

The Kaliningrad Region

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The Kaliningrad Region

A Specific Enclave in Contemporary Europe

BRILL | Ferdinand Schöningh



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Introduction

The origin of the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast)¹ is related to the emergence of a new international order after the Second World War, when the leaders of the Big Three (the USSR, US and United Kingdom) divided the post-German East Prussia into a Polish part of 23.8 thousand sq.km and a Soviet part of 13.1 thousand sq.km with the main city of the region being Königsberg (Kaliningrad)². On the territory incorporated into the USSR, the Königsberg Special Military District was established in September 1945, renamed to Königsberg District in April 1946 and finally Kaliningrad District in July 1946. Considering its particular geopolitical, strategic and military importance, it was decided to include the Oblast in the Russian Federal Soviet Socialist Republic even though it was separated from its home republic by other Soviet Union republics (Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic and Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic).

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 led to the isolation of the Kaliningrad Region from the territory of the Russian Federation and the creation of an enclave (semi-enclave).

It is a region separated from Russia proper by the territories of other countries. Presently, it is also an enclave in the geopolitical sense because it is surrounded by countries of the European Union and NATO. It is one of the smallest regions of the Russian Federation and its most western part. In addition, from the Polish perspective, the Kaliningrad Region is the only part of Russia with which we have a common border. This determines a look at the Region regarding scientific investigations and processes taking place there, not only through the perspective of Polish-Russian relations, but also in wider

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- 1 In the book the term 'Kaliningrad Region' will be used, which is relevant to the administrative unit of the territorial division of the Russian Federation under the Russian name 'Kaliningrad Oblast' (in Russian: *Калининградская область*). In the international scientific literature, besides the term 'Kaliningrad Region' its equivalents exist, such as 'Kaliningrad Oblast', 'Kaliningrad District' or just 'Kaliningrad'. See: Oldberg, Ingmar (2000). "The Emergence of a Regional Identity in the Kaliningrad Oblast." *Cooperation and Conflict* 3, 269-288; Lamande, Vincent and Samson, Ivan and Vinokurov, Evgeny (2004). "Measuring Regional Economic Development in Russia: The Case of the Kaliningrad Oblast." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 1, 71-80; Joenniemi, Pertti and Prawitz, Jan, eds. (1998). *Kaliningrad: the European Amber Region*. London: Routledge.
 - 2 One cannot ignore the fact that a small part of German East Prussia in the north, the so-called Klaipeda Land (*Memelland*) with an area of 2,700 sq.km, in 1948 was made part of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic and now belongs to the independent Lithuania.

contexts: Baltic, European or Euro-Atlantic cooperation projects in the Baltic Sea Region, EU – Russia, NATO – Russia). Regional and local types of cooperation on the Polish-Russian borderland between the Warmia and Mazury Region³ and Kaliningrad Region have also a considerable significance.

Contemporary Kaliningrad has been changing intensely; isolated from the rest of the world in the second half of the twentieth century due to its military nature, now catching up in almost every field. The strengthening of NATO forces in the Baltic Sea Region, visible in recent years, including the presence of the US troops in Poland, has brought repercussions from the Russian side. Russia is against the constant deployment of US Army units in Poland and in the whole region of Central and Eastern Europe, because from their point of view any US presence in the region violates their interests and is undesirable. For example, the construction of elements of the American Missile Defense system in Redzikowo, Poland, has strengthened the military power of the Kaliningrad Region. The missile brigade stationed in the Region was armed with Iskander missiles capable of carrying nuclear loads, and the combat capacity of the Russian Baltic Fleet was also strengthened.

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its involvement in the conflict in Eastern Ukraine and its hybridity have resulted in Russia being identified by the government in Warsaw as the primary source of threats to Poland's present-day security. As a result, current Polish-Russian political relations have reached a deep deadlock. The perception of Russia through the prism of threats has also translated into Poland's cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. For example, in 2016 Poland suspended the Local Border Traffic Agreement with Russia (in force since 2012)⁴, invoking security reasons. This had a negative impact on the intensification of the cooperation on the Polish-Russian borderland, hindering the opening and integration of the Kaliningrad Region in Europe.

3 For the purpose of terminological unification and according to the regional studies approach, the term 'Warmia and Mazury Region' will be used in this book. This term corresponds to the administrative division of Poland and concerns the area of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship (in Polish: Województwo Warmińsko-Mazurskie), the Voivodeship which has existed since 1999 and borders on the Russian Kaliningrad Region. In official documents and scientific publications, especially in Polish, other terms are used: 'Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region', 'Warmia and Masuria Region', 'Warmia-Masuria Region', 'Warmian-Masurian Region', 'Warmia-Mazury Region', or accordingly: 'Warmia and Mazury Province', 'Warmia and Masuria Province', 'Warmia-Masuria Province', 'Warmian-Masurian Province', 'Warmia-Mazury Province', 'Warmia-Masuria Voivodeship', 'Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship', 'Warmia-Mazury Voivodeship'.

4 The Local Border Traffic (LBT) is sometimes called the 'Small Border Traffic'.

Its unique location in Europe and intensive changes indicate the need for scientific analysis to consider the internal and external determinants of its operation. The main objective of this book is to show multilateral aspects of the functioning of the Kaliningrad Region as a Russian enclave in Europe in contemporary reality. It has selected analytical and synthetic documentary issues on the Region (Oblast), which is the interest field of researchers of the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, and researchers from Sweden and Russia alike.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part, entitled “Regional Identities” contains the following articles: East Prussia – Politics and Memory (Krzysztof Gładkowski); Historical Memory and Identity of Borderlands: the Case of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region (Krzysztof Żęgota); Towards the Regional Identity of the Inhabitants of the Polish-Russian Borderland (Arkadiusz Żukowski); Tatar Ethnic Minority in the Kaliningrad Region – Cultural and Religious Activity (Selim Chazbijewicz).

The second part entitled “(Inter-)Regional Policies” contains the following articles: The Specificity of the Kaliningrad Region in the Administrative System of the Russian Federation (Waldemar Tomaszewski); Political Participation in the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation (Karolina Tybuchowska-Hartlińska); The Attitude of Polish Political Parties Towards the Kaliningrad Region in 1989-2019 (Tomasz Bojarowicz); The Kaliningrad Region in the Olsztyn Media (Katarzyna Maciejewska-Mieszkowska); The Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Russia – Political and Security Dimension (Wojciech Kotowicz), Paradiplomacy Between Polish Regions and the Kaliningrad Region (Wojciech T. Modzelewski), Cooperation Between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region and Its Perspectives (Łukasz Bielewski), Cooperation of the Regional and Local Authorities of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region (Teresa Astramowicz-Leyk).

The third part entitled “Geopolitical Perspectives” contains the following articles: The Lasting Consequences of Geopolitical Mistakes – Some Realist Conclusions on the Duchy of Prussia and Its Role in the History of Poland (Jacek Więclawski), Historical Background and Specificity of the Kaliningrad Region in Europe – a Local Perspective Outlook (Benon Gaziński), The Kaliningrad Region: an Exclave With Internal and External Problems (Ingmar Oldberg), The Significance of the Kaliningrad Region in the International Politics in the Baltic Sea Region After 1989 (Marcin Chełmianiak).

The last part entitled “Research Perspectives” contains the following articles: Scientific Activity of the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn on the Kaliningrad Region (Arkadiusz Żukowski, Wojciech Kotowicz, Marcin Chełmianiak, Krzysztof Żęgota); International Activity and

Cooperation of Universities – the European Union from the Kaliningrad Point of View (Anna Barsukova, Igor I. Zhukovskiy) and the List of Scientific Publications on the Kaliningrad Region Prepared by the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn.

This book is the result of research conducted by the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn on the Russian enclave in cooperation with other research centres. The editors hope that the book will be of interest to readers of modern and multi-faceted issues of the Kaliningrad Region. According to them, the book is intended to contribute to the scientific discourse on the internal and external challenges and threats of the Region in Europe.

PART I

Regional Identities

East Prussia – Politics and Memory

Krzysztof Gładkowski

Abstract

East Prussia, the former province of the German Reich, after the Second World War was partitioned between Poland, Lithuania and Russia. Though the province stopped existing, it remained a point of interest in terms of historical politics and remembrance for the inhabitants of the three mentioned countries and Germany. This chapter presents the issues of historical politics and related policy of remembrance to refer them to the particular practices employed in the historical politics. The political history run in Kaliningrad has been given a special attention here.

Keywords: cultural heritage, East Prussia, history, historical policy, Kaliningrad, Königsberg, Królewiec, politics of memory, transnational memory policy, identity, Warmia, Mazury Region.

1. Introduction

The issue of historical politics has recently become a hot subject not only in Poland. The reason for a fierce discussion was triggered by Vladimir Putin's statement who charged Poland with the complicity to the start of the Second World War and the Holocaust¹ (*Putin atakuje Polskę*). The President of Russia commented on the European Parliaments' resolution on Russia's liability for the outburst of the Second World War² (Voltaire Network 2019). The speech

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- 1 "Putin also formulated charges against Józef Lipski, the pre-war Polish ambassador in Germany, who – as the Russian president put it – was supposed to promise to put up a monument of Hitler in Warsaw if the latter would promise to send all the Jews for extermination in Africa. A scoundrel, an anti-Semitic swine, one cannot name him otherwise. He (Lipski) fully supported Hitler's anti-Semitic attitude and – what is more – promised him his monument in Warsaw in return for his wickedness towards the Jewish nation – Putin said last week at the session of the Russian Defence Ministry Executive College" (PAP 2019).
 - 2 Resolution of the European Parliament dated 19th September 2019 on the significance of the European Historical Politics of Remembrance for the Future of Europe (2019/2819(RSP). Critical comments on the said Resolution displayed its incompleteness (see: Stavrou 2019).

by President Putin came under fire in media not only in Poland. The Russian Ambassador in Warsaw was summoned by the Polish Foreign Office. Vladimir Putin was accused of an attempt to write history anew thus falsifying it (PAP, 2019). The Ambassador of Germany, Rolf Nickel published a Tweet: "The USSR along with Germany participated in this brutal division of Poland" (IAR, 2019). Global media published the statement of Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, who was charged with a lie by the Russian Foreign Office spokesperson. In Russia, events and programmes on Poland were arranged which contradicted the commonly acknowledged historical facts. It was nevertheless prophesised that

the Kremlin narrative would go on given the fact that the 'artillery preparation' observed over the latest weeks was so tough and went beyond any borders of international relations that it was hard to imagine what the real attack on the line of the historical front would be like. It seemed very likely for Vladimir Putin to unleash it during the ceremonies at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. But it is not the world approval of the Russian (Soviet more likely) interpretation of history because the Russian propaganda specialists are not naïve to believe in such a great impact of their own propaganda [...] Its aim is ideological enhancement at home and construction of divisions abroad in Central-East Europe (Kacewicz, 2020).

It was the historic narration by Putin and Russian media that prevented Polish President Andrzej Duda from his arrival in Jerusalem. German media published texts about Putin's dangerous revisionism pointing to the enemy of remembrance – oblivion and denial – and, primarily intentional falsification of history, its instrumentalisation for political reasons which can be observed in Germany and Europe. Germany was summoned to do something against oblivion and historical lies. Europe was pointed at as the one more liable to act against Putin than Germany. Putin's attempt to write history anew was judged as extremely dangerous for it spread discord and contempt for Poles, Ukrainians and Balts stigmatising them as Hitler's collaborators. The aim of Putin's actions was regarded as the contradiction to the German saying "*Das Geheimnis der Versöhnung heißt Erinnerung*" / "Remembrance is the secret of reconciliation" (Marschal, 2020).

The debate "The Falsification of European History and Remembrance of the Second World War" launched in the European Parliament on 15th January 2019 was the European response to Putin's words. Majority of MEPs supported

Poland, and Věra Jourová from the Czech Republic, the Vice-President of the European Commission, said: “The Commission will not tolerate these attacks on Poland and stands in full solidarity with Poland and the Polish people.” (KN, 2020). Germany’s President Frank-Walter Steinmeier’s silence in Yad Vashem in the face of the dispute on remembrance between the President of Russia Vladimir Putin and the President of Poland Andrzej Duda was Germany’s attitude towards the issue. Both President of Germany in Yad Vashem and Chancellor Angela Merkel explicitly put blame on Germany for the outbreak of the Second World War. On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi Auschwitz concentration camp, prior to the concert in the Berlin Staatsoper Unter den Linden commemorating the event, Angela Merkel and Mateusz Morawiecki, Prime Minister of Poland, spoke about the need to keep remembrance alive and opposed the distortion of history. The address by the German Chancellor sounded very telling: “We have the responsibility to ensure that all people feel safe in Europe and in Germany, and for them to feel at home”. Similarly, Polish Prime Minister said:

The witnesses who survived KL Auschwitz kept saying that in a death camp one does not die once. The dying continues all the time. If we fail to firmly stand for the truth we shall contribute to the death of our victims of those atrocities. It will be us who will make them die endlessly. Therefore we do oppose the denial and distortion of Holocaust history. We are determined to respond to the attempts to use the 75th anniversary of Auschwitz-Birkenau liberation and the remembrance of the camp victims for political purposes. Instead of resorting to words of political games, we want to listen to the silence left behind by 60 million the Second World War victims and 6 million Holocaust victims (Widzyk, 2020).

On the following day, the Polish Prime Minister said that the agreement with Germany may only be built on the truth (TVP INFO, IAR, 2020).

The above quoted facts show clearly the significance of connections between politics, remembrance and history which have not ended as of today. In this paper, we would like to indicate a few aspects connected with former East Prussia which are strictly linked to politics and remembrance. The raised issues aim at showing the processes going on in this part of the former province of the German Reich which presently makes parts of Poland, Russia and Lithuania. We have started by introducing the notion of “East Prussia” in connection with historical facts marking the major events giving an insight into

the Region's specific properties from the historical and cultural points of view. We go on to present the area liquidation and division only to pass on to the issue of "historical policy" and "history of memory" in today's characteristic "transnational" form which is often presented in contemporary school handbooks. The part entitled "From East Prussia to Warmia and Mazury and Mažoji Lietuva (Prussian Lithuania)" presents the ways the past of East Prussia is reflected in the historical politics in Poland and Lithuania. The last part of the paper deals with Russian historical politics analysed in detail on the basis of a case study from Kaliningrad.

2. East Prussia

The very name "East Prussia" derives from the original pagan inhabitants of this territory, a Balt tribe of Prussians (Pruthenians). There had been unsuccessful attempts in the early Middle Ages to convert them to Christianity until the Masovian Duke Conrad called the Teutonic Order for help (1226). With time, the Teutonic Knights proved a threat to Poland as the Order, growing into power, ended up establishing their own Teutonic State in the conquered Prussian territory. Although the Order was defeated in the battle of Grunwald (1410), the king of Poland's victory did not affect the Order's operations in the area. In 1525, the last Grand Master of the Teutonic Order transformed Prussia into a lay state. The same year, Albrecht von Hohenzollern paid homage to the king of Poland, Sigismund I and turned his country into the Duchy of Prussia introducing Lutheran reformation. In the 1620s, a Brandenburg Elector became ruler of the Duchy. Hardly forty years later, the Duchy of Prussia was exempted from the fealty to Poland. In early eighteenth century (1701), in Königsberg the Brandenburg Elector became King of Prussia. This was the onset of the growing power of that state. Following the First partition of Poland executed in 1772 by Prussia, Russia and Austria, Frederic the Great obtained the biggest slice of Royal Prussia and Warmia ordering at the same time the names "West Prussia" and "East Prussia" be used obligatorily (31st January 1773). East Prussia became an administration entity which was incorporated into the German Empire in 1871. During the Second World War, Russian troops stayed there for six months. Under the resolution passed by the Versailles Treaty, the territory was separated from the German Reich by the so called 'Polish corridor'. Part of this province remained German as a result of the 1920 plebiscite. The Działdowo area was attached to Poland, Klaipeda remained under the supervision of the League of Nations only to be allotted to Lithuania in 1923. During the Second World War, the Province did not experience any acts of war until 1945 when the population

was evacuated. East Prussia was eventually divided in Potsdam: 1) its northern part was handed over to Soviet Russia turning it into the Kaliningrad Oblast and West Lithuania, 2) the southern territory of East Prussia was attached to Olsztyn Voivodship in Poland. Following the democratic transformations in Eastern Europe, the Kaliningrad Oblast has been part of Russian Federation while Klaipeda and the slice around have become part of the Republic of Lithuania. Below, an account of the liquidation will be presented.

In 1945, the majority of the East Prussian population escaped fearing the Red Army, many lost their lives crossing the Vistula Lagoon and due to a severe winter. In the 1940s and 50s expulsions were ordered and over the next decades a great number of the German population left their homeland for Germany. Until now, few of them have still been living there, forming small minority communities. The term that has most commonly been used nowadays to name the area of former East Prussia in Poland is “Warmia i Mazury” (Żytniec, 2015, 94-95).

