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The Failure of Signs and the Need for Community:
A Latvian Perspective on Developing a Cohesive Society

Abstract:

This paper offers a Latvian perspective on the challenges faced by Latvia in its efforts to create a united society after its independence was restored in 1991. Despite corrections made to policies and the paraphrasing of the approaches, social integration in Latvian society has been evaluated as having failed. The renewed identification with democratic values has also brought along the challenges of the contemporary democracies – novel divisions keep the society apart. The discrepancy in values within Latvian society raises an assumption: perhaps the signs that represent specific values are detached from their content, and a closer look at the idea of a unity of society must be taken in light of this assumption. By using the analysis of social cohesion in Latvia, empirical material, and Jean Baudrillard's view on the autonomy of signs (which is complemented by the views of Giorgio Agamben and Roberto Esposito on community), reflections on the failure of social cohesion are offered, suggesting it arises from the application of a modern understanding to signs and society in a postmodern reality.

Keywords:

community, society, social cohesion, values, signs, Latvia, European Union

The global community has been in a crisis for a long time now. To be precise: in crises. In any case it is a word constantly attributed to virtually all areas of society. The events that highlight it – geopolitical tensions, political and social scandals, natural disasters, disease, devaluation, and inflation – vanish from the focal point as soon as new ones appear or a chance for a brief return to the imagined normalcy makes itself available, but the reality underneath the surface of the playing out of different forces persists. Perhaps it is the community itself that is in crisis?

The representation of societies as in various ways divided and polarized indicate a framework that not only might be identifying processes and phenomena but also perpetuating them. And perhaps it has become harder now for rhetoric and ideology as a set of ideas that support this kind of perspective to convince people of the ability of politics to recognize and address the sources of problems. This is not an all-encompassing tendency, but it has become more pronounced in globalized societies with international and supranational interests. In some sense it is the continuation of the postmodern condition with the collapse of grand meta-narratives, the advent of the post-truth era; with the uncertainty, disbelief, and the prevalence of inconsistent relativistic outlooks. On the one hand the future seems too out of hand for internally coherent explanations and predictions to be convincing, but on the other – people need a representation of reality in a narrative that gives them a positive outlook on what is unfolding, and empty words still do sell, especially if they are new.

In Latvia the story of the small nation as one that will prosper in the European Union has rather been replaced with the hope of surviving through an unreliable economic and political situation and with an unclear implementation of political vision. It seems that irrespective of a possible correlation to the accession to the European Union, Latvia has not acquired stable and progressive growth economically and ideologically. Latvia has always belonged to European values, but the discrepancy between the obstinate reproduction of value signs and the prime focus on economic values has created a fragmented and unstable society. Could the problem consist in the intellectual forms of our society representing the, as Horkheimer and Adorno put it, "unity of collectivity and power, and not the immediate social universal, solidarity"?[1]

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1)   Horkheimer and Adorno, "Concept of Enlightenment," 16.

A problem in Latvia that has kept on looking for a new word since the restoration of independence in 1990 has been the division of society. The mitigation of it was first sought under the name of "integration" and mainly focusing on division of the two largest ethnic groups in Latvia: Latvians and Russians, but since there was not sufficient success in "bringing the parts" of society "together", they are now sought to be "stuck together" under the term "cohesion". Since the early 1990s, Latvia has pursued various models of societal integration in response to the post-Soviet demographic landscape, where ethnic Latvians had become only about half of the population. Also, at the beginning of 2024 in Latvia 62.6% of permanent residents were Latvians and 23.4% Russians, among the main nationalities.[2] Early efforts centered around the development of key legislation and plans, such as the Citizenship Law (1994), Education Law (1998), and State Language Law (1999), aiming to restore the Latvian state and identity. The first integration program (2000) emphasized mutual understanding and cooperation within a shared state. Later, the 2012–2018 guidelines reframed integration as part of national identity and development of civic society, prioritizing the Latvian language and cultural space as unifying elements. From 2021 onward, the policy focus shifted toward cohesion, understood as a broader, values-based sense of belonging and solidarity, influenced by local cooperation, NGOs, and emotional attachment to place. Throughout this evolution, tensions between inclusive models and hierarchical models (integration around a core), have persisted. Although Latvia has rejected forced assimilation, the integration process has often been perceived by minority communities – especially Russian speakers – as threatening their distinct identities. Meanwhile, the state has emphasized the importance of shared values, language, and loyalty as prerequisites for a cohesive democratic society.

