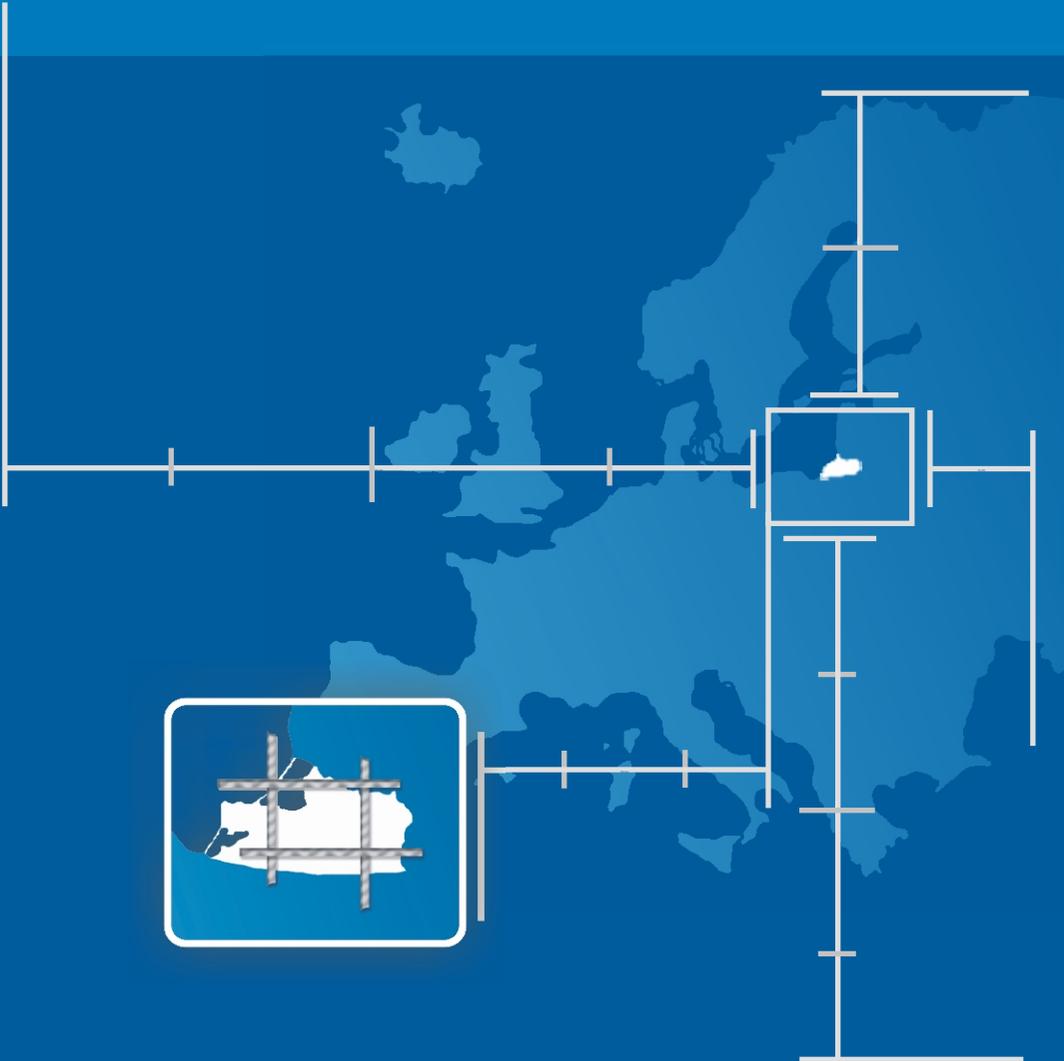


RAIMUNDAS LOPATA

ANATOMY OF A HOSTAGE: KALININGRAD ANNIVERSARY CASE



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“What borders? The border is needed to distinguish nations. For example, there is a border guard who knows very well that the border is not fictitious and not an emblem because on one side of it they speak Russian and drink more and on the other side of it – they drink less and speak not Russian.

And there? What borders can there be if they all drink the same amount and speak not Russian? Maybe there they would be happy to post a border guard but there is nowhere to post him. And border guards fiddle about, get bored and ask for a ciggie... So in this respect there is absolute freedom there... You want, for instance, to stay in Eboli – here you go, stay in Eboli. You want to reach Kanos – no one is in your way, you go to Kanos. You want to cross the Rubicon – cross it...”

Venedikt Yefremov. *Zapiski psihopata*. Moskva – Petushki. – Moskva: Vagrius, 2003. – S. 200.

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FOREWORD

Stranded between the Baltic Sea, Poland and Lithuania, lies the Kaliningrad Oblast – a piece of land which is unique in many ways. It appeared on the maps of Europe after the Potsdam conference, where the victorious powers were redrawing the boundaries of Germany in the aftermath of World War II. The historical legacy, cultural heritage and identity of what was once the core of East Prussia fell victim to post-war geopolitical designs and the Soviet state-building project. During the Cold War, it was virtually turned into a military base – an outpost of the monstrous Soviet military machine, pitted against the ideological enemies in the West. And it emerged as one of the “losers” when the winds of change started blowing with the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Deprived of its historic roots, neglected by its masters and surrounded by the increasingly self-confident and prosperous new members of the European Union and NATO, the Oblast has been struggling to grasp the new opportunities and to reverse its steady decline.

The enlargement of NATO and the EU and accession of the Baltic countries to both organisations have truly transformed the entire geopolitical landscape of the region. Kaliningrad, despite the most pessimistic of predictions, has not become a stumbling block in the process. This does not mean, however, that the discussion about Kaliningrad has become less complex or less important. There are still many unanswered questions concerning the fate of the Oblast, especially with regard to Russia’s vision for it. Developments in this area will

inevitable have broader regional security implications, and for this reason it is important to continue monitoring and researching it further. This book represents a tangible contribution of the Baltic Defence College to the effort of sustaining and advancing academic research on Kaliningrad.

Raimundas Lopata has a long-standing interest in the Kaliningrad area, and, with his broad-based knowledge, he is focusing his analysis on how the developments after the enlargement of NATO and the EU influenced Russia's perception and use of the Kaliningrad issue. Such an endeavour requires taking many factors into consideration. Since the Kremlin is developing a clear-cut policy towards centralisation of power, the Kaliningrad Oblast with its peculiar position becomes a perfect case to study the evolution of Russian internal politics and state-building. The Oblast also represents a litmus test of Russia's relations with some of its neighbours and foreign partners. Will it be manipulated when necessary to cause tensions and obtain concessions? Or will it be used as a geographical link to the enlarged EU? How far can Russia go in encouraging European credentials of the Oblast without undermining the drive for centralisation of power? Lopata looks at these intertwined aspects of Kaliningrad's past and future through the lenses of an outside observer of Kaliningrad's 750th Anniversary celebrations in the summer of 2005 – an event which epitomises many of the underlying emotions, perceptions and policies in relation to the Kaliningrad Oblast.

The book is organised into chapters that follow the headlines of the three-day celebration the 750th Anniversary. In the introduction, the

author outlines the background for the anniversary celebrations and briefly discusses the theoretical framework in which one could place the so-called Kaliningrad puzzle. Chapter I revolves mostly around the heritage and present situation of the city and region of Kaliningrad. It is a unique historical area, but its history before 1945 is complex and with quite peripheral ties to Russia. Therefore the discussion of how Russia approaches identity-building in the region has been important for most people who take an interest in Kaliningrad. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, different parts of Kaliningrad's history have been emphasized to support the identity-building of the inhabitants of the Oblast. In this context, it is, of course, also important to consider the fact that the area is separated from the Russia proper by two countries, is surrounded by NATO and EU members and poses a potential security threat to Russia if secessionist tendencies take hold of the population.

Chapter II takes a closer look at Russia itself and how its treatment of the Oblast has changed with time. It is interesting to see how most of the changes have followed and reflected overall changes in Russia. First and foremost, these are the economic and political developments and setbacks. The state of affairs in Moscow has had an enormous impact on the development of the regional autonomy. It has been a fairly quick leap from Yeltsin's "take as much autonomy as you can" to Putin's "Russia strong and united". While Kaliningrad took stock of the former approach only with a very limited success, the latter leaves not many options but sit and wait for occasional bursts of Kremlin's attention and federal largesse.

The same can be said of the treatment of Kaliningrad as a foreign policy tool used to further the interests of the Russian security policy, whether these have been to stand in the way of the EU and NATO enlargement or to improve relations with Germany. This is the focus of the third chapter of the book. More specifically, it elaborates on the practice which Russia has developed to use Kaliningrad as what the author calls “a geopolitical hostage”, to negotiate its foreign policy goals. The author gives an overview of the changes in the relations between Russia, the EU and former applicant countries in the Kaliningrad context. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian policy towards the exclave has bounced back and forth between more integration with Russia and more integration with Europe, especially with regard to economic integration. During the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad, President Putin took the opportunity to show that Russia prefers to discuss Kaliningrad matters with those European partners, which it favours in a grand geopolitical game, instead of Kaliningrad’s immediate neighbours, thus also asserting the superiority of interests of the federal centre over the local needs. This is perhaps one of the major consequences of being “a geopolitical hostage” – interests and wishes of people living in the Oblast are not very high on a priorities list in the Kremlin, which is, however, hardly unique in contemporary Russia.

The book ends with an assessment of the future of the Kaliningrad Oblast in Russia. It is the author’s clear opinion that Putin has finally outlined a future for the region. This is seen in his choice of a new governor - a man who is through and through living out Putin’s ideas in

the small oblast. The new governor is taking on the task of eliminating corruption in the Oblast administration, but also tying the Oblast closer to the centre by establishing clearly the exclave's Russian identity and the role of bringing Russia to Europe through Kaliningrad, instead of letting Europe come to Russia through it.

As the title of the book indicates, one of the author's main points is the way the Kaliningrad oblast has been used in negotiations between the EU and Russia. Readers with a special interest in the relationship between the EU and Russia will find the book interesting no matter how much previous knowledge they already have on the subject. The author goes into many of the crucial events and developments featuring Kaliningrad as one of the focal points of the EU-Russia relations, supplementing them with his own comments. He also offers an insight into the view of the Baltic countries, and especially Lithuania, of the situation. In the introduction, the author poses the critical question: *"What are the real intentions of the organisers of the celebration of the 750th Anniversary of Königsberg/Kaliningrad?"* He gives the readers an idea of what might be the answers to this question by providing the necessary "food for thought" but leaving it up to the readers to make up their own minds. Thus the book lays an important foundation for the debate on the future of the Kaliningrad Oblast and, indeed, Russia itself. Will "a geopolitical hostage" continue languishing in its miserable condition, or will it be given a breathing space to catch up with its neighbours, which are racing ahead towards greater security and prosperity? Will it represent Russia which has acknowledged its totalitarian past, chooses a democratic future and

treats its neighbours as equals and with respect? Or will it mimicry Russia's post-imperial convulsions, resurgent nationalism and authoritarian tendencies? Regional security and stability as well as a sense of "geopolitical comfort" in the Baltic countries will very much depend on what answers to these questions emerge over time.

Tomas Jermalavičius and Ditte Henriksen

Baltic Defence College

PROLOGUE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Each study has a story of its own. This one is no exception.

In 1995, while overseas in Washington D.C. learning the ABC's of political sciences at The Johns Hopkins University Foreign Policy Institute, I came up with the idea to apply it immediately in analysing the foreign policy of Lithuania. As in this field, so to say, I felt very weak, I shared my idea with a friend of mine Vytautas Žalys, the then first secretary of our embassy to the USA. We were bringing forth the text of the Lithuanian Geopolitical Code in the evenings for three months, which the editorial board of *Politologija* kindly agreed to publish. An abridged and more popular version was published by *Lietuvos Rytas*. In the article, explaining whether the geopolitical code of Lithuania and its gravitation coincided we stated that within the short period of time following the restoration of independence, Vilnius had not managed to harmonise the relations of the domestic and foreign policies: it had failed to take advantage of opportunities arising to the south and did not achieve anything specific in terms of security guarantees to the north either. Still, we finished explaining our ideas with the optimistic tune that there were signs showing that Lithuania was starting to perceive the disagreement of the current geopolitical code of the state and gravitation and tried to eliminate it by activating relations with Poland.

Namely this context framed the final chord of the article: “In this case not the least role should be played by the shared sore of both countries – the

Kaliningrad problem.”¹

I remember very well asking Vytautas, “Are we sure that we will not be called revanchists?” And his reply, “It’s just smoke...”

The smoke started spreading with the wind in the first half of 1998. Lithuania was preparing for the presidency in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the institution which was quite actively involved in developing a strategy of cooperation with the Russian Federation. Visits of our diplomats to the Kaliningrad (Konigsberg) Oblast became more frequent. The first, more serious political, socioeconomic and other photographs of the region appeared in Lithuania.² In other words, the Oblast was heading towards the top priorities of the Lithuanian CBSS Presidency agenda, shortly afterwards also appearing on the spearhead of the Euro-Atlantic integration processes rapidly developing in the region.

Maybe just the spirits of the time coincided and maybe it was high time for a more concrete decision to be taken, but the Institute of International Relations and Political Sciences of Vilnius University, better-established at the time and founded only on 7 February 1992, also started looking for

¹ Lopata R., Žalys V. Lietuvos geopolitinis kodas // Politologija. – 1995. No. 1 (6). – P. 13 – 21; Lopata R., Gintaras Green (V. Žalys). Lietuvos geopolitinis kodas: ar ieškoma ten, kur galima rasti? // Lietuvos Rytas. – 26 April 1995.

² Gričius A. Russia’s Exclave in the Baltic Region: A Source of Stability or Tension? // Joenniemi P., Prawitz J. (eds.) Kaliningrad: The European Amber Region. – Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Ashgate, 1998. – P. 149 – 177; Lopata R., Sirutavičius V. Lithuania and the Kaliningrad Oblast: a Clearer Frame for Cooperation // Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review. – 1999. – No. 3. – P. 67 – 86.

their own, expert niche beyond the boundaries of Lithuania. In the general background of Euro-Atlantic developments and integration, the problems of Kaliningrad, as if naturally, appeared on the priority research list of the Institute. In September 1998, we became one of the organisers of famous international round tables and discussions to analyse the issues of Kaliningrad. Teachers and students gradually formed a group of those especially interested in the development of the Russian Kaliningrad Oblast. Very soon they joined the global, according to US Professor Emeritus Ričardas J. Krickus of Mary Washington College, network of Kaliningrad watchers.³ Moreover, contacts with the representatives of the Oblast and academic circles, students, journalists, businesspeople and politicians were established. Some of those contacts turned into sincere friendship, family friendship.



Area (km²)	15000
Population	950000
Distance to Moscow	1289
to Brussels	1164
to Vilnius	341
to Warsaw	240
Largest cities	
Kaliningrad	428000
Sovetsk	50000
T'cherniahovk	4300
Baltiysk	3150
Gusev	2800
% of total in the RF	
Area	0,1%
Population	0,7%
GDP	0,4%
Relation trade	0,5%
Exports	0,4%
Imports	0,7%
FDI	0,1%

1. Kaliningrad District of the Russian Federation (RF)

³ Krickus R. J. The Kaliningrad Question. - Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford; Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc. – 2002. – P. 2.

To make a long story short, a sentence which slipped out a decade before insensibly turned into a serious professional interest often affecting personal life experience. This was probably why colleagues repeatedly encouraged me to reveal that interest more broadly and offered their support as soon as I decided to do so. The administration staff of the Institute of International Relations and Political Sciences of Vilnius University, as if inconspicuously, redirected the flows of administrative routine to themselves. Friends, scientists and diplomats provided intellectual support. I sincerely thank them all, in particular Evaldas Ignatavičius, Albinas Januška, Alvydas Jokubaitis, Česlovas Laurinavičius, Vytautas Radžvilas, Vladas Sirutavičius, Vygaudas Ušackas and Vytautas Žalys, for friendly pressure and support, at the same time admitting that it was not easy to overcome the often immediate distance between the researcher and the object of his research. Not always does the principle of “open doors” mean the open doors in scientific practice.

If it seems to you that this live threshold has been crossed, just bear in mind that it has been done with the help of those for whom the Kaliningrad Oblast is not just a small piece of land on the political map of Europe.

Finally, we would not have done it if not for the patience of the family of Aušra, Marius and Jokūbas.

INTRODUCTION

The origin and originality of the problem often referred to as the Kaliningrad puzzle are geopolitical. Their concise description could be as follows. The part of Prussia taken by the Soviet Union after the Second World War was transformed into a gigantic Soviet military base. It performed the functions of the exclave against the West and of the barrier which helped the USSR to ensure the dependence of the Eastern Baltics and domination in Poland. After the Cold War, the territory of 15,100 square kilometres with a population of almost a million, owned by Russia and located the farthest to the West, although on the Baltic Sea, ashore became isolated from the motherland and turned into an exclave. Gradually that exclave found itself in the crossroads of different security structures and later – surrounded by one of them. Changes in the situation gave rise to the so-called Kaliningrad discourse, i.e. political decisions influenced by international policies in Central and Eastern Europe and academic discussion and studies of the role of this Russian-owned exclave in the relations of the East and the West.

The academic literature reveals quite a broad panorama of interpretations of this topic. It should be pointed out that the issues which appeared atop of the research – how the collapse of the USSR affected the situation of the Kaliningrad Oblast, what it would be in the future, what role would be played by the motherland and the neighbours, what influence it would experience from the Euro-Atlantic development to the East, how the international community should help the Oblast to adapt to the changing environment, etc. – mostly coincided with the slips of the West-East relations after the Cold War. As the latter were essentially marked by the

search for the so-called new security architecture, the Kaliningrad topic was dominated by the tendency of overcoming insecurity, “a threat potentially encoded in the Oblast.”



Observers (“watchers”) of Kaliningrad. First row from the left: R. Lopata, P. Joenniemi, A. Songal, A. Ignatjev, Ch. Wellmann, P. Holtom, A. Sergounin. Second row: L. Fairlie (first from the left), S. Dewas (first from the right). Third row: L. Karabeskin (first from the left), H.-M. Birckenbach, G. Gromadzki, N. Smorodinskaya. Fourth row: I. Oldberg (first from the right).

At the end of the 80’s and beginning of the 90’s that tendency was reflected in texts modelling the future of the Kaliningrad Oblast based on the Potsdam Tail and analysing the military threat constituted by the Oblast to the security of the Baltic Sea region. In the mid-90’s, the idea of Kaliningrad as the “Baltic Hong Kong” started developing as an alternative to various internationalisation and demilitarisation proposals for the Oblast. It aimed at revealing the potential of the Oblast as a possible economic link between the East and the West. At the turn of the century, following practical steps to reduce the militarisation level of the exclave, the Kaliningrad topic became more focused on non-military threats. More and

more attention was devoted to issues relating to the impact of the expansion of the European Union to the East on the socioeconomic development of the Oblast, its lagging behind its neighbours and consequences of turning into a “double periphery.”¹ Popularity was acquired by recommendations suggesting that such problems should be overcome relying on the principles of organising the political space which were followed by the EU multi-stage governance logic and spread with EU enlargement: deterritoriality, devaluation of the state borders and qualitative change of their functions, border cooperation and international interconnectivity enhancing mutual dependence of regional players.² Finally, a few years ago, after the Kaliningrad Oblast found itself surrounded by NATO and the EU, related tension was attributed to the practical and technical decisions concerning Russian passengers, goods and military transit to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast.³

Thus, the Kaliningrad Oblast did not become the factor which would block the development of Euro-Atlantic institutions, nor did it cause a military conflict as was sometimes forecasted, and eventually did not turn into a “black hole” in the so-called soft security context, or a site of socioeconomic destabilisation in the Baltic Sea region, which was also widely discussed and written about. In other words, it could be stated that

¹ Lopata R. Naujausios kaliningradistikos apžvalga // Politologija. – 2002. – No. 1. – P. 96 – 104.

² Joenniemi P., Dewar S., Fairlie L.D. The Kaliningrad Puzzle. – Karlskrona: The Åland Islands Peace Institute, 2000. – P. 3 - 4, 26.

³ Daniliauskas J., Stanytė-Toločkienė I. Derybos dėl Kaliningrado tranzito // Maniokas K., Vilpišauskas R., Žeruolis D. Lietuvos kelias į Europos Sąjungą. – Vilnius, 2004. – P. 309 – 349.

the Kaliningrad wheel is moving forward encouraging thoughts of progress after each cycle.

On the other hand, the optimistic scenario which required unconventional solutions to the situation in place and outlined the principles of free trade, wide autonomy and clear independence in the actions of the Oblast did not come true either. Discussions as to whether the overlapping process of the West and the East structures seen in this part of the Baltic Sea region has essentially neutralised the “potential encoded threat” in the Oblast are still hot. In fact, this demonstrates that the Kaliningrad topic remains especially sensitive. Clear evidence thereof could be seen in mid-summer 2005 when Russia organised a pompous celebration of the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad the first three days of July.

A missed opportunity and further complications of the Kaliningrad puzzle are just a few evaluations of the Kaliningrad Anniversary expressed by foreign political observers.⁴

“Whenever Russia is on some bigger booze, Lithuania faces political upheaval and the EU holds another sycophancy race who will ingratiate Putin more.”⁵ This sentence belongs to colleague Rimvydas Valatka. It is undoubtedly sarcastic but not deprived of felicity in characterising the peripeteia of the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad as they have been perceived in Lithuania.

⁴ Dewar S. Lost Opportunity // <http://kaliningradexpert.org./node/1578>

⁵ Valatka R. Kremliai – šventės, ES – pagirios // Lietuvos Rytas. – 4 July 2005 – No. 153.

One cannot be but charmed by those political observers who manage to describe processes tormented by political scientists in long articles or even monographs in just one sentence. No doubt, political scientists would go into broad explanations of the situation. Here colleagues, journalists appeal to the disgraceful step of Minister of Agriculture of Lithuania Kazimiera Prunskienė – her visit to Kaliningrad despite the fact that her counterpart from Russia did not invite the president of our country to the celebration and objections of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and political tension caused thereby in the country. The same could be said about toasts pronounced by German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and French President Jacques Chirac together with Vladimir Putin to the non-existent city of Immanuel Kant.

Certainly, political scientists would not miss an opportunity to add something. For example, graduate student of the Institute of International Relations and Political Sciences of Vilnius University Inga Stanytė-Toločkienė in popular fashion, focusing on the meeting of the heads of Russia, Germany and France in Svetlogorsk (Rauschen) wrote: "...only the German chancellor and the French president were invited to attend the celebration. Heads of the neighbouring countries did not receive such an invitation. Vilnius started talking about the Moscow-Berlin axis. Warsaw did not hide its disappointment with Germany and Russia either. The acceptance of Putin's invitation made the countries of the Baltic Region play the role of supernumeraries in the relations of Russia and the EU /.../ The tendency to talk and 'solve problems' with the largest countries is perfectly in line with Russian diplomatic traditions. It suffices to remember

that at the end of 2000 the representatives of Moscow spoke about the desire to limit the activeness of foreign (neighbouring) countries towards Kaliningrad until Russia finalised its negotiations with the EU regarding transit to the Oblast. At the same time, Russia had active dialogue with some EU Member States. The Kremlin managed to win discounts from the EU. During the last month the voices speaking about the necessity to create a multi-speed Europe with the nucleus comprising closely cooperating old Member States have been prominent in the EU Member States. Thus the choice of partners in whose company the Russian President was willing to celebrate the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad seems especially logical.”⁶

However even Inga Stanytė-Toločkienė studying the Kaliningrad problems for five years did not see quite clearly whether namely such an interpretation of the summit of the three could help in trying to answer several more questions. The author formulated them as follows in her popularising article:

“Festivities will last for the entire weekend. There are many of them: nine international festivals, three exhibitions, nearly two dozen concerts, ceremonial attribution of Kant’s name to Kaliningrad University, a spectacular procession and even a bikers’ show. By the abundance and effectiveness of events these festivities are not expected to equal the 300th Anniversary of Saint Petersburg celebrated in 2003. However, why is such

⁶ Stanytė-Toločkienė I. Pavojaus signalai per jubiliejų // Lietuvos Rytas. Rytai – Vakarai. – 2 July 2005 – No. 152.

significance given to the anniversary of a city which for a long time was the capital of Eastern Prussia?

“It would seem that anniversary festivities and the simultaneously held meeting of the State Council to discuss the prospects of reforms in the Kaliningrad Oblast witness positive changes. Maybe this could be the acknowledgement of miscellaneous historical experience? Or a striving to take real steps modernising the Oblast and integrating it into the European processes? The official concept of the anniversary celebrations seems to be in line with such an assumption. Slogans of the celebration days: “Kaliningrad – One City, One History”, “Russian City in the Heart of Europe”, “Kaliningrad is Where Russia and Europe Meet” – demonstrate the acknowledgement of historical experience and at the same time emphasise the importance of partnership with Europe.”⁷

It is worth pointing out that quite some time before the anniversary celebrations, when some news started spreading about considerations concerning this issue in Kaliningrad and Moscow, many analysts posed similar questions.⁸ They all relied on the cornerstone – *What are the real intentions of the organisers of the celebration of the 750th Anniversary of Königsberg/Kaliningrad?*

Let us try to explain.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ Karabeshkin L., Wellman Ch. The Russian Domestic Debate on Kaliningrad: Integrity, Identity and Economy // Kieler Schriften zur Friedenswissenschaft. Kiel Peace Research Series. – Münster, 2004. – Band No. 11. – P. 29 – 34.

At least several options exist. For example, the so-called discourse analysis. How to use it has recently been shown by Pertti Joenniemi and Vyacheslav Morozov studying the 300th Anniversary celebrations in Saint Petersburg in 2003 as a mnemonic battle.⁹ Admitting that debates on the issue raised many fundamental problems, the authors exclusively focused on interpretations of historical heritage: whether they promote nostalgic feelings for the “good old” imperial times, favour the modern urban conceptualisation, i.e. political, cultural and territorial demarcation, or vice versa, they reveal post-modernist spirit encouraging one to open to the changing external environment characterised by deterritoriality, localisation, regionalisation and Europeanisation? In other words, in analysing the discourse of the Petersburg celebrations the researchers did not conceal their attempts to do a test whether and how Saint Petersburg (Russia, in fact) is ready to use historical heritage to project their relations with Europe. This way, for example, it would be possible to provide a comprehensive analysis of the official concept of the Kaliningrad anniversary celebrations.¹⁰

Incidentally, Joenniemi together with Christopher S. Browning applied the same analytical scheme of competing modern and post-modern discourses to the Kaliningrad Oblast.¹¹ They were interested in the problem raised by

⁹ Joenniemi P., Morozov V. The Politics of Remembering: Saint Petersburg's 300th Anniversary // *Journal of Baltic Studies*. – Winter 2003. – Vol. XXXIV. – No. 4. – P. 375 – 396.

¹⁰ Kontseptsija prazdnovanija 750-letija osnovanija Kaliningrada. – Mezhhregionalny Press-Tsentr, - 2005.

¹¹ Browning Ch. S., Joenniemi P. The Identity of Kaliningrad: Russian, European or a Third Space // Tassinari F. (ed.). *The Baltic Sea Region in the European*

Noel Parker of how marginal provinces located in the outskirts of different political centres (including structural overlapping areas) using namely their territorial peripherality can benefit acquiring resources and influence. Identifying differences between modern and post-modern approaches to the periphery, Parker accentuated four criteria: self-identification of the periphery, border conceptualisation, relations with the centre/-s, possibilities for representation and influence.¹² In the modern (closed) discourse the marginal province is perceived as an integral subject of the state. Its borders are fixed and impermeable (“billiard ball” countries). The periphery is ruled by one centre assessing it as the final limit of the state territorial sovereignty. It finally becomes a defence object of the state using the threat factor to expand its influence. At the same time, in the post-modern (open) discourse the periphery is treated as an interstate link with flexible borders open for revision; it is connected with one or more centres and is able to freely relax from previous constraints.

Relying on the ways of treating modern and post-modern peripheries defined by Parker and supporting his thought about the influence of one or another discourse on the periphery by properly selecting the strategy, Joenniemi and Browning clarified how those ways corresponded to the three factors: regional subjectivity (identity, maturity of the elite), international and regional structure and the discourse role of this

Union: Reflections on Identity, Soft-Security and Marginality. – Gdańsk, Berlin, - 2003. – P. 58 – 99; Browning Ch. S., Joenniemi P. Contending Discourse of Marginality: The Case of Kaliningrad // Geopolitics. 2004. – Vol. 9. – No. 3. – P. 699 – 730.

¹² Browning Ch. S., Joenniemi P. – Contending Discourse of Marginality. – Op. cit. – P. 703 – 705

environment, and historical narrative resources of the periphery. They specifically analysed the paradigms of Kaliningrad as a military outpost and the fourth Baltic republic referred to as modern ones and the post-modern paradigm of Kaliningrad as a pilot experimental region. Some insights revealing certain aspects of the relations between Moscow and Kaliningrad (for example, the discourse of Kaliningrad as a military outpost spread by the motherland in the early 90's was useful for and supported by the Oblast as it guaranteed resources and certain economic security and stability) were interesting.¹³ True, the final conclusion of the authors was characterised by flexibility. It announced that the identity of the population of the isolated region as well as the dynamics of relations between the motherland and the province were of especial importance for the manifestation of influence of the Oblast but an answer to the question of which paradigms would be more favourable for the marginal periphery to turn into a region with more autonomy and potential power depended on specific circumstances.

It would be difficult to argue such conclusions. Especially because there are other studies confirming the same. True, these works based on neorealist and geopolitical perspectives focus on namely the relations

¹³ True, the authors interpreting the situation, apart from anything else, also appealed to the absence of self-identity among the Kaliningrad population (Ibidem. – P. 716). However they could not explain why at that time 20% of the population of the Oblast supported the independence of the Oblast, and 50% supported the idea of the Oblast having more rights. See Savkinas A. Santykiai tarp Kaliningrado srities ir jos kaimynų: esama padėtis ir jos vystymosi perspektyvos // Lietuva ir jos kaimynai. – Vilnius, 1997. – P. 113-118; Gricius A. Kaliningrado srities raidos perspektyvos ir saugumo aspektai Baltijos regione // Ibidem. – P. 121 – -122.

between Moscow and Kaliningrad.¹⁴ Their significance for the development of the Oblast is not only acknowledged but attempts are made to specify the mechanism of such dynamics applying the principles of research into exclaves introduced by Honore Catudal.

Comparative studies of the triangle – the metropolis (“motherland”) – the territorial political anomaly (exclaves, enclaves) – the neighbouring state (-s) – carried out by Catudal prove that motherlands are mostly concerned with the task of strategic capacity to govern territorial fragments.¹⁵ It requires ensuring security, proper socioeconomic development and communication with separated regions as well as targeted efforts in shaping the loyalty of the population of the territorial anomaly to the centre. Therefore, motherlands looking for ways to neutralise threats to the preservation of sovereignty usually strive to establish in territorial anomalies administration which would not violate the principles of political territorial control prevailing in the state and spare no effort in ensuring effective communication therewith (“ignoring the host state”). The role of the host state is reflected in the response to the actions of the motherland undertaken with a view to ensuring communication with the exclave/enclave. And the latter, especially in the cases where the problems

¹⁴ Holtom P. Kaliningrad in 2001: From Periphery to Pilot Region // Russian Participation in Baltic Sea Region-Building: A Case Study of Kaliningrad. - Gdańsk, Berlin, - 2002. – P. 36 – 67; Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas: Rusijos Federacijos Kaliningrado (Karaliaučiaus) srities atvejis // Lietuvos Metinė Strateginė Apžvalga. – Vilnius, 2004. – P. 177 – 192 (also in English); Lopata R. Kaliningrad, otage géopolitique de la Russie. Un point de vue lituanien // Le Courrier des pays de l'Est // Paris. – Mars – Avril 2005. – No. 1048. – P. 30 – 39.

¹⁵ Catudal H. The Exclave Problem of Western Europe. – Alabama, 1979. – P. 60 – 66.

of relations between it and the motherland reach the level of so-called “high” politics, experiences “the exclave/enclave syndrome” – if such territorial formations are treated as specific or special but the specific needs of their population are not realised through specific measures, such a formation finally “loses” the desire to have a special status. In other words, the above triangle gives the key role namely to the motherland, its strategy and tactics with respect to the separated territory.

An example of the aforesaid attempts to detail those principles when studying the relations between Moscow and Kaliningrad would be the concept of a geopolitical hostage presumably revealing the essence of the Kaliningrad dossier.¹⁶ What is it?

It is a tangle of expressions of the status of relations of the motherland (the Russian Federation) with its geopolitically separated territorial fragment (the Kaliningrad Oblast) depending on internal and international factors. For over fifteen years combinations of internal and external factors have determined their diversity this way or another making Russia face the tasks of retaining, effectively governing and controlling the territorial fragment, i.e. preserving sovereignty and assuring legitimacy. While the academic community is obstinately looking for visions of the future of the Oblast, Moscow is solving somewhat more pragmatic issues. The motherland faces certain complications provoked by the dilemma between the role which, in Moscow’s opinion, legitimately (*po pravu*) belongs to it

¹⁶ Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas. – Op. cit. – P. 181; Lopata R. Lopatologija: apie politinį popšą. – Vilnius, 2005. – P. 198.

and the role which it is let to play by the external environment. In other words, Russia is forced to correct its chances to implement one or another strategy of relations with the fragment adjusting it to the changing situation both in and around the Oblast. Failure to solve this dilemma would create a real opportunity for the Oblast to break away from Moscow, without negating the motherland defragmentation scenario.

Namely because of that Moscow tried to turn this Oblast into a geopolitical hostage – a territory received in the process of cession as the spoils of war which is to be not only retained (the internal aspect) but is also to make other countries and international institutions refrain from any direct or indirect act of liberation of the hostage (the external aspect). As regards the specific features of Kaliningrad (the Potsdam Tail, geopolitical location, socioeconomic factors), namely the internal aspect officially covered with the external one may be of greater importance for Moscow. Formally, the motherland does not object to and even promotes interpretations of the province as a specific region. However in practice it does not allow such uniqueness to be manifested. This is a way to invoke and support a peculiar Stockholm Syndrome* in the Oblast – the

* The first one to use the Stockholm Syndrome concept in 1978 was US psychologist F. Ochbergh who studied the hostage drama of 1973 at the Stockholm Sveriges Kreditbank. The American used it to define a psychological phenomenon when hostages start feeling sympathy for their captors and feel like ingratiating them, fulfilling their wishes, cooperating, forgiving and justifying their behaviour and start feeling antipathy to their rescuers. As for political manifestations of the Stockholm Syndrome, some appeal to the Western Berlin of the end of the eighth decade and the beginning of the ninth decade of the 20th century where the population, especially the young generation became ambivalent to the unification of Germany and the issues of relations between the GDR and Western Berlin due to continuous tension. See - Dean J. The Future of Berlin //

Kaliningrad population must themselves reconcile with the status of an ordinary region of Russia, i.e. all decisions regarding the expression of the Oblast will be taken by Moscow and the Oblast will not be allowed to express itself as a subject.

We targeted our study of Kaliningrad's 750th Anniversary to check this version. True, those who more or less attentively followed the anniversary case would probably agree with the idea that the proposed ways of analysis do not exclude but rather complement each other. Certainly, the Russian rhetoric referred to as the European one was prominent in the case. It demonstrated the Russian approach to the historical heritage of the Kaliningrad Oblast. However it also highlighted the practical relation of the Russian foreign policy to Eurocontinentalism, Central Europe and the placement of the Kaliningrad factor therein. The outlines of the regional policy of the motherland framing relations with the specific subject of the Russian Federation were also visible. To make a long story short, we saw essentially all aspects attributable to the Kaliningrad dossier.

We divided them into three chapters. The headings of the chapters correspond to the three ideologisms attributed to the three days of celebrations by the drafters of the Kaliningrad anniversary concept. It remained only to explain the relation of those ideologisms with the reality, i.e. the processes really in place in and around the Oblast. The analysis has revealed that Moscow is preparing for serious corrections in its policy

Moreta E. (ed.) *Germany between East and West*. – Royal Institute of International Affairs: Cambridge University Press, 1989. - P. 172.

towards this region. The same is shown by a decision maturing in the celebration peripeteia to change the political management of the Kaliningrad Oblast. Therefore the study is naturally crowned by the chapter devoted to discussion of the first steps of the new Governor of the Oblast.