3. The Liquidation of East Prussia

It was the geopolitical location of East Prussia that forced its liquidation. It was decided in Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam by the rulers of the USA, Great Britain and Soviet Russia. The genesis of the liquidation went back to the situation which emerged as a result of the First World War. Both in Poland and Germany, the Versailles Treaty provisions were regarded as temporary and the subsequent war in Europe was supposed to bring final solutions. In Poland, the effects of the lost plebiscite in 1920 were not treated as permanent and various territorial and political programmes were being developed. The radical variant saw the liquidation and division of the Province (National Democracy) while the minimum programme assumed weakening its links with Germany (Polish Socialist Party and the ‘Belvedere fraction’). The opinions concerning the issue of East Prussia were differentiated and dependent on the current politics and international situation (see more: Eberhardt, 2018, 595-597).

During the inter-war period, East Prussia was an exclave separated from the German Reich by the ‘Polish corridor’ which was part of the Polish state. This situation was inconvenient for both Poland and Germany. Germany wanted to have a free access to their eastern province and Poland, on the other hand, saw it as a threat to the national security and integrity and therefore used to put forward the concepts of its liquidation, disintegration or division. Neither of the parties opted for a compromise thus the only solution was power play. In their publications, many geographers and historians indicated that as long as

East Prussia was separated from Germany the independence of Poland would be at hazard³. Kazimierz Głogowiecki explicitly represented the option of East Prussia liquidation by saying: “Therefore it must clearly be stated: either Poland absorbs East Prussia or East Prussia destroys Poland. There is no other possibility and if anyone claims it is possible, they cheat themselves or others” (Głogowiecki, 1925, 11; quotation after: Eberhardt, 2018, 597). That statement was tragically confirmed in the year 1939; the Polish state ceased existing in September following the attack of Germany on Poland launched from East Prussia which, after 20 years, had not only joined the Third Reich but expanded its territory as well. The September disaster, however, did not stop the most active politicians from formulating political programmes in reference to the future of East Prussia. There appeared firm statements that the final solution of the problem was necessary for the time Poland regained its sovereignty. As early as 2nd April 1940, in Paris the issue of the East Prussia status change by liquidating this province of the Third Reich was raised by the III Department of the Chief Commanders’ Staff. Another idea was the division of East Prussia territory between Poland and Lithuania put forward in two variants. On 17th October 1940, in London another programme was outlined by the Political Works Bureau appointed by the Polish Government in Exile. It also favoured the liquidation of East Prussia and incorporation of its territory into Poland and Lithuania. The liquidation demand came up also in occupied Poland supported by all political groups, and it became specifically powerful following the German invasion of Russia. The Polish Government (in Exile) Delegation for Poland and the Home Army Chief Command (Headquarters) considered the future political status of East Prussia. Home Army’s supreme political aim was to incorporate East Prussia into Poland. The Polish Government in Exile sent a memorandum to governments of Great Britain and the USA where it was explained why it was necessary for Poland to absorb East Prussia. In 1943 in Tehran, the decision concerning East Prussia was made which cancelled the plans of incorporating East Prussia in whole into Poland, instead the proposal of the division of the said territory between Poland and Soviet Russia was accepted⁴. Although the border line was being drawn for a long time – until 1947, followed by corrections introduced as late as in the 1950s – the very fact of this frontier was finally decided by the three powers and the Polish and Soviet

3 Piotr Eberhardt mentions a number of authors who devoted their works to this issue: Włodzimierz Wakar, Adam Uziębło, Stanisław Grabski, Jerzy Kurnatowski, Stanisław Sławski, Bolesław Limanowski, Jędrzej Giertych, Karol Buczek (Eberhardt 2018, 597).

4 A detailed description of the diplomatic processes concerning the border outline with respective maps, see: Eberhardt 2018, 602-609.

Governments approved it in August 1945. The historic East Prussia disappeared into two foreign parts. It is worth mentioning what Piotr Eberhardt wrote in one of his papers in relation to the division of East Prussia:

As a result, after having existed for centuries, East Prussia was erased and divided. The division was made in fact along a straight line: across single villages, water bodies, arable fields and forests. Infrastructural links and connections were cut across. The border line separated the former areas which for centuries had made homogenous and uniform political, economic, social or functional entities. A total replacement of population occurred (except a small area in Warmia and Mazury Region where the original inhabitants left their homes much later). The southern part was inhabited by Polish Catholics while the northern areas by mostly Russians, originally Orthodox, but under a severe impact of atheism. The whole territory of former East Prussia saw major civilisation and cultural changes. Over the subsequent decades, both parts of the historic East Prussia were separated completely. With time, the two areas started to significantly differ in terms of demography, society and economy due to a very tight border between them. Following the dismantling of the USSR giving rise to the Russian Federation and Poland's access to the European Union, the separation gained a different political dimension due to the fact that it became the eastern frontier of the NATO member states. This had a major impact on the area's strategic importance. For Poland this was an unprecedentedly great change. However, there still exist some historic analogies. During the inter-war period, East Prussia was a German exclave threatening Poland from the north with their military aggression. The present Kaliningrad Region is also an exclave but this time instead of our western neighbour it is part of our eastern one, and again poses a threat to Poland's security from the north (Eberhardt, 2018, 611).

Despite having been erased from the political map of Europe, East Prussia is still present in historical politics, in the memory of those born in the Province and historical science.

4. Historical Policy and Politics of Memory

Contemporary humanistic studies have differentiated between history and remembrance (Le Goff, 2007; Ricoeur, 2006). History opposed to remembrance serves the legitimisation of power while remembrance recovers human

deeds and experience of the past and oblivion. History instrumentalizes the past; remembrance brings back all types of experience, fascination, acts of men or societies. History is occupied with great events and heroes; remembrance focuses on single everymen and their life experience (Ricoeur, 2006; cf. Domańska, 2006; Müller, 2013; Domańska, Stobiecki, Wiślicz, 2014).

The issues of current political disputes concerning the political interpretation of the outbreak of the Second World War make us focus on the two concept categories – “historical policy” and “politics of memory”. The phrases “historical policy” and “politics of memory” have all the time been present in the discourse between political analysts and historians since the so called ‘dispute of historians’ started in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1980s (Chwedoruk, 2018, 139-146; Hahn, 2013, 147; Saryusz-Wolska, 2009). Next to yet another notion, the “politics against the past”, both terms have been successfully functioning in contemporary German journalism and historiography. In Poland, the term “historical policy” has been borrowed from the German language; it is also true for Russia. Importantly, the term “politics of memory” is used in England (Hahn, 2013, 146). Not going into detailed genesis of the said terms, as it has been done before (Hahn, 2013, 146-147; Chwedoruk, 2018, 232-245), we shall confine our presentation to the definitions only to be able to outline the political processes shaping the social historical awareness in relation to the liquidated East Prussia and the memory of it. In the case of both terms our study concentrates on, we face political instrumentalization affecting both history and memory. In reference to East Prussia, there occurs yet another expression in a totally unavoidable way: the ‘transnational policy against the past’ (Müller, 2013). The latter term came into existing on the basis of comparative studies on historical policy but it is closely linked to the processes of globalization and integration as well, thus the demand for transnational school handbooks appeared (Kąkolewski, 2018).

Beatrix Bouvier and Michael Schneider gave the notion of “historical policy” the following meaning: “Intentional support to the memory of specific events, processes and historical protagonists for political sake and purposes” (Bouvier, Schneider 2008, 1; quot. after: Hahn 2013, 148). In Poland, historical memory is defined in various ways. One of the concepts gives it the meaning of “intentional actions by the political class for the purpose of shaping the scope and nature of collective historical memory” (Wolff-Powęska, 2007, 10). It is regarded as “politics in full”, one of specified area of politics, “it is a peculiar way of ‘practicing politics’ which handles the true, more or less falsified and mythologised knowledge on the past in an instrumental manner; turning it into the means of keeping power or gaining it, possibly participating in it” (Ponczek, 2013, 7). Both terms “historical policy” and “politics of memory”

are used interchangeably (Ponczek, 2013; comp. Korzeniewski 2009). Rafał Chwedoruk explained the historical policy as

complex (hybrid) and conflict-evoking activities of various political actors on the level of *policy* and *politics*, who are supposed to manage specific interests on international and internal scenes of both democratic and non-democratic states (Chwedoruk, 2018, 327).

There are attempts to solve the issue of the relation of “historical policy” to “politics of memory” by referring it to the notion of *mémoire collective* – collective memory – coined by Maurice Halbwachs (Halbwachs, 1939), who understood it as common memory applied for social groups integration as he maintained that individual memory resulted from socialisation. In his opinion, there is a reciprocal feedback in place between reminiscence and a group and it is owing to the latter that the reminiscence and group stabilisation is provided through interaction and endorsement. Collective memory is not identical to the type of memory the science of history deals with. Following Halbwachs, there is not such a phenomenon as universal memory; it is a social group that is the carrier of memory, however limited by time and space. Collective memory guarantees the continuity and uniqueness of a group; history is not able to ensure this. Memory and history are distinguished also by Pierre Nora (1978) who came up with the phrase *lieux de mémoire* – “sites of memory” by saying:

Memory is life [...] it is a phenomenon of current significance, linking us to eternal presence [...], it is affective and magic, emerges out of a group who is united by it. On the contrary, history is always a problematic and incomplete reconstruction of notions which are no more present [...] represents the past (Nora, 2009, 5; quat. after: Hahn, 2013, 151-152).

There have appeared many different concepts on how to name the relation between memory and history⁵. One of the most common ideas found in the literature was the concept put forward by Aleide Assmann, who proposed to look at history and memory as supporting each other; “two modes of remembering” (Assmann, 2009). The author distinguished between “functional memory” and “storage memory”. The first of the two types renders the function of relation to the group, is selective, is able to evaluate and is of prospective nature. The other represents memory of the second degree, it is the memory of the

⁵ A broader account on the relations of memory and history presented by various authors is contained in a publication by Han 2013, 152-153.

memory of other people, it stores all this which has lost a living connection with the present. In both cases, memory refers to collective identity.

“Politics of memory” often uses figures known from history – sites of memory are engaged for the construction of the new European identity. From the attempts to use Charles the Great for the purpose of historical policy Hans Henning Hahn drew the following conclusions:

- medieval characters and events may also make part of functional memory, which is substantive for identity;
- at the same time, they may become tools of historical policy;
- yet again it turns out that politics of memory and historical policy are identical domains of politics;
- the aim of this kind of historical policy may be a top-down manner of creating identity;
- not every initiative undertaken within this field of historical policy, neither by governments, ends in success; and finally
- historical policy sometimes/often is not confined to one country (Hahn, 2013, 154-155).

Referring to the latest attempt of history reinterpretation, mentioned in the introduction to this paper, and having in mind the current globalisation and integration issues, it seems only natural to include here the notions of “trans-border politics of memory” also called “trans-border historical policy”. In the Polish-German relations, the works done in the framework of the Polish-German Textbook Commission⁶ illustrate the development within this area. Its origins go back to pre-war times. Following the Second World War, the instrumental use of history handbooks for building up historical identity and the resulting role of using them for shaping the confronting and xenophobic attitudes was fully realised given the tragedy perpetrated by the very war. The criticism of the textbook contents was started by the intellectuals right after the end of the First World War; the issue of their review was raised at the turn of 1920s and 1930s. Also the League of Nations contributed to the discussion by rendering support to the work done by Textbook Subcommittee (founded in 1933) operating as a division of the International Intellectual Cooperation Committee in

6 More on the phases of the Polish-German textbook dialogue, see: Ruchniewicz, 2012, 35-54. Those phases are as follows: “1) initial talks concerning the so called review of the syllabuses contained in history textbooks in both countries held in the years 1937-1938; 2) outlining the seeds of the dialogue concepts during the first two decades following the Second World War; 3) the dialogue of the turn of 1960s and 1970s leading to the establishment of the Joint Polish-German Commission of Historians and Geographers in 1972; there is also the fourth phase which started in late 1980s and has been in place until now” (Kąkolewski, 2018, 61, note 2).

Warsaw. It was this Subcommittee that started the first Polish-German talks concerning the contents of school handbooks in Poland and Germany. Polish and German historians had a series of meetings in the years 1937-1938. The German party were critical about the way the Germanic tribes and Teutonic Knights were presented in the Polish history textbooks which hinted the conclusions indicating the German national characteristics. Other concerns emerged given the negative presentation of the Kingdom of Prussia, specifically when ruled by Frederic Willem I and Frederic II Hohenzollern, Bismarck policy and the German Empire in general before the First World War. Pressure was exerted on the Polish part to remove the third stanza of the Polish Oath by poet Maria Konopnicka from the handbooks which used the phrase 'No German shall ever spit in our faces'.

The Polish historians demanded a review of the negative presentation of Poland in the German textbooks concerning such historical events as the Battle of Vienna in 1683 or partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. At the same time, the Polish Party demanded that the German books include the highlights of the Polish past, such as the foundation and baptism of the Polish state in the tenth century, the position of Poland in Eastern Europe from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century (the Union with Lithuania including) or the significant role the victory in the Battle of Warsaw in 1920 played in the struggle against the Bolshevik invasion of Europe (Kąkolewski 2018, 62-63). The Polish-German meetings on textbook contents were stopped by the Sudeten crisis in 1938 followed by the increase in anti-Polish policy in Germany which made any common arrangements impossible to be reached. After the Second World War, those talks were blocked by the political situation.

In 1951, in Germany the *Internationales Schulbuchinstitut* [International Textbook Institute] was established, managed by Georg Eckert (present name: *Georg-Eckert-Institut – Leibniz-Institut für internationale Schulbuchforschung* [the Leibniz Institute for International Textbook Research]). The said Institute has developed to be the biggest global institution devoted to school handbooks studies. Professor Eckert inspired the dialogue between environments working on textbooks, their contents in particular, both in Europe and many countries across the world. Similarly, in Oldenburg a former Wehrmacht soldier Enno Meyer, who had served in the occupied Poland, teacher of history and geography, inspired by the French-German textbook dialogue started his activities for the sake of the Polish-German compromising. His concepts concerning the presentation of Poland in the contemporary handbooks triggered the discussion among historians not only in the Federal Republic of Germany but also in Communist-ridden Poland. It was not until the new eastern policy launched by Chancellor Willy Brandt's government and the Treaty

concluded by and between Poland and Germany that the establishment of the Joint Polish-German Commission of Historians and Geographers was possible. Looking from the perspective of time, the research done by this institution has been found to be the achievement of what seemed impossible shortly after the Second World War (Zernack 1995, 5). The 1990s saw a new phase of that Polish-German textbook dialogue and the achievements have since been used also by countries beyond Europe. The project of *Polish-German History Textbook* meant for history classrooms, officially launched in 2008 by the Joint Polish-German Committee has been continued ever since⁷. So far, three volumes of this transnational ‘Europe, our History’ handbook have been published in Polish and German⁸.

The project of a Polish-German history textbook gives the opportunity to stop the ‘westernized’ narration of the European past. Eventually, the new perspective is not intended to focus on the history of the western ‘founder states’ of the European Union but to make an effort to broaden young Germans’ view of Central and Eastern Europe instead. On the other hand, Polish students will be given a chance to look at their country’s history from the perspective of their Western neighbour thus getting an insight into the way the history of Europe may be perceived from other national points of view. This is why the title of the Polish-German

7 In 2008, the task of preparing the textbook was vested in the Joint Polish-German Textbook Commission by Foreign Ministers of Poland and Germany. The textbook, whose subsequent volumes are published by *Wydawnictwo Szkolne i Pedagogiczne* and *Eduversum Kommunikation und Medien* AG, often becomes the objective of conferences and workshops arranged for teachers. One of those conference-workshops was held in Olsztyn in the Institute of Political Sciences on 7th December 2018 (*How to work with a transnational textbook*, <https://www.gladkowski.edu.pl/aktualnosci/jak-pracowac-z-podrecznikiem-transnarodowym/> (January 20, 2020).

8 The first volume of the history textbook in German entitled *Europa. Unsere Geschichte. Band 1: Von der Ur- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Mittelalter* was issued in 2016 (Eduversum GmbH, Wiesbaden 2016). The same volume was published in Polish: *Europa. Nasza historia 1. Tom 1: Od prehistorii do średniowiecza*. [From Prehistoric and Ancient History to the Middle Ages]. This volume contains a separate part: *Europa Nasza historia 1 Historia w źródłach, obrazach i odwołaniach do współczesności*. [Europe-Our History 1 History in sources, images and references to the present] (Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warszawa). The German version of Volume 2 is entitled *Europa – Unsere Geschichte, Band 2: Neuzeit bis 1815*. (Eduversum GmbH, Wiesbaden 2017); in Polish: *Europa. Nasza historia. Tom 2: Czasy nowożytne* [Europe. Our History. Vol. 2: the Modern Age] (until 1815) (Wydawnictwo Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warszawa 2017). The latest Volume 3 was published in 2019; in German *Europa – Unsere Geschichte, Band 3: Vom Wiener Kongress bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*. In Polish: 2019. *Europa. Nasza historia kl. 7. cz. 1. (1815-1918)* [Europe. Our History, Class 7, part 1 (1815-1918)]. Work continues on the subsequent parts.

textbook, eventually accepted by both publishers after time-consuming procedures and negotiations reads: 'Europe – Our History' / *Europa – unsere Geschichte* (Kąkolewski, 2018, 67).