Also, the regional geopolitical tensions and ideological tensions in Western societies in the past decade resonate strongly in Latvia; data shows "the biggest polarization in regard to Western orientation and the perception of the state," including "extreme opinions in terms of seeing Latvia as a failed state"[3] among the Baltic states. Also, the trend of juxtaposing "liberal *versus* conservative" values is expected to grow

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2)   Centrālā statistikas pārvalde, *Demogrāfija*, 3.

3)   Kaprāns and Mieriņa, *Ideological Polarization*, 75.

in Latvia.[4] Along with the intransient general division of society, the divide between the citizens and the state has increased. The goals of the second ratified relevant policy document – the "Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society 2021–2027" – are yet to be met: its "plan [is] to promote the strengthening of the national identity and sense of belonging, the increase of inclusive participation and civic literacy, to strengthen a high-quality and safe space for democratic participation and information, to promote the participation of foreign citizens living in Latvia in society, as well as to reduce an attitude based on negative stereotypes towards various groups of society."[5] The motto of the European Union – "United in Diversity" – in Latvia thus far has not materialized to the desired degree[6] as the high level of inter-group distrust and the divided (Latvian and Russian), information space with differing ideologies and values hinder the efforts of cohesion politics.[7]

The European Union itself is in many respects divided. "[P]olycrises, economic, unemployment and cost of living challenges, persistent inequalities, … GDP disparities, … demographic challenges, the twin green and digital transition and low institutional capacity"[8] are identified as some of the biggest current threats to social cohesion. The Council of Europe defines a socially cohesive society as a "mutually supportive community of free individuals pursuing" "the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation" as "common goals," "by democratic means."[9] But this definition is at once pronounced an ideal not fully achievable.[10] If this is true for any society, the rhetoric recognizing a "divided society" and expressing the need for a "cohesive society" is to be taken cautiously.

The solution usually sought for societal fragmentation is in common values. Do they provide the unity of society? The political values of Latvia adhere to the values of the European Union, as laid out in the article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty: "The Union

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4)   Geks, Vizgunova, Bukovskis, and Kazoka, "Political Ideologies," 222.

5)   Ministru kabinets, Rīkojums nr. 72.

6)   For example, in one of the latest publications formulated as "the failed social integration policy in Latvia" (see Jurāns, "Latvia," 90).

7)   Valtenbergs, Grumolte-Lerhe, Avotniece, and Beizītere. *Latvijas informatīvajā telpā*, 19.

8)   Jančová, Kammerhofer-Schlegel, and Centrone, *The Future of EU Cohesion*, 1.

9)   European Committee for Social Cohesion, *A New Strategy for Social Cohesion*, 3.

10)   Ibid.

is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail."[11] Also the Council of Europe has determined several core values necessary for the realization of a cohesive society – "access to rights for all, respect for dignity of others, the right for all individuals to have the opportunity for personal development, and participation in the democratic process."[12] Why are values that represent respect for all not sufficient? And if there is no discrepancy in values, why does the division persist?

One important deficiency is the predominance of the bureaucratic and econom-ical nature of the European Union. The relationship can be characterized as mercantile – with the governmental structure providing services which the citizens are receiving. The current direction of bureaucratization, technologization, and prioritization of the economy (but not necessarily the economic well-being of the population) over social, human, spiritual, and intellectual fields continues to alienate the population from each other and from the state, and is reminiscent of the Weberian "iron cage" of the "technical and economic conditions" into which the "light cloak" of the "care for external goods"[13] has turned. The origin of the European Union in the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and the failure to ratify the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe in 2004 marks this ongoing confusion of the nature of the European Union: is it a union of people or a united bureaucratic and technocratic management of people? As Martha C. Nussbaum argues, if "nations need technical calculation: economic thought, military thought, good use of computer science and technology," but "do not need the heart," "one might well want to live elsewhere."[14]

Another problem is that in both cases – in Latvia, as well as in the European Union – the values are set at the highest political level, but they do not necessarily stem from that which is actually valued or desired by the people. The tradition of the

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11) European Union, Treaty of Lisbon, Article 1a.