I. DAY ONE – CITY.
KALININGRAD: ONE CITY, ONE HISTORY

It might sound somewhat unexpected but the anniversary celebrations could have been omitted. Not because of the political dramas which were present in abundance as we will see. It is equally difficult to call it a coincidence. It is rather an event characterised, quite ironically, by the journalists of the *Izvestiya* as the initiation of a fight between the Russian and the European origins at the events of the city festival.¹ On the eve of the celebrations, or rather during the night, the crew of the yacht Northern Crown decided to take a voyage along the Pregel River. As the yacht was dangerously manoeuvring, the militia patrol tried to stop it. The yacht did not obey. Boarding had to be undertaken. It turned out that the crew members were totally drunk and the yacht had damaged high-voltage cables. It threatened not only the functioning of transport but also the entire city being without electricity. A European readiness for emergencies and the heroism of the electricians were what saved the day. The city, journalists concluded, was prepared for the celebration in advance. The ritual events of 1 July 2005 confirmed that.

In the morning of the first day of the Anniversary Governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast Vladimir Yegorov, still looking over the pre-drafted texts of speeches, started receiving guests. First, foreign delegations representing eleven Member States and the European Commission followed by delegations of cities and regions of Russia.

Sticking to his usual style, abundant in statistics, the governor familiarised

¹ Sokolov-Mitrich D., Stulov I. Tевтонские рыцари с российскими флагми. Город Калининград отметил 750 лет города Кенигсберга // *Izvestija*. – 2005 07 04.

the foreigners with the economic achievements. The volumes of supply to Russia of the products manufactured in 2004 grew to 1.85 billion US dollars while the foreign investment package in the Oblast reached 1.1 billion dollars. At the end of the speech he expressed hope that the Anniversary would give new momentum to the development of joint manufacturing.

At the same time, when addressing compatriots, Mr. Yegorov especially stressed the role of mutual cooperation within the country. Without it, the governor explained, it would be impossible to implement the president's encouragement to turn the Oblast into a territory of constructive connection between Russia and the European Union. Later, somewhat unexpectedly for the casual observer, he added a statement about the necessity in this context to strengthen the Orthodox traditions in the region as a component of national self-sufficiency (Russian – *samodostatochnost*).

Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill II could not escape a response speech and the chance to elaborate on Yegorov's idea. Having thanked the governor for the revival of the Russian spirit in the Oblast, he stated, "Just the circumstance that Russian Kaliningrad is in the centre of Europe gives especial significance both to the city and the Anniversary. The celebrations show that we have finished fighting with history, which witnesses our power."²

² Kaliningrad prinimaet gostej jubilejnykh torzhestv // Rosbalt. – 1 July 2005.

По состоянию на 30.06.05

ПРОГРАММА
участия официальных гостей,
приглашенных на 750-летие основания Калининграда,
в юбилейных мероприятиях

1 ИЮЛЯ – ПЯТНИЦА

ОДИН ГОРОД – ОДНА ИСТОРИЯ

9.30 – 10.40	1. Официальная (протокольная) встреча губернатора области с гостями юбилейных мероприятий, приглашенных администрацией области.	
11.00 – 11.30	2. Участие официальных гостей в возложении венков и цветов к мемориальному комплексу «1200 воинам-гвардейцам».	
12.00 – 13.30	3. Участие официальных гостей в театрализованном прологе Юбилея – открытию праздника (открытие Королевских ворот после реставрации).	
13.45 – 14.45	4. Обед	Места обеда – рестораны гостиниц: «Калининград» (для российских гостей); «Москва» (для иностранных гостей);
15.00 – 17.00	5. «Поднять паруса!» - Большой водный праздник в акватории реки Преголи. 6. Прогулка по острову Канта с посещением Кафедрального Собора	
17.00 – 18.30	7. Обзорная экскурсия по городу с посещением исторических и культурных памятников, праздничных мероприятий, в т.ч. <u>возможно</u> участие гостей в открытии скверов городов-побратимов. • 17.00 – 18.00 – открытие сквера Российско-Литовской дружбы • 18.00 – 19.00 - открытие сквера дружбы с г. Санкт-Петербургом	Пересечение улиц Каштановой и Адмиральной • ул. Дм. Донского, 1
19.00 – 20.30	8. Спектакль «Иоланта» в постановке Государственного Академического Большого Театра России	В помещении областного драматического театра.
21.00 – 23.00	9. Официальный прием гостей юбилейных мероприятий от имени губернатора области и мэра г. Калининграда.	В помещении Калининградской областной филармонии Ул. Б.Хмельницкого, 61а
23.00 – 24.00	10. Убытие к местам проживания в гостиницах	

3. Programme of the first day of the Kaliningrad Anniversary. 1 July 2005

Ritual speeches were closed by the Head of the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography Mikhail Shvydkoy. In his speech he expressed

thoughts about the merits of the Oblast in introducing Europe to the culture ring of Russia, the evaporation of the spirit of impermanence and the feeling that the region had become an important part of Russia.

Ideology of Anniversary: Markers

Ritual speeches, even if boring, always draw attention. Accents often become those markers which allow checking, for example, whether the event organisers and participants adequately comprehend objectives and whether they are led by the same keynotes. In this regard formalists had to stay calm. Speakers did not deviate from the official motto of the celebration ideology, which declared Kaliningrad to be an integral part of the Russian Federation, an economic and cultural gateway from Europe to Russia.³

Not so strict formalists would rather be prick-eared and try to identify codes hidden in accents. Naturally, Umberto Eco would not have the time to explain to which kind of communication – referential function or emotive function – the speakers' speeches were to be attributed. However the aforementioned specialists in discourse analysis would really be interested in analysing the relation between the most prominent modern and post-modern types of language and text.

The starting point attributable to the former one is obvious. This is a definition of the state as a political formation through difference (from

³ Kontseptsija prazdnovanija. – Op. cit. – S. 3.

anything else) rather than similarity. In this case this difference is marked by the borders of the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation between them (Europe; the circumstance that the relation therewith was also expressed in US dollars is worth attention but is not principal) and us (Russia). However the marks of openness – link and gateway – characteristic of the other one also speak for themselves. It must be pointed out that they are manifested especially radically because in fact Europe is invited to be more open to the relationship. Europe is encouraged to enter Russia through the gateway of Kaliningrad located in its very centre. And taking into account another statement in the official concept that the Anniversary must become an effective prerequisite for the creation of a favourable background for the development of Russian-European integration⁴, not only the ideologisms of the three days (city – motherland – Europe) would be elegantly embedded into the post-modern context but Metropolitan Kirill II who voiced the end of the battle with history would also become a herald of post-modernism.

I do not doubt that Joenniemi and his associates would also question the possibility of such an interpretation. Although Kirill II is quite a rare guest in the Kaliningrad Oblast, his aureole is well known to those interested in the Kaliningrad theme. Kirill II is not Don Quixote, who is the first romantic for romantics, the first realist – for realists, the first modernist – for modernists and the first post-modernist – for post-modernists. In the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church of Moscow and in all of Russia Kirill II occupies the post of not only Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad

⁴ Ibidem.

but also the influential post of the Head of the Foreign Affairs Department. The bishop is close to Alexy II, a committed supporter of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the “Eurasian Union” who dares express sharp criticism of the West and democratic values and passionately advocates for collectivism, panslavism and Russian nationalism.⁵ This would rather be a grave pretext not for post-modern interpretation but for parallels in history leading to the modern Russia of the 1st half of the 19th century. At that time Europe was also physically approaching Russia and Minister of Education Count Sergey Uvarov formulated the key principles of the official nationhood: Orthodoxy, nationhood and autocracy.

Periods differ. The beginning of the 21st century is not the 19th century but the topic – the identity of Russia – remains the same. Factors characterising it are also similar. In general, one should not be too surprised with such a situation, explains Director of the Strategic Research Centre in Moscow Andrey Piontkovsky. “Whenever Europe approaches Russia, it normally faces crises accompanied by private arguments of the Russians regarding the true values of the society and geographical, historical and metaphysical self-identity.” This regularity is supported by a certain reciprocating mechanism of which an especially accurate analysis, according to a Russian political scientist, was given by Alexander Blok in his poem *The Scythians*: “Pridite k nam! Ot uzhasov voyny / Pridite v mirnye obyatiya.../ A esli net – nam nechego teper teryat / I nam

⁵ Bugajski J. *Cold Peace. Russia’s New Imperialism.* – Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 2004. – P. 41, 43.

dostupno verolomstvo.../ My shiroko po debriam i lesam / Pered Evropoyu prigozhhey / Rasstupimsya! My oberniomsia k vam / Svoeyeu aziatskoy rozhey!”⁶

On 28 January 2004, at the meeting of the public committee Russia in the United Europe formed at the initiative of the (Right Wing) Members of Russia’s National Duma dedicated to the relations of Russia and Europe and the role of the Kaliningrad Oblast therein, Piontkovsky did not limit himself to simply quoting Blok. “We are consumed with the desire to adopt all benefits of the European material civilisation,” he explained. “However we ignore the fundamental roots of the values of this civilisation which allow them to spread /.../ Post-Communist Russia is no exception because attempts are made to direct it towards collegiality, Russianhood and national security reminding of the German *Ordnung* and guiding stars which are to be perceived as historical, immovable values.”⁷

The episode is worth attention. The quality of the European standard of living and especially the task of decreasing the socioeconomic underdevelopment of the Kaliningrad Oblast as compared to its neighbours using EU enlargement was discussed by the Committee

⁶ Piontkovsky A. Russkaya „elita“ na rendez-vous istoriji // Evropa. – Warszawa. – 2001. – T.1. – No. 1. – S. 105 – 106, 111. “Come to us! Leave the horrors of war,/ And come to our peaceful embrace!.. / But if not – we have nothing to lose, / And we are not above treachery!.. / Throughout the woods and thickets / In front of pretty Europe / We will spread out! We’ll turn to you / With our Asian muzzles!” See Blok A. Lakštingalų sodas. Eilėraščiai. Poemos. Lyrinės dramos. – Vilnius, 1980. – P. 233 (translated from Russian by Algimantas Baltakis).

⁷ Russia in the United Europe Committee. Sovremennoye sostoyanie otnosheniy ES – Rossiya. Diskussii. – Moscow, 2004. – S. 38 – 39.

members. They even mentioned the scenario of Kaliningradian separatism which, true, was based on pragmatic economic grounds in the case of failure to fulfil such a task.⁸ No one else joined the discussions on identity, its elements or similar existential values. An explanation would be simple. As the speech by Piontkovsky about traditional Russian values was abundant in criticism of Putin to which even the chairman of the meeting Vladimir Ryzhkov, who did not conceal his more liberal views, reacted encouraging the speaker to shorten his speech, the participants of the discussion just tried not to burden the topic. Issues relating not to points of contact for which the committee gathered, but to possible contrapositions to Europe were suppressed by applying procedures. However such a deliberate taboo on the theme of Russia's spiritual and political identity just emphasised the problem.



4. First meeting of the Committee "Russia in the United Europe", Vilnius, 23-24 October 2004. Second from the left: V. Ryzhkov. Photo by Judita Grigelytė, "Veidas".

⁸ Ibidem. – S. 43 – 46.

Post-Communist Russia, at least the official Moscow, takes pains to find a way out of the situation, which researchers refer to as a painful transformation and post-imperial identity crisis. As the processes were discussed in comprehensive analyses by Piontkovsky and other researchers⁹, we know quite well that following the collapse of the USSR the search for self-identification in Russia was accompanied not only by natural openness for history. They were also directed by the attempts of the authorities looking for their global mission for fifteen years to open the sources of Russian patriotism and stages in history which would raise pride: Peter the First, the national emblem and the flag of tsar Russia, Lenin's mummy in Red Square, the Stalin anthem and Victory Day – 9 May. There were few doubting that political levers were used deliberately to fill the vacuum of identity by fostering the cult of power and the culture of fear. It is probably not worth initiating broad comments on the relation of Orthodoxy with Russian spirit or Russian statehood. After what has been said about Alexy II, we would just remind you of the conclusion dominating in Western historical and political literature that the Russian Orthodox Church conventionally, before, during and after the Soviet interlude served as a political tool of Moscow.

The problem would be the following – so what are the results of such efforts? Even analysts close to the president's administration admit that Russians still rejoice at 12 June as a day off and not as a day of freedom

⁹ Plenty of works are devoted to various aspects of transformation of the post-Soviet Russia including the identity crisis. See one of the latest quite comprehensive lists of references: Bugaysky J. - *Op. cit.* – P. 1 – 28.

and statehood.¹⁰ Critics, of course, are more radical. For instance, former member of the committee Russia in the United Europe Mikhail Khodorkovsky sharing his thoughts from the Matrosskaya Tishina isolation ward and now from Krasnokamensk prison in Chita Oblast refers to the results as worth nothing because the Kremlin has still not managed to answer the principal questions: “Why when it was bad in the USSR, we were respected or at least feared in the world and now we are despised as half-witted and boldfaced beggars? We were thrown out of the old Zaporozhets and promised a Mercedes instead but then just left standing by the roadside... Where are we?”¹¹

Straightforward analogies are dangerous. But if the motherland faces such difficulties, what about the province, especially one such as the Kaliningrad Oblast, marked by complex historical and geopolitical specificity?

Mnemonics and Identity

Self-identification of the Kaliningrad Oblast and its population is one of the most popular directions for research. Such studies are often dominated by the idea that the development of the Kaliningrad Oblast after 1945 is nothing but a reflection of the fight of people with their region, the fight for identity. For example, a longstanding employee of the North-East Culture Institute in Luneberg, Germany, Eckhard Matthes suggests dividing this fight together with the development of regional identity into

¹⁰ Fartyshev V. Posledny shans Putina. Sudba Rossii v XX veke. – Moscow, 2004. – S. 293 – 294.

¹¹ Putinui teks trauktis // Lietuvos Žinios. – 2 August 2005 – No. 177.

six successive stages taking into account the prevailing relation to national history and heritage: pioneer times and mythology (1945-1955), appropriation of the new motherland (1955-1975), historical implants and new symbols (1965-1980), pragmatic normality and demythologisation of foreignness (1975-1985), Perestroika and its heritage (1985-1993), *Qua vadis exclave?* (1991-present).¹² Maybe such attempts are too schematic and the idea about the crucial influence of the link with history on the identity of the Kaliningrad population is too categorical, namely the fact that the issues of the Königsberg heritage and history absorption (*osvoeniye*) still heat up the political atmosphere in the Oblast and have become one of the most important factors when deciding when and how to celebrate the Anniversary is undoubted.

It is known that the Potsdam Conference of 17 July to 2 August 1945, “in apprehension of the final solution to the territorial issues of the peace treaty”, agreed to transfer the city of Königsberg, which belonged to Germany, and a northern part of East Prussia to the Soviet Union.¹³ After the latter officially annexed the territory on 17 October 1945 and renamed it to replace the name Königsberg Region in the composition of the RSFSR with the name Kaliningrad Oblast, the latter had no history in the Russian language at all for decades, except for the history of German crimes or stories about the geography, flora and fauna of the region which replaced the pre-Soviet period of the region at schools.

¹² Matthes E. Regioninė Kaliningrado srities gyventojų sąmonė // Politologija. – Vilnius, 2002. – Nr. 3 (27). – P. 18 – 30.

¹³The Berlin (Potsdam) Conference, July 17 – August 2, 1945 // <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/decade/decade17.htm>

During Soviet times speaking about historical heritage was politically tricky. It was primarily due to the fact that the Kremlin established a gigantic military base in the region for performing specific geopolitical and security-related functions – to isolate the occupied Baltic States from the West, to ensure the security of satellite states in Central Europe, to threaten the entire Baltic Sea region and to deter the imperialistic West.¹ Since 1956, when the command post of the Soviet Baltic military sea Navy was moved from Leningrad to Baltiysk (Pillau), about 100,000 soldiers have been deployed in the Kaliningrad Oblast together with the 11th Guard Army.



5. O Maxomov. “Ljudi ne vsio znajut” (“People don’t know everything”). Early 70’s, Kaliningrad (Archives of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University)

¹ Incidentally, formally the martial law with Germany was revoked by the Soviet Union only in the context of the so-called peace initiatives – on 25 January 1955. See *Mezhdunarodnoje pravo*. – Moscow, 1987. – S. 501.

Insights into the experiments of Moscow establishing an outpost of the Soviet (Russian) civilisation in the Oblast, an ideal Soviet city, are quite accurate. However they should not be understood word for word or overestimated.² Here civic life (“grazhdanka”) was just a formality. And could it be anything else in an isolated area surrounded by barbed wire, full of the military and military equipment, which also served as a sort of a heartland for the military base of the Baltic Navy where everything and everyone was strictly and automatically obedient to Moscow, subordinated by the law-enforcement structures and the party line. In other words, the principal tool of the Sovietisation was the total militarisation of the region tying “the westernmost outpost” exclusively to Moscow.

After the Second World War settlers from the Soviet Union were transported or came to replace killed or deported locals. They, mainly Russian speakers from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, did not really need any history. Newcomers, often temporary, not to mention the impressive military staff and families of soldiers usually staying in the Oblast for three to seven years³ were found it somewhat easier to view their destiny as

² Alternativity during Stalin times was used for other purposes. Quite a good example of Stalin “pluralism” would be the considerations of the Kremlin in 1944-1946 to annex the Königsberg/Kaliningrad Oblast to Soviet Lithuania. For Moscow debates constituted a good basis for doing away with the so-called LCP “nationalists.” In this case those were the members of the LCP CC – the Jews who supported the establishment of another Jewish autonomous area in Königsberg. Read more: Levin D. Another Birobidzhan in Eastern Prussia // Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem). – 2003. - Summer 1 (50). – P. 227 – 228.

³ It is still argued what per cent (35 to 50) of the Oblast population was directly related to military industrial facilities (see Wellmann Ch. Kaliningrad’s Military Economy // Joenniemi P., Prawitz J. (eds.). Kaliningrad: The European Amber

compensation, as a trophy for the hardships of war than to identify themselves with Kaliningrad or think that it had history. It is not accidental that it is stated that any other oblast was not so “anational”⁴ and thus easily Sovietised by destroying the previous relicts of civilisation by various means. For both civilians and the military history of the region turned at best into a military Soviet epos, memories and stories about deeds of the Soviet soldiers.



6. O. Maximov. “Bez vremennyje” (“Timeless”) Kaliningrad, 1962 (Archives of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University)

Region. – Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998. – P. 89. However even given specifically established figures, it is hardly possible to doubt the characteristic of the Oblast as a military region strictly subordinate to and governed by Moscow. Particularly without a category of direct links we could easily find examples which allow speaking about indirect relations as well.

⁴ Gerner K. Recovered Territory: Königsberg/Kaliningrad as Virtual History // Conference speech “Contemporary Kaliningrad: a Windows to Europe?”. – Stockholm, 27 February 2004. – P. 3 – 4; Misiūnas R. – Op. cit. – P. 394.

True, there were exceptions. Someone still remembered is Viktor Khodakovsky, the leading archaeologist of Kaliningrad in the 60's who proposed not to build a grandiose Soviet palace instead of the Königsberg King's Palace to be demolished, but to reconstruct it. Such was the response of the then First Secretary of the Oblast Committee of the Communist Party Nikolay Konovalov to such a plan: "To reconstruct a fascist castle, the heart of the Prussian reactionaries? And this is the demand of the Soviet people, the Communists, cultured people? It is simply idiotic. This is an argument for the revanchists of Western Germany... The palace used to be the residence of the Prussian kings. From here they suppressed people. We will destroy this residence and build a new palace. Nothing will remain of the German atmosphere and spirit."⁵



7. O. Maximov. *No title. Kaliningrad, 1970* (Archives of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University)

⁵ Lachauer U. *Die Brücke von Tilsit. Begegnungen mit Preussens Osten und Russlands Western.* – Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1994. – P. 138.

Today looking at the gradually disappearing and abandoned Soviet Palace we can just smile at the efforts to delete the past and create an ideal Soviet city. Especially when we know that the local and Oblast authorities during the entire Soviet period tended to settle down in the German buildings and even paid tribute to the German spirit by constructing a sculpture of Carl Marx in Kaliningrad next to that of Vladimir Lenin. It seems like a paradox but namely those men became the most influential paracletes supporting at least one relict integral to Königsberg – Immanuel Kant, a representative of German classical philosophy, “one of the sources of Marxism.” So the Soviet ideologists had to take care of not only Kant’s grave in the centre of the city and to preserve the old Königsberg Cathedral nearby, but also not to object to the opening of the philosopher’s memorial museum in the State University in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of his birthday.⁶ However at that time only the 80’s saw the formation of a small group of intellectuals who entitled themselves the Prussian Club and secretly collected materials about the heritage of Eastern Prussia.⁷

The collapse of the USSR provoked a boom of attempts in the Oblast to “discover” Königsberg “anew.” True, it was essentially stimulated by pragmatic economic considerations and hopes of attracting the sight of nostalgic German tourists flooding to Kaliningrad to old Prussian and German names of stores, products or publications. The latter were not

⁶ Gulyga A. Kantas. – Vilnius: Vyturys, 1989. – P. 276; Jokubaitis A. Kantas ir Kaliningrado problema // Politologija. – 2005. – No. 2 (38). – P. 37.

⁷ Sezneva O. Dual History. The Politics of the Past in Kaliningrad, Former Königsberg // Czaplicka J., Blair A. (eds.). Composing Urban History and the Constitution of Civic Identities. – Washington: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2003. – P. 76.

tempted by the Russian “re-Germanisation” pop tending to donate funds to reanimate at least the rest of the remnants of historical cultural heritage. Donations were accepted but no one was in a hurry to carry out such restoration. The reason was trivial – neither the Oblast nor the motherland was ready for the assimilation of the regional history.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Kaliningrad Oblast turned into an exclave separated from the motherland by foreign countries on land. No other region of the Russian Federation had to face such a circumstance causing specific political, economic and psychological tensions. The situation was also complicated by the fact that geopolitical changes provoked the debate not only over the unique nature of the state fragment but also over the status of international recognition thereof to Russia. Therefore it was no surprise that although Stalin’s position regarding the heritage was negated to a great extent, attempts to open the pages of the regional history before 1945 were viewed with much suspicion, treating them as a threat to state integrity.

All encouraging to give the name of Königsberg back to the city at the beginning of the 90’s were immediately labelled as separatists. The Prussian Museum opened in 1992 at the initiative of the Oblast administration was liquidated just two years later. The first works by Russian authors on the history of Eastern Prussia also seemed to speak for themselves accompanied by cautious introductory sentences about the papers having

been written in a “purely scientific” manner, which was why the list of references to sources and literature used exceeded the number of pages.⁸

The heritage “control” was complemented by attempts to emphasise the influence of the Russian factor on the historical development of this territory. Some of them were based on the tradition of the Russian Königsberg origin stressed during Soviet times. Others were stimulated by the fashion of confronting history in the motherland. Kaliningrad started popularising the so-called version of the Rurik dynasty associating this tsar dynasty and the origin of the Russian state with the current territory of the Oblast. Particular attention



8. *Monument to Peter I. Baltijsk*

was given to Peter I and his “great embassy” visit to Königsberg, which was clearly symbolised by the erection of a monument to Peter I in Baltiysk, the command post of the Russian

⁸ Vostochnaya Prussiya s drevneishih vremion do kontsa Vtoroj mirovoj vojnny. – Kaliningrad: Yantarnyj skaz, 1996; Ocherki po istorii Vostochnoy Prussii. – Kaliningrad: Yantarnyj skaz, 2002.

military Baltic Navy, regarded as the main one. Again, the history of the Seven Years War of 1756-1763 was referred to in an attempt to disclose its political content, activities of the then Russian Governors in Königsberg V. Fermer, N. Korf, V. Suvorov, P. Panin and others, as well as possible legal connections of Königsberg's dependence on tsar Russia with the current situation of the Kaliningrad Oblast more widely.⁹

However such a policy towards the past seems to have just complicated the situation. Stereotypes about the new start of the regional history in 1945 were as if questioned but the relation with what was non-Russian in the Oblast was not explained. Namely this circumstance, according to the aforesaid Matthes, with the Oblast opened to the external world, but geographically remote from continental Russia, contributed to the posing of the question "Where are we?" quite often.

It must be pointed out that this circumstance was documented not only by researchers. For instance, journalists from National Geographic who visited Kaliningrad at the turn of the century came to the conclusion that here questions which concerned Immanuel Kant were still relevant: What can I know?, What should I seek?, What can I believe in? As an illustration, they provided answers of Professor Vladimir Glimanov residing in

⁹ Matthes E. – Op. cit. – P.25; Žalys V. Kaliningrado sritis: istorija ir dabartis. Kontseptsija prazdnovaniya 750-letiya osnovaniya Kaliningrada. – Op. cit. – S. 5.

Kaliningrad: “Living in the Oblast, we don’t really know where we live. So we don’t know what to do and we don’t know what to expect either.”¹⁰

Analyst of the post-Soviet area Brian Vitunic, occasionally dropping in Kaliningrad bars, gave even a sharper description of the situation. When some Kremlin official gets on a train from Moscow to Saint Petersburg, they don’t doubt that they’re going to the second largest city of Russia, maybe even the country’s second capital. Interesting, Vitunic asks, Where does a Kremlin official think they’re going when they get on a sealed train from Moscow to Kaliningrad? To the outpost of Cold War times? To the free trade area corresponding to classical textbooks on globalisation? Or a post-Soviet periphery “not really home” because of the complicated history and thus sensitive to secessionist tendencies and foreign annexation plans?¹¹

Even former Estonian President Lennart Meri could not help mocking when specifying the question received after a lecture in the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) in Paris about the status of the Kaliningrad problem. “Are you interested in the Kaliningrad where the famous Soviet philosopher Immanuel Kant lived?”, Meri answered the question with a question.¹²

¹⁰ Vesilind P. J., Chamberlin D. Kaliningrad. Coping with a German past and Russian future // *National Geographic*. – March 1997. – Vol. 191. – Issue 3. – P. 116.

¹¹ Vitunic B. No Easy Answers // *Transitions Online*. – 22 October 2002. – P. 2.

¹² The author’s conversation with Thierry de Montbrial, President and founder of the IFRI, on 17 April 2005 in Wye Plantation, Maryland, USA.

In this context of questions the thoughts of Oleg Kashin, a longstanding reporter of the *Kommersant* in Kaliningrad, who after the Anniversary celebrations changed not only his employers but also his place of residence, would be especially eloquent. He explained that the Oblast had experienced a small intellectual revolution. “For the majority of the intellectual youth, media representatives, public relations specialists and officials of Kaliningrad the Oblast no longer exists as a part of Russia,” the journalist said openly. “Five years ago it was fashionable to speak that we are Russia, we are the Empire, Kaliningrad is a Russian city, and now it is not. Now, when the principal idea of the Anniversary celebrations announced the change of the Kaliningrad orientation vector from the European to the Russian one, it made the locals feel ironic. The Kaliningrad population do not associate themselves with Russia any more. The Oblast has not yet separated only because it is governed by people with Soviet experience. After the generations change in the governance, in five or six years the Oblast will break free from Russia....”¹³

However, for example, Governor of the Oblast Yegorov before the very Anniversary celebrations insistently assured that the Oblast was more patriotic than any other region of the Russian Federation because 94% of the Kaliningrad population held themselves to be citizens of Russia and defenders of the country’s interests at its western borders.¹⁴

¹³Korespondent “Kommersanta” – Kashin: Kaliningradtsy uzhe ne schitajut sebja Rossijej // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k59591.html>

¹⁴ Vladimir Yegorov: Patriotov u nas bolshe, chem v ljubom drugom regione // Nezavisimaya Gazeta. – 2005 06 02.



9. *Orthodox Church of Christ the Saviour. 1 July 2005. Photo by V. Smirnov, columnist of “Kaliningradskaya Pravda”*

Thus separatism is touched upon only by those who know too little about the Oblast. Still one should be cautious in assessing Yegorov’s statements. Within the last several years he repeatedly changed his mind on various topics and we will see that the same is also true about the Anniversary. He finally subtly swallowed where one could get more information about the referenced survey data. So, the survey data announced by the administration witnessed something else. Only 19% of respondents felt the

Russian spirit in the Oblast (*russky dukh*). Twenty-two per cent of respondents didn't feel it but thought that their place of residence was Russia although somewhat different from the real one. Twenty-five per cent were sure that if the territory was not Russian, it was their land, which was why it was Russia.¹⁵ The percentages revealing the unique picture seem to be a good complement to the survey-based statement that the majority of the young generation of the Kaliningrad population (90% of the youth under 28), who as they refer to themselves are from "Konig", have visited Western countries more than once but have never been to the big Russia.¹⁶ Namely this circumstance has repeatedly encouraged the Oblast administration to encourage the Government to draft a special programme for the youth of Kaliningrad to get to know Russia.

It would also be quite tricky to speak about achievements on which the governor was congratulated by Kirill II in the field of religion. We can find an Orthodox chapel in the gothic cathedral of Kaliningrad, at the entrance, next to the Lutheran one. There are but a few functioning Russian churches and even those are accommodated in former Lutheran churches.¹⁷ So no one is too surprised by the fact that newly-weds go not

¹⁵ Misiūnas R. Rootless Russia: Kaliningrad – Status and Identity // Diplomacy and Statecraft. – 2004. – No. 15. – P. 394.

¹⁶ Kortunov S. Kaliningrad and Russia – Europe Partnership // International Affairs. – 2002. – No. 4. – P. 122; Incidentally, the same data is used by Putin. See Vstrecha V. Putina so studentami Kaliningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta//http://president.kremlin.ru/appears/2003/06/27/1620_type63381_47945.shtml

¹⁷ The first "original" Russian and Belarusian church was consecrated in presence of Kirill II in June 2003 in Ladushkin, in the west of the Kaliningrad Oblast. See Rusijos prezidento žmona rengiasi aplankyti Kaliningrado sritį // BNS. – 2 June 2003

to churches but to the grave of Immanuel Kant where they put flowers. True, the almost completed construction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour blessed by Boris Yeltsin in 1996 and financed by the federal centre which is to become the second largest in Russia can be regarded as an achievement. However probably even Kirill II, who blessed the Cathedral on the third day of the celebrations dedicated to Kaliningrad as the place where Russia and Europe meet, could not say how many believers would come. Even if they do, still there will be questions of whether they sometimes drop in to the Cathedral because it is erected next to the reconstructed Victory Square. This has been a usual place for city residents to gather at Vladimir Lenin's monument and now they will come to see whether the monument, removed for the period of reconstruction, has been returned to its old place.

Still the mnemonics that started to be employed in the Kaliningrad Oblast with the celebrations approaching is worth special attention. It seems to tell about a new tendency of openness to history and connections between old Eastern Prussia and the Russian culture in the official politics of Russia. On the occasion of the Anniversary some elements of the historical cultural heritage (for example, the Royal Gates at the 40th VLKSM Anniversary Park) were renewed and new ones (for example, Liudvikas Réza's monument financed by the Lithuanians) were built in commemoration of the same. If one feels like it, even the removal of Lenin's monument, which replaced Stalin's in 1958, from the central square of the city could be interpreted as a sign of European openness to history. Despite constant debate on whether it should be returned to its

old place, and it was to be returned by 22 April 2005 where it stood with his back very disrespectfully to the new shrine, or whether a new place should be prepared for it on a piece of vacant land, between Moscow Avenue and the Soviet Palace, on the former Kaiser Wilhelm Square with a corresponding monument.¹⁸

On the other hand, a specific directive of the above trend should be pointed out.

On the eve of the Anniversary, 30 June 2005, a bronze monument to Duke Albrecht von Brandenburg (1490-1568), the last Great Master of the Crusaders Order and the first Duke of Prussia, financed by several German foundations, was unveiled. The German side hoped to see namely this message.¹⁹ However the Russian side managed to convince the Germans that the historical role of Albrecht was characterised not by the fact that he headed the German Order or became a worldly duke who swore allegiance to the King of Poland and paved the way for Prussia to turn into an inherited worldly dukedom, but rather by the circumstance that in the battles of the 16th century against the Polish Crown he was financed by Grand Duke of Moscow Vassily III. So the message on the monument says, “Albrecht – military political ally of the Moscow State.”

¹⁸ Yermakov A. Oboshlis bez tiazhkogo pohmelija // Komsomolskaya pravda v Kaliningrade. – 2005 07 06.

¹⁹ V Kaliningrade postaviat pamiatnik “vojenno-politicheskomu sojuzniku Moskvy”, 30 June 2005 // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/474675.html>

For example, there are jubilee coins of 10 and 3 roubles issued by the Central Bank of Russia on the occasion of the Kaliningrad celebrations. The first one, continuing the series of coins on the Old Cities of Russia, shows the Royal Palace once glorifying Königsberg and terminally destroyed in the late 60's by the Soviets. The other one is decorated with St. Nikolsk Cathedral, Juditten-kirche, which was built in the 13th century and later “changed” its religious shade (what is more, the Soviets also destroyed the adjacent Protestant cemetery in the 60's).

Looking at those examples of mnemonics, it's really difficult to decide which of them are to be attributed to symbols of the process referred to by Kirill II as the end of fight against history and which are not. However it could hardly be doubted that their purpose is not only to reflect the relation with history but also to perform a political function – to become new sources of legitimising the current status faced by the Oblast. This would confirm not only the key idea highlighted in the official concept of the celebrations that the Anniversary would “reveal” Kaliningrad as an integral part of the Russian Federation, a city founded by the Czechs which has always maintained active relations with the countries of the Baltic Sea region, preserved the German historical cultural heritage, and has harmoniously and uniformly been embedded by the Russians into the history, culture, economy and politics of Russia²⁰ but also by some comments.

²⁰ Kontseptsija prazdnovanija 750-letija osnovanija Kaliningrada. – Op. cit. – S. 3.

For instance, after seeing the Anniversary coins, journalists of the *Kaskad* daily published in Kaliningrad wrote, “The new issue of coins is dedicated to the celebrations, which is why it is logical that we see the Royal Palace on one of them. The origins of the history of Königsberg are associated with it. At the same time, it is a surprise. Yes, the Royal Palace is the symbol of Königsberg. Unfortunately, the monumental structure did not survive the war and the Soviet ideology and was demolished. So is it worth embossing something non-existent on the Anniversary coins? If we spoke about another city, the answer would probably be unambiguous: it is better to emboss something that has been preserved. Normally this is what happens. However, whenever anything is said about Kaliningrad, the majority of people are lost in conjectures /.../ Indeed, Kaliningrad became an ‘old’ Russian city just 60 years ago. As the Central Bank did not argue, we can only think it was a political decision. Indeed, the authorities regularly emphasise the dependence of Kaliningrad on Russia, especially having in mind the isolation of the region from the main part of the country /.../ After all, it suffices to remember just the circumstance that for a long time the authorities couldn’t make a decision as to the Anniversary of which city we would celebrate and respectively what anniversary – the 60th or the 750th.”²¹

Indeed, in the great Russia, for example, in Saint Petersburg, the question “The city is ours and whose is the history?” was not posed either in 1991 when the city population refused to be residents of Leningrad or in 2003 when the 300th Anniversary of the foundation was celebrated. In

²¹ Kaliningrad – drevnij gorod Rossiji // *Kaskad*. – 2005 01 12. – No. 1.

Kaliningrad it became a key political problem discussed both before and during the celebrations.²²

Features of the Celebration History

At the beginning of 2003 the administrations of the Oblast and the city contacted the President's Administration with the proposal to celebrate the 750th Anniversary of the most western city of Russia founded on 1 September 1255. Moscow's response was unambiguous. At the end of April the letter of Head of the Regional Development Department of the Office of the Government Nikolay Korenirov to the Oblast Governor said that the Supreme National Legal Board of the President returned the President's Order on the Commemoration of the 750th Anniversary of the Foundation of the City of Kaliningrad without coordinating it for the absence of the required legal and historical prerequisites. The President's Office recommended considering how to draft the President's Order on the Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Kaliningrad Oblast to be held on 4 July 2006.²³ The first to surrender was former Commandant of the Baltic Navy Governor Yegorov who stated that the real history of the city and the region started only after the assault of Königsberg. The statement provoked public debate. Everyone seemed to unexpectedly feel like someone had insulted their mothers.

Supporters of the ex-admiral, especially war veterans, declared that it was

²² Smirnov V. Korolevskie vorota v Evropu // Vremia novostey. – 2005 06 30.