Following a long and intense cooperation, the transnational Polish-German textbook was launched where it was possible to compromise a new perspective reflecting the spirit of the integrating Europe. It seems right to quote yet again the statement by the coordinator of the said handbook which explains what it takes to make a new approach to the common history.

It is most obvious that military and inter-state conflicts play the major role in the enforcing the national identities. By emphasizing them we can clearly distinguish 'our folk from the strangers' thus strengthening the feeling of our belonging to the community at the expense of 'the others' or 'the strangers'. In opposition to the foregoing, the narrative of the transnational textbook is meant to drive our thinking along a different path, at least to some extent. Beside the war-time and political themes, unlike the previous national handbooks, the new textbooks are supposed to concentrate on such phenomena as: cooperation, various goods and cultural values exchange, the history of interactions and – what seems most important – the history of females and transborder areas. So, talking about the Medieval Ages or the Modern Era it is advisable to underline the role of royal intermarriages and the resulting cultural transfers – arrival of scientists, artists, craftsmen along with the royal spouses and the influx of material cultural goods. Cartography provides another example, a rarely observed fact that the Polish-German borderline used to be the most peaceful in Europe from the mid-fourteenth to mid-eighteenth century. Similarly, the history of transborder areas in those times, Silesia and Royal Prussia in particular, is full of fascinating examples of reciprocal Polish-German influences and cultural exchange which disappeared from national textbooks into oblivion under the impact of the modern type of national awareness and nationalism developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Kąkolewski, 67-68).

The cooperation of the Polish and German historians has keenly been supported by such institutions as: *Niemiecki Instytut Historyczny w Warszawie* [German Historical Institute in Warsaw] (since 1993) and *Centrum Badań Historycznych PAN w Berlinie* [Polish Academy of Sciences Institute for Historical Research in Berlin] (since 2006). Another example of a transnational cooperation of Polish, German and British authors is the project for the

purpose of writing an academic textbook on the history of Poland in German, started in 2005: *Polen in der europäischen Geschichte. Ein Handbuch* (Müller, Kąkolewski, Holste, Traba, 2018-2019; Müller, Kąkolewski, Holste, Traba, 2020; Bömelburg, 2019).

In the era of globalisation, transnational textbooks are published in many countries. The tendency is to present events that join and connect showing the transfer of cultural, technological patterns or migration processes rather than conflicts. The emphasis is on cultural differences and similarities. In many cases, the work on those textbooks is supported by governments. Also private projects are initiated. It is necessary to mention here the transnational publication *Deutschland – Russland. Stationen gemeinsamer Geschichte – Orte der Erinnerung*, Band 3: *Das 20. Jahrhundert* [“Germany and Russia: the stations of common history – sites of remembrance. Vol. 3. 20th century”] (Altrichter, Ischtschenko, Möller, Tschubarjan, 2014). It has been described by specialists⁹ as the so called Russian-German textbook (Kąkolewski, 2018). It covers the years 1917-1991 and is meant for the high school teachers. The German version was launched in 2014, the Russian in 2015. In this case, the principle was adopted that particular topics would be developed by historians from both countries together – a German and a Russian.

One historical event, however, proved this principle inapplicable: the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of 23rd August 1939. Due to the interpretation differences it was impossible to come to terms. Horst Moeller, the chairman of the German-Russian commission of historians announced that the positions of both parties were completely unmatchable:

“nobody any longer questions the fact of the very Pact itself, but the judgment of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin’s cooperation results for Poland

9 “The series was presented as ‘handbook’ for the history of Russian-German relationships which was meant for both high school and university tuition but, owing to its popular scientific nature, it is also addressed to broad public in both countries. It must be pointed out that presenting the publication as a school textbook is not true because its contents are not based on core curriculum (at least in Germany). Besides, it concerns chiefly the history of German-Russian relationships rather than the complete general history and the books are not complete in terms of didactic requirements. It is also worth mentioning that there is some bias in the selection of chronological borders in the series. The selected centuries – from the eighteenth to twentieth century – simply cover the period of imperial power of Russia. The chronological topics of the German-Russian relationships presented within that framework allows for going across the phases of Russian history, either run by Tsar or the Soviets, where the state played the role of a European and global empire. Unfortunately, earlier historical events were omitted which were of minor importance for the Russian promotion abroad (such as the sixteenth/seventeenth century crises)” (Kąkolewski 2018, 70; see also: Ruchniewicz 2015).

presented ‘substantial differences’. The Munich historian emphasized that the same problem concerned the ‘brotherhood of arms’ between the Third Reich and the USSR in 1939-1941, and also the motives that drove Stalin to pact with Hitler. Alexander Tschubaryan (Czubarjan), the Russian head of the commission, explained it was the Polish issues that caused major problems the historians had to face. In his opinion, in 1939 Stalin was at an impasse and this situation forced him to make an alliance with Hitler. The Russian party questions the fact of joint military parade with Wehrmacht in Brest. Moreover, Tschubaryan strongly opposed to the use of the term ‘occupation regime’ in reference to Polish territory invaded by the Red Army. He condemned the attempts to unify the Nazi German and Soviet activities. The Russian historian emphasised that the textbook authors ‘did not dramatize’ the differences in opinions. – Both positions were included in the book – remarked the Director of the General History Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He also acknowledged that the Russian authorities ‘very carefully’ observed the progress of the textbook and that he himself was criticised for the joint project with the Germans.

We did not avoid controversial topics – said Moeller, adding that differing opinions are embedded in democratic culture. Intellectuals should abstain from nationalist and imperialist propaganda – reserved the German historian thus referring to the participation of some Russian historians in the propagandist apparatus of Putin’s Russia. The dual texts appearing as a result of the differences in opinions include also the time of the establishment of the DDR in 1953 and the West Berlin blockade in the years 1948-1949” (PAP, 2015).

The presented issues of historical policy, the politics of memory, transnational historical policy allow the statement that, for the purpose of avoiding the opacity of categorization, the term “historical policy” should be tighter linked to the instrumental treatment of those historical events which give way to historic narratives serving a specific purpose. The very phrase “politics of memory” also contains an element of instrumental shaping of individual or social awareness, hence its interchangeability with “historical policy”. The terms “transnational historical policy” and “transnational politics of memory” can be labelled in the same way. One may explicitly say that an instrumental approach to history is responsible for tensions and international conflicts, not only in bilateral relationships, as the fact described in the introduction proves. In this case we do not only deal with a politics-related conflict between Poland and Russia but along the Russia-Germany, Russia-the European Union lines as well. A serious diplomatic problem between Poland and Israel occurred, too.

Historical narratives presented by politicians and contained in political propaganda today unleash serious global problems which were best observed during the celebrations commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of KL Auschwitz held in Israel, Poland and Germany as well as in other countries with the participation of politicians.

Our considerations explicitly indicate that those terms must not be used for the purpose of creating historical narratives with no specific political target both in reference to history and memory. In what way should they be used then? This issue calls for a separate survey. It is worth mentioning here that the label “transnational” in reference to the textbook, which is supposed to overcome national narratives, is not the right one. Referring to Europe, it is a European handbook. This assumption is worth a consideration. Searching for truth, in its nature, is a man’s work and is the aim of science. History is part and parcel of it.

5. From East Prussia to Warmia and Mazury and Mažoji Lietuva (Prussian Lithuania)

The title of this part paraphrases the title of the lecture given by professor Oskar Gottlieb Blarr in Olsztyn in 2011 to the participants of a jubilee conference on Polish-German relationships: *Wege von Ostpreußen nach Ermland und Masuren. Persönliche Anmerkungen zur polnisch-deutschen Kultur*¹⁰. In this way, the Professor told in a symbolic way his own biography where the terms “Ostpreußen” and “Warmia i Mazury” marked the political changes which had erased the name “Ostpreußen” from the map of Europe replacing it by “Warmia i Mazury” as the name of the Voivodship. In contrast, Little Lithuania was a historical name of an ethnographic region in Prussia, later in East Prussia and nowadays it continues to be an ethnographic region of the Republic of

10 Lecture given on 1st December 2011 in the Warmia and Mazury Philharmonic Hall of Feliks Nowowiejski in Olsztyn during the International Scientific Conference to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Treaty of Good Neighbourship and Friendly Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and Federal Republic of Germany, organized by the Institute of Political Sciences and Faculty of Art of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn and Scientific Research Centre named after Wojciech Kętrzyński in Olsztyn. The text in Polish was published under this title: *Droga z Prus Wschodnich na Warmię i Mazury. Osobiste spostrzeżenia na temat polskiej i niemieckiej kultury* (Blarr 2014, 134-153). [translated into English: The Road from East Prussia to Warmia and Mazury. Personal Remarks on the Relationships between Polish and German Culture].

Lithuania retaining the same name. Those names portray the political changes but most importantly vast and dramatic cultural changes.

That personal experience of professor Blarr best reflects the phenomenon of the individual culture of remembrance, unfortunately often neglected by social sciences research, which is shaped not by historical policy but by human experience. This aspect of individual memory is as important as social memory. It makes a substantial factor of the latter. In science, making it more precise: in humanistic and social studies, individual experience and individual identity are gaining value which is well documented by multiple publications (Bömelburg, Stößinger, Traba, 2001; Lewicka, 2012; Gładkowski, Kurasz, 2019).

The social identity of the inhabitants of East Prussia in the inter-war period was shaped by the interweaving of personal experience and historical policy. Here, the strong impact of the nineteenth century nationalist idea on the awareness of modern nations is very clear (Znaniński 1952; 1990). The nineteenth and twentieth centuries was the period Polish, Lithuanian and German nationalists were trying to prove their title to East Prussia. The German historiographers were doing their best to provide evidence for the “ancient German” nature of this province. The Lithuanians, on the other hand, were striving to join Prussian Lithuania to Lithuania proper. The Poles were trying to prove their right to own the south of this province – the “ancient Polish lands” (Kossert, 2009).

East Prussia is the best, yet sad example of how easily collective memory can be subjected to manipulation and distortion. Oblivion is the counter-pole of remembrance and the social tendency to forget happens to be susceptible to influence. Looking at what has remained in the historical memory of the nations who now argue about East Prussia, it is clear that all parties have removed something from their memory. Since the nineteenth century, each of them have steered their own collective memory in their own way (Kossert, 2009, 8).

Prior to the appearance of the nationalist narrative in German historiography, the authors used to first of all point to the connections of East Prussia with the Poles, Lithuanians and Prussians. Also after the Second World War, in publications issued in Germany, the qualification of the multicultural heritage in that area as purely Germanic tradition was fairly often denied. One of the authors who was very influential in terms of shaping the thinking in a radical nationalist way was Heinrich von Treitschke (1865), who linked the origin of Prussia to the power of the Teutonic State. After the national socialists had taken power, this national liberal became one of the “political educators of the German

nation” (Żytnyńec, 2015, 95). His narrative focused on the Teutonic State and the German nation as models of perfect order and invincibility, a “bulwark” against the tide of Slavism. It was to be best explained by Grunwald and Tannenberg. The battle won by Hindenburg in 1914 was reforged into a symbol of the final victory after the defeat in 1410 at Grunwald. This non-historic approach was followed by many authors who were disseminating the nationalist ideology to shape the attitude of many generations in Germany. It was this ideology that brought on the tragedy of the Second World War.

Among the Poles and Lithuanians national ideology was spread as a negative of the model created in Germany. Polish Grunwald¹¹ and Lithuanian Žalgiris¹² became the symbol of Polish-Lithuanian victory over the Teutonic Knights in 1410. East Prussia was initially presented as the looting Teutonic Order, then

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- 11 The tradition of maintaining the memory of the Battle of Grunwald goes back to the fifteenth century. The analysis of how the remembrance of the battle was shaped shows for how long and for what purpose the historical policy was practiced, in this very case connected with one event which was given a timeless symbolic meaning and cherished as such. “Unlike few of other our historical events, the memory of the Battle of Grunwald had a dual meaning. It provided the legitimacy to the Jagiellonian dynasty to possess the Crown which emphasised their importance and distinguished them among other royal families. At the same time the memory of the battle made a significant keystone for the inhabitants of Poland and Lithuania, a permanent, common element of their collective memory. It was as early as the 1420s that the date of 15th July became the first Polish national day. On that day, by the order of King Casimir IV Jagiellonczyk (Jagiellonian) the streets of Cracow were illuminated, decorated with carpets and flowers, coins were scattered for the inhabitants and visitors. Archbishop Mikołaj Trąba ordered the parish priests to arrange celebrations of the Victory Day as it was also the anniversary of incorporating Lithuania into Catholicism and thus it meant glory for the Church in Poland. For the Jagiellonian dynasty, Grunwald was indeed a perfect propaganda opportunity. Not only because it highlighted the glory of King Jagiella and Duke Vytautas but also for the reason of having become useful in the policy of multi-ethnic and multicultural state. Every lawful citizen of that country regardless what language they spoke; be it Polish, Ruthenian, Lithuanian or even German, had the opportunity of being honoured by the celebration of the success, known and acknowledged in many European countries. Their ancestors’ participation in the battle, regardless whether Catholic (Poles, Lithuanians), Orthodox (Ruthenian people) or even Muslim (Lithuanian Tatars) gave them the feeling of satisfaction and, to some extent, the pass to be part of great power politics” (Samsonowicz 2015).
- 12 Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Živilė Mikailienė (2010, 8) distinguished three periods of shaping the image of the Battle of Grunwald in the Lithuanian society “1) the memory of the Battle of Grunwald started to be cherished by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania shortly after the battle; in the mid-sixteenth century it reached some final forms; 2) the image of the Battle of Grunwald changed in late sixteenth century and it that shape remained until the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century; 3) in the twentieth century, the narrative about Grunwald was changing three times: Grunwald was remembered differently in the inter-war period and in Soviet Lithuania. The latest transformation came after 1990”.

as a state of Junkers and finally as a symbol of Prussian militarism. Following Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel *Krzyżacy* ["Teutonic Knights"], in the consciousness of Poles a Teutonic Knight remained a synonym of an eternal enemy of Poles (Slavs and Balts, too). During the Second World War and thereafter, the Grunwald symbolism was often exploited by the historical policy of the Polish communist government by organising commemorative celebrations, launching books, films and monuments thus implementing the Teutonic 'black legend' in the public memory. The very site of the battle has been until now an important venue for anniversary celebrations which have turned into commercial events gathering thousands of viewers to watch the re-enactment of the battle staged by participants from across Europe. The events are organised by the Museum of the Battle of Grunwald.

The tradition of the Grunwald Battle has been still present and is doing well also in the Third Republic of Poland. The celebrations in the historic battlefield, motor and bike rallies, school groups, competitions, chivalric duels make a permanent feature of contemporary Grunwald remembrance. It is difficult to foresee its future (Samsonowicz, 2010).

Also Lithuanian historical policy towards the territory of former East Prussia puts forward claims and builds up symbols aimed at strengthening national identity. This chiefly refers to the main hero of the battle, Duke Vytautas who was honoured by a monument in Kaunas in 1932. The said monument presented Vytautas at whose feet lay a Teutonic knight and next to him a Pole, a Russian and a Tatar. After having been destroyed during the war, the statue was reconstructed in the city centre in 1990. Making up for the neglected strengthening of the national identity Lithuanians, too, celebrate the anniversaries of the Battle of Grunwald. Following the establishment of the Republic of Lithuania, the border with East Prussia was 272 km long and the Lithuanians started claiming not only its northern part but the Prussian Lithuania and Königsberg as well. Those political demands were based on the historical cultural bonds.

It was Prussian Lithuania that was the origin of literature in the Lithuanian language. Protestantism also contributed to the development of national languages thus the first verses printed in their language came from there: *Catechismvsa prasty szadei* [Simple words of the Catechism] by Martynas Mažvydas, then student of the Königsberg based Albertina, later a pastor in Königsberg in 1547. Mažvydas came from Samogitia and for a certain time remained in Vilnius. He ran away to Königsberg most

likely due to his religious beliefs. [...] The Königsberg University could boast a “seminary” for the Lithuanian tongue already in the eighteenth century. It was an objective of studies rather than the language of instruction or a “language class”. It must be mentioned here that the interest in the Lithuanian oral tradition was older than in the Great Duchy; before romantic fascinations by folklore arrived in Vilnius, in Königsberg subsequent collections of folk proverbs and riddles had been published.