12) Council of Europe, *Concerted Development*, 9.

13) Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, 123.

14) Nussbaum, *Political Emotions*, 396–97.

West to conceptualize particular societies according to the needs of its own identity, overlooking their customs and their self-understanding, thus producing an "imaginative othering,"[15] is at least to some considerable degree also at work in the way values are implemented in contemporary Europe. Would somehow better or more aligned common values or their more insistent and cleverer implementation unite us? What do "values" in this context mean? Is it likely they are just concepts with the ascribed concept of value to them? What supports something as a value? For one, intuitively it seems correct that values should be related to what we desire. It would be odd that we would not value or wish at least in part that which we desire. However, it could be that it does not translate the other way around – that values *are* desires – and the whole common-values discourse could, in theory, turn out to be invalid. For example, value theorist Graham Oddie argues that values are expressions of desires through which we know values experientially.[16] Thus, saying that something is a value without desiring it would compromise the real values. Is that not what has happened to values of the Latvian and the larger European society?

The quotidian self-sufficiency of the bureaucratic apparatus of the European Union masks the displacement of the structure in relation to the body; like the relationship between the map and the territory in Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, Jorge Luis Borges' *On Rigor in Science*, or later renditions in Umberto Eco and Jean Baudrillard, the crisis of democratic institutions of representative democracies and their values reveals a lack of connection between the representation and the reality. The conundrum of values in the context of division is sustained by values not being values; the signs of values are used and exchanged as a currency, and the only values we are discursively dealing with are the use value and the exchange value of signs. People bid for the signs they are most ready to exchange their life and themselves for. Dignity, freedom, and rights are exchanged for the signs "human dignity," "freedom," and "human rights." (With regard to "democracy," "equality," and "the rule of law" there are complications of other kinds.) While in many parts of the world human rights are curtailed, in Latvia and other democratic societies we witness a different form of loss: dignity, freedom, and rights are not suppressed but abstracted, exchanged

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15) Bursztyka, "Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe," 69.

16) Oddie, *Value, Reality and Desire*, 268.

for the signs "human dignity," "freedom," and "human rights," which circulate more as rhetorical tokens than lived realities. Honoring and respecting oneself and others and practicing freedom is replaced by belief in the magic of signs. Value has been, as Baudrillard writes in *Simulacra and Simulation*, "dissociated from its contents" and functions alone, proliferating and circulating "without referential criteria,"[17] generating a double confusion.

Besides the obvious confusion, there is the confusion of the confusion, which eventually cancels itself, re-establishing the (pseudo-) normal situation, returning things back to baseline conditions with the exception of now holding empty signs. But as the signs used by Baudrillard more than 40 years ago inform, "their circulation alone is enough to create a social horizon of value, and the ghostly presence of the phantom value will only be greater, even when its reference point … is lost."[18]

A reason why it is possible both to sustain the concepts and their corresponding ideas such as democracy, equality, freedom, and to refer linguistically to a society or a community, is by virtue of the nature of language. It can function independently from the reality it is in relation to. On the "sovereignty of the abstract concept"[19] Horkheimer and Adorno indicate in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, and Giorgio Agamben reveals the sovereign nature of language in *Homo Sacer*:

> The sphere of law shows its essential proximity to that of language. Just as in an occurrence of actual speech, a word acquires its ability to denote a segment of reality only insofar as it is also meaningful in its own not-denoting (that is, as *langue* as opposed to *parole*, as a term in its mere lexical consistency, independent of its concrete use in discourse), so the rule can refer to the individual case only because it is in force, in the sovereign exception, as pure potentiality in the suspension of every actual reference.[20]

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17)   Baudrillard, *Simulacres et simulation*, 221.

18)   Ibid., 221–22.

19)   Horkheimer and Adorno, "Concept of Enlightenment," 17.

20)   Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 21.