²³ Maskva nepritaria Karaliaučiaus 750 m. jubiliejaus minėjimui // BNS. – 29 April 2003

not possible to speak of history in any other manner and accused their opponents of efforts to Germanise the Oblast. They also received support from their compatriots in continental Russia who even remembered the visit of the famous cinema director Nikita Mikhalkov to Kaliningrad in 1996 and his words about Russia's war trophy taken at the cost of millions of lives. Although the survey carried out just a few months ago revealed that almost half (47%) of the Russian population did not know where the Oblast was located.¹ The opponents, supported by city mayor Yuri Savenko, suggested looking at history with eyes open, reminded of philosopher Kant and mathematician Friedrich Besel, rejected the accusations related to the threat of Germanisation, arguing that the city had continuously connected with Russia since as early as the beginning of the 16th century and the times of Grand Duke of Moscow Vassily III and explained that Kaliningrad was not some small window but a real door to Europe.² The most passionate revived the civic movement "For Königsberg." Apart from anything else, the participants of the movement appealed to the support of the State Duma rejecting the draft law which proposed prohibiting in the Oblast the restoration of any historical names of foreign origin in the Oblast. The paradox was that the draft law was initiated by the Oblast Duma at the beginning of 2003.³ Local politicians hoped in this way to "mitigate" the possible adverse approach of the

¹ Beveik pusė Rusijos gyventojų nežino, kur yra Kaliningrado sritis // BNS. – 19 February 2003

² Smirnov V. Korolevskie vorota v Evropu. – Op. cit.

³ Kaliningrade grupė aktyvistų reikalauja pervardyti miestą į Kėnigsbergą // BNS. – 4 July 2003; Rusijos Dūma atmetė Kaliningrado įstatymų leidėjų siūlymą uždrausti pervardyti Rusijos miestus // BNS. – 17 March 2003

motherland regarding the idea of celebrating the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad.

Formally watching those battles, it could be concluded that they almost identically reproduced the mnemonic battles which were quite numerous in the Oblast following the Perestroika period. The approach to the history of the region and the city depended on the answer to the question, “Would it be from Adam to Potsdam immediately”, or not? The political implication and the city authorities who found themselves on the opposite side of the barricade pointed out the 1993 Oblast Duma elections, when the most important circumstance determining the results was the issue of whether or not to restore the name Königsberg. The federal centre in general had no doubts. For Moscow, such a problematic relation with the Königsberg heritage, as some analysts hurried to explain, was conventionally a serious matter of concern with the preservation of sovereignty of the Russian Federation in the Oblast.⁴ However, namely the turn of the Kremlin in the Kaliningrad Anniversary case in summer 2003 would cause one not to hurry with conclusions suggested by parallels.

⁴ For more information on mnemonics and curves of the political situation in the Kaliningrad Oblast see: Matthes E. Regioninė Kaliningrado srities gyventojų sąmonė // *Politologija*. – 2002. – No. 3 (27). – P. 25; Oldberg I. Contributing to Identity-Building in the Kaliningrad Oblast // (Birckenbach H.-M., Wellmann (eds.). *The Kaliningrad Challenge. Options and Recommendations*. – Münster, 2003. – P. 242. For expert conclusions see: Browning Ch. S., Joenniemi P. *Contending Discourse of Marginality*. – Op. cit. – P. 720; Kaliningrad in Focus. *Policy Recommendations in the perspective of problem-solving*. – Kiel, 2002. – P. 22 (also in Russian and German).

On 27 June Putin, who arrived in Kaliningrad directly from London, stated that the celebration of the 750th Anniversary, which would unite the European nations, must be organised and on a large scale. At a meeting with students and representatives of the intelligentsia at the State University the president assured them that prerequisites of the celebration existed and history could not be divided into our (Kaliningrad) and alien (Konigsberg) and it was not needed by either Europe or Russia, which was not going to return to 1937 and give up the region, “with the exception of some softheads (Russian – *pridurki*).”⁵ No one argued with the president about the dates and no specific names of those “softheads” were discussed but the statement immediately provoked various, often contradictory comments sometimes even bringing smiles.

Just a few months ago the refusal to celebrate the Anniversary was seen as an impolite approach to Western Europe, primarily Germany, destroying the hopes of the Kaliningrad politicians to solve the economic, transport and security problems of the Oblast with the help of Europe. Now they have started talking about Putin at last responding to the proposals of international experts to open the Oblast to history, to contribute to reconciliation and to turn the Anniversary into the Russian-German cooperation model and even adjoin the exclave to the EU. True, there were also more cautious explanations that the Kremlin, intoxicated with the Saint Petersburg Anniversary celebrated a month before and the success of the summits of Russia and the EU as well as Russia and the US

⁵ Vstrecha V. Putina so studentami Kaliningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. – Op.cit.

held there, could change its mind.⁶ Still many circumstances of that time showed that Putin thoroughly prepared for the statement concerning the Anniversary taking into account actualities of both the domestic and foreign policies.

In summer 2003, Russia was overwhelmed with the spirit of the approaching elections to the State Duma and for the post of president. Even without comments from political scientists the strengthening nationalistic and chauvinistic rhetoric also not despised by the Kremlin was prominent in the domestic policy. The external environment also created a favourable context for the spread thereof. War in Iraq was a good chance for anti-American propaganda and the so-called passenger transit through the territory of Lithuania to/from Kaliningrad to Russia – for anti-European propaganda. However the Kremlin did not dare bang the table with its fist in front of the EU like the Russian president did a year earlier announcing flat out that the solution to the issue would be a sign for the Russian to understand whether he had opted for the Western direction rightly or not. Following the logic of the concert model of the large states and particularly using disagreements between Western countries on the war in Iraq, Russia tended to stress the Eurocontinental line. “Following the crisis in the relations of the US and Russia caused by Russia’s disagreement with the US military campaign in Iraq, close relations with the united Europe became more important for Russia,” explained an official of the

⁶ Atsisakymas švęsti Karaliaučiaus 750 m. jubiliejų atsilieps požiūriui į Kaliningradą, rašo “Frankfurter Rundschau” // BNS. – 8 May 2003; Browning Ch. S., Joenniemi P. Contending Discourse of Marginality. – Op. cit – P. 720; Oldberg I. – Op. cit. – P. 236; Iškauskas Č. Kiemo jubiliejus – Karaliaučiaus ar Kaliningrado? // <http://www/delfi.lt/archive/index.php?id=6879743>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia who desired to remain incognito (as a comment in the margin, we will add that in summer 2003 Moscow refused to aggravate relations with the US, which was demonstrated by the meeting of Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush in Saint Petersburg immediately following the summits of the Shanghai Six in Moscow and of Russia and the EU).⁷ So to relieve the tension related to the Kaliningrad transit, Russia selected a seemingly weaker target for criticism – Lithuania. It already naturally attracted the attention of all because everyone had to travel across the territory of Lithuania. On the other hand, Moscow hoped to fill in quite abstract statements of the Joint Declaration signed with the EU on 11 November 2002 in Copenhagen regarding the Kaliningrad transit scheme introducing simplified (railway) transit documents from 1 July 2003 with contents beneficial for it.

The negotiations with Lithuania held in the first half of 2003 clearly demonstrated that Russia spared no effort in turning the above scheme into nothing more than a legal formality to justify the visa-free transit corridor. Seeking this goal Russia used not only official diplomatic levers. Without rushing to fulfil other obligations assumed in Copenhagen to ratify the treaty of the state border and to sign and ratify treaties of readmission with Lithuania, Moscow turned consideration thereof in the State Duma into an anti-Lithuanian show. In general, outbreaks of the so-called grassroots diplomacy became a component of the negotiation process. It also involved the Kaliningrad politicians, who started presenting

⁷ Rusija tikisi Sankt Peterburge sutaisyti pasidalijusia Europą // BNS. – 30 May 2003; Rusija ir JAV turi glaudžiau bendradarbiauti, nepaisydamos jokių sunkumų, teigia Putinas // BNS. - 8 July 2003

territorial claims to Lithuania reminding it of the circumstances of regaining Vilnius and Klaipėda.⁸ However in May 2003 the anti-Lithuania hysteria stopped.

After Putin's letter to the State Duma the latter ratified treaties with Lithuania. The Russian diplomats started talking about the developing compromises on the simplified transit procedure and did not conceal that all of this would facilitate the discussions on issues relating to the liberalisation of visa-free trains crossing Lithuania and the visa regime between Russia and the EU at the summit of Russia and the EU in Saint Petersburg. Incidentally, on the same occasion references were made to Putin's annual speech of 16 May in which the president declared that he would seek "qualitatively new progress" in the "historical choice" of Russia to integrate into Europe and gave an example of the "political compromise" reached "for the benefit of all Russian citizens" in the Kaliningrad transit case.⁹ The fact that the issue of Russians travelling to Europe without visas would be exceptional, seeking a new level of partnership was stressed by the president himself both before and after the summit. "We have made another important step towards the rapprochement between Russia and the EU," Putin declared at one of the

⁸ Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas: Rusijos Federacijos Kaliningrado (Karaliaučiaus) srities atvejis // Lietuvos Metinė Strateginė Apžvalga. – Vilnius, 2003. – P. 192; Read more about the negotiations regarding the Kaliningrad transit: Daniliauskas J., Stanytė-Toločkienė I. Derybos dėl Kaliningrado tranzito // Maniokas K., Vilpišauskas R., Žeruolis D. Lietuvos kelias į Europos Sąjungą. – Vilnius, 2004. – P. 309 – 352.

⁹ Maskva būgštauja dėl galimos "naujos Berlyno sienos" Europoje, sako diplomatas // BNS. – 30 May 2003; Putin V. Poslanie Federalnomu Sobraniju Rossiyskoy Federatsii // http://president.kremlin.ru/appears/2003/05/16/1259_type63372_44623.shtml

press conferences, explaining that he had in mind not only the development of political and economic cooperation but also mutual reluctance to turn the Schengen border into a new Berlin Wall. “Our mutual relations are becoming stronger,” agreed President of the European Commission Romano Prodi, not forgetting to praise Russia for doing its homework in regulating relations with its neighbours and solving specific issues of the domestic communications regime.¹⁰ Nevertheless it was one thing to outline visa-free prospects, however remote it was, when travelling West in Saint Petersburg and it was something totally different to explain to Kaliningrad that this course actually corresponded to the visa transit regime and that the motherland had not deceived the province.

The Oblast politicians did not even conceal such an impression. For a long time Moscow demanded that the EU retain the visa-free travelling regime for Kaliningrad residents and then changed its position and aggravating the negotiations on the transit of all Russian citizens demonstrated no concern for the deep-rooted problems of the development of the Oblast but fears that EU enlargement would make it more remote from Russia. At the end of 2002 Valery Ustyugov, elected to the Federal Council of Russia to represent Kaliningrad, resigned protesting against the confrontational line followed by Dmitry Rogozin, the special representative of Putin in the negotiations with the EU on the Kaliningrad transit. Such a position, in Ustyugov’s opinion, essentially transformed the transit issue into a matter of assuring Russia’s territorial integrity and national security, thus moving

¹⁰ Rusija tikisi Sankt Peterburge sutaikyti pasidalijusia Europą // BNS. – 31 May 2003

away from the solution and on to the more important tasks of the social and economic development of the Oblast.¹¹ Vice-Speaker of the Oblast Duma Sergey Kozlov expressed himself with the same sharpness in stating that it not only increased the feeling of uncertainty and distrust in the federal centre among the population but also highlighted tendencies which allowed referring to the regional development as quasi-colonial: the Oblast was dominated by the influence of the military and other law-enforcement structures, it was to be a tool for implementing exclusively political, military and economic interests of the motherland.¹² It must be admitted that Putin managed to dispel such and similar impressions during his visit to Kaliningrad. And it was not entirely due to Russian TV broadcasts about the president's determination not to leave the Oblast to its own fate.

He paid tribute to those killed during the Königsberg assault, communicated with war veterans, participated in Russian military manoeuvres simulating the scenario of the Nordic Navy coming to support the Baltic Navy deployed in Baltiysk, analysed development problems of the Oblast with the authorities and met the youth, the intelligentsia and President of Poland Alexander Kwasniewski. Before announcing the news about the Anniversary to the Kaliningrad people Putin spoke a lot about the structural rapprochement of Russia and the European Union and the role of the Oblast in the process opening the way to the formation of a single economic area and travelling without visas. He particularly informed that in autumn the Government would submit to the

¹¹ Moses J.C. The Politics of Kaliningrad Oblast: A Borderland of the Russian Federation // *The Russian Review*. – January 2004. – No. 63. – P. 129.

¹² Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas. – *Op. cit.* – P. 192.

State Duma to consider a new relevant draft law regarding a special economic zone, that the worrying issue of the so-called Kaliningrad transit was finally solved and not only transit trains would go across Lithuania without hindrance but also the so-called air taxis would fly from Kaliningrad to Moscow, and also mentioned his intention to include the issue of the Oblast development into the list of the five top national priorities of Russia. “The moment of truth has struck for Kaliningrad,” stated the president of Poland after his conversation with his Russian counterpart, adding that with the help of the EU and its future Member States, within the coming three to five years Russia would have real opportunities to turn the Kaliningrad Oblast into a comprehensively developed region.¹³ Kwasniewski took that message to Europe. And what about the local politicians?

The dust around the Anniversary settled. Savenko was said to have lit up after the president’s visit. Yegorov started elaborating on the president’s idea that it was impossible to pretend that the history of Kaliningrad started just sixty years ago.¹⁴ However another circumstance, namely the hint of including Kaliningrad into the list of top priorities, was in focus. It gave rise to speculations about the expected new sensational solutions that the Kremlin could resolve to implement what had long been discussed, for example, the appointment of the governor, the transformation of the

¹³ Rusijos prezidentas atvyko į Kaliningradą // BNS. – 27 June 2003; Lenkija pasirengusi supaprastinti Rusijos piliečių įvažiavimą į Kaliningradą // BNS. – 29 June 2003; Rusijos Valstybės Dūma rudenį svarstys įstatymą dėl YEZ // BNS. – 29 June 2003.

¹⁴ Smirnov V. Korolevskie vorota v Evropu. – Op. cit.; Prazdnik novogo vremeni // Rosbalt. – 2005 06 30.



У К А З

ПРЕЗИДЕНТА РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ

**О праздновании 60-летия образования
Калининградской области и 750-летия основания
г.Калининграда**

В связи с исполняющимися 60-летием образования Калининградской области (2006 год) и 750-летием основания г.Калининграда (2005 год), а также учитывая историческое, политическое и культурное значение этих событий, **п о с т а н о в л я ю:**

1. Принять предложение органов государственной власти Калининградской области о праздновании в июле 2005 г. 750-летия основания г.Калининграда и в июле 2006 г. 60-летия образования Калининградской области.

2. Правительству Российской Федерации утвердить по представлению администрации Калининградской области:

состав организационного комитета по подготовке и проведению празднования 60-летия образования Калининградской области и 750-летия основания г.Калининграда;

план основных мероприятий, связанных с подготовкой и проведением празднования 60-летия образования Калининградской области и 750-летия основания г.Калининграда.

3. Рекомендовать органам исполнительной власти субъектов Российской Федерации и органам местного самоуправления принять участие в подготовке и проведении празднования 60-летия образования Калининградской области и 750-летия основания г.Калининграда.

4. Настоящий Указ вступает в силу со дня его официального опубликования.



Президент
Российской Федерации В.Путин

Москва, Кремль
13 ноября 2003 года
№ 1353

10. Decree of President V. Putin no. 1353, 13 November 2003, "On the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of Kaliningrad Oblast and the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad City" (at <http://document.kremlin.ru/doc.asp?ID=019972>)

Oblast into an offshore zone, the already planned status of “an overseas territory”, establishing specific relations with the EU, etc. At the same time, Moscow did not allow recovering.

Already in July 2003 Kaliningrad hosted a meeting of the Security Council of Russia, which discussed the relevant issues of the current state and the future position of the Oblast taking into account EU enlargement. Soon the region was visited by Adviser to the President Igor Shuvalov, the chairman of the commission drafting Putin’s activity strategy for 2004–2008. Moscow officials explained that Putin was positively determined to turn the Oblast into an example of how Russia should develop its relations with the EU in all directions.¹⁵ So when in autumn, on 13 November 2003, Putin signed an order regarding the Anniversary celebrations, no discussions of this fact were initiated in Kaliningrad.

One of the reasons was that political twists of the Kremlin in the Oblast involved the local politicians into passionate arguing with the federal centre over principal issues, primarily over the new draft law on the SEZ (read more about this in *Outlines of the Motherland’s Strategic Plan*). The second one is the compromising nature of Putin’s order. The heading of Order No. 1353 of the President of 13 November said, “On the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Kaliningrad Oblast and the 750th Anniversary of the Foundation of Kaliningrad.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Rusijos Saugumo taryba rengia pranešimą prezidentui apie Kaliningrado problemas // BNS. – 10 July 2003

¹⁶ Ukaz prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii No. 1353 of 13 November 2003 // <http://document.kremlin.ru/doc.asp?ID=019972>



11. Opening ceremony of the Royal Gates (from the left: J. Savenkov, V. Putin, V. Yegorov), 1 July 2005. Photo by V. Smirnov

In other words, the Kremlin paid tribute to both dates, avoided any reference to the name Königsberg, seeming to prioritise the Anniversary of the Oblast but chronologically “ordering” that the celebration of the city’s Anniversary be first.

The issue of the Anniversary became trickier only for those forty officials and representatives of Russia’s largest companies who were appointed members of the Anniversary Organisation Committee. They did not rush to prepare for the Anniversary because neither the concept of the celebration nor the sources of financing were yet clear. True, the Mayor’s Office of Kaliningrad tried to move up in the eyes of the federal centre by initiating the drafting of the concept of the Anniversary celebrations. However the attempt was a failure. Moscow did not like the concept drafted by show business star Gennady Danishevsky. The Anniversary

Organisation Committee considered just one idea highlighted in the concept: that it was primarily necessary to find good cars for the guests because even singer Oleg Gazmanov, on concert in Kaliningrad, refused to use the Volga he was offered and a Mercedes had to be found for him. Therefore until the end of 2004 the Anniversary Organisation Committee was taking care of the technical documentation for drafting the concept of the Anniversary celebrations.¹⁷



12. Opening ceremony of the Royal Gates, 1 July 2005

Some progress was seen only after the repeated interference of Putin, when he demonstrated that attention personally devoted to the Oblast was not just some promise targeted to influence the pre-election campaign.

¹⁷ German Gref ne odobril kontseptsiju prazdnovanija jubileja Kaliningrada, 11 August 2004 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/community/k9690.html>; Inčiūraitė G. Šventė miesto įkūrimo ir sugriovimo proga // Veidas. – 2005 06 30. – No. 26.

While the Catholic world was celebrating Holy Christmas, on 23 December 2004 the Kremlin organised a presidential press conference for Russian and foreign journalists. There Putin once again repeated that “the Anniversary of Königsberg-Kaliningrad would be celebrated.”¹⁸ True, this time he did not say anything about “the large scale” and was satisfied with the phrase “the wider the better” explaining that the format of events and the guest list were still open questions.

Indeed, the guest list was becoming clearer only in May 2005. The city renovation works were actually completed only on 1 July and their scope is still not known because the criminal case concerning the misuse of 200 million roubles is still under investigation.



13. Street carnival “Unifying Thread of History”, 1 July 2005

¹⁸ Smirnov V. Jubilej Kaliningrada nado otmetit shiroko // Kaliningradskaya pravda. – 2004 12 24. – No. 255.



14. Street carnival "Unifying Thread of History", 1 July 2005



15. Street carnival "Unifying Thread of History", 1 July 2005



16. Street carnival “Unifying Thread of History”, 1 July 2005

The same can not be said about the concept of events. It was drafted in the middle of February. The fact that the presentation of the Anniversary concept was attended by the president’s appointee in the Northwestern Federal District Ilya Klebanov with his deputy Andrey Stepanov clearly showed that the centre paid special attention thereto. “The Anniversary celebration is a significant event not only for Russia but also on the international scale,” quoting the text of the concept. “Its goal is to show the role and weight of Russia in the European Community through the prism of Kaliningrad, its history, the present and future development strategy.”¹⁹ On that occasion the Russian journalists, shrewd and good-humoured, once again repeated that whatever it be but the battle of the European and Russian origins was visible for the entire three days, but

¹⁹ Ivankov E. Poema o jubileje // Kaskad. – 2005 12 15.

especially prominent during the official events of 1 July 2005.²⁰ Mayor Savenko could not manage to smoothly unveil any of the renovated or newly erected monuments: when unveiling the sculptures of the Royal Gate, the fabric was caught on the sceptre of Friedrich I and there was nothing left to do but wait for the help of specialists; a similar situation happened at the unveiling ceremony of Liudvikas Rėza's monument. Still the most wonderful view was available when a kilometre-long procession moved along the streets of the city – “Thread Uniting History”. The theatrical procession was headed by actors playing Prussian tribes with bows and swords decorated with the Russian tricolour. They were followed by the Teutonic knights marching with Russian flags. They were followed by groups of people dressed in the national clothes of Russians, Lithuanians, Poles and Latvians marked with the symbols of red, blue and white. And “only the Irish”, concluding the procession were with the Irish flag flapping in the wind...

The implication of the media report was obvious. Taking into account the official tendency of revising the previous policy towards heritage, i.e. to replace the negation of anything non-Russian with connections between the Prussian and the newcomer Russian cultures, not only the peculiarity and artificiality of the efforts to develop a new identity but also a political order hardly concealed by them – to find new sources of legitimising the dependence of the Oblast on Russia – was demonstrated. Incidentally, the foreign media straightforwardly wrote, “the organisation of the Anniversary celebrations is Russia's desire to disperse doubts concerning

²⁰ Sokolov-Mitrich D., Stulov I. – Op. cit.

the dependence of the former Königsberg region and to unambiguously demonstrate who the master of the region is.”²¹ And the more frequently the Russian officials talked about the continuation of the link between the motherland and the exclave province, the more attention was paid to the issue by foreign media.

²¹ Rybak A. Splendid Isolation // Financial Times Deutschland. – 28 June 2005.

II. DAY TWO – MOTHERLAND.
RUSSIAN CITY IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

“On 2 July 2005 there will be events to show Russia’s contribution to the development of Kaliningrad,” the official Anniversary concept said. “Events must clearly demonstrate the continuity of the Russian culture and the great interest in this culture shown not only by the Kaliningrad population and guests from Russia but also by numerous foreign tourists.”¹ Glancing at the distributed programmes, guests easily concluded that they could familiarise themselves with the cultural contribution of Russia in the morning and evening of 2 July; in the evening – ballets and concerts of pop-stars from Moscow, in the morning – sightseeing tours of historical sites of Svetlogorsk and Zelenogradsk.² So what could one see, for example, in Zelenogradsk?

In Zelenogradsk, located right next to Kaliningrad, formerly known as Cranz, one could see the Museum of History and Archaeology opened not long before. There are three small exposition rooms. The first one displays relicts of the Prussian and Vikings. The second shows faded photographs of an Eastern Prussian fishing village and towns of the 19th century. The third room, like the second one, displays faded photographs of Soviet times, the assault of Königsberg, extracts from newspapers of Stalin’s speeches on the occasion of the Victory, copies of reports on settlers, and some examples of Soviet weapons behind glass, like the Viking relicts. The impression is as if separate periods of Eastern Prussian history are chronologically identical and equally significant. But there it is – a detail. A booklet entitled “Outline of Cranz History” was on sale. The introductory

¹ Kontseptsija prazdnovanija 750-letija. – Op. cit. – S. 5.

² Programma uchastija oficialnyh gostej, priglasjonyh na 750-letije osnovanija Kaliningrada, v jubilejnyh meroprijatijah. – Kaliningrad, 2005.

motto about the importance of the search for one's own place in history (Who doesn't do that?) is trivial. However the following page quotes the poem Cranz in Russian language by Agnes Miegel, recognised by *The New York Times* in 1927 as the greatest German poet of the time. The poem is short, romantic and dedicated to the motherland.

2 ИЮЛЯ – СУББОТА		
РОССИЙСКИЙ ГОРОД В ЦЕНТРЕ ЕВРОПЫ		
<i>Для гостей размещенных в гостиницах «Светлогорске» и «Зеленоградске»</i>		
8:00 – 9:00	1. Завтрак	В местах проживания
09:00 – 10:00	2. Обзорные экскурсии по памятным и историческим местам в г. Светлогорске и г. Зеленоградске.	
11:00 – 14:00	3. Экскурсия по национальному парку «Куршская коса»	
14:00 – 15:30	4. Обед	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Куршская Коса, пос. Рыбачий, трактир «У дороги»
15:30 – 17:00	5. Продолжение экскурсии по национальному парку «Куршская коса»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Посещение Дюны Эфа
	6. По желанию гостей возможна поездка в Калининград для участия в открытии скверов городов-побратимов.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.00-16.00 – открытие сквера дружбы со шведскими городами • 18.00-19.00 - открытие сквера дружбы с немецкими городами 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • На территории зоопарка • Ул. мл. д-та Ротко
17:00 – 18:00	7. Переезд гостей к местам проживания в городах Светлогорске и Зеленоградске	
18:00 – 21:00	7.1. <u>Свободное время</u>	
19:00 – 24:00	7.1. <u>По желанию гостей возможна поездка в Калининград для просмотра</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • балета «Жизель» в постановке Государственного Академического Большого Театра России (19.00-22.30); • концерта Российского национального балета под руководством В.Моисеева (19.30-21.00); • Концерта звезд эстрады (21.00-24.00) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • В помещении областного драматического театра. • Большая концертная площадка у Дома Советов • Сцена у Дома Советов
21:00 – 22:00	9. Ужин	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Рестораны гостиниц по месту проживания в г.г. Светлогорске и Зеленоградске

17. Programme of Day Two of the Kaliningrad Anniversary, 2 July 2005

Both locals and guests should like it. It is just that the authors of the booklet seem to be ignorant of the fact that Miegel is famous not for her recognition by The New York Times but rather for her relations with Nazis. In Germany she is still referred to as *Lebensraum, Drang nach Osten* or just a poet of evil spirit.³ Guests, for example, from Germany must have suppressed their dismal impression only upon returning to Kaliningrad to participate in the opening of the square of friendship with German cities. Although the festival organisers located the square in the street named after Second Lieutenant Rotko but still with more respect than the square dedicated to friendship with cities of Sweden. The location for the latter was found in the zoo.

It is only fair to admit that very few paid attention to those nuances of the establishment of new identity on the second day of the Anniversary. Although the sight of politicians, political analysts and observers was directed to the Drama Theatre, they were interested not in the Russian culture and its continuity but the future of the Russian Federation and the specific place of Kaliningrad therein. On the second day of the celebrations of the city Anniversary, in the Drama Theatre the president presided over the meeting of the State Council regarding the enhancement of the role of subjects of the Russian Federation in solving prospective tasks of socioeconomic development.

³ Gerner K. – Op. cit. – P. 12.

Twists of Russian Federalism

First, the title of the meeting of 2 July 2005 itself created intrigue as it was more characteristic of Boris Yeltsin's times than Putin's Russia. Many members of the State Council could illustrate by their own example what the Kremlin's speeches about the role of subjects of the Federation and practical steps of the centre towards them meant.

In 2000-2001, the laws directed against the Supreme Palace of the Federal Assembly disrupted the more or less established mechanism of counterbalances in the Russian political system and the vacuum created by the authorities was eliminated by the concentration of the president's powers and centralisation of the country imposingly called the vertical of power. The Federation was divided into seven districts, essentially corresponding to military ones. Appointed representatives of the president, who soon became full-fledged members of the Security Council, were obliged to ensure that the regional leaders standing on a lower step of the hierarchy would follow the federal laws and the budget policy. At the same time, the heads of the Federation subjects with limited rights were offered to participate in the State Council, the president's advisory body, by the rotation principle. However the formation of the vertical did not end there. Although at the end of 2002 Putin stated that the centre did not intend to question the system of governors' elections stipulated in the Constitution, in autumn 2004 the president suggested replacing it with governors directly appointed by Moscow and only pro forma approved by regional legislative institutions. Upon approval of the proposal by the State Duma and the

Federation Council, on 12 December 2004 the president signed it into law.⁴ Although the Kremlin explained that the changes were not related to the Beslan tragedy, few doubted that it constituted a good prerequisite for Moscow to justify its step by the necessity to preserve not only public security but also to protect national solidarity from regional separatism.

It must be admitted that appealing to the chaos caused by the decentralisation of the end of the 20th century Putin had serious arguments. Many regional heads interpreted the famous phrase by Yeltsin “take as much of sovereignty as you can” as permission to establish their own patrimonies. They often ignored Moscow, regularly violated the rule of law of the Federal Constitution and federal laws (about 25%-30% of all laws made by federative subjects were not in line with the Federal Constitution and laws), directed revenue flows from the central government not only to regional budgets but also to their own pockets and to those of their friends and during election campaigns even stooped to rely on the support of local mafias.⁵ So in Putin’s opinion, the abolition of direct elections of governors logically continued the centralisation reform. Appointed governors, personally accountable to the president for the development

⁴ Putin utverdil izmenenie zakona o vyborah gubernatorov // <http://www.lenta.ru>, 2004 12 12; Baev P. K. Russia’s Regions: Never-Ending Reshuffling with Diminishing Returns // The Jamestown Foundation. – August 18, 2005. – Vol. 2. – Iss. 162. – P. 2-4.

⁵ Hill F. Rusijos valdymas: Putino federalinės dilemos // New Europe Review. – 2005. – No. 2 // <http://www.neweuropereview.com/Lithuanian/Rusijos-valdymas.cfm>; Vitkus G. Federacijos pamatus klibina ir Maskva, ir regionai // Lopata R., Laurinavičius M. (sud.). Tarptautinė politika: komentarai ir interpretacijos. – Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2002. – P. 204 – 207.

results of their regions, would serve not private and local interests, but the state.

However the Kremlin's course towards centralisation and concentration of power caused both constitutional and practical policy problems.

One could not only reasonably wonder at the disappearance of the boundary between the law-making authorities and the executive power, but also ask whether Russia was further to be referred to as a federal state where powers are shared between the centre and regions (provinces, republics) on the basis of mutual agreements. Putin's actions clearly demonstrated that if federalism was to exist, it would be developed from top to bottom based not on mutual agreements but on Moscow's decision as to which functions would be delegated to the regions and which would not.

At the same time, in practical politics at the beginning of 2005 it was becoming clear that the president and his administration, referees in local battles and intrigues relating to the management of one or another region, not only favoured political manipulation but also caused difficulties. The insertion of new regional leaders from the outside, i.e. from Moscow, exhausts its human resources, causes local tension and narrows the political and social base of the Kremlin supporters.⁶ On the other hand, approbation of old leaders, i.e. local people, "preserves" the procedure

⁶ Independent surveys show that 75% of the electorate tend to elect regional leaders. See Baev P. K. – Op. cit. – P. 2.

which had to be destroyed by the power vertical. However the most important responsibility in both cases for governance, effectiveness and failures is borne personally by the president. Finally, from 1 January 2005 abolishing a number of political and social functions previously delegated to governors, it became clear that regions had no more lightning-arrestors or “scapegoats” who could be left holding the bag for failed reforms initiated by the centre. The Kremlin could see this especially well in January through April 2005, when a wave of dissatisfaction with Moscow’s decisions to abolish certain social privileges and to start the unpopular reform of the utility complex rippled throughout Russia.⁷ At the same time, governors unexpectedly felt tangible benefit which could be extracted from their trimmed political status.

The topic suggested for discussions of the State Council convened in Kaliningrad proved that Putin was not striving to assume the whole responsibility. There were also other signs from the Kremlin witnessing the same. Putin elevated the meeting of the State Council, criticised for its lack of legitimacy, up to the level of “an extended governmental meeting”⁸ inviting Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov and other Members of the Cabinet to participate. As the meeting approached, statements by some of them gave the impression that Moscow was going to share responsibility. For example, the head of Russian diplomacy Sergey Lavrov openly stated, “A priority task will be solved – to ensure mutual relations between the

⁷ Na proshedchem v Kaliningrade zasedaniji Gossoвета byla ozvuchena novaya regionalnaya politika // <http://kaliningrad750.ru/rus.index.phtml?idnews=979>

⁸ Dmitriev J. Regiony vlijatelnoje zveno gosudarstvennogo upravlenija // Strazh Baltiji. – 2005 07 05.

centre and federal subjects strengthening and improving their international and external economic relations.”⁹ This was pabulum for the conclusion about Moscow’s readiness to coordinate the functions of the centre and the regions. Only the mercantile question of which powers would be returned by the centre and in exchange for what remained unclear.

So in this context attention was drawn to another idea expressed by Lavrov that the unique geopolitical location of the Kaliningrad Oblast granted it a special role and allowed hoping that the westernmost outpost of Russia would be turned into one of the most developed regions. As the same idea almost word for word was repeated by Special Representative of the President for EU relations Sergey Yastrzhembsky, some media made a second conclusion: “The celebrations attended by the leaders of all 89 regions of Russia must prove Russia’s obligations to a territory whose population has repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with Moscow’s inability to properly settle accounts with the Oblast.”¹⁰ So what obligations were in question?

Compensations to the Exclave

Kaliningrad heard obligations or obliging promises from the centre quite often after the collapse of the USSR when the Oblast became an exclave,

⁹ Interviu Ministra Inostrannyh Del Rossiji S. Lavrova // *Diplomat*. – 2005. – No. 7 (135).

¹⁰ Rybak A. Splendid Isolation. – *Op. cit.*; Danilova M. Leaders of Germany, France assure Russia of Strong Ties with EU // *Associated Press Newswires*. – 4 July, 2005; See Yastrzhembsky’s speech in Biriukov V. Kaliningrad – mesto vstrechi Evropy i Rossiji // *Rosbalt*. – 2005 07 01.

but three of them were the most important. The federal centre announced that it would ensure the legal legitimacy of Russia, effective governance in the Oblast and stable development of the region deprived of the territorial link with the motherland. Moscow was sure that in its stockpile it had sufficient internal resources and instruments and was also capable of using external factors to implement such undertakings. Therefore it descended to give hope to the Oblast that as compensation for its exclave it would receive a new political and specific economic status, factually having no strategic plan as to how to ensure stable development of the Oblast and not immediately understanding the scope and pace of international processes, primarily – Euro-Atlantic integration.

In 1991-1992, the federal centre, renewing the idea of the Kaliningrad industrial zone discussed during the final years of Soviet times, established the Yantar free economic zone (FEZ), providing various tax and other reliefs for participants. It was expected that the FEZ as well as additional undertakings of Moscow to allocate investment for infrastructure development would stimulate export and formation of economic branches to replace imported goods and in general promote the socioeconomic development of the Oblast. At the same time, the liberalisation of entering the “garrison” region to open the Oblast to a broader extended world, started during the final years of Soviet times, was accelerated. The motherland agreed to consider the draft law on the status of the Kaliningrad Oblast drafted by the Kaliningrad politicians, which provided

more autonomy for the region.¹¹ On that occasion the then Governor of the Oblast Yuri Matochkin who came to power in 1991, taking advantage of the attractiveness of the FEZ idea, even talked about the region becoming the Baltic Hong Kong within a decade.

On the other hand, it must be pointed out that Moscow agreed to apply economic adaptation mechanisms in the Oblast somewhat later than in ten other contemporary regions of the RSFSR, in fact only after it managed to execute contracts and agreements with neighbouring countries, primarily Lithuania, to provide guarantees relating to conditions (energy resources, transit of duty-free goods, etc.) to secure the sustenance (Russian – *zhizneobespechenie*) of the Kaliningrad Oblast.¹² For Moscow, the agreements were important in several aspects. The addressee proper could evaluate the “special interest” in Kaliningrad documented therein as the concern of the motherland with the socioeconomic progress of the Oblast. However the guarantees stipulated in the agreements were much more important for the federal centre, which not only assured the possibilities of retaining the Oblast as a part of the economic area of the motherland, but also stipulated Moscow’s political argument concerning the organic link of the Oblast with continental Russia. The arguments of the Oblast

¹¹ Khlopetskiy A., Fiodorov G. Kaliningradskaya Oblast: region sotrudnichestva. – Kaliningrad, 2000. – S. 331.