It was there that in 1590 the first Lithuanian issue of the Bible appeared, translated by Jonas Bretkunas, alternatively called Johannes Bretke. Daniel Klein, in the history of literature known as Danielius Kleinas studied in Königsberg and in 1693 published the first Lithuanian language grammar handbook. In the same academic centre, Liudvikas Rėza in early decades of the nineteenth century developed the language and Lithuanian oral tradition studies successfully combining it with didactic and publishing activities. His work culminated in the publication of the first volume of songs in the Lithuanian language, in 1825. *Dainos oder Littauische Volkslieder* [Dainos or Lithuanian Folk Songs] were the result of his visits to the villages of Lithuania Minor. This booklet contributed greatly to stimulating interest in folklore in the former Great Duchy of Lithuania. The followers of Rėza (Königsberg professors: Fridrichas Kuršaitis/Friedrich Kurschat, Georg H.F. Nesselman, Adalbert Bezenberger) created the foundations of modern Lithuanian studies, thus the significance of this academic community for the consolidation of the canon of modern Lithuanian language is obvious (Litwinowicz-Drożdźiel, 2010).

Rėza's great achievement was the publication of “Metai” in 1818, a poem by Kristijonas Donelaitis. It is worth stopping for a while to have a look at the author and the very book as it is yet another milestone contributing to the significance of Lithuania Minor. One of the best experts on East Prussia issues, Andreas Kossert wrote:

The fact that the pidgin Lithuanian dialect spoken in East Prussia became the literary Lithuanian language results from linguistic and cultural traditions which went back to the the times of the foundation of the University of Königsberg. They make an important element of the Lithuanian national awareness. However, the twilight of the Prussian Lithuanians and their culture in East Prussia in the eighteenth century was inevitable. For this minor people the loss of ethnic distinctiveness, even though it got dispersed in the country so important for the history of culture as East Prussia, meant a disaster (Kossert, 2009, 14).

Contemporary Lithuanian writers have been discovering “heroes who perceive the distinctiveness of Lithuania and are able to appreciate it” (Putinaitė, 2000, 135; quot. after: Kossert 2009, 14) in such figures as Johann Georg Hermann, Johann Gottfried Herder, Kar Friedrich Lesing, Johan Wolfgang Goethe, and above all Immanuel Kant.

Personal experience of the direct contact with Lithuania Minor shows to what extent a landscape can evoke the past independently of memory or history. It is well portrayed in the reflections by Małgorzata Litwinowicz-Drożdżiel:

Any time I come to Nida, the first thing I do is go and admire *vetrungės* – wooden weather vanes which represent miniature theatres of everyday lives. Flat little planks jigsawed in the shapes of houses and trees, figures of craftsmen and fishermen, very small and colourful attached to the boat masts, move lightly; the life at sea does not look so very dangerous then. The pleasure the little pictures give is the first reason.

Then I go to the graveyard. Not to look at the tombstones – these are long gone. At the Nida cemetery it is the *krikstai* that mark the sites of eternal rest. Wooden tomb boards. Heads of steeds, anthropomorphic shapes, floral motives, a clear silhouette of a toad. The traditional *krikstai* used to be painted in plain colours; the paint had vanished from the Nida ones and the ageing wood is blending in the natural background, vanishes in the pine forest.

Those wooden tombstones were everywhere on the Curonian Spit and also in villages along the Neman River. They were said to be of Prussian origin.

However, frankly speaking, it is not the desire to learn history or folklore which makes me visit that place. Staying there I get the feeling of experiencing an emblematic phenomenon for the whole Lithuanian culture. A natural, free and somewhat ‘casual’ coexistence of neo-gothic protestant church with this semi-forest area of the cemetery. A complete infiltration of Christian and pre-Christian symbols in the very art of making the *krikstai*. Standing there, I get a clear explanation why contemporary girls are named Fir, Sun or Dew; and those baptism names are not at all an evidence of any particular community dictated passion/environmental fashion. Regardless of all the knowledge concerning the nation-shaping processes, the awareness of how mythology and history of Lithuania are the construction put by men of letters in the nineteenth century, I succumb to the nature of the site and the commonly accepted in Lithuania conviction about the direct bonds between today’s Lithuanian culture and its pre-Christian past.

The third thing: when I climb a dune on the Curonian Spit and see the Gulf on one side and the open sea on the other, I am standing on the roof of the world. And I know the feeling – although it is a completely different place:

“I am keeping my ears so curiously open/ That I am likely to hear the voice from Lithuania.

Make no mistake. It calls.

Look how hard we are waiting: come, lovely dune -

And the dune came and covered them” (Litwinowicz-Drożdźiel, 2010).

This is another example of contemporary discoveries of ancient traditions still present in East Prussia which, after 1990, are likely to reappear not only in the literary publications but also in the books of “amateurs” who, living in the area which once was East Prussia, feel the need to learn its past. Everyday contact with artefacts of the forgotten culture cannot prevent asking questions about their history the truth of which had so efficiently been hidden for years. In the new political reality the name “East Prussia” has started to be allowed to be used which paved the path for a thorough insight into the history. To what extent the penetration triggered by the urge to put history straight has proved fruitful is best presented in the work done by “Borussia” Cultural Community and its Foundation. People craving for knowledge, full of curiosity to find the earliest information about East Prussia along with numerous societies, the cultural heritage of the people once living in the territory, managed to discover a method of reaching out for historical knowledge and building up their identity starting from its suspended form (Gładkowski, 2014) resulting from undeserved ignorance, to mature personality (Gładkowski, 2017). The past they are getting to know is no longer stigmatised by ideological superstitions; it is marked with European cultural heritage instead.

We have not tackled here all aspects concerning the East Prussian identity (Traba, 2005) as it was not the main goal. We wanted to draw the readers’ attention to the political steering of social awareness which, in times of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’ strong nation-shaping tendencies not only subjected history to the political targets but also led to disaster. Today, the demons of the past seem to be recurring in historical policies, hence our emphasis on the need to promote individual and other than institutional social achievements for the process of building up open consciousness which will be able to treat the historical events in a personalised way. Although scientific surveys are making respective attempts, there is still too little study devoted to individual experience which is as important as social awareness or national identity.

6. Kaliningrad – Königsberg – Królewiec

Until here, little has been said about the capital of East Prussia whose present name has nothing in common with the original Königsberg (in Polish: Królewiec). In ancient Prussian times it was called Tawangste:

Królewiec, or Königsberg, is a beautiful city on the Pregola, a river spanned by seven bridges, a Pruthenian settlement established 300 years before Christ by Tawangste, a famous chief of the Samland tribe. In 1256 it was the territory of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword whose fraction joined later the Saint Mary Teutonic Order. The city was given the name Königsberg to honour the king of Czechia, Přemysl III who helped the knights fight the pagans. In the years 1259-1261 the castle survived the Prussian siege and in 1457 became the seat of the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order replacing Marienburg (Malbork) after the Teutonic Knights had lost the 13-year-war against Poland.

It was decorated by a big square castle standing on top of a small hill; one of the wings was put up by king Přemysl himself. The castle was surrounded by a double rampart and had seven towers, however, it had never been completed. Since 1802, the entrance had been guarded by the statue of king Frederic I. The city was kerbed by a 1.7 mile long embankment with eight gates in it. The Friedrichsburg Citadel with the church and arsenal towered over the city where along its streets were characteristic facilities such as the Philosophers' Dam, railway station and the tomb of Immanuel Kant. The main "Long Street" (*Langgasse*), led to the old district, Kneiphof, also called Knipoog, put up on pillars pressed into the bottom of the Pregola River. From 1332 on, the old cathedral, also called *tum*, dominated in the district centre. It was built by Grand Master Lothar Ludar von Braunschweig: 286 feet long and 93 feet wide and a 184 feet tall tower. It was famous for its magnificent organ and the tombs of the last six Teutonic Grand Masters and Prussian dukes (Dzieszyński, 2007, 3-4).

This account has been quoted here to pass on to the issue of construction and reconstruction of the politics of memory in connection with the capital of today's Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation; its urban planning in particular. In the city itself, a debate is in place discussing the possible return of the name Königsberg, in Russian *Кёнигсберг* (Zieliński, 2013; Macheta, 2018). Behind the names of the city, post-war Kaliningrad and pre-war Königsberg, there are currently two competing urban models. The annexation of Crimea unleashed a wave of radicalisation of historical policy and political memory in Russia.

Over the recent years, Russia has revised its politics of memory opting for the narrative which is based on the notion of patriotism and national consolidation, with the central point focused on the victory in the Second World War. This attempt has also reached the Kaliningrad Region, a strategic area for Moscow which Russia wants to control entirely, also in the ideological aspect. In the case of Kaliningrad, the new narrative about history and identity was concentrated on exposing the “Great Victory” as the city founding myth (Siegień, 2016,15-16).

The urban planning in Kaliningrad is subjected to firmly set politics of memory. The buildings are designed to co-participate in the citizens’ identity shaping. Kaliningrad represents an example of a total blocking of the memory of the pre-war tradition of the city which was the result of the Soviet methods, so typical of totalitarian regimes – to erase from the public area everything what was not in line with the adopted ideology or to dominate the same area by facilities and sites glorifying the present rule. Kaliningrad was the site of the new Soviet style city construction on the ruins of former Königsberg. With the decomposition of Soviet Russia (1991) the city changed its look. A spontaneous process of recovering the relics of ancient Königsberg started. Until then, the castle stigmatised with the Soviet propaganda had been a symbol of Prussian militarism and hostile culture. It was blown up in 1968 and on the site the construction of the Soviet House, the headquarters of the local government started. In 2001, in front of this Soviet House, archeologic excavations started unearthing fragments of the castle foundations, which now have become a tourist attraction. Owing to the city anniversary, the Royal Gate and St. Adalbert Cathedral were renovated. Concepts for the reconstruction of the pre-war centre were put forward. In 2014, the city authorities established an institution to manage the “Heart of the City” project with the task to promote the idea of the historic centre reconstruction and to encourage ideas for the new infrastructure of that part. The concept was widely supported by the citizens and the idea of the castle reconstruction put forward by one of the inhabitants was eagerly voted for. The Internet “Post-Castle” design competition was won by the local architect A. Sarnic, whose plan was to reconstruct the castle in its original shape and in doing so to destroy the Soviet House. However, the competition Jury – local politicians and representatives of the city authority – voted for the design by A. Sagal who combined his concept with the Soviet relics into a modern shape. The local media opted for this design and thus, until today, the abandoned Soviet House has been towering over the site. “Most likely neither of these plans will ever come true (obviously not the castle reconstruction)” (Banach, 2018).

The actual downtown today is the former Hansa Square. After the war, it was renamed to Victory Square and the statue of Lenin was put up in the centre. It was later removed when the Orthodox Church started to be constructed but on top of its displaced pedestal the statue of victory was placed and the column crowned with the Stalinist war medal and the Soviet star in the centre. In the years 1995-2006 an

Orthodox Christ the Saviour church was built. The monumental style of the 73m tall white solid structure adorned with gold-covered domes, dominates over the square. The cornerstone of this temple buried in the ground is a capsule containing earth from the recently reconstructed Jesus the Saviour Orthodox church in Moscow which had been destroyed by the Bolsheviks during the revolution. The selection of the Muscovite church, the biggest Orthodox church in the world and the symbol of Moscow, standing for the Third Rome, shows how important the Kaliningrad Region is for the Orthodox Church in Russia – the westernmost territory of the Orthodox realm (Siegień, 2016, 17).

Given the intention to put up the statue of Duke Vladimir I the Great on the Square¹³, the politics of memory put to practice on the Victory Square in Kaliningrad becomes transparent indeed. Both sites in the city: the former historic centre – “Project-Castle” and the Victory Square are the areas where specific strategies of the politics of memory are being implemented. On one hand there is a strong grassroots tendency opting for the reconstruction of historic sites of the ancient capital of Prussia including the need to bring back

13 The statue of Duke Vladimir was unveiled by Vladimir Putin in 2016. “In his address, the President of Russia emphasised the analogy between the times of the Duke and current geopolitical situation of his country. According to Putin, presently Russia needs to perform spiritual guidelines in order to face contemporary challenges and threats. Duke Vladimir created the foundations of moral values which have been defining our lives until today. This strong moral rock and unity helped our ancestors overcome difficulties, live and win for the glory of Homeland strengthening its power and greatness from generation to generation – said Putin [...] Originally, the monument of Vladimir in Moscow was to have been 25 m tall. Eventually, it measures 16 metres. The first ever in Russia a statue of a duke and a saint at the same time, was put up in Borowicki Square. The date of the controversial ruler statue unveiling was no coincidence. In 2004, Vladimir Putin established the Day of National Unity on 4th November. This feast is celebrated to commemorate the expulsion of Polish troops from Kremlin in the seventeenth century. What is important, this anniversary does not only commemorate the expulsion of Poles from Moscow but also the end of ‘great sadness’ in Russia.” (Wprost, 2016).

the former name while on the other, contemporary Russian historical politics forcing the cultural and religious message straight from Kremlin.

The competitive ways of remembering – the constructive and open ones – shape specific identities. The effort of the government invested in the historical politics and shaping with its use the collective memory bumps into the needs of the Kaliningrad inhabitants who want the reconstruction of the historical tradition of their city, also in the public space. This tension must not be disregarded. Each structure built on top of false or incomplete ideas leads to ardent tensions and conflicts which result in personality and identity issues. Immature identity is shaped when detached from the truth, historic truth in this case, and the effects are found in human personality. Truth is the foundation of mature personality. Its significance in the process of building social identity and culture was best spotted during the communist era in Poland and all other East Bloc countries.

In order to understand the needs of the contemporary Kaliningrad citizens resulting from the urge to know the truth, this quotation is worth looking at.

Yuri Zabuga has just woken up from an afternoon nap. He is smoking one cigarette after another. Behind him, big red hands are moving on a big wooden clock. Zabuga lives in an old German house at Peace Prospect in the city centre, the street which used to be called Hufenallee. Nevertheless, he likes the house which has undergone multiple refurbishments. He also likes the history of the city stormed by his father, a Soviet soldier.

As a child, Zabuga used to play in the ruins of Kaliningrad. He was specifically fascinated by the destroyed cathedral across the street with the saved Immanuel Kant tomb – so many paths and hiding corners. One day, while they were playing in the ruins, he got trapped in one of the stone shafts. 'If not the other boys, I would have probably lost my life in the cathedral' says he and laughs at the reminiscence. Anyway, in this way or another he offered his life to the cathedral, this brick gothic monument which issued the East Prussian reformation in the sixteenth century.

He had been devoting his life to the reconstruction of the cathedral for many years; he dreamed of its resurrection and the reconstruction of Knipawa, the medieval city centre. In 1988, when he no longer could get this idea out of his mind, he eventually started studying architecture. 'Königsberg?' – kept asking the university library attendants. 'Young man, let us look at the map of our country. Where can you see this Königsberg of yours? There is no such city in the Soviet Union.'

But Zabuga was stubborn and with the help of his friends, friends of other friends he managed to get hold of three old photographs which showed the complete cathedral in its original shape. Archives in those times were not open. He made a drawing, a design and presented his idea of how the historic Kaliningrad centre could have been reconstructed to the surprised university examination commission in what was then called Leningrad. Twice did the professors reject the survey only to honour it later with a medal. It was the time of a breakthrough, the Soviet Union was to soon become the past. The plans – sighs Zabuga – are still in my flat. He still keeps the model of the cathedral, high up on the wooden shelf carved in his own hand.

The cathedral was reconstructed without his participation; with the help of German money, among others. ‘Improper performance of the job’ – curses Zabuga. ‘Wrong materials. Shoddy work. But this way or the other, the cathedral is made anew’. No architect in town admires this piece of art. The tourists on the contrary; they are eager to stay on the bank of the Pregola, listen to concerts under the cathedral roof even though the acoustics fail. The cathedral has again become the symbol of the city. ‘But it has been crippled’ – says Yuri Zabuga (Hartwich, 2015).

Eckhard Mattheus, a historian, a long-serving employee of the Institute for the Culture and History of Germans in North-Eastern Europe in Lüneburg decided to analyse the regional awareness of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region and distinguished four age subgroups for the purpose of identification: 1) the first generation of the Soviet settlers born at the time of the establishing of the Soviet Union and in the early years of that state, 2) their children born around 1945, 3) grandchildren born after 1965 and 4) great-grandchildren born after 1985 (Mattheus, 2001).

The first group is slowly disappearing from the scene of the history; they are pioneers, war veterans, party or labour veterans. While the last of the groups (born after 1985) are students or graduates. Those two groups are the worlds apart. What links them is the necessity to reconcile their lives and consciousness with the region they live in.

The history of the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast) after 1945 is the reflection of the struggle of its inhabitants with their region and identification with it. This is the struggle for identity. The ideological guidelines and their effects forced the Soviet people of East Prussia to accept as their own the achievements of German material culture they found there and at the same time to get out of

their ideological minds the contents of that culture. The effects of the contradiction have been shaping the people's worldviews until now.