What individual people desire reflects, directly or indirectly, in practice. Common values determined on a national or an international level lay claim for their generality. They might, however, have, first and foremost, the meaning of a sociopolitical agenda – as imperatives, as ideals. And therefore, they can be purely performative if they serve as substantial social assets. These considerations also enter the previously examined metalevel of the question of values and concern the value of values in society. What is their ontological status; are we naming the existing when using the names of values? In contemporary society a trend can be observed: values have lost the sacredness and protectedness which made them public, and are performed as a mere imitation, practiced as a hobby which is characterized by its private nature and unimportance for political life and decision-making.[21] For example, ancient Latvian signs which were used for protection, promotion of prosperity, and other purposes lately have come to decorate everyday objects and public communication materials, or the Summer Solstice celebration, which in the pagan Latvian traditions held the meaning of fertility of nature and the people, is now widely passed by drinking beer and eating shashlik with a wreath of flowers or oak leaves on one's head; in both cases the culturally embedded and personally embodied meanings have to a great extent disappeared and left performativity of the signs, symbols, and practices of the original values. It means then that the commonly defined values are not describing the values affirmed in practice, but function as guidelines without normative significance and can be ignored both on an individual level and the level of governance.

Thus, common values can be seen as symbols that, returning to the original meaning of *σύμβολον* in Greek, are deprived of their other half, and that only together would allow for the identification of an existing agreement, which initially referred to *ξενία* – ritualized friendly relations between strangers – and later shifted also to the relationship between a state and an individual.[22] It is also significant to note that *ξενία* indicates its genesis from "guest," "stranger," and "host," implying the possibility and the importance of establishing friendship among those outside of one's own household in society.

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21) Kūlis, "Values as a Hobby."
22) Hopper and Millett, "Symbolon."

The Western value of individualism, which promises independence, freedom, power, self-expression, and self-realization but delivers alienation, confusion, loneliness, and precariousness on a mass scale, also manifests itself in larger social unities. It is reflected in the idea that a family is a cell of society as a body. It is remarkable that this view, in the form of an idiom, is so widespread in Latvia. It has also propagated in the global community through the formulation by Pope John Paul II: "'Since the Creator of all things has established the conjugal partnership as the beginning and basis of human society,' the family is 'the first and vital cell of society,'"[23] which is a reference to an announcement of Pope Paul VI in 1965. Emile Benveniste, on the contrary, in his study of political divisions of society shows why it is false to imagine family (the Greek *οἶκος / oikos* or the Latin *domus*) as the temporally primary community of a society and stresses that Aristotle in *Politics* has made the particular of the Athenian society into a universal. He states that "such a reconstruction, which starts from a social cell and proceeds by successive accretions, is false. What existed from the start was the society as a whole and not the family, then the clan, then the city. Society from its origin was divided into units which it comprised. The families are necessarily grouped within a unit, and so on."[24] The primacy given to a family in our society is in the significance ascribed to it and not of some ontological meaning for the origins and therefore existence of the society. The individual, the own, the proper, has taken the form of "each for themselves." Surely, values that could unite people do not reflect in these forms of thinking about society.

If common values fail to find secure footing in the practice, how can the problem of the unity of society be theoretically approached? Europe as a political and economic union surely exists as a sense in the citizens who enjoy the rights and liberties of the European Union. But does this union equal society, and does society translate to unity? In Latvia on average only 53% of people feel a sense of communion toward all the people of Latvia, and the percent is especially low among people who speak Russian in their families (40%).[25] The example shows that "society" is firstly a sign

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23) John Paul II, "Role of the Christian Family." The reference in the quote is to the Second Vatican Council *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 11; available at: https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html.

24) Benveniste, "Four Divisions of Society," 252–53.

25) Kažoka and Bērziņa, *Sabiedrības saliedētības radara ziņojums*, 41.

and an abstraction. To understand and explicate the complication that the concept "society" presents, one can turn to the concept of "community."

"Community" is usually understood as a unity of people, a union of people that has something in common that defines or determines them as a unity. While it is true that a community has "something in common," not only is what they have in common not "something" and not "a thing," but exactly the opposite: what they share is a lack. The work of two contemporary Italian theorists – Roberto Esposito and Giorgio Agamben – approach the concept of community differently, but they both emphasize the non-affirmative nature of the ties of a community.