¹² See Agreement between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Republic of Lithuania concerning the grounds for intergovernmental relations, 29 July 1991 – Art. 11; Agreement between the Republic of Lithuania and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic on cooperation in the economic and sociocultural development of the Kaliningrad Oblast of the RSFSR // Key International Treaties of the Republic of Lithuania. 1918- 1995. – Vilnius, 1997. – P. 173, 177-182.

sustenance and organic link with the motherland also had clear geopolitical implications. Factually, the former Eastern Prussia with Königsberg devolved upon the Soviet Union after the Second World War as a tool ensuring the dependence of the Eastern Baltics on the USSR. Moscow had no historical rights to that territory. It means that emphasising the organic link existing between the motherland and the Oblast would mean that Lithuania (and other states of the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea) too still belongs to Russia.

Incidentally, Moscow, with the collapse of the USSR, at least several times provoked international debate on the issue of the dependence of the Oblast. In 1988, negotiations between Mikhail Gorbachev and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl regarding the transfer of the so-called Soviet Germans from the Volga banks to the Kaliningrad Oblast, which were published in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and later also on the pages of the German press, gave rise to the idea of establishing German autonomy under Russian jurisdiction in the Oblast. In 1991, the proposal to give the Oblast to Poland suggested by Yeltsin created momentum for the so-called Polish plan to spread throughout the European countries' press, according to which the exclave territory would have been divided between the neighbouring countries. Official Bonn and Warsaw strictly rejected such plans.¹³

¹³ Janušauskas R. Four Tales on the King's Hill. – Warszawa, - 2001. – P. 65; Laurinavičius Č. Kaliningrado srities problema istoriniu požiūriu. // Naujasis židinys – Aidai. – 2004. – No. 11. – P. 528.

At the same time, in 1993-1995 the practical consequences of Moscow's appeals to the organic link could be felt by both Lithuania and the Kaliningrad Oblast. The former had to withstand the pressure from Moscow to document the issue of military transit of the Russian Federation over the territory of Lithuania to/from Kaliningrad in the form of a political agreement, thus actually retaining Lithuania within the sphere of its influence.¹⁴ And the latter had to deal with stricter control by Moscow, which was caused by both external factors as well as political and economic processes in Russia and in the Oblast proper.

In its changeable relations with the West, Moscow primarily tried to use the Oblast as a geopolitical instrument, turning it into a hostage of those relations. The Cold War was followed by dialogue of the East and the West based on the Russia First principle, which sort of marked the appearance of a new security environment reducing the previous tension and at the same time the military strategic significance of the former Soviet military base. However the initiated withdrawal from Eastern Europe of the Soviet Army, later falling under the jurisdiction of Russia, increased the level of militarisation of the Oblast. Presumably, from about 1991-1994, when the Oblast was announced to be a special defence region of Kaliningrad, 120,000 to 200,000 military land, sea, air, border staff, and staff of the Ministry of the Interior might have been deployed there.¹⁵ That

¹⁴ Laurinavičius Č., Lopata R., Sirutavičius V. – Military Transit of the Russian Federation through the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania. Rusijos Federacijos karinis tranzitas per Lietuvos Respublikos teritoriją. – Vilnius, 2002. – P. 73.

¹⁵ Pedersen K. C. Kaliningrad: Armed Forces and Missions // Joenniemi P., Prawitz J. (eds.). – Op. cit. – P. 107 – 116; Oldberg I. Kaliningrad: Problems and Prospects // Joenniemi P., Prawitz J. (eds.). – P. 4 – 6, 26.

circumstance could be interpreted as a temporary one. Especially until Moscow followed the course towards a democratic state, receiving political and financial support from the West. However the political and economic transformation in Russia started reeling. Political pluralism had mixed with strong elements of authoritarianism along with anarchy. It gave rise to clashes between real opportunities of the country, the readiness of the public, and the still dominating spirits of the global power. In Russia and also in the Kaliningrad Oblast it created grounds for the strengthening of revanchist ideas (for example, during the Oblast Duma elections of 1993 the majority of mandates were taken by the Liberal Democrats led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy) and in the West it added a sense of urgency to the decision to expand NATO to the region of Central and Eastern Europe, stabilising and protecting it from threats coming from the East. Russia itself evaluated this decision as a violation of promises given by the West to Mikhail Gorbachev not to expand NATO in exchange for the union of Germany. The rising tension touched upon the Kaliningrad Oblast as well. Poland, Germany and Lithuania were full of rumours about the possible internationalisation of the Oblast. Russia demonstrated a corresponding reaction. Yeltsin started threatening Poland, approved by the West to join NATO, with “cold peace”, Russia tried to enforce the military corridor on Lithuania, and Kaliningrad was to be turned into a strategic military bastion. In March 1994, the Oblast was announced to be a special defence region headed by the Russian commander of the Baltic Military Navy directly subordinate to the Ministry of Defence and the General Headquarters. Russian military authorities and analysts suggested changing Russia’s military doctrine and rejecting the principle of restraining from the

first strike attack threatened to deploy a tactical nuclear weapon in the Oblast and military trainings were continuously held there.¹⁶

It must be stressed that the decision was dictated not only by strategic military needs but also striving to ensure the economic stability of the region.¹⁷ That was a clear signal from the motherland to the Oblast that the idea of the FEZ, despite its political popularity in the region, was questionable. Moscow also had additional arguments. The FEZ did not stop the economic recession and promoted the prosperity of the grey economy, corruption within the privatisation process, non-payment of taxes to the federal budget, money laundering through joint ventures with foreign capital, etc. In mid-1993, the adoption of the federal law cancelling tax reliefs substantially limited the FEZ regime. In 1994, implementation of the Law on strengthening the sovereignty of the Russian Federation in the territory of the Kaliningrad Oblast gave rise to more rigorous customs procedures, enhanced border control, and cancelled trade agreements of the Oblast with subjects from other countries; in early 1995, the FEZ was cancelled.

On the other hand, the motherland also gave a discount to the Oblast by agreeing that the FEZ complications were also caused by the weakness of the institutional basis, i.e. the lack of legal basis, lack of determination about economic priorities and the indefiniteness of function sharing

¹⁶ Oldberg I. *Kaliningrad: Russian Exclave, European Enclave*. – Stockholm, 2001. – P. 15.

¹⁷ Jegorov V. *Cooperative Security in Northern Europe // Ideas on Cooperative Security in the Baltic Sea Region*. – Helsinki, 1995. – P. 130 – 131.

between the centre and the periphery. In early 1996, Moscow again demonstrated its explicit attention to the Oblast. Without waiting for the adoption of a law on free economic zones applicable to all of Russia, on 22 January Yeltsin signed a Federal Law on the establishment of a special economic zone (SEZ) in the Kaliningrad Oblast. On that occasion Chairman of the Russian Federation Vladimir Shumeiko talked about the fact that the Oblast would become an experiment of liberal economy, a centre of international congresses, a visa-free tourist zone, etc. and also had an opportunity to acquire wider autonomy.¹⁸ It must be pointed out that at the same time the process of reducing the military build-up was under way in the Oblast (in 1997, the 11th Guardian Army was disbanded and the Operational Strategic Group was formed which presumably today consists of 18,000 to 25,000 soldiers¹⁹) and Russian diplomats almost openly offered Poland and the Baltic States demilitarisation of the Kaliningrad Oblast²⁰ if they declined the invitation to join NATO. The first wave of NATO expansion was not stopped and the limits of the Kaliningrad Oblast demilitarisation were not defined. However both the West and Russia were more strongly debating the function of the Oblast: whether it is a military outpost of Russia, a geopolitical instrument to stop

¹⁸ Gorodilov A., Kozlov S. *Geopolitika*. – Kaliningrad, - 2003. – S. 61.

¹⁹ Kaliningrado srityje tarnauja 25 000 kariškių // BNS. – 11 June 2002; Sergounin A. Transforming the “Hard” Security Dimension in the Baltic Sea Region // Birckenbach H.-M., Wellman Ch. *The Kaliningrad Challenge. Options and Recommendations*. – Münster, 2003. – P. 258 – 259. However one must not forget that about 8,000 persons serve in the Oblast doing their federal border guard service and over 1,000 in the units of the Ministry of the Interior while the number of soldiers in obligatory military service reaches 360,000.

²⁰ Landsbergis V. *Karaliaučius ir Lietuva*. – Vilnius, 200 – P. 132; Krickus R. *The Kaliningrad Question*. – 2002. – P. 72.

Euro-Atlantic integration or an exclave capable of being transformed into a bridge, a geopolitical link to connect Russia with the West.

The supporters of the bridge concept asserted that due to its convenient location the Oblast would inevitably become a link between the East and the West, which would determine its prosperity. However they failed to estimate that the performance of such a function required at least several conditions: a stable international environment, political will of the motherland to grant such a function to the exclave and the institutional base securing the political, legal and economic stability of the exclave. All those conditions were absent, let alone the fact that in 1996 almost 70% of the Oblast population were against decreasing the Army and armament.²¹ It was an additional argument for those who explained that when making a decision about the prospects of the Oblast, military strategic and diplomatic factors were to be the decisive ones. Incidentally, they were often remembered in Kaliningrad by federal institutions whose staff was significantly more numerous than that of the Oblast administration forced to spend about 50% of its budget on the subsistence of the former. The local political elite was more or less supportive of the strategy of the motherland. For example, in October 1997, the Oblast Duma demanded that the Lithuanian-Russian treaty on the state border be signed in connection with the issue of the Russian military transit.²² At the same time the motherland agreed to detail legal and financial guarantees to the SEZ. In 1996-1997, the Agreement of the Kaliningrad Oblast and the

²¹ Gričius A. Kaliningrado srities raidos perspektyvos ir saugumo aspektai Baltijos regione // Lietuva ir jos kaimynai. – Vilnius, 1997. – P. 122.

²² Krickus R. – Op. cit. – P. 63.

Russian Federation was signed, an agreement of the Government and the regional administration concerning the sharing of competencies was executed, and the Federal Targeted Programme of SEZ Development in the Kaliningrad Oblast for 1998-2005 was adopted.²³ However it soon became clear that expectations of the exclave were artificially provoked.

Although the SEZ initiated economic growth and foreign investors favourably evaluated the new law, the approach of the federal centre did not add optimism. The FEZ story was repeated when the motherland, announcing special state support for SEZ participants, continuously questioned the purposefulness of retaining the special economic regime. It was becoming clear that the unbundling of functions between the centre and the province was nothing more than an illusion and the funds provided for in programmes, if any, were directed as subsidies for the subsistence of the decaying military and industrial facilities.²⁴ The then Oblast administration with Governor Leonid Gorbenko (1996-2000) could only reference Gibraltar and console themselves that in the future the functions of the military outpost and the pilot site of economic reforms could be coordinated.²⁵ Some of the Kaliningrad politicians were more open, explaining that Moscow's tactics of "granting a decree with one hand and taking it away with the other" enhanced tension between the Oblast and the motherland and forced admission that the "peculiarity" of the

²³ Khlopetskiy A., Fiodorov G. – Op. cit. – S. 337.

²⁴ Kargopolov S., Gorodilov A., Kulikov A., Gomin A. – Svobodnaya zona i osobyj status. – Kaliningrad, 2001. – S. 67; Khlopetskiy A., Fiodorov G. – Op. cit. – S. 41.

²⁵ Oldberg I. – Op. cit. – P. 18; Khlopetskiy A., Fiodorov G. – Op. cit. – S. 364 – 368.

Oblast “was manifested in its closure” and the term “zone” should be interpreted in the most primitive meaning of the word.²⁶

True, tension was also increasing due to other factors. The introduction of the permanent system of laws regulating critical aspects of duty and tax policy in the Oblast and quotas for various imported goods created conditions for abuse and corruption. Battles for economic influence were often transformed into political conflicts of the Oblast administration, the Duma and Kaliningrad city authorities, manipulated by the federal centre. In autumn 1998, when the financial crisis dramatically affected both continental Russia and the exclave province, a compromise between Governor Gorbenko and the Oblast Duma was reached due to the efforts of Moscow. However at the beginning of 2000 with the governors' elections approaching, the federal centre aroused the growth of political tension in the Oblast criticising the governor for “regional autarky” and lack of readiness to become “a pilot region.”²⁷ For that Moscow appealed to Putin's idea expressed in October 1999 when presenting the Mid-Term Strategy for the Development of Relations between Russia and the EU. In Article 48 of the Strategy, relying on the Russia-EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreement of 1997 and protecting the interests of the Kaliningrad Oblast in EU enlargement, the federal centre emphasised the objective of signing a separate agreement with the EU regarding the

²⁶ Kargopolov S., Gorodilov A., Kulikov A., Gomin A. – Op. Cit. – S. 9, 138.

²⁷ Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas. – Op. cit. – P. 189.

transformation of the Kaliningrad Oblast into a “pilot” Russian region within the framework of Russia-EU cooperation in the 21st century.²⁸



18. Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania in the Kaliningrad Oblast (2001-2005) V. Žalys (on the left) and Governor of the Oblast V. Yegorov.

Although the idea of “a pilot region” was not developed further, quite a few international experts evaluated it as determination to develop the independence of the Oblast and its institutional base adjusting it to the countries of the region and even to grant the status of a subject, empowering Kaliningrad to build ways for Eurointegration together with Vilnius, Warsaw and other partners in the region.²⁹ In their turn quite a few Kaliningrad politicians understood it as support from the federal centre for the anti-governor opposition, one of the leaders whereof Matochkin urged

²⁸ Smorodinskaya N., Zhukov S. Kaliningradskij anklav v Evrope: zaplyv protiv techeniya / The Kaliningrad Enclave in Europe: Swimming against the Tide. – Moscow, 2003. – P. 137, 291.

²⁹ Sirutavičius V. Maskva vis tvirčiau ima į ranką šalies regionų vadžias // Lopata R., Laurinavičius M. (sud.). – Op. cit. – P. 217.

to consider the possibility of an agreement with the EU regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast from 1998.

Moscow supported the expectations of the opposition in a very subtle fashion choosing the favourite of the governors' election campaign in the face of Admiral Yegorov, who actively exploited the idea of "a pilot region." The chief of the Baltic military navy actively urged to align the legislation of the Oblast (and of the country) with the EU and to use the opportunities offered by EU enlargement. His election still enhanced the hopes in the Oblast that the region would receive special attention from the federal authorities. On the other hand, the federal centre and Putin, who personally supported the Admiral, although generous in uttering statements about the country's turn towards the West and special relations with the EU, did not forget to point out the geopolitical functions of the exclave promising to remilitarise the exclave and prevent further expansion of NATO*. The president did not comment on the issue interesting for the Oblast as to how its development would be affected by its appointment to the Northwestern Federal District in May 2000. In late 2000 and early 2001,

* In this context it is worth presenting quite a self-evident episode characterising the position of the MoFA of Russia in relation to Putin's turn towards Europe "via Kaliningrad." At the conference held on 17-18 May 2000 in Copenhagen entitled to reflect the then popular tendency as Nordic Dimension and Kaliningrad: European and Regional Integration, representatives of the EU Members States, candidate states and the European Commission energetically and concisely explained to the Russian delegation how the Kaliningrad Oblast announced to be "a pilot region" was to be involved in regional cooperation. The Russians listened to proposals but some could hear a very self-evident phrase uttered behind the scenes by the head of the Russian delegation, a top diplomat, "Let them...[yarn], it will still be as we want it."

the Kremlin supported both the “opening” and the centralisation tendencies of the Oblast.

In early December 2000, newly inaugurated Governor Yegorov became a permanent member of official delegations of Russia to the EU Member States and very soon the Oblast was visited by delegations from almost all EU Member States. In Moscow Yegorov easily solved the conflict caused by the decision of the Russian Duty Committee abolishing the SEZ duty reliefs and obtained the Kremlin’s promise that the federal centre would revise the decision concerning the attribution of the Oblast to the Northwestern Federal District and that the officials of the Oblast administration and politicians would be included into the working group responsible for studying consequences of EU enlargement for Russia and drafting a special agreement with the EU regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast. On 22 March 2001, Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov considering the measure plan for the assurance of the socioeconomic development and sustenance of the region unequivocally stated that the Oblast would become “an example of the application of market methods.”³⁰ In July Putin encouraged the Russian Security Council to turn the adverse effects of EU enlargement on the Oblast into positive ones as soon as possible and to make a prompt decision on the Federal Targeted Programme of the Socioeconomic Development of the Kaliningrad Oblast for 2002-2010 drafted by Minister of Economy German Gref. The president explained that although the Oblast would not be reorganised into the eighth federal district, there was a real opportunity for the Kaliningrad Oblast to become

³⁰ Holtom P. – Op. cit. – P. 47.

a region where the model of Russia's interaction with the EU would be drafted.³¹

On the other hand, at the end of 2000 and during the first half of 2001 Moscow focused still more on the military strategic function of the Oblast. Kaliningrad hosted a meeting of the Federal Security Service Board, which considered measures to resist security threats and threats to Russia's sovereignty in the Kaliningrad Oblast, and the mass media published news about Russia's plans to deploy a tactical nuclear weapon in the Oblast while the real pressure put by Moscow on Lithuania to legitimise the Russian military transit to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast in the form of a political agreement was highlighted.

From spring 2001 it was becoming clearer that the federal centre was withdrawing from the idea of "a pilot region." Responding to the proposal to consider the consequences of the trade regime changes for Kaliningrad expressed in the Communiqué of the European Commission on the EU and Kaliningrad, in March Moscow stated that it did not at all see any specific problems related to the influence of the enlargement on the economic relations of the Oblast and suggested consulting on the enlargement consequences on the scale of the whole country, demanding that the EU compensate for adverse consequences of the enlargement. In addition, it refused its idea of the visa-free regime for Kaliningrad residents visiting Lithuania, Latvia and Poland and suggested issuing them free one-

³¹ Kaliningrad ne stal vosmym federalnym okrugom // <http://www.gazeta.ru/2001/07/26/last26476.shtml>

year visas, which would allow them to enter the territories of the neighbouring countries, and demanded visa-free communication (“a corridor”) between the Kaliningrad Oblast and continental Russia.³² In other words, demanding privileges and compensations from the EU for the entire Russian population, Moscow sought to ensure the avoidance of isolation of the Oblast from the rest of Russia’s territory and not from the neighbouring countries. As the Oblast governor expressed his concern with the fact that the visa regime for Kaliningrad residents would become the first border, which would turn the region into a large reservation in the middle of Europe at international forums in a more critical manner, Russian diplomats explained that the introduction of visas would not be painful.³³

At the same time, Moscow started strengthening the Oblast control mechanisms inflicted by the centre. The application of market methods promised by Kasyanov was frozen and measures which expanded the boundaries of competencies of federal institutions in the Oblast were provided for.

Putin’s colleague of the Saint Petersburg period Andrey Stepanov, appointed to the newly formed position of Deputy Presidential Envoy to the Northwestern Federal District at the end of July 2001, in fact was told to ensure the Kremlin’s control in Kaliningrad. He had to coordinate the

³² Rusija teikia ES ir Lietuvai neturinčius precedento reikalavimus // BNS. – 4 April 2001

³³ Rusijos Federacijos URM atstovo Kaliningrado srityje ambasadoriaus A. Kuznecovo pareiškimas // BNS. – 26 March 2001

activities of federal bodies in the Oblast, supervise implementation of the federal programme for the social and economic development of the region, and remove any threats of potential squandering of funds.³⁴

On 7 December 2001, the federal targeted programme defining the key policy objectives of the federal centre towards the Oblast was adopted: preservation of the status of the Oblast as an integral part of Russia, strengthening of connections with other federal subjects, use of the exclave location in the European Economic Area, development of the energy sector, development of the transport system, restructuring of industrial companies, priorities in promoting amber production, establishment of an export production zone, etc. However the programme did not provide for almost 50% of the funds needed for financing the Oblast.³⁵ Moscow did not even try to conceal that the missing funds were to be compensated by the EU, whose enlargement and funds allocated to the candidate states increased the asymmetry in the development of the Oblast and the neighbouring countries. Yegorov as well repeatedly spoke about the negative influence of EU enlargement, repeating the position of the federal centre. In his turn Stepanov, who started openly competing with the governor for influence, actively criticised the Oblast administration for its inability to use the federal programme.

The actively developing so-called transit case stressed even more that the federal centre was more concerned with the interests of the motherland

³⁴ Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas. – Op. cit. – P. 190.

³⁵ Sirutavičius V. Maskvos eksperimentas virsta ant kaklo veržiama kilpa // Lopata R., Laurinavičius M. – Op. cit. – P. 257.

than of the region. In March 2002, Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov disappointed the Kaliningrad politicians by his statement that Moscow was no longer considering the idea of a special agreement with the EU regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast.³⁶ As mentioned, Russia instead presented Brussels with the document in which it introduced practical realisation details of the “corridor” ensuring the transit of people and goods from/to Kaliningrad. While the divide between the positions of the EU and Russia on the transit issue was increasing, Lithuania raised the idea of special magnetic cards which could be used as an alternative to long-term visas for Kaliningrad residents. It was favourably evaluated by Yegorov but Moscow did not agree to give any privileges to the exclave population, stating that the Oblast was an integral part of Russia and any special regimes should not apply to it. “We need not cards but corridors,” the Russian diplomats were eloquently open.

Namely during that period international experts started speaking about the “Kaliningrad crisis.” As EU enlargement changed the key political and economic parameters of the Kaliningrad environment and put pressure on the rapid modernisation of the region and Russia did not have sufficient resources for that, they explained there was a real threat that the Oblast would turn into “a double periphery.” Therefore mitigation of negative consequences of the enlargement and successful adaptation of the Kaliningrad Oblast were possible only using innovative instruments breaking the status quo: enhancement of the independence of the Oblast,

³⁶ Songal A. The Fate of the Exclave Decided (Manuscript).- Kaliningrad, 2002. – P. 2.

compatibility of the institutional base with the external environment, i.e. realisation of the “bridge” concept.³⁷ However neither Russia nor the EU demonstrated any political will to assume responsibility for development of the Oblast. In Moscow’s opinion, EU enlargement with regard to Kaliningrad was an external event, which was why responsibility for the region’s adaptation and communication with continental Russia should be borne by Brussels. In Brussels’ opinion, the Oblast was an integral part of Russia, which was why responsibility for its development should be borne by the federal centre. Diplomatic relations between Russia and the EU demonstrated that both parties desired to solve the problems which arose because of direct procedural consequences of EU enlargement.

Outlines of the Motherland’s Strategic Plan

At the end of 2002 and during the first half of 2003 Russia and the EU reached a compromise on the issue of transit of people. That case highlighted even more the trend which had been visible previously: depending on the situation, Kaliningrad was becoming a hostage of the strategic game of the federal centre. Seeking to retain the Oblast and using it as a tool to influence the Eurointegration processes, Moscow opted for only those ways and solutions which ensured implementation of the selected strategy, irrespective of whether they corresponded with or contradicted the key interests of the Oblast. On the other hand, to ensure

³⁷ Stanytė-Toločkienė I. Kaliningrado sritis ES plėtros požiūriu // Politologija. – 2001. – No. 2 (22). – P. 26- 66; Sirutavičius V., Stanytė-Toločkienė I. Rusijos Federacijos Kaliningrado srities strateginė reikšmė // Lietuvos metinė strateginė apžvalga. – Vilnius, 2003. – P. 199 – 200.

the legitimacy of its actions the federal centre was forced to take into account their practical implications as well: without any effort to stimulate the development of the Oblast finding itself in a peculiar situation, anti-federal approach could become stronger in the Oblast. Then Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivanov did not conceal this factor that was frightening Moscow and making it influence the situation accordingly. Therefore the documents constantly stressed the objective of ensuring the development of the Oblast as an integral part of Russia and the federal centre regularly tried to solve problems of the Oblast with the local politicians.³⁸ The minister didn't say one word about the motherland's regular attention to the province coinciding with one or another solution to the strategic issue. However in summer 2003, that connection was again seen in Putin's curtsseys to Kaliningrad.

As mentioned, the federal centre again spoke about the priority attention to development of the Oblast. Putin formulated the goal: by 2010, the standard of living of Kaliningrad residents had to reach that of its neighbouring countries. The Kremlin also defined guidelines for the implementation of the goal: SEZ improvement and transformation of the Oblast into the example of cooperation with the EU. A mechanism for detailing the guidelines was also formed: Shuvalov's commission. However it soon became clear that its activities did not relieve but increased tension in the Oblast and its relations with the motherland began to look like a stubbornly played ping-pong game.

³⁸ Ivanov I. *Novaya rossiiskaja diplomatija. Desiat let vneshnei politiki strany.* – Moscow, 2002. – P. 293.

First of all, Moscow's signs were understood in Kaliningrad as a possibility of reviving the discussions on the principal question of whether Russia could effectively govern the region.³⁹ Criticism of the centre was abundant, especially regarding insufficient financing and bureaucracy. Incidentally, it was also expressed by those who looked at the geopolitical environment surrounding the Oblast with suspicion and even hostility. The political forces which envisaged new opportunities, namely in the special location of the region, tried to associate the region's progress with the development of the special economic zone, perceiving the latter as a "step" towards the Russian Federation acquiring special political status. However opinions differed about the "way guidelines", i.e. questions of what economic policy must be based on the SEZ and what institutional and legal reforms it should rely upon.

Having taken over the banner of the "pilot region" idea from the centre, they stated that Russia was incapable of ensuring development of the Oblast and that the SEZ regime didn't stimulate economic modernisation but instead the model of intermediary activities in commerce and import servicing based on the "buy-sell" rules thus promoting the growth of grey economy. They suggested orientating towards the EU economic area and preparing the single strategy and action plan of Russia and the EU for gradual transformation of the region into a zone of export production for the European markets. In other words, an individual development plan of the exclave region realised through the joint efforts of Russia and the EU

³⁹ Kozlov S. Kaliningradskaya oblast: forpost SSSR, SEZ, O EZ, zagranichnaya territorija Rossiji. Doklad. – Kaliningrad, 2004. – S. 4.

had to create conditions for the Oblast to reduce its dependence on subsidies from the federal centre, to guarantee stability and to enter the European markets.⁴⁰ True, the authors of this course did not manage to give a clear answer to the question of whether the direct promotion of export would contradict the rules of the WTO to be entered by Russia.

That circumstance and the criticism of “the pilot region” that the realisation of this idea would make the Oblast dependent on EU subsidies and finally take it away from the economic area of the motherland was relied upon by the supporters of the “cooperation region” concept. They suggested using all cooperation opportunities at the federal, interregional and separate economic branch levels, grounding cooperation with the EU on the principle of mutual benefit, promoting foreign investment by stabilising the legal SEZ base intended not to create a new competitor but to establish a platform for entering the Russian market. The weightiest argument of the supporters of this line was the declaration of strategic cooperation implementing the Strategy of the Socioeconomic Development of the Kaliningrad Oblast as a Cooperation Region until 2010, signed by the Oblast administration, the Duma, the city of Kaliningrad, the Baltic Navy authorities, businesspeople and non-governmental organisations on 19 April 2003.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Smorodinskaya N., Zhukov S. – Op. cit. – Moskva, 2003. – P. 136 – 156, 290 – 306.

⁴¹ Strategija sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya Kaliningradskoj oblasti kak regiona sotrudnichestva na period do 2010 g. / Strategy of the social and economic development of the Kaliningrad Region as a cooperation region for the period to the year 2010. – Kaliningrad, 2003. – 98 s.

Moscow listened to discussions and proposals and even strongly recommended looking for effective ways to create a healthier economy in Kaliningrad. However when Shuvalov's commission started considering the law on the SEZ, such recommendations turned into accusations of "parasitizing", unfair competition and the endeavour to retain "greenhouse" positions living on discounts and not under competition conditions. Formally those accusations could be understood as Moscow's response to criticism from Kaliningrad regarding insufficient financing of the Oblast implying that for the motherland to allocate huge funds to the region, which was in fact incapable of functioning successfully, meant just wasting already insufficient resources. In early November 2003, Yegorov tried to convince Putin personally that the Oblast was developing dynamically and its gross domestic product (8.9% per year) overtook the Russian average (5.9%) and the Polish average (5.1%). The president said he was satisfied.⁴² However a month later Moscow again sent a warning signal.

Director of the Scientific Research Institute of the Audit Chamber of Russia Sergey Shakhryay urged adoption of a constitutional law and a change in the status of the Oblast. According to the director, "today it is obvious to everyone that general laws of Russia are ineffective here" because of the unique geopolitical location of the region. However the new version of the law on the SEZ could not be adopted earlier than the law on free zones of Russia drafted by the Ministry of Economic Development of

⁴² Putinas patenkintas ekonomikos plëtra Kaliningrade // BNS. – 13 November 2003

Russia headed by Gref because it would not be able to take account of all peculiarities. Shakhray urged the introduction of direct federal governance in the Oblast to be able to promptly respond to any changes in the situation related to the region.⁴³

The province took the signal from the motherland very seriously. The statement concerning the freezing of the SEZ considerations could still be interpreted as reluctance to burden the situation before the presidential and State Duma elections. However the intervention of Shakhray and the Russian Audit Chamber caused to remember the circumstances of destroying the FEZ when, after then Vice Prime Minister of Russia Shakhray accused the Oblast of separatism and following the conclusions of the Audit Chamber, FEZ activities were stopped.⁴⁴ Kaliningrad took responsive action.

The Oblast Duma committee responsible for SEZ development initiated the formation of a working group of parliamentarians, administration representatives and scientists to draft the federal law on the foreign territory of the Russian Federation. Following the international governance practice of overseas, enclave and other territories, they hoped to draft a constitutional act clearly defining the boundaries of competencies and functions of the federal centre and the Oblast. The drafters did not conceal that by the law they sought to guarantee SEZ administration rights to the

⁴³ Rusijos Audito rūmų MTI direktorius siūlo keisti Kaliningrado srities statusą // BNS. – 16 December 2003

⁴⁴ Khlopetskij A., Fiodorov G. – Op. cit. – S. 337.

Oblast.⁴⁵ However from unofficial conversations it could be gathered that there were supporters of more radical views among the drafters: at the beginning the law on the foreign territory; later, an application to the president and the State Duma (or using the referendum right) regarding the adoption of a constitutional law providing for the independence of the Oblast, the adoption of the law; in the future, formation of the government and the parliament, parallel efforts to reach an international agreement between Russia and the EU regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast crowned with the acquisition of associated EU membership by the Oblast. As a result of such actions, the Kaliningrad Oblast remains a subject of the Russian Federation but at the same time becomes an associated Member State of the EU. Even attributing this plan to the domain of fantasy and EU orientation – to the idea that “Europe would help us and solve all the Kaliningrad problems”, considerations of the status of the foreign territory revealed the trend that the Oblast politicians were not going to surrender to Moscow’s pressure.

At the beginning of 2004 this pressure was becoming stronger. The federal centre did not conceal the striving to take over the SEZ administration and preferences for large, in the centre’s opinion, competitive Russian business. In Moscow’s draft law on the SEZ the Oblast administration was in fact given only the role of a supernumerary. All larger financial resources would be distributed through a special SEZ administration not subordinate to the

⁴⁵ Kozlov S. – Op. cit. – S. 7-9.

Oblast and holding the system of quotas* in its own hands while all the responsibility for the socioeconomic situation would be borne by the governor elected by the citizens. The draft did not reject the provision on discounts for the participants of the special economic regime and they were discussed, but now “larger discounts for the large” were being spoken about. In other words, such a position could also have been treated as an attempt by the large Russian capital to displace from the Oblast the foreign capital already having its niche there (and to prepare for the opportunities offered by EU enlargement) and as discrimination of local small and medium-sized businesses prevailing in the Oblast.

The Oblast administration admitted the drawbacks in the SEZ activities but pointed out that the economic growth which started in 2000-2001 to a great extent was reached due to the efforts of local small and medium-sized businesses stimulating the SEZ mechanism at a time when the actual support of the federal centre for the Oblast was minimal. The best example, the Kaliningrad representatives explained, was the widely advertised federal targeted programme. Despite all of Moscow’s promises that the programme, unlike all its predecessors, would be implemented successfully, so far the situation is in line with the classic Russian saying “we wanted to do our best and it turned out as always.” The fact that even given high oil prices the Government does not allocate the promised funds

*The quota system for imported goods was introduced justifying it by concern for the interests of local producers. However it was also very often used in cases where the local producer was incapable of providing even the Oblast population with certain quotable goods. It is not accidental that the entire system of quotas was accompanied by the shadow of corruption both in the times of the FEZ (Matochkin) and the SEZ (Gorbenko, Yegorov).

to the region gives rise to the following question: either the federal centre evaluates the region as insignificant or it does not want to admit that it has invested a lot of funds into so-called strategic but economically disadvantageous projects, for example, the ferry facilities in Baltiysk whose feasibility depends on the whims of winter in the Gulf of Finland. Now when it is necessary to finance sites and projects which are not strategic but are needed to ensure its normal functioning, for example, the transport infrastructure, it becomes clear that there is no money for those purposes or their implementation is objected to by the structures subordinate to Moscow. And this poses another question: Is the federal centre interested in the economic recession and stagnation in the Oblast?

The fact that debates in Shuvalov's commission were hot was demonstrated by many episodes. The especially famous one was the conflict of the Oblast administration and Avtotor Holding AB, which owns the companies manufacturing BMW and KIA automobiles in the Oblast and defends the interests of large Russian businesses. The administration accused Avtotor of refusing to provide financial support to President Putin and Yedinaya Rossiya during the election. In Moscow Avtotor took countermeasures to protect it from any consequences of the administration's actions. The administration threatened to deprive Avtotor of privileges based on violations of the SEZ regime and relied on this particular example in the Commission discussions. The speech by First Vice-Governor Mikhail Tsikel of the Oblast, who presented the example, is said to have been of such a nature that the Commission members decided to refrain from inviting him to further meetings. However the

conflict didn't end there. At the Commission meetings Avtotor General Manager Shcherbakov accused Tsikel of the fact that upon the latter's return from Moscow he prejudiced the local Duma deputies against the federal centre and threatened the Union of Industrialists and Businessmen with the invasion of large capital from Moscow and Saint Petersburg into the Oblast and urged them to protest against the new version of the SEZ. In the Oblast press Shcherbakov undertook various public relations campaigns announcing that the regional administration was "corrupt" and everyone there was "thieves."⁴⁶

Certainly, with different emphasis, the situation could have been interpreted differently. For example, Tsikel had not "threatened" but informed the Oblast businesspeople of the threats arising to their businesses and had not "prejudiced" politicians against the federal centre but invited them to come together and support the position of the administration. However one thing was clear: the administration of the Kaliningrad Oblast, fighting for the new version of the SEZ, earnestly tried to resist the dictatorship of the federal centre and was not going to withdraw from its positions very easily. This was again demonstrated by Yegorov reading the annual statement of 30 June 2004.

The governor started it with some seemingly ritualistic phrases pointing out the preamble of the Oblast development strategy adopted a year before which discussed the mission of the region to create conditions for the

⁴⁶ Landsbergis V. Karaliaučiaus korta // Veidas. – 28 October 2004 – No. 44. – P. 38.

integration of Russia and the EU, the specific nature of the pilot project, etc. However he unexpectedly shifted emphasis. “The Kaliningrad Oblast has a special mission in history,” Yegorov stated, “to be the largest outpost of Russia in the united Europe. Due to the uniqueness of the geopolitical location the Oblast in many aspects must be oriented towards Moscow and the Russian Federation even more as stable regional development is inherent to the progress of the entire country, whose integral part it has been and will be.”⁴⁷ Without pausing, he presented figures: in 2001-2003, Russia’s GDP grew by 17.5% while the Oblast’s grew by 24%; industry – by 40%; in terms of developmental pace it took 11th place in Russia and third in the Northwestern Federal District, in terms of investment risk and attractiveness ratio it took the 13th position, etc. After rejoicing at the favourable statistics, Yegorov started discussing the relations with the federal centre. Here the governor’s strict tone caused many to listen. He openly criticised Moscow for its unfulfilled financial undertakings and promised to protect the interests of the Oblast in all spheres and especially concerning the centre’s drafting of the new law on the SEZ. It must be adopted in “the local and not the Moscow version,” the Governor announced fightingly, warning that in the opposite case the Oblast budget would not be executed.