The memory of Poles also strongly refers to the former capital of East Prussia. Andrzej Menclew¹⁴ writes:

Believe it or not, but I had always dreamed of travelling to Kaliningrad I did not want to visit the very name which I had successfully been omitting, but the city named in this way. My continuous use of the name 'Królewiec' was not a token of any revisionist tendencies. For Królewiec, a Polish equivalent of Königsberg, has a permanent, lasting position in our language habit and is as adopted as Rzym (Rome), Lipsk (Lepizig) or Gdańsk. Thus, pronouncing the word 'Królewiec' I never showed any intention of restitution of the past Polish, royal fealty which was accorded to Russia after the *manu militari* war. I simply used the name that was handy and historically well grounded. As it is, nobody forces the Poles any more to say Vilnius instead of Wilno, Lviv instead of Lwów, and similarly, we have allowed the Germans to visit Breslau and Stettin. To my certain surprise, I have noticed that both at the travel agent's in Elbląg and then at the border clearance, I was told off for saying Królewiec instead of Kaliningrad. Due to my firm reluctance to accept that name, I was not paying attention to being corrected which was easier to do because it was done by nice young ladies. Eventually I thought to myself that it was them who worked on a daily basis with the lords of the city, so for them politeness is a right. And I am an extraordinary visitor indeed (Menclew, 2003, 7).

When we analyse the aspects commented on here, paraphrasing the subtitle of the book by Rudolf von Thaden (2014), East Prussia is a history of a suspended province. Thadden quoted phrases from a letter by Otton Braun written on 8th April 1947 in Ascona to Count Kanitz. Those phrases explain the meaning of this suspension:

In fact, now it is about whether we acknowledge the historical facts or we continue to dream. No one can deny the fact that using the common fury with which Prussia was treated as a state, the victorious powers erased it from the map. Now the question if it was justified, or wise or politically

14 Andrzej Menclew was born on 11th September 1940 in Tarnobrzeg. A Polish historian, literature and Polish culture critic, anthropologist of culture, essayist and journalist.

far-reaching is of no importance. Today, when it is the winner who decides, it is not about the defence of the Prussian state. Facing the sentiments everywhere in the world, it would have been a hopeless undertaking. All we can do is to act for the sake of historical judgment of Prussia which would have to be just and based on facts. As of today, the political atmosphere is not yet pure enough to make it possible. With disregard to the actual proportions, as Prussia has been blamed for the source of all misery the Nazi criminals brought on Germany and the world.... Thus, dear Count, we must remain patient (Thadden, 2004, 11).

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Historical Memory and Identity of Borderlands: the Case of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region

Krzysztof Żęgota

Abstract

The end of the Second World War brought a new legal, political and spatial order to the territory of former East Prussia. The political, demographic and economic area was divided between Poland and the Soviet Union as a result of the decision made between the world powers. Both sides of the border carried out separate policies to respect the German heritage of these lands and changes made to the names of towns and geographic sites. These two approaches affected and continue to influence the current identity and historical consciousness of the inhabitants of the Warmia and Mazury Region and Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. The aim of the article is to establish a comparison of this kind of historical policies related to the German heritage of these lands, and the processes of evolution of the identity and historical awareness of both communities, as well as to study the processes of the evolution of identity and historical awareness in the Warmia and Mazury and Kaliningrad Regions. The following selected issues related to identity and historical consciousness are analysed: history of the former German sacral and defensive architecture, museum collections and monuments; the state of preservation of pre-war names of rural, urban and geographical areas; the currently observed frequency of recourse to German resentments in the society, culture and economy. One of the currently observed processes around the Polish-Russian border are the transitions of identity and awareness resulting from the cross-border cooperation of local communities.

Keywords: historical identity, historical awareness, Warmia and Mazury Region, Kaliningrad Region

1. Introduction

The period after the Second World War brought a new legal, political and spatial order to the territory of former East Prussia. The political, demographic and economic area was divided between Poland and the Soviet Union as a result of the decision made between the world powers. Both sides of the border carried out separate policies to respect the German heritage of these lands and changes made to the names of towns and geographic sites. The Polish side tried at least to partly respect the German heritage of the southern part of former East Prussia, in particular with regard to sacred monuments, castles and Teutonic fortresses. The policies of the Soviet authorities in the Kaliningrad Region were aimed, in turn, at blurring the historical memory of the area belonging earlier to Germany in the first place. This was not confined to only the changes in the names of places and geographic features, but also to erasing traces of German material culture. Former German museum collections were either destroyed or deported to other territories of the Soviet Union. Numerous sacred buildings, castles as well as urban systems and whole cities were decided upon not to be rebuilt, justifying it not only with economic considerations, but also with the necessity of breaking ties with German traditions. Strong ideologisation of the reconstruction processes of the Kaliningrad Region designed to shape the region in accordance with 'the spirit of the Soviet Union' was a characteristic feature of the post-war era (Karpenko, 2006, 91). These two approaches affected and continue to influence the current identity and historical consciousness of the inhabitants of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation.

The aim of this article is an attempt to establish a comparison of the historical policies related to the German heritage of these lands, and the processes of the evolution of identity and historical awareness of both communities as well as to study the processes of the evolution of identity and historical awareness in the Warmia and Mazury Region and Kaliningrad Regions. The following selected issues related to identity and historical consciousness will be analysed:

- history of the former German sacral and defensive architecture, museum collections and monuments;
- the state of preservation of pre-war names of rural, urban and geographical areas;
- the currently observed frequency of recourse to German resentments in society, culture and economy;
- the currently observed processes of regional identity in the Polish-Russian borderlands.

2. Methodological and Definitional Aspects

A particular kind of approach to identity and historical awareness in the area of former East Prussia is considerably important and has been the subject of research and scientific publications (see: Żęgota, 2016; Żukowski, 2016). The term 'identity' is defined as the identification with someone or something or searching for common elements between two (or more) factors (Marshall, 2004, 402). In this context, the historical identity of the community are those elements of identification which are derived from historical experience, history of the site where the community in question resides, as well as the awareness of any changes taking place within the group identity as a result of historical phenomena (Bieleń, 2006, 22-24). It is worth mentioning that the historical identity is a result of many processes and conditions, and is subject to constant change. According to the interpretation of a number of researchers, elements of historical memory are one of the most important conglomerates, allowing for the building of identification processes of social groups, including regional communities (Bokszański, 2007, 45-46). These elements attempt to answer the following questions: Who are we? Where did we come from? What is the history of the land that we inhabit? How strong are our relationships with these lands? Which elements related to the history of these lands allow for the enrichment of our identity?

These questions are particularly important in the context of the area of former East Prussia which, after the Second World War, saw an almost complete replacement of the population. The new inhabitants who arrived after the war brought with them the memory of their own local homelands (Alimpieva, 2005). At the same time, the displaced people struggled with the problem of historical consciousness in the context of the knowledge of their origin and history of the land on which they happened to find their new home. According to the researchers' interpretation, the historical consciousness is an effective historical knowledge concerning the origin, past ideas and the value system accompanying the aforementioned (Filipowicz, 2002, 23-29; Tosh 2010, 1-6). The question of the historical consciousness of the people who arrived in the territory of former East Prussia after the Second World War, is an important one. They built their attitude toward these lands based on two components: one was the assigning of a national narrative to the lands joined to their respective countries (Polish or Soviet). The other one was the appeal to history as a source of justification for these lands to join either Poland or the Soviet Union. These two largely opposing tendencies had a decisive impact on the level of identity and historical consciousness of the inhabitants of the Warmia

and Mazury Region and the Russia's Kaliningrad Region, where it is worth mentioning that they affect the identity and historical consciousness in both regions in different ways.

3. Remains of Historical Identity and Awareness in the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region

Those trends had an impact on the selected issues presented in the introduction, related to the identity and historical consciousness of the inhabitants of the Warmia and Mazury and Kaliningrad Regions. The awareness of the existence of German material heritage on lands of former East Prussia implied on one hand the desire to erase the remaining traces of German presence, yet on the other hand, it tended to protect the remains of the material culture which justified the addition of these areas to Poland and the Soviet Union. This issue also affected the process of giving names to settlements and geographical features, though it proceeded differently on the Polish and the Soviet sides of the border: the Warmia and Mazury Region tried to appeal to the Polish convention of returning to historical names while the Kaliningrad Region mostly elected to cut itself off from historical naming. At the same time, the awareness of the German past of these lands increased in the last almost 30 years in both regions and this part of history becomes more and more commonplace in nomenclature, culture, marketing and everyday language.

To start with, the approach to the sacral and defensive architecture remaining from the pre-war times should be analysed. In the Warmia and Mazury Region, immediately after the end of war, the policy of the intensive restoration of Polish traditions related to individual sacral buildings was carried out, among others, through liquidation of material remnants of the German heritage (replacement of religious paintings, removal of ornaments and decorations on the buildings). In temples, original Polish inscriptions were often restored. Also, the reconstruction of former Teutonic castles was undertaken. Constructions restored in the post-war period included the castles in Węgorzewo, Kętrzyn, Nidzica, Olsztynek, Ostróda and Pasłęk. The effort put into the restoration of the Teutonic castles should be considered a symbol, despite significant financial constraints in the post-war conditions (Sakson, 2005, 153-154). In recent years, more or less successful reconstruction works have been carried out in castles in Ryn, Działdowo and Morąg. Most castle buildings were designated for cultural and educational purposes and for hotel facilities. Local museums and artistic events were organized in some of them (Sikorski, Jasiński, 2014, 6-7).

The situation in the Kaliningrad Region, where the issue of reconstructing German historical buildings was under strong ideological pressure, was different. The effort of Soviet authorities in blurring the historical memory of the area in question ever belonging to the German state needs to be emphasized. This mostly resulted in cutting off any German traces of material culture. Former German museum collections were destroyed or taken away to other territories of the Soviet Union. The decision not to reconstruct the destroyed centre of Kaliningrad was based not only on economic reasons but also on the need to detach the town from German traditions. The post-war years were characterised by strong ideologisation of the reconstruction process, aimed at developing the region in accordance with “the spirit of the Soviet Union” (Wellman, 2007, 2). Ideological reasons were also used to justify the denial to reconstruct a number of sacral buildings – many of them were deliberately destroyed after the war. It is worth mentioning that of the 222 churches in the Kaliningrad Region which survived the war, 118 were deliberately destroyed later (Kotowicz, 2011, 159). The story of the Königsberg castle and the tomb of Immanuel Kant, located at the cathedral on the Kneiphof Island, is the perfect example of the ideological approach taken to the problems of reconstruction in Kaliningrad and German heritage retention: in 1969 the castle ruins were demolished after being considered part of the Prussian heritage of Kaliningrad. At the same time the tomb of Kant was preserved, since Kant was regarded, from the point of view of the Soviet ideology, as one of the few truest German philosophers (Kostyashov, 2003, 50-53; Oldberg, 2000, 273; Brinks, 1998, 611-615).

Many other castles were destroyed and not rebuilt after the war and remain to this day in a state of permanent ruin. The castle in Mayovka (in German Georgenburg) collapsed into rubble after the end of the military fights. In the case of the Chernyakhovsk and Neman castles only the walls and some structures have remained. Both towns are home to social organizations seeking to protect what is left of the once prominent buildings. Several of the preserved castle buildings have been repurposed. The surviving part of the Gvardeysk castle currently serves as a prison. In turn, in Guryevsk and Sovetsk the functioning buildings are used for commercial purposes. In Polesk the castle was made into a local cultural centre. It is worth noting that although most of the surviving castles remain in poor condition, there is effort aimed at protecting the preserved buildings. Initiatives related to the reconstruction of some of them have been undertaken. Throughout the region there are noticeable trends towards documenting the historic value of the preserved buildings and facilities (Sikorski, Jasiński, 2014, 8).

The process of renaming the localities and geographical sites in the post-war period was an interesting issue. In the Kaliningrad Region, this issue was also subject to the strong impact of the state ideology. Immediately after the war, the original German names were used with reference to those places. Starting from July 1946 the process of giving new names to localities and geographical features of the Kaliningrad Region began. Importantly, the new names do not usually have anything in common with the previous German nomenclature, despite the fact that the German nomenclature often originated from Polish or Lithuanian. New names usually refer to the natural values of the Kaliningrad Region, or to the Soviet war heroes (Matthes, 2002, 12; Kotowicz, 2011, 161).

The name of Kaliningrad was given to the town to commemorate Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, Chairman of the Presidium of the Soviet Union. The process of changing other names was based on Soviet symbolism: Tapiiau into Gvardeysk, Neukuhren into Pionersky and Tilsit into Sovetsk, geographical and natural features: Baltiysk (Pillau), Yantarny (Palmnicken) and historical background: Bagrationovsk (Preusisch Eylau), Domnovo (Domnau), Mamonovo (Heiligenbeil), Nesterov (Ebenrode) and Chernyakhovsk (Insterburg) (Szcześniak, 2003, 202-204). New names referred to the German former ones only to a slight extent. This concerned usually the names related to nature, geographical location or characteristic land features. There were also attempts to refer to actually very faint Russian traditions of those lands and the veterans of the Second World War and of historical Russian and German battles in the territory of East Prussia (Kretinin, Bryushkin, Galtsov, 2002, 472; Krickus, 2002, 38-39).

In the Warmia and Mazury Region the issue of renaming geographical sites and localities remained under the influence of the dogma concerning re-polonization of those lands. It should be noted that due to many years of cultivating strong Polish traditions on those territories, most of the locales had Polish names, and there was no need for re-polonization. At the same time Polish historical names often originated from polonized German names, as these processes occurred particularly strongly in those parts of the the Warmia and Mazury Region where Poles had lived before the war. Examples can be found in the names of such towns as: Olsztyn (in German Allenstein), Grunwald (Grünfelde), or Gietrzwałd (Dietrichswalde) (Szcześniak, 2003, 205). Therefore, attempts were made to use Polish historical names. These names operate in parallel with German nomenclature and often have a different root, i.e.: Ełk / Łek (Lyck), Lidzbark Warmiński (Heilsberg), Morąg / Moraği (Mohrungen) as well as Olecko (Marggrabowa, Treuburg). Another tendency was observed in the translation of individual names of localities from

German to Polish (e.g. Guttstadt – Dobrze Miasto, Bischofsburg – Biskupiec, Liebmühle – Miłomłyn, Mühlhausen – Młynary). Finally, the fourth tendency was to give the localities completely new names, without any clear relation to history or to the pre-war German names, usually in honour of pro-Polish activists in the Warmia and Mazury Region (Kętrzyn, Pieniężno, Giżycko, Barczewo, Mrągowo) (Lewandowska, 2008, 106-107). However, the general principle was to refer the names of significant localities and geographic features to Polish traditions with the aim of strengthening links between the Warmia and Mazury Region and Poland.

4. Conclusions

These two different approaches to the historical traditions of former East Prussia are reflected in the current historical awareness and identity in the Warmia and Mazury Region and in the Kaliningrad Region, as well as in the frequency the German traditions of this land in culture, politics as well as economics and marketing are referred to. In the Warmia and Mazury Region, the echo of the German past of the area is still quite alive. This is supported by not only the functioning of numerous representatives of the indigenous peoples, but also the remaining material traces of centuries of the German presence on this territory: sites of worship, palaces, castles and other fortified edifices. The partial preservation of various plaques and landmarks of former East Prussia residents who were taking part in military campaigns carried out by the army of the German Empire serves as a striking example of respect for the German heritage in the Warmia and Mazury Region. All in all, the identity and historical awareness of the inhabitants of the Warmia and Mazury make a peculiar mix of knowledge about the history of these lands and their awareness of Polish affiliation. This not only emphasizes the relationship of Warmia and Mazury with Poland but allows for a reasonable management of German heritage as well (Lewandowska, 2008, 109).

Phenomena associated with “working through” the history of the region have been occurring in the Kaliningrad Region for only several years. A process of particular significance that has been going on since the 1990s in the Kaliningrad Region is referred to by researchers as the “appropriation” of the German heritage. It involves emphasizing the German history of the Kaliningrad Region and applying references to the German language in the colloquial Russian nomenclature. The city of Kaliningrad is commonly called by the German name of “König”. A range of companies and trade brands incorporating the word “Königsberg” in their names has emerged. German monuments and

remembrance sites related e.g. to Immanuel Kant, Prince Albrecht, Richard Wagner or Friedrich Schiller have been restored. An exceptionally interesting process has been observed as regards secondary germanization of Russian names and a specific trend to refer to German cultural heritage. It can be expected that this process in the Kaliningrad Region will intensify mainly due to the fact that the young generation of the Region is growing up surrounded by non-Russian culture, creating a specific type of historical identity – being a mixture of Russian, German and general European elements (Romanovskiy, 2014, 280-281).

