and power in stereotyping the political process in Latvian media points to the fact that women’s marginalisation in power relations has not yet been overcome and that, evidently is at the level of politics where their show-offish pseudo-activity as that of recipients of political activity is demonstrated. Even though the state has a number of legal documents on gender equality and integration of the principle of gender equality, Programme for the implementation of gender equality, and there are institutional solutions planned for the enforcement of equality politics, and Latvia has signed a number of international treaties and conventions on ensuring gender equality, activities for guaranteeing prioritisation of the problems of gender equality in the process of democratic public development are still absent. Gender asymmetry is one of the most characteristic

features at all levels of power even though women form the majority of the population and they are also an active part of the electorate. We have tried to illustrate how gender stereotyping in Latvian mass media is strengthening marginalisation of women in political structures and at the same time from the point of view of gender relations, how it moulds conformism in the behaviour of women voters from a gender perspective in which affective (“I trust them”, or “I fear them”) instead of rational motives are built in the process of selecting a person for a position of power (a charismatic or populist, “strong personality”, “strong hand”, etc.).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several essential spheres in the need for change:

- A. To increase women’s participation and access to decision making and manifesting in media and through media as well as in the modern communication technologies. The problem of women’s position in media (falling beyond the scope of this study).
- B. To stimulate balanced and stereotype-free representation of women in media.
- C. To avoid silencing gender and to develop adherence to gender aspect: to develop training programmes for media professionals (journalists inclusive), media students and faculty on “ability to read gender” and adhering to gender aspects. To stimulate programme development creating and enforcing women with a gender perspective. To organise working groups and educational programmes for media professionals on adhering to aspects of gender and gender issues.
- D. Media monitoring from a gender perspective – with assistance from women’s organisations (women’s NGO coalition) and gender researchers (University of Latvia’s Centre for Gender Studies):
  - to look at the problems related to representation of men and women in their position in media;
  - to aid journalists, editors and media owners in gaining awareness on the existing lack of balance from a gender perspective; in future years to carry out a similar project at a national level to define trends in representing politicians;
  - to integrate gender in media policies (partnership among the government, media industry and NGOs (form – gender “shadow report” on media).
- E. The main challenge here is addressing media managers and controllers. Possible ways for creating their interest on gender issues and more intensive reflection of these issues as a part of media policy must be identified.
- F. Media policy initiatives from the side of NGOs who should initiate wider discussion on communication and democracy, particularly on the necessity in individuals and institutions to pay ever increasing attention to the gender aspect starting from early childhood, from school. This is an issue pertaining to the social responsibility of media, on their impact on the freedom of speech for men and women and pluralistic approach to media sources.
- G. To do a subsequent study tied in with a regular gender monitoring idea. If gender monitoring with regard to prejudices may be initiated and also on noticing gender and results could be

delivered to policy makers in media and the general public, a subsequent study on representation of men and women in mass media should be supported as well.

- H. Amendments to the existing legislation on media are needed – for the integration of gender equality aspect.
- I. To build organising and stimulating policies enabling creation of a more competitive and public-interest orientated media system with a strong non-profit and non-commercial sector.

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