Such statements were not characteristic of the governor who was often militarily loyal to the Kremlin. Therefore, the majority assessed them as a

⁴⁷ Tekst ezhegodnogo poslanija glavy administratsiji (gubernatora) Kaliningradskoj oblasti V.G. Yegorova v oblastnoj Dume. – 2004 06 30 // <http://www.gov.kaliningrad.ru/index.php?action=vistuplenije&person=1>

new tendency in the relations of the region and the federal centre. However the situation was somewhat more complicated.

The version of the SEZ law drafted in the Oblast and forwarded to Moscow a few weeks before, the delay in the adoption of the law (at the beginning – autumn of 2003, then spring of 2004 and later the end of 2004), and finally the transfer of the drafting thereof to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade headed by Gref as if demonstrated that Moscow did not refuse to listen to the opinion of the region and tended to reach compromises. In June 2004, the status of Stepanov was degraded – Klebanov's deputy became his assistant. This just strengthened the belief of the Oblast administration that the pause was the right moment for demonstrating once again firm determination regarding the position selected. Finally, another factor which promoted Yegorov's determination was the issue of transit of Russian goods to/from Kaliningrad through Lithuania. In the opinion of the Oblast authorities, he was the main concern of Moscow and not the SEZ law.

True, after Lithuania became a full-fledged Member State of the EU a stricter procedure was introduced for Russian cargoes transited to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast. It should also be pointed out that the Russian party was informed in 2000 about how the procedure would change after Lithuania became a full-fledged Member State of the EU. This issue was analysed by carrying out special studies of consequences discussed at different political levels and in different formats.⁴⁸ Without debating

⁴⁸ For example, see Joenniemi P. Lopata R., Sirutavičius V., Vilpišauskas R. Impact Assessment of Lithuania's Integration into the EU on Relations between Lithuania

technical aspects of this issue, for example, phytosanitary and veterinary control, etc., it is important to bear in mind some principal moments. Obviously, a stricter transit procedure influences the economic life of the Kaliningrad Oblast. This really caused additional difficulties for the Russian and foreign capital companies working in the Russian market. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that the goods transit to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast is not a homogeneous mass. We could find in the so-called goods structure both the goods necessary for successful activities of companies in the Oblast and transit cargoes whose transit yields revenues only to certain narrow interest groups using privileged completion of the goods customs procedures for various “grey schemes.” In this case various state bodies following narrow interests could also be attributed to narrow interest groups. For example, the Russian Customs Service assessed the cargo transit as an opportunity for additional earnings by managing and filling in transit-related documents.⁴⁹ At the same time, the Kremlin was concerned with creating the maximally privileged conditions for cargo transit as another way to tie the Oblast closer to the domestic market of Russia as well as using this factor for further influence on the EU integration processes.

Beginning in the spring of 2004 Moscow started taking up active diplomatic and propagandistic campaigns aimed at the discrediting of the

and the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation/ Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review. Supplement /Vlijanije Integratsiji Litvy v ES na otnoshenija Litvy i Kaliningradskoj Oblasti Rossijskoj Federatsiji. - Vilnius, 2000. – No. 2 (6). – 46/51 p.

⁴⁹ Lopata R. Kaliningrado bylos ekonominiai aspektai: požūris iš Lietuvos. – Op. cit. – P. 200 – 201

cargo transit procedure as the threat to the sustenance of the Oblast. The Oblast administration supported it although it had data showing that the new goods transit procedure, while causing additional concerns, did not reduce but even increased the cargo transportation flow and in accordance with the forecasts of the Oblast railway staff, by 2010 the cargo flows to Kaliningrad would increase about 40% more.⁵⁰ In other words, by publicly criticising the EU and Lithuania and supporting the federal centre in its relations with Brussels and Vilnius, Yegorov hoped for Moscow's amenability towards the issue of concern to the Oblast.

However the pause was not long. Diligence in the issue of goods transit did not compensate the stubbornness of the Oblast administration, which influenced Moscow to postpone the decision concerning the SEZ. The federal centre turned towards the destabilisation of the political situation in the region. First, the Oblast was activated by the statement of Secretary of the Russian Security Council Ivanov in the *Kaliningradskaya Pravda* from which one could understand that it was Europe who wanted to see Kaliningrad as a cooperation model and for Russia it was just "a bridge able to help the development of cooperation."⁵¹ The region, which thought that it was a model of cooperation between Russia and the EU, suddenly realised that in the eyes of Moscow it was but a bridge. After the middle of summer the Oblast was already shaken by the scandal of corruption in the administration after Vice-Governor Leonov, i.e. the member of the governor's team who at the end of 2003 contacted Avtotor with the

⁵⁰ Žalys V. Kaliningrado sritis: istorija ir dabartis. – Op. cit. – P. 9.

⁵¹ Interviu s I. Ivanovym // *Kaliningradskaya pravda*. – 2004 07 01.

request for support “for the presidential election expenses” and was directly subordinate to Tsikel, was detained with evidence. The operation was carried out by Moscow officials who did not inform the interior authorities of the region. Those were just the first strikes.

Stepanov was returned to his previous position, and Yegorov’s team continued to collapse. Newly appointed Second Vice-Governor Oleg Shlyk, closely related to the pro-president party of Yedinaya Rossiya, resigned. The political configuration of the Oblast Duma favourable for the governor changed. Speaker of the Duma Vladimir Nikitin was forced to piggyback to the Yedinaya Rossiya and thus doomed the parliamentary political group of Soyuz Pravykh Sil. In autumn of 2004, after Putin started speaking about the abolition of governors’ elections, there were rumours that Moscow would not wait for the end of the governor’s term of office. Yegorov was even forced to make a statement about the dramatically aggravated situation by starting the consideration of a new mechanism of elections of regional authorities. “In recent months,” the governor stressed, “processes directed towards the destruction of public stability and readiness to seize power at the regional and municipal levels have started rapidly developing.”⁵² However, unexpectedly, the federal centre did not aggravate the situation.

At the beginning of October Head of the President’s Administration Dmitry Medvedev signed a decree on the formation of an interagency working group headed by Yastrzhembsky on the issues of development of

⁵² Landsbergis V. – Op. cit.

the Kaliningrad Oblast. Yegorov was appointed to represent the Oblast. In a short press release the Kremlin limited itself to conventional, already trivial phrases that the group was assigned to draft recommendations to the Government concerning the development prospects of the special region of Russia under new geopolitical conditions caused by EU enlargement. In its press release the Oblast administration added, “one of the most important issues would be to adopt a new law on the SEZ.”⁵³

It soon became clear that the federal centre was not concerned with the SEZ law. The political implication of the formation of the working group became more understandable after the first statements of the group leader: “Russia intends to pose the EU issue regarding cargo transit to the Kaliningrad Oblast again. It will be considered at a regular meeting of Russian and EU authorities in The Hague on 11 November. Russia intends to consider this issue anew and absolutely openly.” Putin’s envoy did not explain what “absolutely openly” meant but added that the Oblast could become an experimental (pilot) region where it would be checked how the border guard and duty control system was functioning at the border of Russia and the EU.⁵⁴ The news about experiments had to be spread by Yegorov as well.

⁵³ Jastržembskis paskirtas vadovauti darbo grupei Kaliningrado srities raidos klausimais // BNS. – 12 October 2004

⁵⁴ Rusija ketina siekti, kad ES supaprastintų krovinių tranzitą į Kaliningradą, teigia Jastržembskis // BNS. – 25 October 2001; Kaliningrado srityje galima išbandyti supaprastintos kontrolės Rusijos ir ES pasienyje sistemą, mano prezidento atstovas // BNS. – 26 October 2004



19. Royal Gates after the opening ceremony. 1 July 2005. Photo by V. Smirnov

The federal centre did not create any hindrances to the organisation of the first field meeting of the committee Russia in the United Europe at the end of 2004 in Vilnius. The meeting discussed not only the document regarding cooperation in four fields drafted by the EU and Russia but also listened to the speech of the Kaliningrad governor. He criticised (though “with his lips pressed together”⁵⁵) the new goods transit procedure and suggested “pilot” ways to improve it.

It must be pointed out that Moscow did not limit itself to experimenting with the cargo transit procedure. The Kremlin again started speaking about the “pilot region” and made efforts “to spread” it as widely as possible.

⁵⁵ Autoriaus pokalbis su V. Jegorovu. – Vilnius, 23 October 2004. See also Labanauskas V. Kaliningrado gubernatorius: priekaištai dėl tranzito – nepagrįsti // Respublika. – 30 October 2004

For example, Yastrzhembsky personally started actively supervising the round tables organised by the Kaliningrad Development Agency and the East-West Institute on the topic of Transforming Kaliningrad into the Pilot Region of Russia-EU Cooperation (December 2004 – Warsaw, February 2005 – Vilnius, April 2005 – Krynica) which were attended not only by renowned international experts on the Kaliningrad issue but also by representatives of the European Commission, diplomats from Lithuania, Poland and Germany and Russian officials headed by Stepanov. Incidentally, in late 2004 and early 2005 the debate participants were insistently being convinced that the recommendations drafted by them would be forwarded to the top-level Russian-EU working group, which was formed based on the decision by both parties at the meeting in The Hague to solve the Kaliningrad problems, although the European Commission rejected the proposal of forming a “top-level” group.⁵⁶

In other words, Moscow, politicising the cargo transit issues in its relations with the EU, again needed Kaliningrad as a hostage. The weakened but politically non-eliminated governor, well known in Western and neighbouring countries, was the perfect figure for performing such a role. What was interesting was that at the beginning of 2005 it even seemed that for the performance of this function on the foreign policy arena the federal centre would as usual come over to the tactics of the Oblast temptations. However this impression was erroneous. Although formally the

⁵⁶ Rusijos ir ES sąveikai svarbias Kaliningrado srities problemas spręš aukšto lygio grupė, sako Putino atstovas // BNS. – 20 December 2004. Cf. EU – Russia Summit on November 2004 in the Hague // http://europe.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit_11_04/index.html

motherland put aside the ping-pong paddle and again started playing with the province like a cat with a mouse, in fact Moscow was already determined to introduce essential changes into the games.

In January 2005, Moscow forwarded the amended draft law on the SEZ to the Oblast administration requesting that they present their opinion to the delegation of representatives of the federal centre coming to Kaliningrad on 11 February – Yastrzhembsky, Klebanov, Stepanov and Chairman of the Organisation Committee of the 750th City Anniversary Celebration Gref, whose Ministry was the most active in contributing to the Moscow version of the SEZ law – to check the works on the preparation for the city anniversary. The local politicians prepared very thoroughly for the meeting with the representatives of the federal centre.

On 31 January and 7 February, the Oblast Duma together with representatives of the administration and business held special meetings to discuss the draft SEZ law received from Moscow. In the course of the meetings the views were obviously becoming more radical. While the first meeting agreed upon a unanimous position with regard to the law drafted by the motherland in an attempt to “make” correctives satisfying the Oblast, a week later they started mentioning rejection of the drafted version of the law and preservation of the old one with some corrections. Seeking this goal, even some economic statistical data was to be corrected and the Oblast would be presented as the most rapidly developing region of Russia. In other words, the idea was to use the way repeatedly verified in practice: during discussions with EU representatives, the Oblast is

presented as a depressed region lagging behind and routinely fighting adverse consequences of EU enlargement and when the conversation is with Moscow, merits and positive trends in the Oblast development are reported. Naturally, nothing was said publically. However Tsikel openly complained in the press that arguments surrounding the SEZ lasted so long that it would be best to just forget them completely and “to work in the existing legal field.” Still, the first vice-governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast expressed his hope to clarify all disagreements with the guests as to “what we want to see in our Oblast.”⁵⁷

However the guests did not seem willing to clarify anything.

First of all, Yastrzhembsky did not even come. As the Kremlin got confused explaining the reasons for such a decision, one could suspect that the federal centre was not even going to discuss disagreements.⁵⁸ This was also witnessed by the circumstance that immediately upon arrival the guests divided into two separate groups which met again only upon departure. True, Klebanov did not refuse to preside over the experts’ council, which considered the development strategy of the Oblast and introduced the Anniversary programme to the media. He rather pretentiously explained to the journalists who gathered on that occasion that following long deliberations and expert considerations the status of a

⁵⁷ Tri papki Mikhaila Tsikelia // Kaliningradskaya pravda. – 2005 02 08.

⁵⁸ Yastrzhembsky is said to have decided not to go at the last minute, already in the plane. Moscow first explained that the assistant received an urgent assignment from the president. Afterwards they explained that the Kremlin official was ill. See Kozyreva A. Kurica ne ptitsa, no Kaliningrad – zagranitsa? // Yantarnyj kraj. – 15 February 2005; Segova D. Kaliningradskaya oblast dolzhna stat zagranichnej territorijoj Rossiji // Kaliningradskaya vechiorka. – 2002 02 11-18.

foreign territory was to be granted to the Oblast. Thus, in Klebanov's opinion, the real situation faced by the region was reflected.⁵⁹ The statement became the first sensation.

Gref was interested in how the preparatory works for the celebrations were carried out and was generous in criticising those who carried them out and even promised to build the gallows instead of the money for the renovation of the Royal Gate.⁶⁰ Threats such as this did not leave an impression on the local journalists in the least. They were concerned with how the Minister assessed Klebanov's promise to the Oblast regarding the status of a foreign territory and the destiny of the SEZ. Here journalists received some more surprises.

Gref stated that he understood only what the border territory status meant and that he had not seen the SEZ law drafted in the Oblast at all but was fully aware of the current drawbacks of the SEZ. Despite the fact that the Oblast survived during a year which had been difficult for all of Russia, the minister said that that was the only significant success. Instead of ensuring stable economic growth based on competition, the SEZ became an opportunity to create grey schemes and pseudoeconomy based on privileges. It is constantly declared that the region has rapidly growing production and that new companies successfully operating on the Russian market are being opened. However what is disregarded is that the majority of those "companies" are virtual producers assembling final products from

⁵⁹ Ivankova E. Kaliningrad – zagranichnaya teritorija // Kaskad. – 2005 02 12. – No. 24; Kozyreva A. – Op. cit.; Segova D. – Op. cit.

⁶⁰ Vinnitskaya G. Korolevskaja viselitsa // Kaskad. – 2005 02 12. – No. 24.

imported components or just packing the same with a view to achieving the only goal: to create added value of 15% to 30%, to refer to the product as Russian, and to sell it in continental Russia without duties. According to the estimations of the Audit Chamber, the federal budget thus loses 30 billion roubles every year.⁶¹ In other words, journalists were forced to listen to the arguments that the federal centre relied on in discussions with the Oblast administration about the SEZ.

We have already had a chance to make certain that the statistical part of the discussion between Moscow and Kaliningrad defining the socioeconomic standing of the Oblast through various indicators was not new. In fact, since the FEZ times it reflected the same political trend. The motherland regularly appealed to the revisions of the annual budgets of the Oblast carried out by the Audit Chamber speaking about the parasitizing of the Oblast on the account of the federal centre and even, as announced in 2002, its bankruptcy.⁶² The political authorities of the region headed by Yegorov explained that the Oblast faced this situation due to the fault of its predecessors. At the same time, often involving local analysts, it illustrated its own results in figures witnessing the continuous progress of the region: the rise in net wages, the increasing turnover of foreign trade and volume of investment, and the growing GDP.⁶³ Incidentally, the

⁶¹ Smirnov V. A vas, Gref, poproshu ostatsia // Kaliningradskaya pravda. – 2005 02 12.

⁶² O rezultatah proverki ispolnenija biudzheta Kaliningradskoj oblasti za 2000 god // Biuleten Schetnoj palaty Rossijskoj Federatsiji. –2002. - No 1 (49) // <http://www.ach.gov.ru/bulletins/2002/1-2.php>

⁶³ Zhdanov V. Perspektivy ekonomicheskogo razvitiya Kaliningradskoj oblasti kak regiona sotrudnichestva. – Kaliningrad, 2005.

motherland acknowledged some of the progress indicators presented by the Oblast.

Gref himself agreed with the fact that the dynamics of the investment growth in the Oblast reached 12%-15%, that it looked quite good in the context of the entire Russian Federation in terms of the investment risk and attractiveness ratio, between twentieth and thirtieth place, and that foreign trade in the Oblast was growing. However the representative of the motherland explained that those figures not only failed to reveal the key problem but only masked it more. The factually declared huge economic growth of the Oblast is still fiction, concealing huge budget debts of the Oblast.

This opinion is also supported by independent experts.⁶⁴ In their opinion, although the Oblast using the SEZ privileges didn't turn into "a black hole", i.e. in terms of its socioeconomic development did not catastrophically lag behind its neighbours, the existing SEZ mechanism failed to ensure quality economic growth and stimulated not competition but "grey schemes" based on duty and tax reliefs. Still, unlike the representatives of the motherland, experts tend to emphasise the circumstance that those privileges are used not only by the Oblast companies but also those of continental Russia. So it is no wonder that the SEZ in the Kaliningrad Oblast has become a problem in the context of the

⁶⁴ Pursiainen Ch., Medvedev S. (eds.) with contributions by Entin M., Smorodinskaya N., Cherkovets M. Towards the Kaliningrad Partnership in the EU – Russia Relations / K Kaliningradskomu partnerstvu v otnochenijah Rossiji i ES. – Moscow, 2005. – P. 78.

whole country. It is clearly demonstrated by the single fact that the tax privileges valued at of 30 to 32 billion exceed the contribution of the Kaliningrad Oblast into Russia's GDP by 650%. Experts claim that due to the existing situation responsibility is borne by both the federal centre and the region which failed to find an economic model meeting the requirements of the rapidly changing geopolitical environment. By the way, such criticism may be understood as a hint that a situation such as this cannot not be retained for so long without influential political support.

The sharp public statement by Gref showed that the motherland tended to leave the burden of political responsibility on the shoulders of the Oblast authorities and was not going to continue any discussions of the topic. The fact that there would be no more discussions was proved by the last phrase Gref uttered to journalists at a media conference on 11 February: "There is a draft law drafted by the Government and the final version will be complete within the next two weeks."⁶⁵ As the same information was confirmed by Klebanov, journalists could only ask how it could be adopted if the federal centre had still not decided on the status of the Oblast and the Oblast had many claims to the Moscow draft law on the SEZ. "So what?", Klebanov responded with a question. "We will adopt the law and then amend it. It is always easier to work with prepared materials."⁶⁶

Many simply laughed at this reply, only confirming the traditions of Russian bureaucracy. However, Moscow used this tradition.

⁶⁵ Smirnov V. A vas, Gref, poproshu ostatsia – Op. cit.

⁶⁶ Ivankova E. – Op. cit.

The federal centre encouraged the Oblast administration to agree with the SEZ law drafted by the motherland and to have it approved by the time the State Duma adjourned for holidays.⁶⁷ Certain privileges were granted to small and medium-sized businesses and larger discounts and some other claims filed by the Oblast (for example, the quota system, the role of the administration in SEZ management) were to be satisfied during the consideration of the draft law in the Duma. Therefore, it is no wonder that when on 14 April the Government of the Russian Federation approved the draft law on the SEZ and on 4 May presented it for consideration to the State Duma, the Oblast administration repeated what Prime Minister Fradkov said: the Kaliningrad Oblast was “the European façade of Russia”, which was why the new law would create all conditions for the dynamic development of the region.⁶⁸ The initial consideration of the draft law was planned for 9 June. The second and the third ones were to be held on 15 June.

The first consideration was successful. On that occasion observers started speaking about the possibility of Putin’s approval of the law during the Anniversary days of Kaliningrad. However the State Duma behaved otherwise and postponed the second consideration. Before the very

⁶⁷ For example, on 1 April Russian Vice Prime-Minister Zhukov explained to Tsikel that there were no grounds to worry about the fact that planned privileges or certain other provisions were contradictory to other laws of Russia and that the Tax Code would be amended, and that would suffice. See *Novosti administraciji OEZ*. 24 maja 2005 g. // <http://www.gov.kaliningrad.ru/index.php&sgrp.=stat&idn.=oeznews>

⁶⁸ *Naujas srities statusas* // *Respublika*. – 15 April 2005 – No. 86; *Projekt zakona ob OEZ vnesion v gosdumu*. – 5 maja 2005 g. // *Novosti administratsiji OEZ*. – *Op. cit.*

celebration of the Anniversary, in the middle of June, the reasons of why it happened so became clearer. The Committee for Economy, Business and Tourism of the State Duma did not improve the draft law in a way favourable for the Oblast as promised by the representatives of the Government but, quite the opposite, presented so many comments that the second reading was postponed to October 2005.⁶⁹ “There is no need to compete over this strategic document,” Yastrzhembsky explained.⁷⁰ According to him, that single circumstance that the draft law was considered in the Parliament urgently showed the great interest of the president in the strategic issues of the region. What specific strategic issues interested the president was illustrated by the comments of the State Duma Committee. As many of them were based on the arguments regarding the incompliance of the provisions of the draft law with the laws of Russia and especially the norms of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), for example, the Kyoto Convention concerning the harmonisation of customs procedures, it was quite easy to conclude that the Committee on Economy just thoroughly fulfilled the president’s directive – by 2006 Russia must join the WTO. By the way, the directive was especially emphasised immediately after the summit of Russia and the EU held on 10 May in Moscow, where the Kremlin was assured of EU support for Russia’s strivings to become a member of the WTO.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Novosti administratsiji O EZ. 4 ijulia 2005 g. – Op. cit.

⁷⁰ Iškauskas Č. Kieno jubiliejus – Karaliaučiaus ar Kaliningrado? // <http://www.delfi.lt/archyve/index.php?id=6879743>

⁷¹ Walker M. Neiskrennija soglasheniya Moskvyy // <http://www.inosmi.ru/translation/219506.html> , 11 May 2002.

Undoubtedly, events in Moscow shocked the administration of the Kaliningrad Oblast. On 16 June, reading the regular annual statement, Yegorov could not but console himself by saying that the foreign policy objectives of Russia “created the need to search for new ways to draft the new federal law on the SEZ.” The governor himself did not suggest any new way, proposing to revive the idea of a special agreement between Russia and the EU to ensure the sustenance of Kaliningrad, once already rejected by the federal centre. Therefore, for the sake of security Yegorov accompanied the proposal with a determined emphasis in order to reach Moscow: “No one should have any doubts – the regional authorities with the support of the population will be determined to object to any attempts to use international cooperation for the erosion of Russia’s sovereignty in the Kaliningrad Oblast.”⁷²

So coming back to the opinion expressed by observers that the meeting of the Russian State Council on 2 July would approve the commitments of the motherland to the Oblast, it could be asked: “What commitments?”

State Council

Reading the interviews given by Yegorov before the Anniversary, another impression could be developed. It seemed that the Oblast was essentially satisfied with what it had: status, SEZ regime, and a level of cooperation with Federation subjects and neighbours. It successfully ensures the

⁷² Tekst ezhegodnogo poslanija glavy administratsiji (gubernatora) Kaliningradskoj oblasti V.G. Yegorova oblastnoj Dume. – 2005 06 16 // <http://www.gov.kaliningrad.ru/index.php?action=vistuplenije&person=1>

security of Russia in the west and may be the country's outpost as a region of cooperation between Russia and the EU. Although the governor mentioned the need to define more clearly the functions and limits of responsibilities of the centre and the region, he presented it not as a political problem but as an administrative issue solved by reducing bureaucracy. Yegorov gave an example: While the papers were travelling between Kaliningrad and Moscow, the Lithuanian fishing fleet caught almost all of the Russian fish.⁷³ It could be concluded that if the papers travelled faster, the Russians would catch their own fish. This example might be interesting to those who watched the so-called fishing quotas case between Russia and the EU. The Russian side seems to be able to recognise that the EU and its enlargement are guilty not for everything. However, those who thoroughly collected the Kaliningrad dossier did not come up with any questions after the governor's interview.

In mid-2005, it was clear that the situation had essentially changed. Putin's centralisation initiatives left Yegorov with only one alternative: to demonstrate loyalty to the centre and hope that the Kremlin would appreciate it. "The meeting of the State Council in Kaliningrad is an acknowledgement that the region is supported by the federal centre and the rest of the subjects of the Federation," the governor explained vaguely.⁷⁴ Therefore, he very carefully and even critically commented on the promises given a few months before by Presidential Envoy to the Northwestern Federal District Klebanov to grant the status of a foreign

⁷³ Vladimir Yegorov: *Patriotov u nas bolshe*. – Op. cit.; Biriukov V. *Prazdnik novogo vremeni* // *Rosbalt*. – 2005 06 30.

⁷⁴ Biriukov V. *Prazdnik novogo vremeni*. – Op. cit.

territory to the Oblast and avoided talking about the hottest disagreements between the centre and the region when discussing the new law on the SEZ, “True, somewhere ‘foreign territories’ have proved themselves to be a good form of governance but no one consciously talks about what a complicated historical path has had to be covered by those territories and how many decades it has taken to reach stability and welfare. The Oblast must be the country’s outpost, but as a region of cooperation between Russia and the EU. Namely an oblast where the economy is based on the SEZ regime is the most attractive for the countries of the Baltic Region.”⁷⁵

On 2 July 2005, the State Council spoke quite a lot about economy. “First of all, we will talk about powers of regions and their responsibility for economic growth, i.e. for increasing people’s standard of living,” Putin stated in his introductory speech. “It will be ensured by the mechanism of joint political responsibility and a transparent system of financing regions.”⁷⁶ What this could mean in practice was estimated even before the end of the meeting: the Kremlin would provide governors with 80% or 114 powers (forestry, environmental protection, veterinary care, licensing, protection of historical and cultural monuments, education, science, land use, public utilities, etc.), the right to supervise certain federal institutions (divisions of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Emergencies, the Ministry of Justice, etc. except for the Ministry of Defence and the Federal Security Service), and the right to reject the candidates selected by Moscow for the positions of heads of those institutions twice, as well as 80 billion

⁷⁵ Vladimir Yegorov: *Patriotov u nas bolshe.* – Op. cit.

⁷⁶ *Vstupitelnoje slovo V. Putina na zasedaniji Gosudarstvennogo soveta //*
<http://president.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2005/07/90716.shtml>

roubles per year for the implementation of commitments (functions).⁷⁷ Nobody discussed the political significance of Russia's turn in the regional policy. The mechanism of joint political responsibility was transparent. Putin returned many powers of the federal centre in economic and social fields to the appointed governors now already personally responsible for the effectiveness of Russia's regional policy. In other words, the Kremlin giving a carrot (decentralisation and money) also lifted an individual stick (control and responsibility) in front of every subject of the Federation.

Governors understood that what was shown by their attempts, although awkward, to convince Putin to return them to the Federation Council and somewhat braver encouragements to thoroughly evaluate the price of each function.⁷⁸ They relied upon the estimations of the Ministry of Finance of Russia showing that to perform just 27 out of 114 functions the federal budget had to allocate one to five billion roubles annually, let alone the fact that additional human resources would be needed for the performance of new functions.

In their turn the representatives of the federal centre suggested drafting real socioeconomic programmes, using more wit when looking for internal resources and showing more initiative when attracting investments to

⁷⁷ Troshkina O. Gubernatoram dali vlast i dengi // Rossijskaya gazeta. – 5 July 2005; Dmitriev J. Regiony – vlijatelnoje zveno gosudarstvennogo upravljenija. – Op. cit.

⁷⁸ Ratiani N. Putin oprokinul vertikal// Izvestija. – 2005 07 04.

regions.⁷⁹ The implication of their recommendations was also clear: if you cannot earn money, reduce the number of powers.

Namely on the background of this discussion between governors and the Kremlin Yegorov tried to stand out by appealing not to internal difficulties but to the problems caused by external factors. The head of the Kaliningrad Oblast administration tried to remind the participants of the specific geopolitical location of the Oblast and the EU support of 400 million euros to regions of neighbouring countries. He did not succeed. The governor, who started talking about the peculiarity of the Oblast, was interrupted by Putin encouraging the former to speak up, “into the microphone.” Yegorov spoke “into the microphone” but his statements were drowned out by the noise of interferences. The equipment installed by Moscow specialists was soon repaired but the governor did not dare repeat the introduction and from the whispers in the audience, according to the journalist from the *Izvestiya* who documented it, it was clear that nothing would be left to the mercy of fate but it seemed that there would be no one “special” more.⁸⁰

The impression was enhanced by one more circumstance. It became clear that Klebanov, who was cornered behind the curtain and asked about the promises of the status of a foreign territory to the Oblast, participated in the meeting with experts held in February in Kaliningrad “accidentally”

⁷⁹Zakliuchitelnoje slovo V. Putina na zasedaniji Gosudarstvennogo soveta // <http://president.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2005/07/90731shtml>

⁸⁰ Ratiani N. – Ibidem.

and confused the idea of the new status with the new SEZ law.⁸¹ In addition, the presidential envoy to the Northwestern Federal District pointed out that immediately following his visit to Kaliningrad the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia published a special statement comprehensively commenting on the question: The Constitution of the Russian Federation did not contain concepts such as a “foreign territory”, the Oblast was an integral part of Russia where the laws of Russia are undoubtedly effective, and the changes caused by EU enlargement on the political map of Europe, although touching upon a number of questions related to the sustenance activities of the Oblast, did not form sufficient grounds for revising the status of that subject of the Federation.⁸² By the way, Klebanov could not but sting and remind of one more circumstance: Immediately after the statement of the MoFA of Russia the Oblast authorities also rejected the idea of the status of a foreign territory.

Indeed, after the statement of the MoFA of Russia on 15 February 2005 Tsikel convened a media conference where he declared that the idea of the status of a foreign territory was raised by only some politicians in the Oblast: “The issue of granting the region the status of “a foreign territory” is no matter of ideology of the Kaliningrad Oblast and is not analysed as a variant of its further socioeconomic development,” and “the status problem which could provoke amendments to the Constitution hinders

⁸¹ Ivankova E. Obmenialis stolbami // Kaskad. – 2005 07 07.

⁸² See the statement of the MoFA of Russia: Kaliningrado srities konstitucinio statuso keisti neketinama, patvirtina Rusijos URM // BNS. – 14 February 2005

the work of the political elite of the region in forming a common and realistic approach to the further development of the Oblast.”⁸³

Thus, the presidential envoy, avoiding unpleasant questions by a bitter reminder about the “real” story of the idea of the status of a foreign territory for the Kaliningrad Oblast, suggested that the Oblast politicians should first clarify their own mutual relations.

For the sake of justice, it must be stressed that the federal centre tried to mitigate the tendency highlighted. During the meeting of the State Council, Putin referred to Kaliningrad twice.

He congratulated the Oblast residents on the city anniversary assuring them of Moscow’s intention to be as close to the region as possible. The Russian president also pointed out that Immanuel Kant, who in his “scholastic work about the state and the law, especially emphasised the principle of sharing powers as a way of seeking the harmony of public governance.”⁸⁴

Finally, after the meeting Putin demonstrated attention to Yegorov by eating lunch with him in the Solar Stone restaurant. The lunch offered a chance for others as well to refresh their historical memory. Someone remembered that 300 years ago a youngster named Karol Munchausen not yet known to anyone, the future prototype of the famous literary character,

⁸³ Read more: Kaliningrado srities valdžia nesvarsto idėjos suteikti regionui “užsienio teritorijos” statusą // BNS. – 15 February 2005

⁸⁴ Vstupitelnoje slovo V. Putina na zasedaniji Gosudarstvennogo soveta. – Op. cit.

on his way to service in Saint Petersburg, dropped into the inn, which was then located in the place of the Solar Stone restaurant, to regain his strength. He departed owed the owner of the inn three thalers. However that was just a coincidence, the journalists reassured the readers.⁸⁵ It was difficult to say whether it was necessary to reassure the residents of Kaliningrad, who since long ago have joked that Baron Munchausen was a typical Russian. He first caused problems and then heroically found a solution. And he did not think ahead further than one step. He sat on a cannon ball and flew to scout the area. Only when the cannon ball started falling, did he think of how to fly back.

Anyway, 3 July 2005 was still on Putin's agenda – the last day of the Russian president's participation in the events dedicated to the 750th Anniversary of the city. So no one hurried to announce the final summary of the pros and cons of Putin's visit to the Kaliningrad Oblast.

⁸⁵ Sokolov-Mitrich D., Stulov I. *Tevtonskije rytsari s rossijskimi flazhkami.* – Op. cit.

*III. DAY THREE – EUROPE.
KALININGRAD – MEETING POINT
OF RUSSIA AND EUROPE*

Sunday, the last day of the celebrations started with prayer and concentration. Metropolitan Kirill II blessed the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. The bells were ringing. That was an important element of the Anniversary but still not the most important one. The organisers associated the climax of the Anniversary with the Europeanisation theme instead of the Orthodoxy. That was witnessed by the plotline of the events of 3 July 2005 submitted half a year in advance: that day's "events in Kaliningrad must become one of the most important news items in the mass media of Russia and Europe. The participation of Russian President Vladimir Putin and heads of the countries invited to the Anniversary will allow raising the bar for Kaliningrad as a Russian city for open cooperation with Europe."¹

What could all of that have looked like? Here's one of the examples of the vision of 3 July.

At the beginning of July the mass media was full of information about the epoch-making meeting in Kaliningrad which would determine the relations of Russia and Europe for a long time.

Tony Blair, the premier of Great Britain, presiding in the Council of Europe, President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso, heads of Germany, France, the Baltic States and Poland were shaking hands with Russian President Putin. Together they celebrated the 750th Anniversary of the foundation of Kaliningrad – until 4 July 1946 known as

¹ Kontseptsiya prazdnovaniya 750-letiya osnovaniya Kaliningrada. – Op. cit. – S. 6.

Konigsberg in Eastern Prussia – and raised glasses of champagne when granting the name of Immanuel Kant to Kaliningrad State University.

The Russian president, when saying a toast, explicitly mentioned that soon the Oblast itself would be renamed so as to provide adequate reflection of the past and become the symbol of the growing integration of Russia and the EU that would help to forget Potsdam.

At the joint media conference the leaders explained that the Kaliningrad Oblast would become a pilot region of cooperation of Russia and the EU in reality, not on paper. Putin announced that the agreement was made on the formation of a multilateral high-level group to solve the most urgent problems in the fields of health care and environment and take specific steps in fighting cross-border smuggling and crimes. Representatives of the mass media were informed about a few more initiatives: the visa-free regime between the countries of the Schengen zone, associated countries and the Kaliningrad Oblast, as well as the establishment of a special foundation with 200 million euros available annually for the development of the Kaliningrad Oblast to be financed by Germany, Northern Europe and the EU. The presidents of Lithuania and Poland declared that companies of their countries had drafted new investment projects in the Oblast and the regional governor explained in detail the manifestation of the attractiveness of the new law on the SEZ for foreign investors seeking participation in the entire Russian market. The participants of the media conference unanimously assured that because Kaliningrad had become the most important factor linking Russia and the EU, it would no longer be a

wild card in negotiations, satisfying narrow interests of one party or another, or a headache in bilateral relations.

Let us repeat that this has been a vision of 3 July 2005, drawn by many experts actively interested in the Kaliningrad case.² The vision, by the way, was not created out of thin air but constructed of repeatedly discussed solutions to the Kaliningrad problems. Only this time it was presented as an ironic contrast to the reality.

Russian Diplomacy and Anniversary

In fact, it was all different. The third day of the Anniversary appeared in the most important news of the foreign and Russian mass media much earlier. And when in the news, it gave rise to talks about Kaliningrad not only as a place where the ideas of the indigenous author of “Eternal Peace” would come true, but rather about Kaliningrad as a scene of Russia’s diplomatic intrigues and foreign policy manipulations.