Currently, interesting processes of transitions of historical identity and awareness on the Polish-Russian borderland can be observed. These processes can be described by using the paradigm of constructivism. One of the main arguments of constructivists is the inability to predict events and tendencies in the contemporary international environment provided by traditional research trends in international relations. The end of the Cold War showed that the interests and activities of individual powers are not permanent, but often change under the influence of the ideas and knowledge of societies (Czaputowicz, 2007, 292; Guzzini, 2000, 154-155). Constructivists claim that through international interactions, countries and societies construct social structures within which they define their interests and identities. Importantly, these interests and identities are not imposed a priori, but change under the influence of the contacts of states and societies (Wendt, 1992). The indicated sequence is a model of the changing attitude of inhabitants of border areas towards a neighbouring state, an ideal example of which is the cross-border cooperation on the Polish-Russian border (Żęgota, 2016; Żukowski, 2016, 54). The publicists and observers of external relations of the EU also pointed to the positive impact of the Local Border Traffic mechanism on shaping relations between cross-border communities. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Radosław Sikorski, who advocated the Local Border Traffic, emphasized several times that one of the goals of the mechanism is to shape positive relations between border communities (Chołodowski, 2019). Intangible results of the Local Border Traffic operation, connected with developing social contacts, were also pointed out by other observers of the Polish-Russian cross-border cooperation (see: Czajko, 2017).

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Towards the Regional Identity of the Inhabitants of the Polish-Russian Borderland

Arkadiusz Żukowski

Abstract

The paper focuses on the problem of identity and its determinants of the inhabitants of the Polish-Russian borderland. The state of research on the identity of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region and the Warmia and Mazury Region (Western, Russian and Polish scientists) is reviewed. The concept of the borderland in the context of the cross-border cooperation idea is presented. The short history and uniqueness of the new Polish-Russian borderland is analysed with compact reference to the heritage of the earlier German and then Soviet influence. The specific features of the Regions (the Kaliningrad Region and the Warmia and Mazury Region) in the context of regional identity are emphasised. The features and determinants of the newly formed self-perception and regional identity are characterised (among others official symbols, place names, historical writings, attitude to the state and homeland) in the perspective of the common European space (European Union) and Polish-Russian bilateral relations. Such approach is connected with presentation of the concept of regional identity and the “positive legend” on the Polish-Russian borderland.

Keywords: regional identity, Kaliningrad Region, Warmia and Mazury Region, Polish-Russian borderland

1. Research on the Identity

Research on the contemporary Kaliningrad Region, i.e. after 1991 when the region (oblast) became part of the Russian Federation, did not immediately tackle the issue of identity of its inhabitants. The dominant subject matter was the new geopolitical situation of the Kaliningrad Region after the collapse of the Soviet Union as well as new economic and social challenges this enclave, separated from the home country by independent states, member states of the European Union and NATO – Poland and Lithuania – faced.

It is important to review the state of research on the identity of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region and the Warmia and Mazury Region, which should be the starting point for this research in the Polish-Russian borderland. This overview and commentary does not claim the right to outline the comprehensive state of research in this area but is intended to indicate various contexts of identity research, primarily for the residents of the Kaliningrad Region, to a much lesser extent for the residents of the Warmia and Mazury Region. Initial research on the identity of the inhabitants of the Polish-Russian borderland will also be pointed out.

The Western scientists (from Western Europe and occasionally from the USA) have not tackled the problem of regional identity in the Polish-Russian borderland. Only few of them paid attention to the identity of the inhabitants in the Kaliningrad Region. There were discourses of the present Russian Kaliningrad Region and the German heritage. Some studies concentrated on the problem of collective memory prepared by e.g. Jörg Hackmann (2008, 381-391). Alexander Clarkson investigated historical memory and identity in the Kaliningrad Region in the context of the debate on this topic conducted by the universities there (Clarkson, 2017). Others encompass different aspects of the past of the Kaliningrad Region and contemporary changes regarding official symbols, place names, architecture, and history rewriting.

A couple of scholars underlined the process of constructing a new identity among the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region, e.g. Maximilian Spinner (2007, 28). Best known is Ingmar Oldberg who has partly investigated a new socio-political phenomenon: the emergence of a regional identity among inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region (Oldberg, 2000, 269-288). He analysed the separatist attitude by studying the opinions of the inhabitants and the composition of official symbols, place names, architecture, historical rewritings as well as economic and political conditions.

It should be underlined that the issue of an emerging regional identity appears in many other publications, for example in the paper by Christopher Browning and Pertti Joenniemi (Browning, Joenniemi, 2003, 58-103).

The comparative analyses are concerned with two levels of identity: Russian regional (Kaliningrad) and national (federal) with the impact of German history, cultural symbolism on Kaliningrad regional identity. Among others, the following scholars should be mentioned: Stefan Berger (2008, 15-37; 2010, 345-366) and Paul Holtom (2008, 15-37). The latter researcher stressed the perception of the EU-Russian relations by the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants (Holtom, 2010).

Other research tried to investigate the impact of the European Union on the identity of the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants. Stefan Gänzle and Guido Müntel

paid attention to the ongoing process of Europeanisation of the Kaliningrad Region caused mainly by direct and indirect contacts with the European Union and its institutions as well as its neighbouring members – Poland and Lithuania (Gänzle, Müntel, 2011, 57-79). The impact of the European Union on the Kaliningrad Region and its inhabitants, especially from the neighbouring EU states: Poland and Lithuania, and also Sweden and Finland was emphasized by Christopher Browning and Pertti Joenniemi (Browning, Joenniemi, 2003, 58-103; Joenniemi, 2002, 417-446) and others. Incidentally, the topic was touched by Christian Wellman (Wellman, Karabeshkin, 2004; Wellman, 2007).

In conclusion, researchers from Western Europe and the US have been quite selective in their research on the identity of the Kaliningrad Region's inhabitants. They rarely conducted field research, usually in the form of observations and few interviews. It is not surprising that the most comprehensive studies on the contemporary identity of the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants have been conducted by Russian scientists, primarily from the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad. Those scientists started their studies on the territorial identity of the population of the Kaliningrad Region right after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The others work at universities in Moscow and Sankt Petersburg or in the West. But one of the first general outlines of the topic in the context of ethno-cultural situation was presented by Nadezhda Dubova, Natalia Lopulenko and Marina Martynova from Moscow (Dubova, Lopulenko, Martynova, 1989).

A study by Andrey Klemeshev and Gennady Fedorov on the Kaliningrad society was extremely important for further research on the identity of the inhabitants of the said Region (Klemeshev, Fedorov, 2001, 4-41; 2002, 4-40; 2004, 4-43).

From a *stricte* sociological perspective, the problem was investigated in a comprehensive manner by Mikhail Berendeev. What he analysed was the process of searching for their own identity by the contemporary inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region (Berendeev, 2007a; 2007b), the influence of economic factors on their identity (Berendeev, 2007c; 2007d), some aspects of social identity (Berendeev 2006a), the socio-philosophical perspective of their identity (Berendeev, 2006b) and their political and economic self-identity (Berendeev, 2007e). He also prepared a doctoral thesis on the said topic (Berendeev, 2007f). The context of the ethno-cultural situation of the Kaliningrad Region as a border region was investigated by Nadezhda V. Zhivenok (see her doctoral thesis, Zhivenok, 2006). In turn, the formation of an ethnic and cultural identity in the Kaliningrad Region as a multicultural region was examined by Nina I. Gulneva-Lugovskaya (see her doctoral thesis, Gulneva-Lugovskaya, 2012).

Anna V. Alimpieva tackled, in a systematic and broadened manner, the social identity problem (Alimpieva, 2003, 169-176; 2004, 45-56; 2005; 2009a, 76-84; 2009b, 36-40; 2014, 60-66). In her research, Olga Sezneva focused on the impact of the German/Prussian past on the identity of contemporary inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region, mainly by studying differences between generations (Sezneva, 2000, 323-338; 2002, 47-64; 2003, 58-85; 2005, 151-178; 2010, 35-57; 2013, 767-787). Such studies were also made by Valeri Galtsov who underlined the role of the specificity related to East Prussia and its past for the contemporary self-consciousness of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region – i.e. the transition from East Prussians to Kaliningradians (Galtsov, 2012, 141-152).

Anna Karpenko, who specialises in research on the identity of society (Karpenko 2008), analysed how the new regional identity emerged in some crossed-referenced processes, such as New Regionalism, and how the increasing role of regional actors in the European and Russian political areas after the end of the Cold War were affected by the impact of globalization (Karpenko, 2006b, 277-286). From the perspective of New Regionalism, she underlined its key dimension in depicting the core of cultural identity strengthened by the context of ethnic and religious aspects (Karpenko, 2006a, 84-95), including the Muslim community (Karpenko, 2005, 307-324) and also the Orthodox Church of Russia (Karpenko, 2011).

The problem of the identity of contemporary inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region in terms of sociology and political sciences was presented by Viktor Romanovskiy (2014, 254-263). Historical aspects of the problem were investigated by above mentioned Valeri Galtsov (2012), and other historians: Yuriy Kostyashov (2003), Gennady Kretinin (2001; 2002; 2015) and Oksana Kretinin (2001). The research on national, regional, and local identity from the perspective of European and global identity was prepared by Andrey Klemeshev, Gennady Fedorov and Efim Fidrya (Klemeshev, Fedorov, Fidrya, 2017, 47-55).

The identity of the inhabitants of the Warmia and Mazury Region was of no academic interest to scientists from Russia, including Kaliningrad. Recently, a review of Polish studies on the identity and collective memory of the inhabitants of the contemporary Kaliningrad Region has been conducted (Dementiev, 2019, 104-112). The latest research project on the Kaliningrad identity in cross-border and cross-cultural context was prepared by Anton Gritsenko (2019).

Among Polish scientists, the deepest study on the identity of the Warmia and Mazury Region inhabitants was conducted by Andrzej Sakson (e.g. 1998, 1999). The Ukrainian and German minorities in the Region were also investigated by Bożena Domagała (e.g. 1996, 2009). Both researchers acted as editors of a jointly written book (Domagała, Sakson, 1998). The cultural heritage, historical and regional awareness, tradition, and the contemporary multiculturalism of

the Warmia and Mazury Region were analysed by Izabela Lewandowska (e.g. 2003a, 2003b; 2007a, 95-102; 2007b, 194-214; Lewandowska and Romulewicz 2010), Jacek Poniedziałek (e.g. 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013) and other researchers, including historians, for example Wojciech Wrzesiński (1997). Only a few Polish researches, very occasionally, tried to tackle the problem of the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants identity, Wojciech Kotowicz (2011, 151-168; 2018, 157-176) and Krzysztof Żęgota among them, who investigated the problem in terms of politics (2014a, 137-166) and history (Żęgota, 2016a, 63-74) as well as current issues in connection with the monuments policy (Żęgota, 2016b, 87-102).

Preliminary research about collective identity of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region was started in mid 2010s by Miłosz Zieliński (2014, 66-80; 2015b, 57-64). One of the topics concerned the formation of national and regional identity in the Kaliningrad Region from the cross-border perspective, after introducing the Local Border Traffic between Poland and Russia, as seen by self-government officials, NGO activists and researchers living and working in the Polish cities of Elbląg and Gdańsk (Zieliński, 2015a, 109-134). The research was continued in the framework of the "Identity of the Kaliningrad Oblast since 1991 to present day: constitutive factors and direction of ongoing changes" project (financed by the National Science Centre of Poland, Preludium Programme – 2014/13/N/HS6/04214, years 2015-2017) and was crowned with the preparation of a doctoral thesis on the subject (Zieliński, 2017). Publications followed in the direction of identity creation in the Kaliningrad Region through the official vision of Russianness (Zieliński, 2018a, 937-956) and the process of forming and cementing the so-called new Russian conservatism which has been exerting a growing influence (Zieliński, 2018b, 131-142).

In turn, Krzysztof Żęgota focused primarily on the identity of the Polish Diaspora in the Kaliningrad Region and prepared a doctoral thesis on the subject (Żęgota, 2011) which was published as a book (Żęgota, 2014b).

It is only Andrzej Sakson who permanently, since the second part of the 1990s, has been conducting researches on the mentioned subject, not only on local and regional identity of the Kaliningrad Region, but most importantly on the Warmia and Mazury Region and to a much lesser extent on the Klaipeda Region (Sakson, 2008, 118-127).

His crowning research achievement was the fundamental scientific work (Sakson, 2011) entitled *Od Kłajpedy do Olsztyna. Współcześni mieszkańcy byłych Prus Wschodnich: Kraj Kłajpedzki, Obwód Kaliningradzki, Warmia i Mazury* ['From Klaipeda to Olsztyn. Contemporary inhabitants of former East Prussia: the Klaipeda Region, Kaliningrad Region, Warmia and Mazury Region']. The work is based on numerous direct and indirect conversations, interviews,

observations, and quantitative surveys which were supplemented by archival queries, analyses of official documents, memoirs, literature, newspapers, and websites. In his work, he focused on the process of formation of a new identity among modern inhabitants of former East Prussia and their relation to the German (Prussian) past¹.

He continues the research on the identity of the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants (Sakson, 2016, 513-523), sociological and historical aspects of the heritage of East Prussia (Sakson, 2017) and its impact on the contemporary situation of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad, Warmia and Mazury and Klaipeda Regions (Sakson, 2013, 253-270).

Until now, the Polish-Russian borderland identity has not been scientifically recognised but to a small extent. Arkadiusz Żukowski uses the term “identity” in reference to the borderland basically as a concept for the future (Żukowski 2008a, 308-314; 2008b, 647-653). The researcher made preliminary findings on the possible impact of the Local Border Traffic on the identity of the inhabitants of the Polish-Russian borderland (Żukowski, 2013, 99-110) and on the idea of regional identity of the said area inhabitants (Żukowski, 2016, 43-62).

2. Borderland – a Concept (of Cooperation?)

Borderlands are often called the frontier areas. Such areas usually are diverse ethnically, culturally and located on the outskirts of the neighbouring countries (Modzelewski, Żukowski, 2013, 35-43). Every borderland through the economic, social and cultural sphere is seen or should be seen as the contact area of mutual influence and penetration of a variety of contacts across national borders which naturally can turn the borderline into a kind of bridge between the neighbouring countries. In turn, this kind of region is most often understood as a separate, relatively homogeneous area distinct from other areas of natural or acquired traits. Depending on the group of extracted features we can talk about regional climate, an environment-friendly region, historical region, demographic region, economic region or political-administration region. In contrast, a cross-border region is a region located on both sides of the border, which should have the certain degree of homogeneity (geographical, economic, cultural community, regional awareness), the development and

1 Concerning the identity of inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region see subsection and chapter: *Kaliningrad or Königsberg? – Attitude to the past* and *The new identities in the light of own research*.

status of the region and the institutionalization of cross-border cooperation, which is associated with a lack of or low formalization level of the state border.

The term 'borderland' is understood as an area of contacts between two countries, including the regions defined according to the principal territorial division of the state. These borderlands are often characterised by their peripherality in the national dimension (most of them are located far from the main areas of the country's socio-economic activity) and in the international and geopolitical dimension (in the European Union terminology such borderlands are called "outermost regions"). This problem affects all regions of the world.

The establishment of contacts between borderlands determines the emergence of the cross-border phenomenon. According to the European Framework Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation of Territorial Communities and Authorities, any joint action undertaken to strengthen and further develop the neighbourly relations between the territorial communities and authorities of two or more contracting parties, as well as to conclude the agreements and arrangements necessary for this purpose shall be regarded as cross-border (European) cooperation. The cross-border cooperation shall be limited by the framework of the competences of territorial communities and authorities, as defined by national laws.

The cross-border cooperation can be defined as neighbourhood cooperation of adjacent border regions. It serves, for example, to mitigate the adverse effects of the existence of borders by carrying out joint projects and solving problems, e.g. reducing peripherality (although it is worth remembering that peripherality of a location does not always translate into economic peripherality). It is currently an important factor of regional development and security.

The area of cooperation around national borders consisting of administrative regions creates a cross-border area (region), cross-border or simply a border area. This category has a multithreaded and multi-faceted nature, determined, among others, by historical, cultural and political factors.

A cross-border region treated as a certain whole (e.g. in historical terms), however, does not constitute a single socio-economic space, but is the sum of spaces connected to the territories of the neighbouring countries.

The degree of contacts between the borderlands depends mainly on the specificity of the state border, including its openness. The evolution of the border's function is now visible: from the spatial barrier to the plane of cooperation, the border is a meeting place especially in the context of globalisation, the essence of which is the shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders. Each contemporary state is subject to these processes with different intensity, and their perception by its society or political elites may also be different. This is determined by a number of objective and subjective factors,

including political ones, and may boil down to an assessment of the cross-border phenomenon by comparing the resulting risks and benefits.

The growing importance of cross-border interactions and their direct impact on border space has led to the emergence of a new type of state policy – border policy, whose main objective is to regulate the functioning of the border and to harmonise the dynamics of cross-border processes within the national territory. The border policy has taken an indirect position between foreign and internal policies in their traditional sense.