The most commonly used term for denoting the people inhabiting some territory is "society," but this traditional conception overlooks the importance of the ties that bind people belonging to this abstract entity. "Society" can be divided, but "community" cannot. The concept of community in the decades characterized by the demise of the grand narratives has endured a similar fate to that of many other concepts. Perhaps it has always lived the double life of language – one where there is a potential for the concept to denote something existing outside of the language, and the other where one must believe the universals and risk the possibility of finding no reality behind the density of words.

Giorgio Agamben presents the paradoxicality of language which in turn creates a paradoxical reality in the first paragraph of the chapter "Example" in his 1990 book *The Coming Community*. There he shows how the problem with universals stems from language which "transforms singularities into members of a class, whose meaning is defined by a common property"[26] and that the thinking of singular objects as belonging to a whole is thinking a name. He writes:

> The fortune of set theory in modern logic is born of the fact that the definition of the set is simply the definition of linguistic meaning. The comprehension of singular distinct objects m in a whole M is nothing but the name. Hence the inextricable paradoxes of classes, which no "beastly theory of types" can pretend to solve. The paradoxes, in effect, define the place of linguistic being. Linguistic being is a class that both belongs and

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26)   Agamben, "Example," 9.

does not belong to itself, and the class of all classes that do not belong to themselves is language.[27]

It means for community that it cannot be grounded in general concepts and in general, and it must exist somehow paradoxically, a paradox ensuing from the form of natural language. It is an example of how language can operate self-referentially. Once the law of language[28] is established, the discourse can go on without a corresponding reality. One can speak of a community without there being one. But the pressing socio-political situation in Latvia, and in large part also in the European Union, the acknowledged need for seeking solutions speaks the language of existence; the need speaks and compels even if our concepts and ideas are wrong. Thus, the ambiguous power of language to call into existence never abandons either way.

Esposito renounces community as subjectivity, it is neither a unity of individuals nor a body of people, it is in no way or sense a subjectivity. He also argues it is not a property – neither internal, nor external, thus excluding any essence, any predicate, and territory as the grounds for a community. This view sets his account of community apart from the ones put forth by a list of traditional and contemporary prominent thinkers. He writes: "The truth is that these conceptions are united by the ignored assumption that community is a 'property' belonging to subjects that join them together …: an attribute, a definition, a predicate that qualifies them as belonging to the same totality …, or as a 'substance' that is produced by their union. In each case community is conceived of as a quality that is added to their nature as subjects, making them *also* subjects of community."[29] In fact, he believes it is the political-philosophical discourse that reduces community to an object and attributes to it categories that distort the understanding of what

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27) Ibid.

28) In the word "law," which stems from "to lay," the autonomous, sovereign nature of language also reflects – as the law is "laid," "set," established, it simultaneously declares its rule – the logic of law and of language is the logic of sovereignty; they both are grounded in themselves. In Latvian the case is similar: the noun "*likums*" (law) stems from the verb "*likt*" (to put) and initially designated "something that is put, placed." In addition to the meaning "to put," "likt" also means "to command," "to give an order," "to make" (someone do something) and similar. See "likt" and "likums" in: Karulis, *Latviešu etimoloģijas vārdnīca*, 535–37.

29) Esposito, "Introduction," 2.

community is.[30] Such a take on the concept of community allows one to reason that any characteristic of the members of a community is attributed to the community as its characteristic *a posteriori* and begins to define the criteria of identity and to dictate the requirements for belonging only apparently. Probably the power of repetition or, positively, the power of habituation that like in the ethics of Aristotle forms ethical virtue, is what also turns this convention into a sense of community as a substance exemplified by properties which the members share. Even if it is something more external to the particular human beings than their individual origin and personal background, such as place, a country, or a region, the proper is the opposite of the necessary requirement for community. The proper, either one's own or that common to a group, is problematized as a category that does not help or even hinders one's thinking about the social and political crises of today; "the globalized world appears as the sustained crisis of the proper and simultaneously as the endgame of the project of modernization as manifested in ever more intensified, crisis-ridden forms."[31] The common is not to be found in the proper, it is not "the ethnic, territorial, and spiritual property of every one of its members"[32] that unite people in a community.