Discussions on the events of 3 July in the Kaliningrad Oblast primarily appeared in the mass media of foreign countries when in June 2005 it was becoming clear that Moscow had been preparing a summit of Russia, Germany and, as it came out later, France in Svetlogorsk (Rauschen), a resort located just a few dozen kilometres from Kaliningrad and that the heads of the neighbouring countries would not be invited. There were invitations in German media to consider whether Kaliningrad was a

² Dewar S. Lost Opportunity. – Op. cit.

suitable place for Schröder to continue the topic of reconciliation of Russia and Germany initiated by Putin in Moscow on The 9th of May celebration in Moscow in commemoration of the end of the Second World War.³ Whereas in Lithuania and Poland a search for reasons why they were not invited had begun. As the information and diplomatic strife about the interpretation of consequences of the Second World War, Russia's ignorance of the occupation of the Baltic States and the distorted history of Poland had not yet cooled down, naturally the attention was primarily paid to that. Moscow's move was evaluated as another explicit sign of the disfavour of Vilnius and Warsaw, punishing the former for refusing to participate in the celebration of the end of the Second World War on 9 May 2005 in Moscow and the latter for calling attention to the murder of Polish soldiers in Katyn, the occupation of the Baltic States, and criticism of the Kremlin for failing to mention Poland as an ally in the fight against fascism. Both Lithuania and Poland were urged to reply adequately, i.e. don't let the potency to interpret the history of Kaliningrad stay in Russia's hand, to organise a conference about the spirit of Potsdam, etc.⁴ Still those urgings didn't bring about any significant response. Historical motives were not forgotten. However Vilnius and Warsaw opted for another line of behaviour stressing that Moscow was organising a geopolitical demonstration in the Kaliningrad Oblast to show the Russian approach to who was who in the post-Soviet area, pushing away Central European countries that actively participate in the region to the status of "political

³ Manthey J. Durch Zwietracht zur Eintracht: Königsberg war Deutschlands grosse Buergerstadt // Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung. – 19 June 2005

⁴ Laučiūtė J. Turėjome progą pademonstruoti, kas tikrai gerbia Lietuvos valstybę // Lietuvos žinios. – 13 July 2003

pawns” and proposing the rules of the power game for the large countries wherein they do not treat the small and smaller ones as equals.

In general this political assessment did not present anything new. Both Poland and Lithuania and other Baltic States repeatedly tried to draw the attention of the West to the Russian foreign policy strategy to revise the ratio of powers formed under the influence of the Euro-Atlantic integration relying on the model of the concert of the large countries and complained that they were not understood. Quite often that factor turned into an additional argument for stressing differences between the old and the new EU Member States.⁵ However this time the geopolitical evaluation of the Russian diplomacy’s step was presented especially sharply and emotionally both to the West and to the East.

“If German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Russian President Vladimir Putin really participate in the celebrations in Kaliningrad with the immediate neighbours absent and are inaugurated as honorary doctors of Kaliningrad University, this will be a significant sign for the relations of Moscow and Berlin, which we will read closely and respond to,” stated

⁵ For example, immediately after the Moscow summit of the EU and Russia of 10 May, Kwasniewski met Solana in Warsaw and tried to explain that when Poland, the Baltic States and some other Eastern European countries were living a period of complicated and tense relations with Moscow, Germany and France were consolidating their connections with Russia. Therefore, one of the most important goals of the EU, as the Polish president assured, was to have a coherent approach to Russia, preventing separatist processes that strengthen the connections with individual states. “Some countries have lived too close to Russia for a long time while others were not that close. We must together find a way to move forward pragmatically and leave history to the historians,” Solana suggested in turn. See Lenkija ragina ES laikytis vieningos politikos dėl Rusijos // BNS. – 12 May 2005

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania Antanas Valionis on June the 21st.⁶ He used the occasion to point out that Germany did not declare any clear position concerning the proposal of the three Baltic States to Chairman of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barosso to construct a gas pipeline from Russia to Europe not on the bed of the Baltic Sea, as decided by the Russian gas companies and Germany, but across the territory of the Baltic States and Poland.

On the following day Valionis' criticism of Berlin was supplemented by the comment of Speaker of the Seimas of Lithuania Artūras Paulauskas intended exclusively for Moscow. "This is not an accidental step but a part of the general foreign policy of Russia," which was why, according to the speaker of the Parliament, one should draw "certain conclusions and summaries."⁷ Those politicians were soon joined by President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus, who expressed surprise as to why the 750th Anniversary of the City of Kaliningrad was commemorated ignoring its neighbours.⁸

The Poles were keeping pace with the Lithuanians. Everybody had forgotten quite a mild statement by Polish Ambassador to Beling Andrzej Byrto that the participation of neighbouring Poland and Lithuania in the celebrations in Kaliningrad on the same level as Germany would be "an

⁶ Maskvos ir Berlyno flirtas dėl Kaliningrado – akibrokštas kaimynams // BNS. – 21 June 2005

⁷ Lietuvos ir Lenkijos vadovų nepakvietimas į Kaliningrado jubiliejų nėra atsitiktinis, mano Seimo pirmininkas // BNS. – 22 June 2005

⁸ Nesuprantama, kodėl Lietuva ir Lenkija nepakviestos į Kaliningrado jubiliejų, sako prezidentas V. Adamkus // BNS. – 29 June 2005

expression of normal relations”⁹when as soon as the Polish diplomacy and political authorities entered the international public space. Minister of Foreign Affairs Adam Daniel Rotfeld emphasised that today Russia was concerned only with its global position and possible support from the large European countries and ironically offered himself to become an adviser to the Russian president and remind him how much effort and financial resources were allocated by its neighbours to regional cooperation with the Kaliningrad Oblast. In general, Russians think in virtual categories and thus they believe that they will create a myth of a great country bypassing their closest neighbours, explained Rotfeld. If that’s what they want, we won’t invite Putin to the Gdansk anniversary celebration.¹⁰ There was enough sarcasm in Kwasniewski’s comments about another mistake by Putin, an even greater one this time, the German chancellor having only a small chance of winning the coming elections, the farewell nature of the meeting with his friend from the Kremlin, and efforts of the French to demonstrate friendship with Russia where it was and was not necessary.¹¹

Those statements and speeches were generously quoted by the German media¹², which gave new colour to the parliamentary election campaign.

⁹ Maskvos ir Berlyno flirtas dėl Kaliningrado. – Op. cit.

¹⁰ Rotfeld: politika Rossji – “myślenie w kategoriach wirtualnych” // PAP. – 28 June 2005; Polish leaders disappointed at not being asked to Russian anniversary // APN. – 24 June 2005.

¹¹ Kwasniewski: niezaproszenie do Kaliningradu to więcej niż błąd // PAP. – 27 czerwca 2005.

¹² Sharfe Kritik Lituanes an der deutschen Aussenpolitik // Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. – 24 June 2005; Wehner M. Wer sind schon Litauen und Polen? // Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung. –26 June, 2005; Kaliningrad

Deputy Chairman of the Free Democrats in the Bundestag and foreign policy representative Werner Hoyer stated that by leaving for the celebrations in Kaliningrad the chancellor rudely disregarded the sensitivity of small countries of the region, heightened the jealousy of Lithuania and Poland, and suggested the idea of the Moscow-Berlin axis. Although in a subtler fashion, representative of the Christian Democratic Union for foreign policy Friedbert Pflüger also criticised Schröder. “I think it’s good that the German chancellor is going to Kaliningrad,” he said, “but the chancellor should explicitly tell Putin that he made a mistake by not inviting the heads of Lithuania and Poland, countries which were and still are closely related to Kaliningrad, to the celebrations. The German chancellor’s good relations with Russia are valuable but Poland and Lithuania are our partners in the EU and NATO. Germany is obliged to speak on behalf of our partners,” Pflüger added. “In the past Germany established relations with Russia bypassing Lithuania and Poland, but we should never do this again.”¹³ Official Berlin replied to the criticism. Federal Government Press Officer Bela Anda stated that the fact was greatly pitied. Berlin stuck to the opinion that the heads of Lithuania and Poland should also participate in the upcoming events in Kaliningrad. However Russian President Putin, as the host of the events, decided

als Joker // Focus. – 27 June, 2005; Warschau kritisiert Berlins Kremlpolitik // Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. – 28 June 2005.

¹³ V. Putinas padarė klaidą, sako Vokietijos opozicijos atstovas // BNS. – 1 July 2005; Vilnius ir Varšuva sulaukė dar vieno viešo Kremliaus akibroko // Lietuvos Rytas. – 4 July 2005 – No. 153.

otherwise, which was why he had to assume the responsibility for the processes under way.¹⁴

Moscow didn't try to shirk the responsibility, which was witnessed by the twists of the invitation affair and the hardly concealable satisfaction with the international agiotage caused.

On 27 May, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov, visiting Kaliningrad soon after meetings in Lithuania with Valionis and Prime Minister Algirdas Mykolas Brazauskas, gave vague answers to questions about what guests from Europe might be seen and whether Putin would arrive for the Anniversary celebrations. He said he didn't dare comment on the president's agenda and claimed that he knew well only the fact that the head of the country devoted special attention to the celebrations and sought specific results in comprehensively improving the development of the Oblast and its position in the region most important to Russia.

In general, when communicating with the mass media, the minister tried to talk more about the executed agreements with Lithuania and the results of the work of the intergovernmental cooperation commission of Russia and Lithuania.¹⁵

¹⁴ Susitikimas Kaliningrade: Lenkija ir Lietuva nepageidaujamos // Focus. – 24 June 2005.

¹⁵ Stenograma vystuplenija i otvetov ministra inostrannyh del Rossijskoj Federatsiji S. V. Lavrova na voprosy rossijskih SMI po itogam vizita v Kaliningradskuju oblast (Kaliningrad, 27 maja 2005 g.) // http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4nsf/sps/518BEA7935FC3257000E005D3A23;



20. Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania A. Brazauskas (on the left) and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S. Lavrov, Trakai, 27 May 2004. Photo of "Lietuvos Rytas"

He talked about the signed governmental agreement on cooperation in the implementation of the 2K project, setting flexible conditions for harmonising rates of cargo transit to the Kaliningrad and Klaipeda sea ports and ensuring the development thereof; the supplement of the Commission with seven new working groups and also about the fact that it had been agreed with Valionis to address Brussels together with regard to the preservation of the simplified visa-free regime after Lithuania became a member of the Schengen zone in 2007. By the way, on the same 27 May the official website of the Russian president posted an extract about the meeting of Putin and Minister of Transport Igor Levitin heading the aforesaid intergovernmental commission from the Russian side: Levitin rejoiced at the results of the negotiations with the Lithuanians and Putin

agreed, repeating that the 2K project was in line with the interests of both Lithuania and Russia.¹⁶ In other words, Russia and Lithuania seemed to follow the way of pragmatic cooperation after passionate discussions of their different interpretations of the occupation.

True, a somewhat different opinion was expressed by Lavrov towards the Poles when he heard about the difficulties experienced by Kaliningrad residents when crossing the border with Poland. However, even mentioning adequate measures if the diplomatic ones failed, he was not inclined to give prominence to the problem.¹⁷

Meanwhile, a few days later on 30 May Kaliningrad residents received answers to the question not answered by Lavrov. Moscow sent a signal that the celebrations would really be attended by Putin, Alexy II and Schröder.¹⁸ It seems the Russian President invited him to the Anniversary in April 2003 at the Petersburg Forum of German and Russian businessmen held in Weimar.

On their visit to Kaliningrad on 8 June 2005, Yastrzhembsky and Gref once again assured that chances were good that Putin, the German chancellor and possibly heads of some other states would come. That was

¹⁶ Nachalo rabochej vstrechi s Ministrom transporta Igorem Levitinym // <http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2005/05/88739.shtml>

¹⁷ Stenograma vystuplenija i otvetov ministra inostrannyh del Rossijskoj Federatsiji S. V. Lavrova. – Op. cit.

¹⁸ Na jubilej Kaliningrada prijedut vysokije gosti, 30 May 2005 // www.kaliningrad.ru/news/others/k44263.html; Gref provediot v Kaliningrade zasedanije orgkomiteta po 750-letiju goroda, 30 May 2005 // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/462184.html>.

finally showed by the response of both officials, provoked after it became clear that Chkalovsk military airport, located in a Kaliningrad suburb, could not accept VIP jets and to the question of whether it was possible for them to land anywhere, Chief of the Baltic Military Navy Vladimir Valuev said that anything could land but the question was – how and where. The admiral's reply cost the Ministry of Defence an additional 10.6 million roubles.¹⁹ The preparation of Chkalovsk Airport was completed in time.

A couple of weeks in advance of the event, on 20 June, on the eve of the statement of the Lithuanian minister of foreign affairs, a media conference was held by Savenko. The mayor once again confirmed that the city was expecting Schröder and informed that he had heard rumours about the arrival of the French president as well.²⁰ Finally, at the end of June, Russia also started talking, first as official Moscow, which had calmly listened to the statements of Vilnius and Warsaw, later followed by Russian observers and politicians.

The 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad is an internal matter for Russia, its celebration organised by the federal authorities in cooperation with the Oblast administration, the chief of the Russian diplomacy explained on 29

¹⁹ Iškauskas Č. Kieno jubiliejus – Karaliaučiaus ar Kaliningrado? – Op. cit.; Yastrzhembsky: Shansy na uchastije prezidenta RF v prazdnovaniji jubileja goroda ochen vysoki // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/others/k46238.html>; Riabushev A. Putin skroetsia v “baltijskih peskah” // *Nezavizimaya gazeta*. – 2005 06 30.

²⁰ Na 750-letije Kaliningrada obeschaet prijehat prezident Frantsiji Zhak Shirak, 20 June 2005 // www.regnum.ru/news/472455.html.

June.²¹ “The main accent of the celebrations is the meeting of the State Council. Statements that Poland and Lithuania are not invited to the celebration contradict the truth. The administration of the Kaliningrad Oblast have plans for events which will be attended by representatives of the neighbouring countries’ border regions. Yes, Gerhard Schröder and Jacques Chirac have been invited. However they are coming to the traditional meeting of the trinity – a Russian, German and French summit. This is an independent event within the established political dialogue between Moscow, Berlin and Paris. They have met in the same composition five times now. The circumstance that the German chancellor will participate in the ceremony of granting the name of Kant to Kaliningrad State University and receive the title of an honorary doctor of the University is more than natural because Kant was a famous German philosopher.

No one argues Kant’s merits to philosophy. Also, no doubts have arisen with regard to the translation of Lavrov’s thoughts from the diplomatic language. The German chancellor and the French president are not guests of the festival but colleagues who Putin needs to talk to. True, in a few days the assistant to the Russian president for international issues Sergey Prikhodko would say that they were friends²² thus highlighting the essence of the issue even more.

²¹ Ministr inostrannyh del Rossiji: 750-letije Kaliningrada eto Rossijiskoje sobytije // http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/sps/18E47E839999AB00EC325702F002FB4F1

²² Vilnius ir Varšuva sulaukė dar vieno viešo Kremliaus akibroškto // Lietuvos Rytas. – 4 July 2005, No. 153



Moscow shows to Warsaw and Vilnius who it regards as its friends and draws their attention to the fact that the largest EU Member States, even in the crisis over of the Constitution recently rejected by the French and the Dutch and the disrupted EU summit dedicated to financial issues, refuse to sacrifice their strategic partnership with Russia

21. Deputy of the Kaliningrad Oblast Duma S. Ginzburg

because of the tension between them and Central European countries. That would even be impossible because Russia is a large and influential state needed by Europe as a supplier of raw materials and a factor for balancing the global forces.

This assessment was not argued by anyone. However when Russian observers started clarifying how this campaign of Russian diplomacy would reflect on the development of the Kaliningrad Oblast, their opinions were divided into three camps: the one criticising the Kremlin, the one not dramatising the situation, and the one envisaging its advantages.

Although it is difficult to forecast how specifically the Lithuanians and the Poles may react, the former explained, it is obvious that good relations with neighbours are much more important for the Oblast than those with

the states whose daily contacts with the Oblast, to put it mildly, are not active. They quoted Duma Member Solomon Ginsburg, who stated that Moscow's decision was based on emotions, which was why it was not worth expecting effective negotiations regarding solutions to the Kaliningrad problems, and also made known the Internet campaign of Kaliningrad residents to send invitations to the presidents of Poland and Lithuania by e-mail to the address of the diplomatic representations of the countries and the statement of the Kaliningrad Regional Public Movement Respublika.²³ The statement signed by some of the deputies of the Oblast Duma explained a position condemning the Kremlin's policy: "The authorities of the Russian Federation did not find it necessary to invite the first persons of Lithuania and Poland to the 750th Anniversary of the city. We think that such a gesture is unfriendly not only towards the two neighbouring states but also all towards the Russian citizens permanently residing in the Kaliningrad Oblast. On behalf of more responsible persons, the Respublika Movement sincerely regrets the unfriendly behaviour and hopes that in the future we will be able to avoid such misunderstandings between our good neighbours."²⁴

At the same time, the second camp suggested not dramatising the situation because the considerations of the Oblast problems at the Russia-EU level

²³ Ratiani N., Stulov I. Spor slavian mezhdu soboj // Izvestija. – 30 June 2005; Genkonsul Polshy poblagodaryl kaliningradtsev za "prezidentskij fleshmob" // IA Regnum. – 2005 06 29.

²⁴ Kaliningradiečiai deda parašus, kad į miesto jubiliejų būtų pakviesti Lietuvos ir Lenkijos vadovai // BNS. – 30 June 2005. The Public Political Movement Respublika was established in February 2005 immediately after the visit of Klebanov and Gref to the Oblast. The key objective declared by the Movement is to ensure the status of a republic in the composition of the Russian Federation for the Kaliningrad Oblast.

are determined not by personal relations between the heads of states but rather by the opinion of the top officials of the European Commission with whom Moscow negotiates and at the regional level by business relations of the Oblast with the bordering regions of the neighbouring states.²⁵ Vice Speaker of the Oblast Duma Kozlov, who expressed this opinion, hoped that the presidents of Lithuania and Poland, having previously visited the Oblast, would come here time and time again at their convenience.

Finally, the third camp close to Moscow, whom the Oblast governor had also joined, envisaged only advantages in the current situation.²⁶ They said that would be a good lesson for Lithuania and Poland on how they should not miss a chance to remain silent and retain their self-respect. “And should the Polish president, for example, be invited to the Kaliningrad Anniversary?” *Izvestiya* asked its readers. 74.2% said no.²⁷ Right they are. So what could Poland do being dependent on Russia’s gas and oil, or Lithuania, living to a great extent on the Kaliningrad transit of goods and passengers? In speech the neighbours burn with desire to help with the transit issue but in reality, by nodding their heads towards Brussels, just aggravate the communication of the Oblast with the motherland. This

²⁵ Kaliningrad ne bespokoit otstutstvije glav Litvy i Polshy // Rosbalt. – 2005 06 29.

²⁶ Prazdnik novogo vremeni. – Op. cit.; Sergey Yastrzhembsky: Ne sleduet naviazivat Rossiji, kak prazdnovat jubilej Kalininingrada. – 2 July 2005 // <http://kaliningrad750.ru/rus/index.phtml?idnews=959>; Olzhyc V. Litva obidelas na Rossiju i Germaniju iz-za Kalininingrada // <http://www/regnum.ru/news/474787.html>; Zatevakin A. Kogda strasti uliagutsia // Strazh Baltiji. – 2005 07 05.

²⁷ Ratiani N., Stulov. Spor slavian mezhdou soboj. – Op. cit.

circumstance has already started exhausting Moscow's patience. At the same time, Europe is not very happy with the too "independent" policy of Warsaw and Vilnius constantly turning towards the USA, which was demonstrated by the "orange revolution" period in Ukraine when the most influential states of the EU did not have any intention of interfering in the conflict. Thus, instead of teaching how the Russians, Germans and the French should speak, drink or dress, they should rather watch the geopolitical barometer and base their relations with the Russian Federation and its Kaliningrad Oblast on it rather than on their ambitions. This context even gave rise to specific recommendations, for example, to Lithuania on how it should behave with Russia.²⁸ As both countries have common interests in the field of economy ("common energy business"), profess Christian values, and are united by the common fight against terrorism and care for the environment in the Curonian Spit, why could Lithuania not make a goodwill gesture and intercede for Russia in Brussels with regard to facilitating Russian citizens travelling to the EU, Moscow explained the elements of the diplomatic art to Vilnius. In turn Russia would grant discounts in Lithuania's field of interest.

Having followed those discussions and in general the course of the so-called story of invitations for 3 July, several at least preliminary conclusions could be made. Russia intended to turn the third day of the Kaliningrad Anniversary, even before the break of dawn, into a demonstration of satisfaction of its own geopolitical interests. For example, *Financial Times*

²⁸ Olzhych V. Pribaltijskij aplomb i ideja družby s Rossijej // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/514506.html>

Deutschland had no further doubts that the organisation of the 750th Anniversary celebrations was dictated by Russia's desire to settle doubts regarding the dependence of the former Königsberg.²⁹ In other words, if there were any further doubts as to who owned the Oblast, they were settled by the very agreement of the German chancellor to arrive. Indeed, who could deny that Schröder accepted the invitation of the Russian president seeking to avoid controversial discussions in Moscow regarding the historical dependence of Kaliningrad. If there were anyone in doubt as to who had the influence in this part of the Baltic Sea region and where the "dividing lines" were directed, they could see how easy it was to knock Poland and Lithuania out of the saddle, demonstrate their dependence on Moscow's relations with the West, and figuratively speaking turn them into sort of footballs on the field of those relations, which is somewhat more global than some might have thought.

On that occasion some remembered the peace treaties signed on 7 and 9 July 1807 in Eastern Prussia, in Tilsit, between Russia and France and between Prussia and France as well as the expressions of "Tilsit spirit" and "Tilsit atmosphere" which appeared afterwards and reflected the peculiar nature of the relations of the three countries at the beginning of the 19th century. Without going deep into the subtleties of the historical circumstances of the time, the analogy was used to stress one specific implication: although the political realities and other summits of Tilsit and Svetlogorsk were united not only by a trilateral format but also the spirit of Eurocontinentalism.

²⁹ Rybak A. Splendid Isolation. – Op. cit.

The Spirit of Eurocontinentalism

To be honest, the expression of the spirit of Eurocontinentalism is discussed every time the cooperation of Russia, Germany and France is seen in the international arena. It is inspired by both theoretical geopolitical schemes of Eurocontinentalism in Western Europe and Neo-Eurasianism in Russia and the practical examples of foreign policies of the aforesaid states. In accordance with the logic of geopolitical concepts, Eurocontinentalism and Neo-Eurasianism are united by a common goal directed towards Atlantism and the strategic domination of the USA. Therefore Western Europe and Russia are interested in the integration of the energy infrastructure, economic and security structures as well as the consolidation of the single economic area and common political institutions by pushing the USA out of Europe and resisting its striving to creating a single-pole world.

Examples illustrating how this trend is realised in practice are given in abundance: from bilateral, especially after the advent of Putin to power, declarations of Russia and Germany's strategic partnership, strategic cooperation initiatives of Moscow and Paris, the trinity meetings, trilateral diplomatic campaigns against the USA to the overlapping of agreements on geoeconomic and Russian debt issues, the declared strategic partnership of the EU and Russia and the European and Russian structures.³⁰ Incidentally, it can be noticed that the above structural overlap is often

³⁰ Laurinavičius Č., Motieka E., Statkus N. – Baltijos valstybių geopolitikos bruožai. XX amžius. – Vilnius, 2005. – P. 321 – 336; Baršytė J., Daniliauskas J. Geopolitinė Rusijos Federacijos užsienio politikos orientacija po 2001 m. rugsejo 11-osios // Politologija. – 2003. – No. 3 (31). – P. 121 – 142.

favourable not for the strengthening of the relations of the EU-15 (25) and Russia but rather for the privileged relations of Germany, France and Russia. Namely this way, for example, was used to evaluate the 15th summit of the EU and Russia organised in Moscow on 10 May 2005 and the agreement on cooperation in the fields of economy, freedom, security and justice, external security, education and research signed there.³¹

On the other hand, attention should also be paid to the fact that the same geopolitical concepts also function as a sort of brake because the coherent development thereof would finally lead to just two opportunities: Russia is structurally tied to Western Europe or Western Europe falls under the influence of Russia. This means that the meetings of the trinity – France, Germany and Russia – may be treated not as the formation of an anti-American axis but rather as the creation of a provisional unofficial structure seeking to tie Russia to the West and coordinate other issues of the global policy between the EU and Russia.³² Therefore, in practice the observed balancing of the large EU Member States – eliminating the USA, expanding cooperation with Russia – does not mean that they are cherishing the vision of a multi-polar world thus surrendering to Russia's manoeuvres to use the EU and US competition to realise its own geopolitical and geoeconomic objectives. This witnesses the appearance of both both stability and cooperation as well as conflict and destabilisation because of the contradictions of the process of European and Russian

³¹ Radio France Internationale, 12 May 2005 // <http://www.insmi.ru/translation/219540.html>

³² Berlin – Moskva: 2005 – 2008 gody (“Eurazisches Magazin”, Germanija) // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k65069.html>

structure overlapping. The same is confirmed by other evidenced trends in expressions of global scenarios (transcontinental, Euro-isolationist and Euro-Atlantic) depending on specific circumstances.

Still the belief that no progress further than the theoretical concepts and public relations campaigns of Eurocontinentalism (of the EU-Russia axis) will be made does not deny the tendencies of increasing compatibility of the interests of the large EU Member States and Russia in international policy and the possibility of union relations and in turn stimulates hypothetical considerations of what the multi-polar or single-polar world scenarios would mean in every specific case.

In this context the meeting of the trinity on 3 July 2005 in the Kaliningrad Oblast became especially eloquent.

The reaction of Poland and Lithuania thereto expressed the fear of the countries located between France, Germany and Russia that the aforesaid coordination of interests would be carried out on the account of their interests and that the Kaliningrad Oblast would be used for that purpose.

Scenarios of the development of events immediately appeared in Russia based on the opposition of the multi-polar and single-polar worlds and the location of the Oblast accordingly “detected” in them. For example, Russian geopolitician Alexander Dugin, who in 1999 suggested returning Kaliningrad to Germany in exchange for liquidation of the barrier between Russia and Germany and for the sake of the continental unification of

Eurasia against US expansion, now modified his proposal.³³ Dugin explained that the USA, seeking global domination, further hinders the development of strategically independent geopolitical poles creating barriers to the approach of the EU and Russia. To that end Washington is forming a “sanitary cordon” thus increasing the tension between Russia and Central Europe and provoking conflict situations from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. In such a context the US is also interested in the tension in the Kaliningrad Oblast topics, activating Lithuania and Poland for that purpose, but does not deny the possibility that at a certain moment the nationalistic forces of Germany would be involved and the Russian “patriots” would make steps in response. It’s not difficult to forecast that using the tension the USA will acquire additional levers for controlling the relations of Russia and the EU, and Russia will have to look for ways to neutralise those levers.

A totally different prospect for the Kaliningrad Oblast is sketched by the implementation of the multi-polar world scenario referred to by Dugin as the Eurasian scenario. Balancing the USA, Moscow must support EU efforts, relying on Russian resources and international prestige, to increase its geopolitical influence, promote the approach of Russia and Europe and transform the zone located between the EU nucleus and Russia into an area of positive integration for both participants of the strategic alliance. The status of the Kaliningrad Oblast should be construed namely in accordance with the long-term approach prospects of Russia and the EU.

³³ Dugin A. Scenarios for our “movie”, 2005 09 02
[//http://kaliningradexpert.org/node/1624/](http://kaliningradexpert.org/node/1624/)

By using special clauses in the fields of visas, duties, economy and others, it must be transformed into a geopolitical bridge between Russia (Eurasia) and the EU. Such implementation of the scenario would create conditions for the preservation of the legal status quo of the Oblast as asserted by Dugin and would allow including into its economic revival not only the weakly integrated into the EU neighbouring countries but, most important, the central administrative structures of the EU as a whole.

To be honest, in this case Dugin repeated what had been propagated for several years by some influential politicians of the Kaliningrad Oblast (Vice-Speaker of the Duma, one of the leaders of the Yedinaya Rossiya in the Oblast Kozlov) and geopoliticians (Anatoly Gorodilov) also supported by the management of the Yedinaya Rossiya in Moscow. They had suggested specific ways of Europeanising the Oblast more rapidly: by adopting the law on the SEZ to create more favourable conditions for the European capital, to align Russia's regulatory legal acts on foreign trade and external relations of the Oblast with the EU standards, to sign a special agreement between Russia and the EU regarding the development of the Oblast and to draft the law of the Russian Federation "On Granting the Status of a Foreign Territory to the Kaliningrad Oblast." Those measures were also based on the paradigm of interconnectivity of the EU and Russia. A place for the military factor was even found in there, recommending to start the negotiations of Russia and the EU on the integration of the military navy of the Baltic Sea into the general structure for the assurance of security of Euro-Russia in the Baltic Sea region. However the authors of those measures and recommendations, unlike

Dugin, explained that the implementation of their proposals should create conditions for the Oblast to become a reliable bridgehead for Russia's "entrance" to Europe.³⁴ The more the EU "penetrates" the Oblast, they stated, the more significant and influential in the chess game between Europe (the EU) and Russia (Eurasia) is Russia's Oblast as a "passing pawn." In early 2005, the list of the above measures was supplemented by one more: the measure of activating the region of Eastern Prussia to strengthen border cooperation.³⁵ It could incidentally be treated as involvement into the discussions which arose in Germany after the address of the Christian Democrats/Christian Social Union Bundestag members (Jeurgem Klimke) in September 2004 to Minister of Foreign Affairs Fischer regarding the possibilities of establishing the Euroregion of Eastern Prussia*.

³⁴ Gorodilov A., Dudarev M., Kargopolov S., Kulikov A. Integratsija Kaliningradskogo subjekta Rossijskoj Federatsiji v Evropejskij Sojuz. – Kaliningrad, 2003. – S. 270 – 331; also see the introductory speech of A. Chilingarov, member of the Supreme Council of the Yedinaya Rossiya, Deputy Speaker of the Russian State Duma Drogije Chitатели (s. 3); Gorodilov A. A. Sojuz Evropy i Evraaziji v aspekte natsionalnoj bezopasnosti. Rol i mesto v etom protsesse Kaliningradskoj oblasti. – Kaliningrad (manuscript), 2004. – 11 s.; Gorodilov A., Kozlov S. Kaliningradskaya oblast kak zagranichnaya teritorija Rossiji. – Kaliningrad (manuscript), 2005. – 9 s.

³⁵ Gorodilov A., Kargopolov S. Vostochnaya Prussija. Problemy postroenija etogo regiona. – Kaliningrad (manuscript), 2005. – 10 s.

* The German Bunderstag opposition posed the following questions to the Government: how did the Government assess such considerations to establish a Euroregion of Lithuania, Russia and Poland which would more or less geographically coincide with the historic region of Eastern Prussia? How did the Government assess considerations of naming this Euroregion Prussia? The answer was brief – the Government was not aware of such considerations.

At the same time Warsaw and especially Vilnius had serious arguments that Russia had turned the Oblast into a geopolitical hostage with one of the functions being to stop the process of integration of Lithuania and other Baltic States into the Western structures, to control it, at the same time influencing the geopolitical situation in Central and Eastern Europe, whereas France and especially Germany symptomatically took a position of non-interference and even a favourable attitude towards Russia with regard to those trends.

Geopolitical Hostage

Formally the external spread of the hostage mechanism was illustrated by the play in terms of two strategies of the motherland to the exclave, supported by Moscow. The first one is of the Oblast as a military outpost of Russia, a special strategic region which, depending on the circumstances, performs the role of a bridgehead for strengthening influence and/or the role of a barrier to stop the influence of the West. The second one is of the Oblast as a test site (“pilot region”) for economic reforms which due to its favourable geographic location could become a link connecting Russia with the West and facilitating economic, human and idea exchange. However in real diplomatic practice the Oblast has turned into sort of a pledge used in the strategic exchange of Russia and the West based on the tactics of deterrent (suspension), reassurance and interconnectivity. In simpler words, the less NATO and the USA participate in the region, the less military Russian weaponry is in the Oblast and the more it is open to the European integration processes, announced the Russian foreign policy-

makers. However such phraseology did not only mean that Russia refused to use the Oblast as a factor for putting pressure on and blackmailing Lithuania, and in some periods – also Poland, but on the contrary, used it for the legitimisation of such actions. The perepeteia of the so-called Russian transit – military, passenger and cargo – are probably the most explicit evidence of this statement.

In 1993-1995 and in spring 2001, Moscow tried to use the issue of the Russian military transit to/from Kaliningrad through the Lithuanian territory seeking to stop the process of Lithuania's integration into NATO and demanding that this transit be legitimised in the form of political agreements thus hoping to retain Lithuania within the zone of its influence. In both cases Russia made numerous open threats: from declarations to retain the presence of their military in the regions for centuries belonging to Russia (Minister of Foreign Affairs Kozyrev) to statements that even without a nuclear weapon the military Baltic Navy deployed in Kaliningrad is capable of "putting somebody in their proper place" because around the Oblast there are 47 nuclear power plants vulnerable to conventional weaponry (Valuev).³⁶ In the first case the support of only the USA and

³⁶ Vsegda gotovy // Itogi. – 2001 05 30. – No. 20 (258). Certainly, the Kaliningrad Oblast was just one of the factors in Russia's anti-NATO policy. It did not stop either the first (by the way, in 1997 Russia tried to thrust the idea of a transit corridor on Poland as well) or the second wave of NATO expansion. However it must be pointed out that after that Russia received political curtseys from the West. In 1997, the Permanent Joint Council of NATO and Russia was established, which gave Moscow hopes of being involved into the process of strategic decision-making by the West. In 2002, the NATO-Russian Council was established. Although Moscow did not acquire the veto right in deciding the issues of the Alliance expansion and security of its members, the Council functioned in accordance with the so-called formula of "20."

Great Britain and in the second – that of influential American politicians and diplomats to Lithuania helped to withstand that pressure.

What did, for example, the Germans do?

At the end of 1994, when the Lithuanian position of negotiations was finally defined as not to block the Russian military transit and not to terminate negotiations but also not to execute any obliging agreements with Russia, regulating the transit according to the rules based on the ground of Lithuanian sovereignty, also when that position was supported by the American State Department, and the Embassy of Germany in Vilnius spread a message on behalf of all the EU Member States by which it urged Lithuania to execute an agreement with Russia.³⁷

In summer 2000 Schröder, while visiting Vilnius, which had not seen a German leader since 1915 when the city was visited by the then German Kaiser Wilhelm II, devoted most of his attention to the Old Town, discussing its colours, Lithuanian beer, and giving alms to beggars. When answering the question about the possibilities of Lithuania, for example, to be invited to become a member of NATO, specificity as if evaporated.

The chancellor emphasised the open-door principle of the Alliance and the importance of cooperation with Russia, for example, the participation of the Russian military units in the multilateral military training held in

³⁷ Laurinavičius Č., Lopata R., Sirutavičius V. – Military Transit of the Russian Federation through the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania. – Op. cit. – P. 63 – -64

Lithuania.³⁸ By the way, Vilnius was then informed that the Lithuanian citizens who suffered from Nazi Germany would receive reparations from Moscow.



22. *President of the Republic of Lithuania V. Adamkus and President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, Moscow, 29 March 2001. Photo by D.G. Barysaitė*

The Germans did not add much optimism on the EU level either, despite the fact that the Lithuanian membership negotiations with Brussels were already initiated. At that time the latest projects announced, for example, by Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer about the deepening of the EU, allowed thinking that Berlin was first considering the prospect of

³⁸ Laurinavičius Č. Išmalda elgetai – Vokietijos kanclerio vizito simbolis // Lopata R., Laurinavičius M. – Op. cit. – P. 52. By the way, it must be pointed out that when discussing the issues of military security at the Baltic Sea Region Council in 2000-2002, when the CBSS was presided over by Germany followed by Russia, Berlin supported Moscow. See Strateginių studijų centras. Lietuvos ir Vokietijos santykių plėtros perspektyvos Lietuvos narystės Europos Sąjungoje ir NATO kontekste. – Vilnius, 2005. – P. 41.

relations with conventional partners. Namely in that context another tendency was highlighted: the strengthening dialogue of Moscow with both Brussels and Berlin.

The dialogue between Russia and the EU was carried out in the background of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement not providing for any considerations of military and strategic issues. That as if showed a peculiar openness of Moscow to EU enlargement, unlike in the case of NATO enlargement. And the official start of the Lithuanian negotiations on 15 February 2000 did not bring the Kaliningrad issue to the foreground. Moscow assessed the membership of Vilnius as a distant prospect and was more concerned with driving the wedge between the USA and Europe and developing relations with the large EU Member States. However in early 2001, both in the relations with the EU and the bilateral relations of Russia with Germany, the Kaliningrad issue was raised.

In January, following the negotiations of Moscow and Berlin regarding Russian debts, a piece of news spread that they had discussed the issue of transferring Kaliningrad to Germany. Although the leaders of both countries denied the rumours, that just exhilarated the comments on the new strengthening of hearty relations between Russia and Germany and didn't stop the considerations that theoretically there was a possibility of the conversion of Russian debts into shares of Russian companies to be purchased by Germany. Namely in that context someone remembered a still fresh proposal of Kaliningrad Governor Gorbenko to establish a

holding corporation in the Oblast which would unite the fields of transport, energy and amber production and where shareholders could be Germans.³⁹



23. President of the Republic of Lithuania V. Adamkus and President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, Moscow, 29 March 2001. Photo by D.G. Barysaitė

Somewhat more specific and tangible outlines were given to the Kaliningrad factor within the dialogue between Russia and the EU. Let us briefly recall it.