The cross-border cooperation may cover the following areas: health, education, communication/transport, tourism, transport infrastructure, industry, trade promotion, agriculture, environmental protection, energy and also security in form of cooperation between police and border guards.

The cooperation may also concern the issue of shaping the new identity of the inhabitants of the Polish-Russian borderland. The borderland has become part of the social consciousness (Sakson, 2001, 32-42).

For centuries, the territory of former East Prussia had been one integrated historical region. In 1945, it was divided into two areas/states, which for over half a century almost did not cooperate with each other. Artificially designated border drawn across the East Prussia area singled out two foreign territories: the Polish and the Soviet.

The specificity of this territory consists not only of the elements of nature and geography, such as the location, landscape, environmental subsystem or hydrographic network, but most of all, it derives from the specific historical and political circumstances, creating the new national-ethnic composition, new social and economic relations and the new shaping of cultural identity.

It was not until the 1990s that the border nature of the area began to shape which was triggered by the social, political and economic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. The area does not have the typical characteristics of the socio-historical borderland normally attributed to the native people as they constitute a very small percentage of the total population.

On both sides of the border live populations with little social cohesion. This is mainly due to political decisions that forced new immigrant population of complex ethnic composition, different traditions, culture and religion (including atheists) to the territory.

3. The Warmia and Mazury Region – Historical and Political Background

After 1945, due to the centralization of political, economic and social life, as well as promotion of the so-called “national unity of the state”, the identity of

the inhabitants was destroyed. Such policy was supported by forced deportation or migration. North East of Poland, now covering the area of Warmia and Mazury Voivodeship, especially the counties located in the vicinity of the Polish-Russian border, was strongly affected by the policy of cleansing the area of the indigenous peoples (the Germans, Warmian and Masurian ethnic groups).

Today, the northeastern Polish borderland has some characteristics of a backward region. The socio-economic statistics or most indicators differ negatively from national averages. In this area a lower economic, social and political activity (e.g. GDP, GDP *per capita*, unemployment, activity of non-governmental organizations, political parties, voters' turnout) is noted.

The specificity of this area also results from the fact that the Polish-Russian border is also the border between Russia and the European Union and NATO.

4. The Kaliningrad Region – Past and Present in the Context of Regional Identity

Considering the Russian side of the borderland, the population of the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast) survived more than forty five years in internal isolation. The Region was a closed zone/area and a strong Soviet military base. It was the scene for the experiment of building a Communist/Socialist society by social engineering to create *homo sovieticus* (Sakson, 2009, 257-271). All traces of the cultural heritage of East Prussia were being consistently removed (e.g. building the government office House of Soviets on the ruins of the Teutonic Castle). The history of the Region was confined to the Soviet post-war period (Browning, Joenniemi, 2003, 70). The Soviet times saw full negation of the German/Prussian past.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Kaliningrad inhabitants had not only trouble finding their own identity, but they also found it difficult to clarify their relationship/attitude to the neighbours. Previously, in the Communist period, ideological friendship between nation/peoples was promoted but only over the sealed/closed border or in form of meetings arranged by authorities. The political, economic and social events in late 1980s and 1990s on one hand created a new quality in the social consciousness of the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants and a vacuum space on the other. The inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region manifested lack of clear historically formed self-perception (Misiunas, 2004, 385-411). But soon, ethnic and religious revival came into being. There were gradual and slow changes of the attitude towards the material culture and symbolic heritage of the pre-war past (German/Prussian), cautiously and slowly accepted. East Prussia

became a multidimensional symbol and a socio-cultural historical phenomenon (Galtsov, 2013).

The specificity of the Kaliningrad Region does not only result from its geopolitical situation with the status of a Russian enclave (Chełminiak, Żukowski, 2015, 233-240). The closeness of the European Union and neighbours has been playing an important role. The inhabitants of the Region are more open and socially active than in other regions of the Russian Federation (e.g. the activity of different kinds of NGOs and informal groups of ideas exchange is visibly higher than in other regions of Russia). Many Kaliningraders, especially representatives of the younger generation, have never been to main Russia but, instead, often visited the neighbouring and Western European countries.

It is a fact that the regional identity of the Kaliningraders is emerging but not in contradiction to Russian identity. The main cause of the regional identity is a unique location of the Kaliningrad Region kered by the neighbouring states (European Union and NATO member states, Poland since 2004 has been in the EU and since 1999 in NATO). The new identity, to some extent, brings together the regional, Russian, and European elements.

Some scholars showed some similarities between Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg – “They are both solidly Russian, Western-oriented and with economic grievances against the federal centre” (Oldberg, 2001, 71). Others stated that the Kaliningraders began to transform into the “Western/European” type of Russians or “in-between” identity of the inhabitants (Browning, Joenniemi, 2003, 73). In some aspects the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region combine both a Russian identity and a European one. According to the research they have begun to feel their regional distinctiveness.

Their new identity is based on regional, European and Russian elements with the dominant impact of the latter. But “regional identity is more important than ethnic or confessional membership” and “the territorial factor is beginning to predominate over the national” (Goble, 2010). In contradiction to the other parts of the Russian Federation special Kaliningradian identity was created (Galtsov, 2012, 141-152).

Regional identity has been influenced by such historical and contemporary elements as: pre-war Prussian traditions, German past, Soviet and Russian Federation period and the attitude towards Russia and Poland as a neighbour, as well as towards the European Union and NATO.

On both sides of the border, the religious identity is defined by ethnicity and culture (I am a Pole, then I am a Catholic; I am a Russian, then to a lesser extent I am an Orthodox).

5. Polish-Russian Borderland – a Concept of Identity and the “Positive Legend”

Both the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region are new cultural entities without clearly defined identity yet. It also indicates the existence of dissonance between the border areas, from the Polish and Russian side, arising from some differences in the level of civilization, which appears frequently in the media rather than in reality (raised especially at the beginning of the 1990s).

By the end of the 1980s, the border community had largely been cut off from contacts with people over the international border (the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region). The new quality of relations, breaking with selective and formalized contacts began in the early 1990s (Gromadzki, Wilk, 2001). But social, political and economic contacts between both regions possessed quite strong and long institutional background (Palmowski, 2007; Modzelewski, 2011, 153-168).

Political and economic realities in Poland after 1989 certainly raised hopes of the inhabitants of the Polish borderlands. However, it was true for the Polish western borderland; for the northeastern Polish borderland the enthusiasm was not so obvious. Among the reasons, lack of the historical tradition or the cultural and religious proximity prevailed. First of all, there was no concept of mutual cooperation on either side of the border. Regarding the Polish-German borderland, hopes were connected with propaganda boosted development of cooperation in the construction of a “common European home” or “Europe of the regions without borders”. Those activities were often associated with the Polish-German reconciliation. The fundamental reorientation of Polish economic relations from the East to the West was perceived positively. However, in the case of the Polish – Russian borderland nobody said anything about building “a common home” or the like. Here, it was chiefly the rapid economic benefits stemming from mainly the development of trade with Kaliningrad that accounted for the cooperation.

In the context of the northeastern Polish borderland, the Polish-Russian border line, it is still difficult to talk about strong local socio-political and economic movements or associations, which articulate the specificity of the region, and which put the goals to protect the interests of the inhabitants of this land. In most areas of these lands, there is no separate group, both in terms of spatial, ethnic, cultural and social matters which could fight for the autonomy in internal and external actions. The symbolism of the contemporary “little homeland” is basically absent.

The processes of the rebirth of national and ethnic identity of the inhabitants of the northeastern Polish borderland which were clearly visible in the 1990s (German and Ukrainian minorities, the inhabitants of the former Polish Eastern Borderlands) did not strongly affect the intensification of the cross-border contacts and regional identity.

Residents of the northeastern Polish borderland have merely correct relations with the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region. The attitude of openness and friendship between the so-called "ordinary citizens" and local and regional officials have often appeared in contradiction to the state of official Polish-Russian relations, especially at the government level (Żukowski, 2002, 323-348). It seems that Polish political elites may take an example from the so-called "ordinary citizens" and local officials in creating a climate of tolerance and understanding in mutual contacts.

The so called "positive legend" has not yet been created on the northeastern Polish borderland. This kind of legend could promote cooperation in the framework of a new Europe, especially among the younger generation. Given such a legend, there would be no serious problems with the identity of the inhabitants in reference to the territory on which they live. The introduction of the so-called "positive legend" could favour the crystallization of a positive local, regional, national and European identity. This is particularly important and quite easy to implement because, as it was mentioned before, in this area, no permanent local or regional identity has been developed so far.

The assumptions for building an open and civil society draws attention to the importance of the aspect of identification and regional identity. Creating the "positive legend" or regional identity, in addition to identifying the existing geographical space and the authority of the state, the civilization heritage of the area must be taken into account. This is likely to make young generation start thinking of themselves as Warmians and Mazurians (original inhabitants of Warmia and Mazury), or even Prussians/Pruthenians.

As noted before, in the Kaliningrad Region the phenomenon of the slow emergence of regional identity of its inhabitants occurs. Today, many of them see the distinctiveness of their region from other parts of the Russian Federation. A slow process of creating a new identity among the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region, in the sense of belonging to the region and Europe had begun. The rise and intensification of a distinct regional identity combining both Russian and European elements is a fact.

The process is underway. The Kaliningrad Region inhabitants had and still have the awareness of the non-existing historically formed, clear self-perception. But at the same time, authors of such opinions concluded that a new local identity appears to be germinating (Misiunas, 2004, 385-411).

In forming a new identity, the eventual emergence of some form of genuine local autonomy of the Kaliningrad Region should be favoured for the success of the process. It could be a beginning of the process of regional identity-building on both sides of the Polish-Russian border.

In the case of the northeastern Polish borderland, there is no need to make a breakthrough in mutual attitudes to each other between Poles and Russians. In these areas, as opposed to the western Polish borderland, there are no mutual prejudices and fears between the relations of Poles and Russians.

6. Conclusions

Apart from the worries and inconveniences, the implementation of the idea of the Local Border Traffic (the agreement entered into force in mid-2012 and was suspended in mid-2016 without time limit) could have a positive impact on better knowledge and understanding of the inhabitants of the Polish-Russian borderland by building partnerships at the individual and institutional level with the help from local self-governments, non-governmental organizations and the scientific and educational institutions. The Local Border Traffic could serve to build in the future a common economic, social and cultural (and perhaps ultimately a political quasi) space by free movement of people of the adjacent areas. As a new phenomenon, the Local Border Traffic could noticeably enhance the process of regional identity but first and foremost the development of cross-border cooperation on the Polish-Russian borderland (Modzelewski, 2002, 210-214; Modzelewski, 2006). Unfortunately, it is difficult to specify the influence of the Local Border Traffic on the Kaliningrad and Warmia and Mazury Regions inhabitants regarding their regional identities because it has been suspended by the Polish authorities.

Taking into account the containment of the Region among the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance states, the regional identity is likely to acquire Eurocentric tendencies in the future, due to the generation replacement of the regional society, the high frequency of social communication with the border states and the rest of the EU and low cohesion degree or even loss of kinship-blood and culture with Russia proper.

In fact, the current official Polish-Russian relations have been at their lowest level since their establishment. As it happens, they are characterized not only by unwillingness, but also sometimes by hostility. Conflict dominated relations had always been an immanent feature of the Polish-Russian contacts. The most acute manifestation of this occurred in the context of both sides' involvement in the Ukraine and Georgia military actions. For the authorities

in Warsaw, Russia is a threat to Poland's security and destabilises the situation in Central and Eastern Europe. In Poland, a specific historical policy begins to dominate in the official media, and nationalist and xenophobic slogans gain supporters.

In Russia, on the other hand, efforts have been made to consolidate the national identity of the state and the national identity of Russian citizens, as opposed to regional specificity.

As a result, the process of the formation of a regional identity has been basically halted. It is hard to disagree with the statements that in the Kaliningrad Region ever strengthened sense of national identity, followed by the regional and local identity, and the sense of European and global identity is significantly lower (Klemeshev, et al. 2017, 47-55). Efim Fidrya even stated that the Kaliningraders started to feel more like Russians (Мы стали сильнее ощущать себя россиянами) (Sociologist 2015).

In the future, attention of the political decision-making centres should be drawn to the development of the so-called "positive awareness" of the inhabitants of the Polish-Russian borderland. An important argument in favour of the creation of this new collective consciousness of the borderland is that it contributes to removing the existing xenophobic and extreme nationalist behaviours. Such policy would assist in creating communities on both sides of the border facing each other as friends rather than strangers which was the case in the past. Creating and strengthening regional identity on the Polish-Russian borderland may be a common vision for the future.

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Tatar Ethnic Minority in the Kaliningrad Region – Cultural and Religious Activity

Selim Chazbijewicz

Abstract

The author presents different aspects of cultural and religious activities of the Tatar ethnic minority in the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. He gives basic statistical data, characteristics of cultural and religious activity in the internal and external contexts, especially types of cooperation with Baltic Tatars from Poland and Lithuania.

Keywords: Tatars, Kaliningrad, Islam, ethnic minority, nation, region

The vast majority of Tatars today reside in the post-Soviet countries, primarily in Russia and also in Ukraine and Uzbekistan (Akiner, 1986; Bukharaev, 2000; Gainutdin, 2004). They originate mainly from the following Tatar groups: Volga Tatars, Astrakhan Tatars, Siberian Tatars and Crimean Tatars (Amirchanov, 2005; Frank, 1986). Other communities live in Romania in the Dobrudja region, in northern Bulgaria and some small groups live in Finland, in Helsinki and Turku (Norris, 2009). They are ethnic groups rather than a nation; they speak different languages and have different folk traditions. All Tatar groups have common roots in the North-Turkish tradition – Kiptshak. The vast majority of Tatars are Muslims (Chazbijewicz, 2009; Kopański, 1995).

The Tatars have also settled in the Kaliningrad Region. In 1989, there were 3,556 inhabitants of Tatar nationality on the territory of the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast) of the Russian Federation. Majority of them (81 per cent, 2,882 people) lived in towns, whereas only 674 persons resided in the countryside (Nasyrov, 2002, 53). These numbers changed in the subsequent years. In 1999, the total number of the Tatar population increased by 255 people, among them there were 145 persons from the Russian Federation. In 2001, the number of Tatars in the Kaliningrad Region reached the level of 5 thousand and about 1,700 of them live in the city of Kaliningrad (*Татары*).

The number of Tatars in the Kaliningrad Region did not change in the next decade. From a population of 5 thousand Tatars more than 2 thousand live in Kaliningrad, in the Bagrationovskiy district (район) about 240 people, in the

Chernyakhovskiy district about 230 people, in Sovetsk about 180 people, in the Gusevskiy district about 130 people. About 2,380 are settled in rural areas and district centres (*Представители*).

As early as 1991, the Kaliningrad Association of Islamic Culture and History was established consisting mainly of the Tatar people of this region (Nasyrov, 2002, 87). It was a kind of cultural-scientific and social society; its members were mainly retired soldiers and graduates from colleges and universities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Russian Federation, as well as representatives of technical intellectuals and medical professionals. Apart from the social life, the religious one started developing – previously being banned by the authorities. In October 1993, the Religious Society of Muslims of the Kaliningrad Oblast (Религиозное объединение мусульман Калининградской области) was founded, managed by hajji Hakim Ismailovich Bikteev, a Second World War veteran.

In the meantime, they began to solicit formally for the construction of a mosque in Kaliningrad. In 1995, the Tatar Culture Society (*Obshtshestvo tatarskoy kultury*) “Tugan Tamyrlar” (full official name of the association in Russian: Калининградская областная общественная организация татарского и тюркоязычного населения “Туган тамырлар”) was set up and was led by Venzel Takikhivich Salakhov, who was also elected member of the authorities of the religious society. The purpose of the association is to conduct cultural and public events among Tatars and related ethnic groups.

These two organizations often arrange common cultural-religious events to celebrate such holidays as Kurban Byjrami (the Feast of the Sacrifice) and Uraza Bayram (“Festival of Breaking the Fast”), also called the Fast Breaking Feast, the Sugar Feast, Bayram (Bajram), the Sweet Festival and the Lesser Eid as well as Sabantuy – the Tatar ethnic feast – the “Plough Feast”. These two communities take part in the Kaliningrad Days and organize tourist trips, concerts, lectures. Among the members of these communities one encounters the Lithuanian Tatar – Adam Adamowicz Jakubowski – residing in Kaliningrad and teaching religion (Nasyrov, 2002, 89). Both of the Kaliningrad-based Tatar societies support the local and regional libraries by collecting Tatar literature books, especially those written in the language of the Volga Tatars – a language spoken by the majority of the Tatar population in the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast).