If what determines the existence of community is not something positively identifiable, on what grounds does it emerge, how does it come about? Esposito exposes the etymological roots of "community" in the Latin "*communitas*" as stemming from "*cum*" and "*munus*" or "*munia*," "*cum*" meaning "with" or "together" and "*munus*" – "duty," "obligation," "law," "office," "gift." This helps to accentuate the specific foundation of relationship in a community; the members are bound together by obligation in both types of meaning of "*munus*" – either by "duty," a "task," or "law", or by a "gift" in the sense of giving.[33] Community demands and commands us, but not by some external instance. The demand or the command is intrinsic to community itself. Esposito formulates it as follows: "Community is one with law in the sense that common law prescribes nothing else but the exigency of community itself… . this

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30) Ibid., 3.

31) Bird and Short, "Community, Immunity, and the Proper."

32) Esposito, "Introduction," 3.

33) Esposito, "The Law of Community," 14.

is the primary content of the law of community: We need community… . We need community because it is the very locus or, better, the transcendental condition of our existence, given that we have always existed in common."[34]

Where, then, does the solution to the lack of the common in society fit here? This necessity of establishment of community and the necessity of the existence of community for our existence places us in a paradoxical position; community is at once "necessary and impossible for us"[35] because it asks for the realization of that which must precede it, it asks for a community "made up of those who do not have community."[36] Also Agamben envisages the possibility of community in its paradoxical non-existence. He introduces the notion of "whatever singularities," which are singular subjects without any requisite, among which community is possible; for the community that is coming, and referring to Esposito, probably never arriving, the difference is the common. We can see that the seemingly problematic motto "United in Diversity" might not be misguided, but its realization would depend on the conception of community. But how could the difference be the common denominator for a community that sets it apart from anything else that is characterized by difference, by singularity? The answer would be: this community is the last community, the non-community. There is nothing that it needs to exist outside of it. It is a community that surpasses the sovereign power of language with its exclusionary inclusion and inclusionary exclusion exemplified by the example which at once belongs within and is set apart, outside the common.

Top-down political initiatives are mechanistic, artificial, and may not survive. Also, cultural consequences do not naturally follow from economically motivated policies. If culture itself does not have what economic goals can promote, then the skeleton of economic rationality can be dressed up in any concepts, there is no flesh, no alive culture underneath them. Specifically, if society does not already strive for communion, if friendship and awareness of mutual dependence are not the basic condition and feeling of a society, then rhetoric will be deficient. The misalignment of the public discourse – which includes and keeps insisting on the

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34) Ibid.
35) Ibid., 15.
36) Ibid.

value of democracy, freedom, peace, human rights, tolerance, equality, inclusivity, mutual respect, responsibility, diversity, economic, intellectual, and technological progress – and the actual reality is not easy to cover. Perhaps that is a reason the discourse is so insistent; there is a need to repel the truth that we are exchanging merely, as Nietzsche said, "illusions,"[37] "coins which, having lost their stamp, are now regarded as metal and no longer as coins."[38] One of the most important aspects of the Latvian political reality is the lack of unity in two forms: the unity in society and the unity between the citizens and the state. The integration politics in Latvia have not achieved all their goals and they are still being pursued more than 20 years after Latvia regained its independence.

The division of Latvian and European society is intrinsic to the conception of society and to the political position of the European Union. "Society" is a double abstraction, first as a sign and then as an abstract group of people. It could be an important reason for the failure of political approaches in uniting people and for people themselves to unite. The relationship strived for among people in the case of a "divided society" should be understood as the type of relationship that characterizes community, which both Latvia and the European Union are lacking. It is not difference as such that divides people but rather the deep-rooted concepts, unembodied values, and ignorance of the necessity of the other for one's own existence.

"Community is our *res*,"[39] the common thing that unites people; it is the *res publica*. Although community, similarly paradoxically, cannot be achieved, the importance of the understanding of this conception of community as a community among people who lack community is the prerequisite for laying the appropriate ground and maintaining the appropriate perspective for the uniting social ties.[40] People must first feel the need for community for it to be then perpetually established. It is the debt we owe to each other, to live ourselves.

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37) Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying," 144.

38) Ibid., 146.

39) Esposito, "The Law of Community," 15.

40) For an idea of a regional, and yet transnational phantasmatic community of the Eastern European peoples see Bursztyka, "Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe."

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