In January 2001, the Communiqué of the European Commission on the EU and Kaliningrad was published. The Commission proposed to realistically assess the lagging behind of Kaliningrad, to create special economic conditions for promoting development of the Oblast, to orientate towards standards and norms stipulated by the EU and to

³⁹ Jakobson-Obolenski S. Russia's New State in Europe: from "Kaliningrad Puzzle" to "Kaliningrad Experiment" – University of Glasgow, 2001. – P. 3.

develop transport, fishery and energy sectors. True, Brussels admitted that due to the unique geographic location the impact of EU enlargement on the Oblast could be more prominent than expected but emphasised that the investment to promote economy must primarily come from Russia and that no exceptions would be made in the field of transit.



24. President of the Republic of Lithuania V. Adamkus and Governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast V. Yegorov, 31 March 2001. Photo by D.G. Barysaitė

At the same time Russia presented its own batch of demands concerning the Russian transit, visa-free road and railway corridors to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast through the territory of Lithuania. After the mass media became aware of such “pre-negotiation” positions, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov already officially stated that EU enlargement would cause only adverse consequences for Russia in general and for the Kaliningrad Oblast in particular. In the case of Kaliningrad, in the minister’s opinion, EU enlargement would have a negative impact on energy and fishery and most importantly – on transit and passenger

flows.⁴⁰ It must be pointed out that Russia presented its own requirements and made statements just before the visit of President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus to Moscow in March. The circumstance that namely in respect of the issue of relations with the Kaliningrad Oblast Vilnius could rejoice at having the most experience and good examples of cooperation, could not have been more prominent.⁴¹ Now not only they could become worthless. A real threat to the Lithuanian interests to be sacrificed in the subtle power balancing game between Russia, the EU and the US emerged. Much has already been said about the course of negotiations regarding the transit of Russian citizens. It has also been pointed out that one could familiarise themselves with the comprehensive analysis, which highlights even more the general tendency in Moscow's policy to influence the process of admission of Lithuania to the EU, so it is not worth repeating the same. However even assessing the agreements reached on the transit as compromises, one must pay attention to some geopolitical and technological aspects of Russia's pressure.

Moscow's requirement to preserve unhindered communication with the Kaliningrad Oblast through the Lithuanian territory was soon supplemented with the concepts of "territorial integrity", "human rights" and "war of sovereignties", in other words, turned into the issue of retaining geopolitical influence. Namely the above concepts were used by Special

⁴⁰ Sirutavičius V. Maskvos eksperimentas virsta ant kaklo veržiamą kilpa // Lopata R., Laurinavičius M. – Op. cit. – P. 256 – 257.

⁴¹ Lopata R., Bielinis L., Sirutavičius V., Stanytė-Toločkienė I. Rytų kryptis Lietuvos užsienio politikoje: RF Kaliningrado srities, Baltarusijos ir Ukrainos atvejai. – Vilnius, 2005. – P. 33 – 37.



25. Governor V.Yegorov and Prime Minister of Lithuania A. Brazauskas

Representative of Putin to Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the State Duma Dmitry Rogozin.

In summer 2002, in accordance with all the rules of “shuttle diplomacy” he developed an especially intense policy of turning the heads of Southern European countries as well as Germany and France towards his side.

The Russian president did not sit on his hands in the bilateral relations front either. For example, at the meeting in July with Chirac in Sochi he managed to obtain the explicit support of Paris. “The introduction of the visa regime for Russians who travel from one part [of their country] to another is unacceptable,” the French President stated.⁴² Although the European Commission immediately denied the conjectures that the EU was ready to provide Russia with visa-free corridors and raised the idea of simplified (railway) transit documents, the initial assessments of the agreement, signed on 11 November 2002 by the EU and Russia in Copenhagen regarding the transit of Russian citizens to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast through the territory of Lithuania, were explicit: it

⁴² Chiracas palaiko Rusijos pretenzijas dėl Kaliningrado srities // BNS. – 20 July 2002

might be treated as an obvious victory of Moscow's diplomacy and unilateral privileges on behalf of the EU to Russia "relating to strategic partnership" as the idea of simplified transit was essentially in line with Russia's proposals to have visa-free transit.⁴³

Such assessments were based not only on the specifically listed EU privileges (abolished the provision on non-negotiations on the visa regime, the introduction of simplified documents meant certain amendments to the Schengen acquis, declared the readiness for considering technical and legal conditions of implementation of the idea of visa-free and high-speed trains) but also on the belief that the EU had an agreement with Russia on a bilateral basis about visa-free Russian transit through the Lithuanian territory, in fact just informing the official Vilnius thereof.⁴⁴ Although such a belief was questionable, Brussels and Vilnius had intense consultations on the issue of transit, still it was obvious that the opportunities for Lithuania to have influence were significantly limited, and some privileges granted by the EU to Russia contradicted the attitude of Lithuania. It was not accidental that before the EU-Russia summit in Copenhagen the Parliament of Lithuania urgently adopted a resolution on the position of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on the Kaliningrad issue in which it objected to any exceptions especially applicable to Lithuania as regards the transit of citizens of the Russian Federation to and from the Kaliningrad Oblast, and President Adamkus in Berlin unexpectedly

⁴³ Baršytė J., Daniliauskas J. – Op. cit. – P. 131.

⁴⁴ Laurinavičius Č. Kaliningrado srities problema istoriniu požiūriu. – Op. cit. – P. 528.

proposed a solution to the transit problem: to accept Lithuania to the Schengen Treaty earlier than to the EU.⁴⁵

True, the real mechanism of the simplified transit functioning from 1 July 2003 allowed deeming the new transit scheme a simplified visa regime for Russian citizens but Moscow having ensured the possibility of continuing negotiations on visa-free railway (by high-speed trains) transit acquired the grounds for treating the new transit procedure as an intermediary provisional solution to the issue, especially because the European Commission did not deny the possibility of completely abolishing the visa regime for all of Russia in the future.

So it was no wonder that Russia coherently increased and still increases the pressure on the EU as regards the Kaliningrad transit issue both at the multilateral and unilateral levels. Even signing the final documents regulating the simplified transit mechanism with Lithuania, Russia submitted to the European Commission a memorandum in which the Kaliningrad transit was referred to as “the domestic transit” and which proposed carrying it out “in accordance with the domestic laws of Russia.”⁴⁶ In 2004, Moscow continued the pressure, escalating the issues of passenger and cargo transit.

⁴⁵ Lietuva neturėtų būti išskirta iš kitų esamų bei būsimų Šengeno sutarties šalių // BNS. – 10 October 2002

⁴⁶ Seimui pasmerkus laisvo tranzito koridoriaus į Kaliningradą idėją, Rusijos politikas “nusiimprovizavo” // BNS. – 10 September 2004

At the Moscow summit of Russia and the EU of 22 May 2004 the Kremlin not only urged the liberalisation of the visa regime in general but also raised the issue of introducing a more rapid visa-free, “non-stop” train scheme as soon as possible. While upon the order of the European Commission the Danish Company COWI carried out a feasibility study for high-speed visa-free trains, Moscow was generous in stating that the political aspects of the study were clear, only some technical details needed to be established and the decision would have been issued in November 2004 at the Russia-EU summit in The Hague. Such a decision was never issued. However at the end of December after the interstate consultations of Germany and Russia and Schleswig-Holstein Schröder and Putin asseverated a contract valued at 1.5 billion euros signed with Russian Railways Joint-Stock Company and Siemens concerning the manufacture of 60 high-speed trains.⁴⁷ The public was also informed that the countries discussed joint communication projects and that from summer 2005 a common tourist train would start running from Berlin through Kaliningrad and the Baltic States to Saint Petersburg and that a joint tourism company would be established in Kaliningrad.

At the same time on the cargo transit front Moscow spared no effort to achieve that this kind of transit to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast would be treated as a special case “not fitting” into the framework of the Russia-EU

⁴⁷ Zajavlenije dlja pressy i otvety na voprosy po itogam rossijsko-germanskih mezhgosudarstvennyh konsultatsij, 2004 12 21 // <http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2004/12/81545.shtml>; “Siemens” greitiejai traukiniai greitai keliaus per Rusija // <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/index.php?id=5717050>

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which was why it was to be considered not at the meetings of the Subcommittee as provided for in the agreement of the EU and Russia of 11 November 2002⁴⁸ but by an ad hoc high-level working group of the European Commission and Russia “circumventing” the EU Member States directly interested in the goods transit issue, primarily, Lithuania. After failure to do so, in spring 2004⁴⁹ the Kremlin assumed the tactics used during the negotiations on passenger transit.

The Russian rhetoric was again focused on the motive of violated sovereignty. Only this time the motive was wrapped in emphasis about the Kaliningrad Oblast as a cooperation region, concern with its socioeconomic welfare and criticism of the cargo transit procedure complicated by the Lithuanian membership in the EU. Moscow appealed to the statement repeatedly expressed by Brussels that the socioeconomic development of the Kaliningrad Oblast was first of all Russia’s concern but explained that it could not show that concern properly as even the assurance of the Oblast sustenance had been disrupted. The Kremlin continued insistently seeking exclusive institutionalisation of the cargo transit issue.

⁴⁸ Joint Statement on Transit between the Kaliningrad Region and the Rest of the Russian Federation // http://europe.eu.int/common/external_relations/russia/summit/1102js_kalin.htm

⁴⁹ Joint Statement on EU Enlargement and EU-Russia Relations // http://europe.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia_docs/js_elarg_270404.htm

As in Rogozin's case, the Kremlin also found a specific trumpet to announce arguments such as this: Putin's assistance and special representative for EU relations Sergey Yastrzhembsky. True, in autumn 2004 he could not use the methods of shuttle diplomacy to the full extent. Europe was busy with its own affairs and the formation of the new European Commission. Having visited only Berlin, Yastrzhembsky sustained the tension over the transit issue announcing Moscow's official statements concerning the problems of Russian transit and the need for a new agreement and hoping to provoke at least a virtual discussion of this issue.

External Relations Commissioner of the European Commission finishing its term of office Chris Paten emphasised that an agreement on the transit issue was good and Russia ought to follow it hinting that Brussels would not become involved in the discussion at that time.⁵⁰ At the same time, Vilnius responded. On 10 September 2004 the Seimas adopted a resolution categorically rejecting any efforts to create a passenger and goods transit corridor through the territory of Lithuania.⁵¹ The Lithuanian parliamentarians urged Russia to commence real cooperation with the EU on the social and economic development of the Kaliningrad Oblast and a dialogue about separate actions to achieve that objective.

In turn the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia accused Lithuania of intentions to revoke the agreements reached by Russia and the EU in 2002

⁵⁰ Šmaižytė V. Rusija sąjungininkų prieš Lietuvą ieško ES // Lietuvos Rytas. – 30 September 2004 – No. 227.

⁵¹ Seimui pasmerkus laisvo tranzito koridoriaus į Kaliningradą idėją. – Op. cit.;

and Yastrzhembsky stated that the issue of transit to the Kaliningrad Oblast would be discussed at The Hague summit of Russia and the EU and that Moscow would demand a revision of the transit agreements.⁵² True, Yastrzhembsky soon slightly softened his position, adding the prospect for the Kaliningrad Oblast to become an experimental region, the possibility of implementing the “one-window” principle and the required serious capital investments of Russia and the EU into the infrastructure of transit control systems. However that idea just highlighted the analogy with the not yet forgotten considerations of Rogozin. The then representative of the Russian president for Kaliningrad reassured the Lithuanians in their fears that after the introduction of a corridor for civilians Moscow would soon demand a military corridor, explaining that Russia just wanted to have the European order whose introduction required money. Now the analogy was also enhanced by the efforts of the Russian diplomacy to intensify the consultations with Vilnius on military transit. Moscow did not conceal its intentions to seek the revision of all transit conditions (passengers, cargoes and military).⁵³

At The Hague summit of the EU and Russia on 25 November Moscow tried to raise the issue of communication of the motherland with Kaliningrad. The European Commission just provided a general comment about the unique location of the Oblast which needed be discussed in a

⁵² Rusija toliau veda diskusiją dėl Kaliningrado tranzito // BNS. – 15 September 2004; Rusija ketina siekti, kad ES supaprastintų krovinių tranzitą į Kaliningradą, teigia Jastržembskis. – Op. cit.

⁵³ Tatarintsev V. O shagah, predprinimaemyh po protivodeistviyu antirossijskoj liniji stran Priabaltiki i Gruziji. – 2005 06 14.

broader context of its socioeconomic development.⁵⁴ However, as already mentioned, that did not prevent Yastrzhembsky from stating that Russia and the EU agreed to form “a high-level group” to solve all the Kaliningrad Oblast problems highlighted by EU enlargement.⁵⁵ It must be noted that this statement was published within a month, on 20 December, on the eve of the Schleswig-Holstein meeting of Putin and Schröder. In other words, Moscow coherently followed the practically verified tactics. The question was whether those tactics were fruitful.

Following the Moscow summit of the EU and Russia on 10 May 2005 concerning special mechanisms to solve the issues of Kaliningrad transit and the socioeconomic development of the Oblast which might require external support, Lavrov also spoke up. It was not important what the name of the group would be, the minister of foreign affairs explained, it was important that Putin appointed Yastrzhembsky to represent Russia and the EU agreed to appoint a vis-à-vis of their own who would coordinate that mechanism as soon as possible.⁵⁶

On the other hand, it seemed that the European Commission was in no hurry to appoint their representative.

⁵⁴ EU – Russia Summit on 25 November 2004, in The Hague. – Op. cit.

⁵⁵ Rusijos ir ES sąveikai svarbias Kaliningrado srities problemas spręs aukšto lygio grupė, sako Putino atstovas // BNS. – 20 December 2004

⁵⁶ Stenograma vystupenija i otvetov ministra inostrannyh del Rossijskoj Federatsiji S. V. Lavrova. – Op. cit.

Commenting on the results of the summit meeting of the EU and Russia in Moscow, the head of the delegation of the European Commission to Russia Mark Franko explained that the considerations of cargo transit to/from Kaliningrad had shown some progress and only several technical issues were left.⁵⁷ In other words, the European Commission continued appealing to the fact that the cargo transit issue was being solved within the framework of the EU and Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and with the help of mechanisms (subcommittees) provided for therein and was resisting the intentions of the Russians to specifically institutionalise the goods transit issue. Like five years before, associating the set of Kaliningrad issues with risks and threats to the internal/external security of the EU⁵⁸, Brussels perceived its responsibility as the readiness to implement certain measures with a view to improving the effectiveness of border control, accelerating the border crossing procedures, ensuring transport communications, providing expert and financial support through the existing TACIS and bilateral technical assistance programmes of the Member States in the fields which were not directly related to EU enlargement (environment, crime control, health care, etc.). In this case the European Commission was also able to specify the real amount of technical and financial support to the Kaliningrad Oblast in 2004-2006 – 50 million euros, of which, for example, eight million euros was allocated

⁵⁷ Glava missiji: novyje chleny ES – motor svyazej s Rossijej // BBC. Russian.com, 2001 05 12 // <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/russia/>

⁵⁸ Browning Ch.S. The Internal/External Security Paradox and the Recontsuction of Boundaries in the Baltics: The Case of Kaliningrad // *Alternatives*. – 2003. – No. 28. – P. 545-581.

to the works on the enlargement of the border post of Chernyshvskoe-Kybartai on the Russian side.⁵⁹

Moscow did not refuse financial injections but continued insistently demanding the formation of a special mechanism for consideration of the Kaliningrad development issues in the context of EU enlargement. Following commencement of the events of the city's Anniversary, Yastrzhembsky disclosed that on 30 June in Brussels he had met European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who confirmed that she was ready to start activities with the Russian presidential adviser to solve the problems of the Oblast development.⁶⁰ Yastrzhembsky didn't share the details of the joint activities. And when asked whether the federal centre already had a development strategy for the Oblast, as otherwise what would he discuss with the Commissioner, Putin's adviser mentioned the targeted federal programme, the new draft law on the SEZ in the Kaliningrad Oblast and suggested paying attention to the statements of top Moscow officials, for example, Lavrov, in which that vision was clearly defined: surrounded with reliable, well-equipped and transparently functioning borders securing territorial integrity and sovereignty, Kaliningrad would remain Russia's outpost in the West,

⁵⁹ EU Enlargement and EU - Russia Relations // http://europe.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/intro/index.htm; Parūpo siena su Kaliningradu // Respublika. – 10 October 2005 – No. 235;

⁶⁰ Sergey Yastrzhembsky: Ne sleduet naviazivat Rossiji, kak prazdnovat jubilej Kalininingrada. – Op. cit.

attracting investments primarily satisfying the needs of the large Russian capital and then attracting additional investments from abroad.⁶¹

It was difficult to say how that would work in practice.

We saw that when considering the new draft law concerning the SEZ in the Kaliningrad Oblast the motherland did not conceal its preferences for the large capital of the metropolis. Those preferences could be treated as another way of guaranteeing the attachment of the periphery. However it became clear that the draft law was not in line with WTO rules, apart from other things, obliging Russia to open some segments of its market.⁶² So the prospect of the strategic development of Kaliningrad projected in Moscow that the Oblast was dominated by the large Russian capital saving the Oblast from bankruptcy and foreign investments were dosed by special legislation and suspended by the emphasised military purpose of the Oblast was in the air.

So in this context, Moscow, demanding a special format for considering the Kaliningrad problems and in fact for ensuring additional safeguards for the Oblast dependence and increasing the influence on the EU integration processes, the meeting of the leaders of Russia, Germany and France in Svetlogorsk acquired a definite meaning. The practical manifestation of those strivings of the Kremlin and its relation to theoretical schemes could be checked on 3 July 2005.

⁶¹ Stenograma vystuplenija i otvetov ministra inostrannyh del Rossijskoj Federatsiji S. V. Lavrova. – Op. cit.

⁶² Mechtiev A. Zhostkije uslovija ES – ne dlja dialoga s Rossijej? // <http://www.strana.ru/print/137087.html>

Resort Romance

“Kaliningrad is a wonderful place for meetings of Russia and the EU, especially such partners of the Great Europe as Russia, France and Germany,” Russian Presidential Adviser Prikhodko, radiant with joy, addressed journalists on the morning of 3 July, referring to the symbolic fact that the meeting was being held in the westernmost Russian region.⁶³ Symbolism was of little interest to the journalists and they would later be certain that the meeting location was well selected while waiting for it to end, not in an air-conditioned media centre, which was simply absent in Svetlogorsk’s Rus Hotel, but in tents that failed to protect anyone from the sunlight. Media representatives were interested in the leaders’ agenda and the question of whether really the meeting would have nothing in common with the internal affairs of Russia as announced previously. The adviser to the Russian President immediately satisfied this curiosity.

According to Prikhodko, Putin, Chirac and Schröder would mainly focus on four sets of issues.

One set of issues would comprise the priorities of interconnection of Moscow, Paris and Berlin in the international arena.

Another would be about the issues concerning the reformation of the United Nations Security Council and the entire organisation so that “its

⁶³ Kaliningrad: Putinas, Schroederis ir Chiracas kalbėsis apie Rusijos bei ES santykius ir būsimaį G- 8 lyderių susitikimą // BNS. – 3 July 2005

structures and mechanisms would correspond to the changed geopolitical realities and the contemporary requirements.” As the meeting would be held on the eve of the regular G-8 meeting in Scotland, the leaders of the three countries “would synchronise their watches”, exchanging opinions on the prospects of the G-8 activities, especially taking into account that in 2006 Russia would preside over this club of major states of the world for the first time.

The third set of issues included discussions about the cooperation of Russia and the EU including “efforts and obligations to simplify the visa regime” and the topics of the border agreements of the Baltic States with Russia.

Finally the meeting would consider the issues of the development of the Kaliningrad Oblast after EU enlargement to the East. Prikhodko informed that “the leaders of the three countries would discuss the format of a specific decision-making mechanism for the Kaliningrad Oblast which was agreed upon in the Netherlands in November 2004 and the remaining issues of passenger and cargo transit not yet finally regulated.”⁶⁴

So the agenda was very specific and open both to the spread of the spirit of Eurocontinentalism and to strengthening the fears of Central European countries that without them Paris and Berlin would agree with Moscow on the issues directly relating to them. Media conferences of the

⁶⁴ Ibidem.

three leaders before and after the meeting did not dispel that spirit and increased the fears.

The fact that the leaders of France and Germany were confused as to whether they had arrived for the traditional meeting of the trinity unrelated to the Kaliningrad celebrations and thus held 60 kilometres away from the centre of the Oblast, which was especially stressed by Putin, or to the Anniversary celebrations was no more than just a trifle. True, Schröder tried to correct the situation. The Germans retain good memories of the city, the German chancellor explained, agitated. What good memories meant, he explained in several phrases, “In their hearts this city today called Kaliningrad will always be Königsberg. Naturally, this does not imply any territorial claims.”⁶⁵ For just those phrases it was worth not paying attention to trifles for the Kremlin which, apart from anything else, also heard Schröder’s thoughts about the purposefulness of stipulating the real strategic partnership of the EU and Russia in the Kaliningrad Oblast. This was what Putin was doing. He talked about Moscow’s support for Berlin’s striving to become a standing member of the UN Security Council and about the finally coordinated plans of Russian gas monopolist Gazprom and German concerns E.ON.Ruhrigas and Bosf to construct a 1200-kilometre Northern European gas pipeline in the bed of the Baltic Sea by 2010, gaining Schröder additional votes in his pre-election parliamentary campaign.

⁶⁵ Zajavlenija dlja pressy po itogam vstrechi Prezidenta Rossiji V.V. Putina s Federalnym kantslerom FRG Gerghardom Shrioderom i Prezidentom Frantsiji Zhakom Shirakom, Kaliningradskaya oblast, Svetlogorsk, 3 ijulija 2005 goda // http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4nsf/sps/1D327B34EAF9350C32570340029AB8C

Chirac did not lag behind either, obviously trying to use the opportunity to highlight international policy. He repeated several times how important the relations of the EU and Russia were for the global power balance and praised Moscow on its efforts to strengthen relations with Beijing.⁶⁶ The French president directly appealed to the declaration of Russia and China announced a day before on Global Order in the 21st Century and indirectly to the multi-polar world referred to in the above Declaration.

As Putin told about the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan on 5 July and the documents criticising the global domination policy of the USA to be adopted, it seemed that Chirac as well could not miss the chance to stress the differences between continental Europe and the Anglo-Saxons. “One cannot trust people who produce such bad food. The only thing which, for example, the British have given to European agriculture is mad cow disease,” the French President quipped and was praised with the loud agreeing laughter of Putin and Schröder.⁶⁷ Although Paris tried to explain that the jokes heard by journalists were not in line with the tone and contents of the meeting of the three leaders, this did not prevent London from responding. “How would Chirac feel if others descended to his level and called him a snob

⁶⁶ O vstreche Prezidenta Rossiji V.V. Putina s Federalnym kantslerom FRG G. Shrioderom i Prezidentom Frantsiji Zh. Shirakom, Kaliningradskaya oblast, Svetlogorsk, 3 ijulia 2005 g. // http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4nsf/sps/4F2D6910C277CE9BC32570340027CB66

⁶⁷ Praleides proą patylėti J. Chircas sukėlė Europoje skandalą // Lietuvos Rytas. – 7 July 2005 – No. 155; Denisenkov A. Chem zapomnitsia jubilej? // Komsomolskaya pravda v Kaliningrade. – 2005 07 06.

smelling of garlic?" the British dailies sneered, and Europe started talking about the cooking war between Paris and London.

Not only London but also Warsaw became a target for such slaps. Irritated by the questions of why the leaders of the neighbouring countries were not invited to the Anniversary, Putin decided not to repeat that the Anniversary was a matter of Russia's domestic policy but to assume a bitter tone à la Chirac: "If we were awarding the Kaliningrad Philharmonic the name of the Polish composer Chopin, we would have invited the President of Poland as well." ⁶⁸ While Putin thus "settled accounts" with Kwasniewski, with whom just a few years ago he fraternised on the flagman (Nastoychivy) of the Russian Baltic Navy, the French president and the German chancellor remained silent.

They also remained silent when at the media conference Putin explained why he previously stated that the Latvians would see Abrene Region as the ears of a dead ass and then thought that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia behaved correctly on 22 June revoking its signature under the border agreement with Estonia.⁶⁹ Without arguing whether the mistake had been made by the Estonian Parliament ratifying the text of the border agreement not coordinated with the Russians but the text with references to legal acts included in the preamble at the last minute openly speaking about annexation and occupation, it was obvious that Moscow did not

⁶⁸ Denisenkov A. Kak odin zhurnalist trioh prezidentov obidel // Komsomolskaya pravda v Kaliningrade. – 2005 07 06.

⁶⁹ Vilnius ir Varšuva sulaukė dar vieno viešo Kremliaus akibrokošto // Lietuvos Rytas. – 4 July 2005 – No. 153; Rusija nesutiks su Estijos teritorinėmis pretenzijomis, pareiškė Putinas // BNS. – 4 July 2005

miss the chance to accuse the Baltic States of raising territorial claims to Russia. Bearing in mind that the summit of the EU and Russia on 10 May discussed the possibility of forming a special group to consider the situation of Russian speakers in the Baltic States, one could think that the border issue constituted a good urge for the Kremlin to put pressure on Berlin and Paris in that field as well.

Finally, like Prikhodko promised, they discussed the prospects of the Kaliningrad Oblast development after EU enlargement to the East. And at the media conference this issue was commented on only by Putin. The statement was interesting with thoughts leaping at some points, so it is worth quoting it in full,

“Here, on the land of Kaliningrad, we have comprehensively discussed the prospects of development of this region in the context of EU enlargement.

“In the last few years we have managed to solve a number of urgent problems together. Russia’s relations with France and the Federal Republic of Germany also have a chance to become an example of successful and constructive interaction. Pursuant to a bilateral agreement, we together with our French and German partners facilitated the military transit to the corresponding bases in Afghanistan through the territory of the Russian Federation.

“Within the territory of the Kaliningrad Oblast quite a few companies with joint European capital are successfully operating, contacts in the field of

medium-sized and small business are actively expanding, and a convenient and a more perfect border structure has been developed. It is obvious that good economic development of the Kaliningrad Oblast is in line with the interests of our European partners. And its joining of long-term investment projects in the EU will yield not only tangible financial dividends. Close and multilateral cooperation can become one of the key factors of growth of the EU regions in the East. Certainly, we hope that this will positively affect the development of the Kaliningrad Oblast as well. And, of course, we must spare no effort in expanding humanitarian cooperation for direct communication of the citizens of Russia and the EU as well as public and business sectors. I am positive that such contacts will approximate people and help them to become real friends. In the end, that will expand the social base for partnership of countries.”⁷⁰

So the Russian president did not mention either The Hague or the Moscow summit. Putin’s statement could even be understood as the readiness of Russia to Europeanise the Oblast as soon as possible and it was just necessary to intensify structural cooperation, i.e. to open the European funds wider for Kaliningrad, to promote the advent of small and medium European capital and to facilitate the visa regime. Such European needs as if witnessed Russia’s openness for institutional overlap with the EU. On the other hand, Putin explicitly appealed to concession for Russian military transit to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast and seemed to put

⁷⁰ Zayavleniya dlia pressy po itogam vstrechi Prezidenta Rossiji V.V. Putina s Federalnym kantslerom FRG Gerghardom Shrioderom i Prezidentom Frantsiji Zhakom Shirakom. – Op. cit.; Dmitriev J. Novyje grani sotrudnichestva // Strazh Baltiji. – 2005 07 05.

pressure on Berlin and Paris to encourage Vilnius to sign a political agreement on military transit drafted by Russia in October 2003. In other words, seeking strategic goals Moscow was concerned with the direct geopolitical function of the Oblast – not allowing it to go away from Russia and to be stuffing in the European integration area – even more than the institutional way of implementation of those goals and the socioeconomic standing of the Kaliningrad Oblast.

Putin did not speak about that function at the media conference. However he mentioned the European integration processes and Russia's view thereof, speaking about the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement expiring on 1 January 2007, the crisis faced by the EU because of the Constitution and further prospects of EU enlargement. However, this time the German chancellor and the French president without elaborating on the idea of Russia regarding the new agreement publicly advised the Kremlin not to interfere with the internal affairs of the EU. "Europe is again in a difficult period which we may call a crisis," Chirac said. "This crisis will be overcome. In any case, it is not going to be reflected in the relations of Russia and the EU." Schröder tried to explain the subtle response of Chirac in a more understandable manner. "The Constitution and development problems are the problems of the EU Member States," the German chancellor stressed. "This issue has nothing in common with what we refer to as strategic partnership with Russia."⁷¹ So the leaders of

⁷¹ Shrioder i Shirak posovetovali Putinu ne vmeshivatsia v dela ES // Trideviatyj region. – 2005 07 08-14. – No. 025n (052); Vilnius ir Varšuva sulaukė dar vieno viešo Kremliaus akibrokšto. – Op. cit.

both Germany and France drew quite specific, horizontal and vertical dividing lines.

True, the three leaders did not elaborate on that topic. As the press wrote, the resort romance ended with hugs.⁷² Diplomatic protocol specialists said that was usual. However this did not hinder anyone from remembering that the practice of drawing dividing lines between the West and Russia after the Cold War, for example, in the context of the Kaliningrad Oblast, showed that those lines marking what was within the sphere of interests of one party or another did not deny the possibility of interest compromises. Therefore, Russia's efforts to solve the Kaliningrad case in accordance with the Russian formula are not purposeless. The key directions of how this would be done were demonstrated by the motherland on the occasion of the city Anniversary. Saying goodbye to the Oblast Putin strived to emphasise one more aspect.

Rejoicing at the good achievement in the rapid economic growth at the meeting with business representatives on the evening of 3 July 2005, he firmly assured them that soon the Oblast would be saved from the energy encirclement. He associated that prospect with the plans to expand cooperation with the EU in the field of energy and specifically the branch of the Northern European pipeline to the Kaliningrad Oblast to be constructed by the Russian and German gas companies.⁷³ Thus we would "exclude" Lithuania from the game, head of Gazprom Alexey Miller

⁷² Kurortnyj roman mezhdru Rossijej i Evropoj, 2005 07 04 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k49324.htm>

⁷³ Rusijos prezidentas patenkintas Kaliningrado srities raida // BNS. – 4 July 2005

specified.⁷⁴ Putin was not so straightforward. Quite the opposite, he promised support to the Oblast administration for the expansion of cooperation with its closest neighbours, thereby creating conditions for development.

⁷⁴ Kaliningrad vyvodiat iz tranzitnoj litovskoj zavisimosti, 2005 07 05 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k49661.htm>

*IV. POST-ANNIVERSARY DAYS.
“RUSSIAN WINDOW TO EUROPE”*

From a formal point of view, it is somewhat awkward to speak about post-anniversary Kaliningrad because Decree No. 1353 of the Russian President of 13 November 2003 announced the celebration of two dates, not only the 750th Anniversary of the City of Kaliningrad but also the 60th anniversary of the Kaliningrad Oblast. The decision to focus on the former as a core event did not mean that the latter had been forgotten. The recommendation was to "attach" a relevant label to most of the major cultural events to be held in the Oblast after 3 July. In other words, the celebration was to go on for an entire year. In addition, preparations were underway for another planned event on 19 November 2005, i.e. the inauguration of the governor. The inauguration took place, although much earlier than anticipated. And after that, celebrations were certainly not on most people's agenda. This development overshadowed the emerging discussion over the significance of the city's anniversary for the Oblast as well as the dividends it might reap from the forthcoming visit by Putin. It also became a kind of a threshold of the new stage in the Kaliningrad case.

The anniversary was supposed to give start to the fight over the governor's chair. After the event, headlines implying such a possibility appeared in the local press of the Kaliningrad Oblast and later in the newspapers of the motherland.¹ However, the anticipated fight never happened. The new governor was sworn in and took office on 28 September rather than on 19 November. Moscow decided to act and solve the governor's issue quickly

¹ A v glazah – revnost. Jubilej Kaliningrada dal start borbe za gubernatorskoje kreslo // Komsomolskaya pravda v Kaliningrade – 07 07 2005; for more about the related media publications in the metropolitan area see: Kaliningradą valdys Kremliaus vietininkas // Lietuvos Rytas. - 9 August 2005 – No. 183.

and tellingly. The action was illustrated by several parallel and complementary processes: the appointment of the new favourite and the campaign to discredit Vladimir Yegorov during his last days in office.



26. Speaker of the Kaliningrad Oblast Duma V. Nikitin

Below is a short chronology of these processes which developed at a lightning pace.

On 4 July, Putin offered Georgy Boos, deputy speaker of the State Duma, to take the governor's office.² The latter did not object. The rest was just a formality: the Kremlin took care of the appointment procedure and Boos made relevant preparations.

On 6 July, the expert opinion on the SEZ in the Kaliningrad Oblast was published by the Audit Chamber of the Russian Federation.³ It did not bode well for the administration of the Oblast. Experts concluded that tax incentives in the Oblast cost the Russian budget 32.49 billion roubles in 2004.

² Na post kaliningradskogo gubernatora pretendujet byvshyj nalogovik, vitse-spiker Gosdumy Georgij Boos, 05 07 2005 // <http://www.newsru.com/russia/05jul2005/boos>

³ Schiottnaya palata raskritikovala zakon ob O EZ // www.newsru.com/newslines/index.shtml?2005/07/06/181782

On 25 August, Klebanov indicated during consultations with local politicians that he would propose two candidates, member of the Yedinaya Rossiya party Boos and Kaliningrad Deputy Governor Yury Shalimov, to the president. The Presidential Envoy to the Northwestern Federal District also hinted that he had offered several alternate jobs for Yegorov in Moscow. The next day, Vladimir Nikitin, speaker of the Oblast Duma, was summoned to the Kremlin where he was offered the chance to discuss the prospects of strengthening the role of the motherland in the Oblast and introduced to the candidacy of Boos.

On 29 August, Klebanov officially submitted the names of the two candidates to the office of the Kaliningrad Oblast governor to Putin. Several days later there were publications in the media claiming that Yegorov requested to represent Russia in Belarus after his term of office and that Boos was on his way to Kaliningrad to deliver his speech on the regional development programme.⁴

The deputy speaker of the State Duma arrived in Kaliningrad on 2 September and stayed there for four days. According to the reporters, Boos “acted as if he had already been appointed” and ignored the statements by Yegorov of his intent to continue in office for the full term.⁵

⁴ Rossiya mozhet poslat v Belorusiju eshchio odnogo gubernatora // <http://www.rosbalt.ru/2005/08/30/223691.html>; Rodin I. Boos zakroet okno v Evropu, no otkroet ulitsu. Vitse-spiker sostavil plan raboty v Yantarnom kraju // Nezavisimaya gazeta. – 31 08 2005.

⁵ Boos znakomitsia s lichnymi delami sotrudnikov Kaliningradskoj administratsiji // <http://www.rosbalt.ru/2005/09/06/224697.html>; Riabushev A. Boos udarilsia v obeshchanija // Nezavisimaya Gazeta. – 05 09 2005.

At the same time, Klebanov pointed out that Yegorov had been offered appropriate public service positions, while the Oblast was overtaken by rumours about the new corruption scandal brewing in the governor's office over the lease of hunting areas previously supervised by the administration of the Oblast to private undertakings including one run by the son of Yegorov.

On 13 September, Nikitin received an official submission by Putin, which was way before the deadline of 15 October, for the appointment of Boos as the new governor of the Oblast. The speaker of the Oblast Duma, after consultation with Klebanov, decided to submit the candidacy of Boos for discussion during the first Duma hearing to be held after the summer break on 16 September.⁶ Nikitin insisted that a favourable decision by the Duma members would not result in any diarchy in the Oblast. Yegorov would continue in office until 19 November when the new governor would be sworn in and would formally take office. Meanwhile Klebanov made it plain that at 66 the ex-Governor might not be able to continue in the public service. By contrast, the president's envoy claimed that the new governor was merely 42 and he had already earned "federal acclaim."⁷ Klebanov appealed to the extensive experience gained by Boos serving on the State Duma (from December 1995) and efficient work in the position of the head of the State Tax Authority and, after reorganisation, the Russian Federation Ministry for Taxes and Duties (1998-1999).

⁶ Kaliningradskaya Obliduma zavtra reshит vopros s Boosom // <http://www.rosbalt.ru/2005/09/15/226351.html>

⁷ Smirnov V. Chelovek s federalnoj prohodimostju // Komsomolskaya pravda v Kaliningrade. – 17 09 2005.

On 16 September, 27 members of the Oblast Duma, with two votes cast against, supported the submission by Putin and deputed Boos to the office of the Governor for the period of five years. Three days later Yegorov met Boos in Moscow and announced his resignation.⁸



27. Governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast G. Boos, Kaliningrad, 28 September 2005. Photo by V. Smirnov

On 28 September, the Oblast Duma accepted Yegorov's resignation and swore in Boos. The inauguration of the new governor took place in the evening of the same day.

Formally it looked like the motherland had carefully followed every letter of the law of 12 December 2004 regulating the appointment of governors: the president's envoy to the Northwestern Federal District held consultations with local politicians, delivered the list of candidates for the

⁸ Kaliningrade – naujas vadovas // Lietuvos Rytas. - 29 September 2005 – No. 226.

governor's position to Putin in due time, the Kremlin administration discussed these candidates with the leadership of the Oblast Duma, Putin made his submission which was discussed and approved by the Oblast Duma.

However, a closer look shows that the situation is reminiscent of the developments five years ago. At that time, outgoing Governor Leonid Gorbenko was taking part in the election race but fell under heavy criticism for his ties with the criminal world, promotion of smuggling, etc. Stories about the criminal rampage by the “governor’s entourage” were even published in *The New York Times*. Even though Gorbenko was not re-elected, he received a personal gift from the president – a special watch with the inscription “For achievements in developing the economy of Kaliningrad Oblast.”⁹ The election of Yegorov, who was favoured by Putin, gave hope that the region would finally receive support from the federal government and that the residents of Kaliningrad would not be left on their own facing the inevitable enlargement of the EU. The leadership of the Oblast Duma also showed their strong support for Yegorov both during and after the election.

Now, five years later, the Kremlin delegates again promised special treatment for the region surrounded by NATO and EU members. Putin’s representatives insisted that the anniversary was intended to demonstrate to everyone that the territory would never and under no circumstances be

⁹ Lopata R. Geopolitinis įkaitas. – Op. cit. – P. 189.

surrendered to anybody.¹⁰ The words had to be supported by practical implementation of the Kremlin's aim to strengthen of the role of the motherland in the region. The mechanism of "controlled democracy" was engaged. The candidates selected by the Kremlin were members of Yedinaya Rossiya, which had a dominant majority of 19 members in the Oblast Duma. The Oblast Duma, which had been supporting Yegorov for a long time and whose leadership had promised intense discussions, especially over non-local candidates, obeyed the Kremlin even before Putin made his submission (by the way, after the successful procedure of appointment and approval of Boos, Putin proposed an amendment to the law of 12 December 2004 entitling the dominant majority in regional parliaments to submit candidates for the governor's office to the president). At the same time, Yegorov was definitely under pressure to leave his office as soon as possible, first by promising him positions in the public service and then by appealing to his old age and withdrawing these promises as well as initiating journalist investigations into the outgoing governor's personal responsibility for corruption in the regional administration. So the natural question is: Why was the Kremlin in such a rush and what were the underlying interests?

It must be said though that the ex-governor claimed that it was he who decided to resign prematurely and that he felt no pressure and only tried to maintain public, political and economic stability in the region. He also appealed to pending adoption of the SEZ law and approval of the federal

¹⁰ Andrej Stepanov: "Nikto i nikogda ne sobiraetsia otdavat etu teritoriju, 14 07 2005 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k51355.html>.

budget for 2006 and federal strategy for socioeconomic development of the Kaliningrad Oblast. “I hope that the new governor will be able to raise the additional money, approximately three billion roubles, necessary to tackle the problems of this region,” said Yegorov.¹¹ In other words, he agreed with Klebanov that Boos was a more powerful figure.

It was an important factor from which Boos, with the assistance from the Kremlin and the leadership of Yedinaya Rossiya, reaped benefits. But was that the most important thing? Yegorov himself had also been viewed as a powerful politician close to Putin for a long time. However, the Kremlin insisted that the region was in crisis because its administration was totally inefficient, corruption was widespread, major economic and environmental problems were ignored, and the benefits of the special economic zone were not captured.¹² Although the disputes between the motherland and the Oblast over the SEZ law were not brought back, the implications were quite clear: the office of the governor should be in the hands of a person free of any local interests.

¹¹ Gubernator Vladimir Yegorov slagaet polnomochija i utochniaet formulirovki // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k61737.html>; As stange as it may seem, but the next day after inauguration of Boos it was announced that 3.08 billion would be invested into construction of the TEC-2 power plant in Kaliningrad (TEC-2 poluchila investitsiji na dostroiku, 29 09 2005 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/economy/k63469.html>). Maybe it was just a coincidence. Putin demanded that the federal authorities speed up construction of TEC-2 after he listened to complaints from Yegorov during his visit to Kaliningrad.

¹² Fihte M. Boos stal federalnym “prohodimtsem” // http://www/gazeta.ru/2005/09/16/oa_171069.shtml

Boos was more subtle. He promised to take the interests of small and medium-sized businesses on board during discussion of the draft SEZ laws and to rely on the local political elite when selecting his team. Admittedly, the new governor kept his promises. In early October, the Yedinaya Rossiya group in the State Duma decided to postpone the reading of the SEZ law and the official government of the Kaliningrad Oblast formed by Boos included two deputy prime ministers and six of the 12 ministers who were from Kaliningrad.¹³ However, these measures were more of a shock-absorbing nature designed to “mitigate” the governance reform started by Boos and implementation of the new economic development outlook for the Kaliningrad Oblast.

The fact that the outlook was bright and that the population in the Oblast in five years would be able to enjoy the same standard of living as in neighbouring Poland and Lithuania was no news for the locals. It must be said though that the optimistic outlook promised by Boos had its reservations. We will attain the same standards as the Poles and Lithuanians not because our salaries will be higher, he claimed, but because the ratio of our salary to service package, affordable for our wages, will be higher.¹⁴ However, before the new governor it was both the leadership of the Oblast and President Putin who had emphasised the necessity to provide people with normal living and working conditions, quality education, health care, etc. Therefore, such promises in Kaliningrad were

¹³ Morozov: Zakon ob O EZ v Kaliningradskoj oblasti primut do kontsa goda // <http://www.rosbalt.ru/2005/10/11/230147.html>

¹⁴ Cherez 5 let kaliningradtsy budut zhyt ne huzhe, chem litovtsy i poliaki // <http://www.regnum.ru/dossier/586.html>

usually followed by a popular jest dating back to Perestroika times: “I promised that *we* would have everything after the reform. But I did not promise that *you* would have everything.”

The visions of the privileged and model Oblast acting as a donor to the federal budget had been discussed before on numerous occasions. The same could be said about the ways of achieving them: an increase several times over of the energy capacity of the Oblast, developed transport infrastructure, promotion of investment and tourism, elimination of corruption and improvement of tax collection through effective introduction of public administration principles.

So was Boos proposing anything new?

First of all, Boos, in contrast to his predecessors, proposed a specific anti-corruption governance scheme of the Oblast and started its implementation in practice.

On 29 September, the day after his inauguration, the members of the Oblast Duma had to sit through two successive emergency readings and adopt legal acts and resolutions expanding the powers of the governor and entitling him to set up a new regional government. Many subjects of the Russian Federation have their own governments. However, in the case of Kaliningrad Oblast, the regional administration lost more than just its name. Boos used his new authority appropriately and implemented a

virtual structural reform of the executive branch.¹⁵ By 10 October, the Government was set up comprising 12 ministries and seven agencies within the economic, real sector and social component managed by deputy prime ministers. There was a dramatic reduction in the number of departments (from 34 to 24), and the number of staff was reduced (without litigation, it must be said) from 1,200 to 695. Salaries of the remaining public servants were tied to the minimum wages. Public servants lost their pension bonuses. It must be said that the Oblast Duma was also encouraged to start reform and initiate a bill revoking privileges for former governors and its outgoing members. It was also suggested that the number of members in the Oblast Duma should be reduced from 32 to 20.

The governor claimed that his scheme of the executive branch was borrowed from foreign countries. He did not specify, though, which foreign countries operated such a scheme. Actually, not many were willing to ask that in Kaliningrad. One way or another, Boos was known as one of the best managers in Russia. Therefore, many focused on the anti-corruption rhetoric of the new governor, watched the raids conducted by special services in former administrative units and the specific policy of the governor in the field of human resources.

“I want to warn all con men, children of Lieutenant Schmidt, that no one will be offering any positions or resources for sale,” stated the governor.¹⁶ Indeed, there was no improvisation in his actions when distributing posts.

¹⁵ Nastojaschij Boos // <http://www/newsinfo.ru/static/1237824.html>

¹⁶ Boos, kotoryj postroit vseh, 07 10 2005 // <http://www.vremya.ru/136045.html>

As Boos himself said, he had had a lot of time to think about it since April 2005 when the Kremlin started to tempt him with the office of governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast. So he had plenty of time to both select his candidates and secure the federal “roof” for his revolution in the field of human resources. The governor co-ordinated all major appointments with the presidential envoy.¹⁷

These appointments followed several trends. The Government comprised two groups: Muscovites invited by Boos and locals from Kaliningrad brought round by Deputy Prime Minister Shalimov. The governor praised the professionalism of his team. Shalimov could only rely on the experience of working with his team dating back to the times of Gorbenko. But he didn't want to. The question of whether these two groups will develop into factions remains open. However, there is no doubt that the Muscovites managed to secure supervision of government bodies, control of financial flows and posts in major ministries (infrastructure, economy, agriculture, finance, and education). This fact was noticed immediately and a relevant conclusion was drawn, i.e. the main goal of Boos in the region was to deliver a blow to corrupt structures and wasting of public finance.¹⁸ The conclusion is rather reasonable. However, it has to be expanded as the new governor has far more ambitious plans. It is reflected in the commitment to take direct control of the most important economic component and emerging intention to change the geopolitical vector of the

¹⁷ Boos ne protiv stat gubernatorom, 26 08 2005 // www.ntv.ru; Boos, kotoryj postroit vsch. – Op. cit.

¹⁸ Sredi ministrov novogo pravitelstva Kaliningradskoj oblasti mnogo moskvichej // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/521365.html>; Novaya metla Putina (“Spiegel”, Germanija), 27 09 2005 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k62947.html>

Oblast. It is no coincidence that Klebanov, who was introduced to the strategy for development of the Oblast on 18 October, was unable to hide his astonishment. “I have never seen such ambitious plans. They indicate that nowadays the Kaliningrad Oblast is a ‘mini state’ while St. Petersburg is merely a megacity-state.”¹⁹ Besides, Putin’s envoy also added that realisation of these plans requires several preconditions such as consolidation of the political elite in the region and serious effort, both financial and ideological, by the federal government.

Boos himself calls this vector “Russia’s window to Europe.”²⁰ According to him, instead of being the area which the Europeans are trying to play as a privilege card for penetrating Russian markets the Kaliningrad Oblast has to become a platform for integration of Russian business into the European and global markets. This requires urgent revitalisation of the Oblast, i.e. development of a transparent and understandable financial system, public access to the budgeting process, twofold increase in the energy capacity of the region, development of transport infrastructure and logistics, and, last but not least, drafting of the SEZ law so that all these actions could promote the arrival of large and competitive Russian capital to the Oblast. Moreover, Boos believes that the region could become more attractive if certain ideological clichés could be eliminated and its image as a conflict and chaotic zone could be significantly improved. The Oblast is

¹⁹ Klebanov: Novaya programa razvitija oblasti sdelana pod mini-gosudarstvo, 18 10 2005 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/economy/k66399.html>

²⁰ Boos Kaliningrada // Delovaya Rossija. – 30 08 2005; Fihte M. Boos vjehal s trudom // http://gazeta.ru.print/2005/09/02/oa_169431.shtml; Boos nameren izmenit reputatsiju Kaliningradskoj oblasti v luchuju storonu // http://www.inerfax.ru/r/B/politics/23.html?pid_issue=11385292 .

the part of the Russian Federation at the spearhead of Russia's rapprochement with the West and, therefore, there is no rhyme or reason to treat it as an exclave of Russia or to "fence it off." On the contrary, it must become the icon of Russia's openness to the West. The new governor, who is keen on demonstrating the openness of the province, has said that he is even prepared to double the population of the Kaliningrad Oblast (from one to two million) in five years and open the doors for immigration from both continental Russia and EU Member States.

Although the new programme for the development of the Oblast is still being prepared and is to be made available for public discussion in three months, the priorities included into the political rhetoric of the governor have already been reflected in some of his practical steps.

The new governor has already sent his first serious signal to the local business community, confirming the characterisation of Boos given by Yevgeny Primakov: he knows the schemes which are used to circumvent the taxation system. Operators of retail chains in the Kaliningrad Oblast were given an ultimatum: either they give up their strategy to benefit from tax incentives by "breaking up" their business, capitalise their assets and absorb USD 250-300 million in the form of investment projects prepared by the regional government or these projects will be offered to large retail chains from Russia. "I don't care and neither do the people of Kaliningrad who will be working in the market – you or, for instance, the Seventh Continent from Moscow," the governor explained.²¹ The implications were

²¹ Kogo Boos naznachit mestnym Khodorkovskim: Kaliningrad za nedeliu // <http://www.newsrb.ru/allnews/528521>

clear. If local businesses cannot make up their mind, they will not be able to compete with businesses from Moscow protected by Moscow Mayor Luzhkov, godfather of the governor's daughter.

The threat of large Russian capital entering the Oblast was also used by Boos in reference to his intentions to recover the property which had allegedly been privatised in the Oblast by unlawful means.²² So far, only a few specific properties such as the confectionary factory and shipbuilding companies have been the target of reprivatisation. However, the governor makes no secret of the fact that he intends to review the privatisation cases of several more properties and that all new contracts on the sale or lease of state property will only be awarded through public tendering procedures.

In the energy sector, Boos has already approved a concrete action plan securing continuous gas supply to the region in full volume until 2010, when the problem will finally be solved by the new branch of the Northern European pipeline to Kaliningrad.²³

Some statements of Boos regarding the new image of the region did not go unnoticed as well. The German *Spiegel* noted with satisfaction that he was the first governor to speak openly about the necessity to speed up "restoration of the monuments of the German Order of Knights and the

²² Boos nastupil na bolnoje // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/economy/k67460.html>

²³ Boos: oblast budet polnostju obespechena gazom // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/economy/k66398.html>

Prussian Monarchy” for promotion of tourism.²⁴ The same, however, does not apply to the Russian military establishment in the Oblast.

Admiral Valuyev clearly indicated that the Baltic Navy disapproves of the efforts to improve economic and cultural cooperation between the Kaliningrad Oblast and foreign countries. They believe that such efforts will facilitate non-violent separation of Kaliningrad from Russia.²⁵ Valuyev did not elaborate on his arguments any further. However, even in the absence of further clarification they can be viewed as a serious signal to Boos to watch out when speaking about the openness of the Oblast and consider all local political players and their spheres of influence.

It is worth noting that even the regional Duma dominated by Yedinaya Rossiya, which supported Boos’s commitment to cut the number of administrative staff in the Oblast by one half, refused to reduce the costs of administration at their own expense as proposed by the governor. Members of the Duma explained that the decision to increase the seats from 32 to 40 had already been adopted taking account of the mixed electoral system to be used in general election.

This context gives more clarity to Klebanov’s hint at the local political support and unity with the “ideological approach” of the federal government as prerequisites for the successful implementation of the new governor’s plans.

²⁴ Novaya metla Putina (“Spiegel”, Germanija). – Op. cit.

²⁵ Possorit li komandujushchij Baltflotom Putina so Shrioderom, 04 09 2005 // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/506957.html>

Boos was able to see that such words had serious footing reflected in the reaction by the federal government in response to some of his initiatives in the area of external relations.

Some of them were embraced by Moscow.

For instance, after the meeting on 11 October 2005 with the delegation of the European Parliament, Boos put forward the idea to set up a club of the Kaliningrad Oblast's friends in Europe. This governor's idea was immediately presented by Stepanov at the conference of the German-Russian Forum in Berlin.²⁶

Visiting members of the European Parliament representing the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee were offered by Boos and members of the State Duma to sign a memorandum summing up the results of the visit. Representatives of the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry helped draw up the memorandum but the EU delegates refused to sign it as the text was only available in Russian.²⁷ The memorandum, inter alia, stated that the delegation of the European Parliament approved of the changes in the Oblast and expected that neighbouring countries would pay more attention to facilitation of transit procedures for Russian passenger and cargo traffic as well as to possibilities to abolish visa regimes. Considering that around the end of September and beginning of October the federal government

²⁶ Kaliningrad mozhnet stat obraztsom sotrudnichestva mezhdu RF i ES // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k65620.html>

²⁷ Deputaty Evroparlamenta otkazalis podpisivat memorandum po itogam vizita v Kaliningrad // <http://regnum.ru/news/526500.html>

renewed its dissatisfaction with the terms governing cargo and military transit through Lithuania²⁸, there is no doubt that the issue of transit will remain a priority issue on the agenda of both the federal and local governments.

Boos expressed his apology to the delegation of the European Parliament over the misunderstanding with the memorandum. At the same time, he suggested that Moscow should avoid similar misunderstandings in the future and put forward a specific solution aimed at consolidating the external relation agendas of the federal and local government. On 19 October, the Government of the Oblast published a press release stating that Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov approved the decision of the governor to merge the International Relations Agency of the local government with the representative office of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kaliningrad.²⁹ As the press release stated, the merger was aimed at ensuring faster adoption of decisions related to development of relations between the Oblast and foreign countries. However, the press release by the new leadership of the Kaliningrad Oblast was premature.

The Russian Foreign Ministry did not comment on the press release but it is said that Lavrov explained, in a rather mocking manner, to Boos the relevant boundaries of competence of federal and local authorities,

²⁸ Rusija nepatenkinta tranzito per Lietuvą sąlygomis, 27 September 2005 // <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7577404>

²⁹ Boos objedinil mezhduнародnoje upravlenije s predstavitelstvom MID // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k66620.html>

especially in the field of foreign policy. It must be said though that hard feelings of the ambitious governor were soon soothed.



28. Diplomatic corps in Kaliningrad. From the left: Raitis Aveninš, Third Secretary of the Consular Division of the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia; Peter Vuns, Director of German-Russian Chamber in Kaliningrad; Jaroslaw Cubinski, Consul General of the Republic of Poland; Boris Shermetjev, First Secretary of the Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Kornelius Zommer, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany; Erik Hammerjeld, Consul of the Kingdom of Sweden.

First of all, the governor, who was eager to develop cooperation with foreign countries, was notified by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that his concern about the potential inactivity of the German Consulate General was unfounded because the Russian side managed to grant the agreement to the new consul general of Germany in Kaliningrad in record time.

Indeed, as soon as it became clear that Boos would take the governor's office in September, Consul General of Germany in Kaliningrad Kornelius Zommer notified Berlin of his resignation after just one and a half years in office. When, after his long-lasting complaints that the Russian side was

not able to provide the Consulate General of Germany with suitable premises, he was notified on 3 July, the last day of the Kaliningrad Anniversary, by Yastrezhensky of the decision to grant such premises, Zommer appealed to his old age. While everyone in the Oblast was preoccupied with the rumours that the resigning German diplomat could be replaced by Chairman of the German-Russian Parliamentary Group Gernot Erler, Bundestag parliamentarian and member of the Social Democratic party, Boos managed to share his concerns on several occasions over the stalling plans to give locals access to the Schengen area in the German Consulate General in Kaliningrad. However, the rumours proved wrong. Berlin appointed career diplomat Guido Herz as its consul general in the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation.³⁰ In the second half of October he was officially introduced by Moscow to the regional government.

Finally, at the end of October Boos was directly complemented by the Kremlin's administration through Head of the Board for Interregional and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries Modest Kolerov, who expressed his support for the governor's plans to increase the population of the Kaliningrad Oblast twofold.³¹ The Kremlin official, just as Boos, emphasised the socioeconomic dimension of the idea: implementation of

³⁰ Genkonsul FRG v Kaliningrade uhodit v otstavku, 22 09 2005 // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/5170958.html>; Deputat bundestaga FRG Gernot Erler ne budet genkonsulom v Kaliningrade // <http://www.regnum.ru/news/526673.html>; Novyj Genkonsul FRG predstavlen v oblastnoj Dume, 19 10 2005 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k66508.html>

³¹ Nas zhдут v Rossiji, 24 10 2005 // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k67241.html>

large investment projects and the programme for socioeconomic development of the Oblast not only required measures to tackle the deficit of skilled workforce currently standing at 15,000 people but attraction of new human resources. Therefore, Moscow was ready to help the leadership of Kaliningrad and would facilitate in every way possible the immigration of people of working age from continental Russia, Russian-speaking residents from the Baltic States and other countries.

It is worth noting that this initiative of Boos and the Kremlin support came under heavy criticism. For instance, advocates of the rational choice theory were asking in a mocking way: “What is a Russian living in Latvia more likely to choose – the Kaliningrad Oblast where his monthly salary can be \$300-\$500 or Ireland where he can earn €3,000?” Since the intention to double the population of the region was based on economics, it’s hardly surprising that most critics ridiculed economic motives. Maybe this is why few people could have thought that the driving force behind this intention could be both economic and geopolitical considerations. Even the question regarding the choice of the Russian living in Latvia could have been answered by asking whether the official Russia had ever offered him any other alternative.

The formulation of such a question would imply that the motherland and the new leadership of the Kaliningrad Oblast are not only committed to unconventional solutions for modernisation of the region but are also keen on giving new life to the issue of Russian-speaking population in the Baltic States. Even though the Kremlin may still be inclined to maintain its

influence in the Baltic States through the Russian-speaking population, it is likely that this factor is losing its importance in the light of rapprochement between Russia and the West. At the same time, it is believed that the Kaliningrad factor may become a “passed pawn” in a complex geopolitical game of chess between the EU and Russia. In the atmosphere of natural and open rapprochement this would undoubtedly strengthen the European sentiment of the local population, which could have adverse political consequences for Russia. Given the current situation, the Government is searching for possible ways to strengthen its population's loyalty to Russia.

These considerations could be rather eloquently reaffirmed by the leitmotif from the meeting between the president of the Russian Federation and the new governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast which took place in the Kremlin on 7 November: “We often state that Kaliningrad is the Russian exclave in Europe,” said Putin. “It must be in line with this description in terms of development of infrastructure, standard of living and other indicators; however, the most important thing is that we need to resolve all issues regarding the relationship between this region and the remaining territory of our country.”³² Putin expressed his belief in the ability of Boos to tackle all these problems.

³² Vladimir Putin vstretilsia s gubernatorom Kaliningradskoj oblasti Georgijem Bossom // <http://www.kremlin.ru/sdocs/news.shtml#96783>; Prezident Rossiji Vladimir Putin nadejtsia, chto novyj gubernator Kaliningrada G. Boss smozhet okonchatelno reshit vse voprosy sviazej Kaliningrada s ostalnoj teritorijej Rossiji // Interfaks. – 07 11 2005; Putin i Boss obsudili problemy Kaliningradskoj oblasti // <http://www.kaliningrad.ru/news/politics/k69978.html>.

EPILOGUE

A possible answer to the question raised at the beginning of the study – What were the intentions of the organisers of the Kaliningrad Anniversary? – could be their interest in strengthening the ties between the motherland and the exclave.

The interest, of course, is not new. The desire to shake off the syndrome of “not exactly our own” territory and to secure the strategic capacity of the Government to control the exclave in the changing domestic and international context is quite understandable and somewhat natural. Despite the fact that this interest regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast in Russian politics was rather dormant for a long time and that supposedly new ideas about the future of the exclave rarely had any real content, a certain model of actions by the motherland towards its geopolitically-separated territorial unit was becoming more obvious. Formally, Moscow had no objections and even supported the treatment of the Oblast as a specific region but in practice it never allowed such uniqueness to be manifested. However, this so-called model of a geopolitical hostage was leading to a stalemate preventing the finding of answers to such fundamental questions as, What’s next?, What could be the benefit of influx of funds or holding the region which found itself in a foreign environment on a leash? In the last decade, experience showed that the Kaliningrad issue could not be resolved without interference by the motherland focusing on new factors and new room for action. In this context, it would be possible to conclude that the celebration of the establishment of Königsberg/Kaliningrad on 1-3 July 2005 was a

testimony that the Kremlin finally managed to find these new factors and room for action.

The commitment to overcome the barrier, to break the Soviet tradition of counting the city's history from 1945 and to recognise the historic continuum was an important signal from Moscow to the West – a signal that received a response from the West, particularly from Berlin, which is the most important counterparty in this respect. It must be noted that these were not merely symbolic gestures that could be found aplenty in the past. These glasses of champagne represented very concrete trends of strategic cooperation between Russia and the West. One of the trends, the North European pipeline in the Baltic Sea, will soon become evident to all.

It is no accident that an aggressive, ambitious and stereotype-free politician from the motherland was appointed as the new Governor of the Oblast at the same time.

These developments unfold a strategically new outlook for the Kaliningrad Oblast. While in the past Moscow's efforts to draw a geopolitical line of the Oblast were complicated by intermediate obstacles, neighbouring Lithuania in particular, it has finally found direct access to the West, which unlocks opportunities to neutralise intermediate factors. In this context, the Kaliningrad Oblast indeed becomes geopolitically tied to Russia and very important for the development of strategic relations between Russia and the West. It is hardly necessary to explain what may happen to intermediate players who aren't able to adapt to the new reality.

SUMMARY

The origin and originality of the problem often referred to as the Kaliningrad puzzle are geopolitical. Their concise description could be as follows. The part of Prussia taken by the Soviet Union after the Second World War was transformed into a gigantic Soviet military base. It performed the functions of the exclave against the West and of the barrier which helped the USSR to ensure the dependence of the Eastern Baltics and domination in Poland. After the Cold War, the territory of 15,100 square kilometres with almost a million residents owned by Russia and located the farthest to the West, although bordering the Baltic Sea, ashore became isolated from the motherland and turned into an exclave. Gradually that exclave found itself in the crossroads of different security structures and later – surrounded by one of them. Changes in the situation gave rise to the so-called Kaliningrad discourse, i.e. political decisions influenced by international policies in Central and Eastern Europe and academic discussion and studies of the role of this Russian-owned exclave in the relations of the East and the West.

The academic literature reveals quite a broad panorama of interpretations of this topic. It should be pointed out that the issues which appeared atop the research – how the collapse of the USSR affected the situation of the Kaliningrad Oblast, what it would be in the future, what role would be played by the motherland and the neighbours, what influence it would experience from the Euro-Atlantic development to the East, how the international community should help the Oblast to adapt to the changing

environment, etc. – mostly coincided with the slips of the West-East relations after the Cold War. As the latter were essentially marked by the search for so-called new security architecture, the Kaliningrad topic was dominated by the tendency of overcoming the insecurity “threat potentially encoded in the Oblast.”

At the end of the 80’s and beginning of the 90’s that tendency was reflected in texts modelling the future of the Kaliningrad Oblast based on the Potsdam Tail and analysing the military threat constituted by the Oblast to the security of the Baltic Sea Region. In the mid-90’s, the idea of Kaliningrad as the “Baltic Hong Kong” started to develop as an alternative to various internationalisation and demilitarisation proposals for the Oblast. It aimed at revealing the potential of the Oblast as a possible economic link between the East and the West. At the turn of the century, following practical steps to reduce the militarisation level of the exclave, the Kaliningrad topic became more focused on non-military threats. More and more attention was devoted to issues relating to the impact of the expansion of the European Union to the East on the socioeconomic development of the Oblast, its lagging behind its neighbours, and the consequences of turning into a “double periphery.” Popularity was acquired by recommendations suggesting that such problems should be overcome by relying on those principles of organising the political space which were followed by EU multi-stage governance logic and spread with EU enlargement: deterritoriality, devaluation of the state borders and qualitative change of their functions, border cooperation and international interconnectivity enhancing mutual dependence of regional players. Finally, a few years ago, after the Kaliningrad Oblast found itself surrounded by

NATO and the EU, related tension was attributed to the practical and technical decisions concerning Russian passengers, goods and military transit to/from the Kaliningrad Oblast.

Thus, the Kaliningrad Oblast did not become the factor which would block the development of Euro-Atlantic institutions, nor did it cause a military conflict as was sometimes forecasted, and finally did not turn into a “black hole” in the so-called soft security context or a site of socioeconomic destabilisation in the Baltic Sea Region, which was also widely discussed and written about. In other words, it could be stated that the Kaliningrad wheel is moving forward, encouraging thoughts of progress after each cycle.

On the other hand, the optimistic scenario which required unconventional solutions to the situation in place and outlined the principles of free trade, wide autonomy and clear independence in the actions of the Oblast did not come true either. Discussions as to whether the process of overlapping of the West and the East structures seen in this part of the Baltic Sea Region has essentially neutralised the “potential encoded threat” in the Oblast are still hot. In fact, this demonstrates that the Kaliningrad topic remains especially sensitive. Clear evidence of this could be seen in mid-summer 2005 when Russia organised a pompous celebration of the 750th Anniversary of Kaliningrad on the first three days of July.

A missed opportunity and further complications of the Kaliningrad puzzle are just a few evaluations of the Kaliningrad Anniversary expressed by

foreign political observers. A reasonable question is *What were the true intentions of the organisers of the celebration of the 750th Anniversary of the Foundation of Königsberg/ Kaliningrad?*

Answers were sought using the concept of a geopolitical hostage which, the author believes, explains the essence of the Kaliningrad dossier.

The Kaliningrad dossier is a tangle of expressions of the status of relations of the motherland (the Russian Federation) with its geopolitically separated territorial fragment (the Kaliningrad Oblast) depending on internal and international factors. For over 15 years combinations of internal and external factors have determined their diversity in this way or another making Russia face the tasks of retaining, effectively governing and controlling the territorial fragment, i.e. preserving sovereignty and assuring legitimacy. While the academic community is obstinately looking for visions of the future of the Oblast, Moscow is solving somewhat more pragmatic issues. The motherland faces certain complications provoked by the dilemma between the role which, in Moscow's opinion, legitimately (*по праву*) belongs to it and the role which it is allowed to play by the external environment. In other words, Russia is forced to correct its chances to implement one strategy or another of relations with the fragment, adjusting it to the changing situation both in and around the Oblast. Failure to solve this dilemma would create a real opportunity for the Oblast to break away from Moscow, without negating the motherland defragmentation scenario.

Namely for this reason Moscow tried to turn this Oblast into a geopolitical hostage – a territory received in the process of cession as the spoils of war which is to be not only retained (the internal aspect) but also to make other countries and international institutions realise or refrain from any direct or indirect act of liberation of the hostage (the external aspect). As regards the specific features of Kaliningrad (the Potsdam Tail, geopolitical location, socioeconomic factors), namely the internal aspect officially covered with the external one may be of greater importance for Moscow. Formally, the motherland does not object to and even promotes interpretations of the province as a specific region. However in practice it does not allow such uniqueness to be manifested. This is a way to invoke and support a peculiar Stockholm Syndrome in the Oblast – Kaliningrad residents must reconcile with the status of an ordinary region of Russia themselves, i.e. all decisions regarding the expression of the Oblast will be taken by Moscow and the Oblast will not be allowed to express itself as a subject.

Those who more or less attentively followed the case of Königsberg's/Kaliningrad's 750th Anniversary could see a number of aspects attributable to the Kaliningrad dossier. Russian rhetoric referred to as European was prominent in the case. It also demonstrated the Russian approach to the historical heritage of the Kaliningrad Oblast. However it also highlighted the practical relation of the Russian foreign policy to Eurocontinentalism, Central Europe and the placement of the Kaliningrad factor therein. The outlines of the regional policy of the motherland framing the relations with the specific subject of the Russian Federation were also visible.

These aspects were divided into three chapters: *Kaliningrad – One City, One History*; *Russian City in the Heart of Europe*; and *Kaliningrad – Meeting Point of Russia and Europe*. Headings of the chapters correspond to the three ideologisms attributed to the three days of celebrations, 1-3 July 2005, by the drafters of the Kaliningrad Anniversary concept. It is left only to explain the relation of those ideologisms to the reality, i.e. the processes really in place in and around the Oblast. The analysis has revealed that Moscow is preparing for serious corrections in its policy towards this region. The same is shown by a decision maturing in the celebration peripeteia to change the political management of the Kaliningrad Oblast. Therefore the study is naturally crowned by the chapter *Post-Anniversary Days. Russian Window to Europe* devoted to discussion of the first steps of Georgy Boos, new governor of the Oblast.

A possible answer to the question raised in the study – What were the intentions of the organisers of the Kaliningrad anniversary? – could be their interest in strengthening the ties between the motherland and the exclave.

The interest, of course, is not new. The desire to shake off the syndrome of “not exactly our own” territory and to secure the strategic capacity of the Government to control the exclave in the changing domestic and international context is quite understandable and somewhat natural. Despite the fact that this interest regarding the Kaliningrad Oblast in Russian politics was rather dormant for a long time and that supposedly new ideas about the future of the exclave rarely had any real content, a certain model of actions by the motherland towards its geopolitically-

separated territorial unit was becoming more clear. Formally, Moscow had no objections and even supported the treatment of the Oblast as a specific region but in practice it never allowed such uniqueness to be manifested. However, this so-called model of a geopolitical hostage was leading to a stalemate preventing the finding of answers to such fundamental questions as, What's next?, What could be the benefit of influx of funds or holding in leash the region which found itself in a foreign environment on a leash? In the last decade, experience showed that the Kaliningrad issue could not be resolved without interference by the motherland focusing on new factors and new room for action. In this context, it would be possible to conclude that the celebration of the establishment of Königsberg/Kaliningrad on 1-3 July 2005 was a testimony that the Kremlin finally managed to find these new factors and room for action.

The commitment to overcome the barrier, to break the Soviet tradition of counting the city's history from 1945 and to recognise the historic continuum was an important signal from Moscow to the West – a signal that received a response from the West, particularly from Berlin, which is the most important counterparty in this respect. It must be noted that these were not merely symbolic gestures that could be found aplenty in the past. These glasses of champagne represented very concrete trends of strategic cooperation between Russia and the West. One of the trends, the North European pipeline in the Baltic Sea, will soon become evident to all.

It is no accident that an aggressive, ambitious and stereotype-free politician from the motherland was appointed as the new governor of the Oblast at

the same time. Not only was he the first to mention the exclave-type role played in the rapprochement between Russia and the West, but he also had the Kremlin's blessing to take practical steps and prepare the exclave for this role. Boos describes this role as "Russia's window to Europe." According to him, from being the area which the Europeans are trying to play as a privilege card for penetrating Russian markets, the Kaliningrad Oblast must become a platform for integration of Russian business into the European and global markets. This requires urgent revitalisation of the Oblast, i.e. development of a transparent and understandable financial system, public access to the budgeting process, a twofold increase in the energy capacity of the region, development of transport infrastructure and logistics, and, last but not least, drafting of the SEZ law so that all these actions could promote the arrival of large and competitive Russian capital to the Oblast.

Although long-term targets are easy to formulate, the main question is how to achieve them. In a way, it is a matter of the first steps which show that the new governor has virtually completed the structural reform in the governance of the region. Everyone can see his efforts in the fight against the corrupt schemes to avoid taxes, his preference for large capital from the motherland and, finally, his commitment to unconventional solutions in modernising Kaliningrad Oblast looking, at the same time, for possible way to strengthen the loyalty of the local residents to Russia.

These developments unfold a strategically new outlook for the Kaliningrad Oblast. While in the past Moscow's efforts to draw a geopolitical line of

the Oblast were complicated by intermediate obstacles, neighbouring Lithuania in particular, it has finally found direct access to the West, which unlocks opportunities to neutralise intermediate factors. In this context, the Kaliningrad Oblast indeed becomes geopolitically tied to Russia and very important for the development of strategic relations between Russia and the West. It is hardly necessary to explain what may happen to intermediate players who aren't able to adapt to the new reality.

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