In 2000, the Tatar Cultural Centre “Madaniyat” (Маданият) was established to conduct concert and theatre activities among Tatars and other ethnic cultural societies. The Centre was headed by Elmira Gali, a graduate of the Kazan Conservatory. In 2001, the “Cardeshler” (Кардэшлэр) society of Tatar culture was started. Its chairman was Salima Abdullova Yagudina.

The Kaliningrad Tatars take also care of the music and folk tradition by maintaining a youth song and dance ensemble. The number of Muslims in Kaliningrad itself is estimated to be 15 thousand. The Kaliningrad Islamic community includes Tatars, Chechens, Bashkirs and other Muslim nation representatives of the Russian Federation and the Former Soviet Union. In 2010, the construction of a mosque on the Pregola River began. The site is on one of the city squares – Komsomol Square [*W Kaliningradzie*]. However, part of the Kaliningrad inhabitants protested against the idea of both the very edifice and the mosque location. The construction has been going on and so far has not been completed. All Tatar organizations are part of the World Tatar Society with its headquarters in Kazan in Tatarstan (a federal republic of the Russian Federation). Therefore, they are subject to ethnic policy of the Russian Federation.

The Tatar Society of the Republic of Poland has been aiming at broadening the cooperation and integration of the Tatar groups living in Central – East Europe and the Baltic region. Mutual relations of the Tatar groups and organizations from Lithuania, Belarus, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Ukraine and Crimea have been established. The relation with the Tatar Diaspora in Petersburg in the Russian Federation and in the Kaliningrad Oblast was set up, too. Particular Tatar groups in the countries mentioned above have different historical and cultural traditions, which should have been overcome in order to facilitate the arrangement of general meetings and cultural events. The Tatars of Poland, Lithuania and Belarus have the same background – the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, they are often connected by family, friend, and genealogical bonds. The Crimean Tatars constitute a separate historical, cultural, ethnic, linguistic unity. They are strongly consolidated by the common trauma of the 1944 deportation and the political struggle for returning to Crimea. The Tatars came to Finland at the end of the nineteenth century; the most massive Tatar settlement in Finland occurred after 1917. They have well assimilated with the Finns. On the other hand, the Tatars in Petersburg had been settling there since the middle of the nineteenth century. It was the city of the Tatar aristocracy related with the imperial court, for example Prince Felix Yusupov – the murderer of Rasputin. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a mosque in Petersburg was built, preserved until today. It was designed by engineer Stefan Kryczyński, an architect coming from the Polish Tatars. Tatars arrived in Latvia, Estonia, and continental Ukraine and in the Kaliningrad Oblast after the Second World War. They were settled there as Red Army officers and non-commissioned officers or as officers of other former USSR services on grounds of a work order binding them to the former Soviet Union. A lot of Tatars, especially in the Kaliningrad Oblast and Kaliningrad city, come from those officer

groups. Kaliningrad used to be a garrison city which was a kind of a military facility for the Naval Base. It was a shut-off area requiring a special pass to enter the city which made this place inaccessible for tourists.

In order to integrate the Tatar groups, conferences on the topic of the Tatars from the Baltic countries, celebrations of Sabantuj, concerts, lectures and discussions have been organized. These meetings take place in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and previously in Belarus. In 1997, there was a reunion in order to celebrate the 600-year Tatar settlement in the Great Duchy of Lithuania. The meeting was held in Vilnius and one year later in Belarus. The Tatar groups were frequently invited to Gdańsk, among them the Tatars from Kaliningrad. A great meeting of the Tatars from Poland, the Kaliningrad Oblast and Lithuania took place in Wieżyca, Poland, in 2008. Every year, Venzel Takikhovich Salakhov, the chairperson of the Tatar society from Kaliningrad, together with a smaller or bigger delegation visits Gdańsk. The last meeting with the Tatars from Kaliningrad took place in December 2011 on the occasion of the Tatarstan President's visit to that city. He was able to visit the National Centre of Tatar Culture in the Gdańsk Orunia Park, where in 2010 the monument of the Tatar Uhlan in the service of the historic (Polish-Lithuanian) Commonwealth of Two Nations was unveiled. Among the special guests were the former Polish President Bronisław Komorowski and the Tatar delegation from Kaliningrad. Between 10th and 11th May 2009, the Tatars from Kaliningrad took part in a cultural event organized together with the House of Russian Culture in Gdańsk. This cooperation, once established, has been going on since 1997 with different dynamics. These relationships aim at both getting to know each other and the development of trans-border Polish – Russian cooperations in the dimension of NGOs and personal relations. The Tatar organizations in Poland and Lithuania cooperate fairly closely, taking into consideration political, social and cultural circumstances of the Tatar minority from the Kaliningrad Region. The relations with this minority group is maintained in the name of a good cross-border cooperation.

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PART II

(Inter-)Regional Policies

The Specificity of the Kaliningrad Region in the Administrative System of the Russian Federation

Waldemar Tomaszewski

Abstract

The subject of the article is the analysis of the structure and functioning of public administration in the Kaliningrad Region. The article draws particular attention to the specifics of this region of the Russian Federation. In particular, the political position and significance of the governor in the administrative system of the Kaliningrad Region are examined. The article also points to the roles of the Regional Duma. The study does not show the entire administrative system in the Kaliningrad Region because the author's basic assumption is to show the specific features of the administration in this Region.

Keywords: The Kaliningrad Region, administration, Governor, the Regional Duma

The Kaliningrad Region is a specific constituent entity of the Russian Federation (RF). It is determined by both its geopolitical location and political and economic significance. It is a Russian enclave, surrounded by NATO and European Union member states (Poland and Lithuania). The region is significantly distanced from the main area of Russia (over 360 km along a straight line) (Klemeshev, 2009; Żukowski, Modzelewski, 2016; Klemeshev, Fedorov, Fidrya, 2017).

Such a geographical location favours intensification of the region's relations with its neighbours. However, it could potentially weaken the bond between the region and the rest of Russia due to the strong influence of foreign countries in the region. In addition, the region is used by the Russian Federation as an important instrument in policy towards EU and NATO countries. This results, among others, in significant presence of power structures in the region and restrictions in cooperation with neighbours. The above-mentioned factors affect the specificity of management of the Kaliningrad Region and the specificity of its administrative structure (Rogoża, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wiśniewska, 2012).

The basic legal act at the regional level is the statute adopted on 28th December, 1995 (The Charter, 1995). The Basic Law defines the status of the region, establishes the system of the state authorities of the region as an entity of the Russian Federation, determines their competences and responsibilities, as well as general principles for the organization of the local self-government in the region (Głowadzki, Stępień-Kuczyńska, 2004, 53).

The status of each of the RF entities – including the Kaliningrad Region – is provided by the State authorities of the Federation subject to the participation of federal authorities. This source is the legislation of the Federal Assembly, mainly the State Duma of the RF. The Kaliningrad Region is represented by institutions of state power, similarly to entities operating in other regions of Russia. In the Russian Federation, the power system consists of three elements: state federal authority, state regional authority and local government. An important component of the constitutional system is the system of supreme bodies of state power common to the entire Federation. “The principle of uniformity of organs means that they form a compact system of inter-related and complementary entities that form a closed whole. The uniformity of this system, however, is based on the demarcation of competences and scope of activity between the state authorities of the Russian Federation and the state authorities of its entities. It also manifests itself in the fact that all organs included in this system operate independently” (Stelmach, 2003, 102). Federation entities, such as the Kaliningrad Region, have the opportunity to defend their interests through the Federation Council and the State Duma of the RF (by deputies representing all regions). The region also has the right to propose legislative initiative through the Federation Council, MPs to the State Duma and the Kaliningrad Regional Duma – legislative body of the Kaliningrad Region (Palmowski, 2014, 171-180).

The Regional Duma in Kaliningrad is the permanent supreme legislative and representative body of the Kaliningrad Region. Together with the governor – head of the government of the Kaliningrad Region – other regional executive bodies and the legislative tribunal of the Kaliningrad Region, the regional Duma is covered by the system of state authorities of the Kaliningrad Region, based on the principles of legality, transparency, democracy and independence of governance. It operates in the system of division of competences between the state organs of the Russian Federation and the bodies of the Kaliningrad Region. The Regional Duma adopts the Charter (basic law) of the Kaliningrad Region, regional law and resolutions.

The right of legislative initiative belongs to the Regional Duma deputies, standing committees of the Regional Duma, the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region, the Kaliningrad Regional Government, representative bodies of local

authorities, the Public Chamber of the Kaliningrad Region, the Association “Council of Municipalities of the Kaliningrad Region”, the Kaliningrad regional branch of the All-Russian public organization “Association of Lawyers of Russia” as well as to the Statutory Court of the Kaliningrad Region, the Regional Public Prosecutor, the Regional Electoral Commission and the Ombudsman for Human Rights in the Region concerning the matters within their jurisdiction, citizens of the Russian Federation residing in the territory of the Kaliningrad Region and implementing the right of civil legislative initiative in the order established by the legislation of the Kaliningrad Region.

The powers of the Regional Duma are the following: approval of the regional budget and regional socio-economic development programmes, establishment of regional taxes and fees, procedure for conducting self-government elections, procedure of management and disposition of the regional property, implementation of legislative regulation on other issues within the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation's subject.

The Regional Duma exercises control over implementation of the regional budget, execution of budgets of the territorial state non-budgetary funds; approves conclusion and termination of agreements of the Kaliningrad Region; carries out other powers established by federal laws and laws of the Kaliningrad Region (The Regional Duma, January 22, 2020).

The election of deputies to the Regional Duma of the sixth term took place on 18th September 2016. Forty deputies were elected to the Regional Duma, including 20 in single-member constituencies and 20 deputies in one (regional) constituency as part of regional lists of electoral associations. For preliminary preparation and consideration of organizational issues of the Regional Duma activities, the Kaliningrad Regional Duma Council was created. The members of this Council are the Chairman of the Regional Duma, the First Deputy Chairman of the Regional Duma, the Deputy Chairman of the Regional Duma, the Chairmen of the Standing Committees of the Regional Duma and the leaders of the deputy factions. The Kaliningrad Regional Duma has in its structure the Public Council, the Advisory Council on national and cultural autonomies and national associations affairs, the Coordination Council of Chairmen of Councils of representative bodies of municipalities of the Kaliningrad Region.

The Kaliningrad Regional Duma has signed a cooperation agreement with the Department of the Ministry of Justice of the Kaliningrad Region aimed at ensuring the unity of the legal space in Russia, a cooperation agreement in the law-making sphere with the Prosecutor of the Kaliningrad Region.

Six permanent committees have been created in the Regional Duma in the following spheres: Budgetary, Taxes and Finance; Economic Policy and Infrastructure Development; Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and

Environmental Protection; Social Policy, Health Care, Education, Culture and Sport; Legislation, Public Construction, Local Government and Regulation; International and Interregional Relations, Security and Law and Order.

Formally, the Regional Duma functions on a par with the Governor, the Government of the Region, other executive organs and the Statutory Court of the Region as well as other state authorities in the Region. It is appointed in accordance with the rule of law. The regional Duma adopts statutes, regional laws and resolutions. The powers of the Duma include: approval of the perimeter budget and programmes for the socio-economic development of the perimeter, establishing peripheral taxes and fees, determining the procedure for conducting elections to the local government of the perimeter, how to manage and dispose of the ownership of the perimeter, exercising the right and other competences within powers of attorney granted to entities of the Russian Federation. In practice, however, the governor's advantage is now noticeable in this regional system of power.

The highest executive body of state power of the Kaliningrad Region in the years 1993-2005 was the Regional Administration. Currently, the Government of the Kaliningrad Region performs this function (Pravitelstvo Kaliningradskoj Oblasti, 2020). It is a constantly functioning executive branch of the enclave, headed by a governor – the highest-ranking person in the Region.

The Government of the Kaliningrad Region consists of (Act of October 4, 2005): the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region, First Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region – Chief of Staff of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region, two Deputy Prime Ministers of the Kaliningrad Region, Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region – Minister of Sports of the Kaliningrad Region, Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region, Governor Plenipotentiary in the Kaliningrad Regional Duma and thirteen Ministries of the Kaliningrad Region. The government is subject to the agencies of the Kaliningrad Region (there are currently seven of them) and services of the Kaliningrad Region (operate in four areas of administration).

The Government of the Kaliningrad Region, in accordance with their statute and respective law, defining its organization and operating principles, develops and implements measures to ensure comprehensive socio-economic development, participates in conducting a common state policy in the fields of finance, science, education, health care, and social care and environment protection.

The apparatus of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region is a state body established in accordance with the Kaliningrad Region Act "On the Government

of the Kaliningrad Region” and another Act of the Kaliningrad Region “On the system of executive organs of the Kaliningrad Region state authority” in order to ensure the activities of the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region and the Government of the Kaliningrad Region (Act of October 12, 2011).

The Government Office performs the following main functions:

- supervises the compliance with the requirements of government ordinances in the implementation of draft laws of the Kaliningrad Oblast, decrees and ordinances of the governor, decrees and ordinances of the government, agreements and other documents requiring consideration by the government;
- ensures the preparation of proposals for draft legal acts and other government documents;
- organizes government meetings and other events with the participation of the governor and members of the government;
- examines the appeals of citizens and social organizations, and ensures the efficient operation of the phone line “Kaliningrad Governor Hotline to combat corruption”;
- participates in the government’s implementation of mobilization training and civil defence measures in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation.

Formally, the regional administration is also fighting corruption. In December 2018, as a consequence of the implementation of the national guidelines of the President of the Russian Federation – Vladimir Putin, the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region created a service for preventing corruption. However, on 30th May, 2018, at the request of the governor, the Kaliningrad city council adopted an amendment to its statute, allowing the governor to initiate dismissals of councillors in the event of their violation of anti-corruption laws.

Recent years have witnessed the central authorities of the Russian Federation developing a new model for managing the Kaliningrad Region. It focuses on limiting the existing mechanisms operating in this Region. An important element of this process were changes in regional authorities and the transfer of management of the region to people who had no direct relationship with the Region before. Initially (July-October 2016) the Governors were Yevgeny Zinichev, and then Anton Alikhanov.

These changes are a consequence of many economic, political and military factors. Central authorities are constantly trying to strengthen control over local authorities. It is evident that the goal of the Russian central government’s policy towards the Kaliningrad Region is to maintain control over it and ensure social stability. The governors who would have no support in the central government of the Russian Federation (especially of the President of the RF),

would not provide stability and control in the Region. As a consequence of the dispersion of power, conflicts of interest often arose between its subjects. Governors also had no influence on decisions regarding the force services and the territory under their responsibility, as well as economic matters relevant to the Region.

Therefore, in 2005 for the first time, the central authorities of the Russian Federation appointed a governor from outside the political environment of the Kaliningrad Region. This caused dissatisfaction with the political elites in the Region who were afraid of losing their significance. Therefore, another Governor came from the Kaliningrad Region (Nikolay Tsukanov). It restored social stability in the Region, but in the opinion of the central authorities of the Russian Federation, his management was inefficient. In addition, the Region's new problems, e.g. preparations for the 2018 FIFA World Cup and the increasing militarization, led the Russian central authorities to take direct control over the region. Consequently, Governor Yevgeny Zinichev was appointed first, followed by Anton Alikhanov. On 10th September 2017, A. Alikhanov was elected by popular vote for the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region.

The task of the governor in the Kaliningrad Region was to modify the political model of local management and centralize decision-making processes (mainly the concentration of greater competences in the hands of the regional executive at the expense of municipal authorities). There was a qualitative change in the management of the Kaliningrad Region both on the intra-regional level and in the Region-Moscow relationship. It should be emphasized that as a result of the reform, the governor's independence in managing the Region was limited. The governor has become a technical manager who takes care of the political and economic interests of the central government of the Russian Federation. In addition, there was a reduction in pluralism among local politicians. For example, the earlier model in which the Mayor of Kaliningrad competed for power with the Governor was replaced by a model of centralized and concentrated power in the hands of the governor.

Currently, the powers of the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation are very broad (Act of September 29, 2005) as the governor:

- represents the Region in relations with federal state authorities, state authorities of RF entities, local self-government bodies, as well as in the implementation of external economic associations, and has the right to sign contracts and agreements on behalf of the Region;
- signs and announces regional laws or rejects the laws adopted by the Regional Duma; creates the Government of the Region and decides on its resignation, heads the Security Council of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation;

- has the right to request the convening of an extraordinary meeting of the Regional Duma;
- submits bills and other legal acts for consideration by the Regional Duma, provides the District Duma with opinions on draft acts on the introduction or abolition of taxes;
- has the right to participate in the work of the Regional Duma in an advisory capacity; ensures coordination of the activities of the executive organs of the District with other state organs of the region;
- is entitled to organize cooperation of the region's executive organs with federal organs of executive power and their territorial organs, local self-government bodies and social associations (Kotowicz, 2011, 121-124).

The weakening of the political significance of the Mayor of Kaliningrad significantly strengthened the position of the governor. It should be noted that the regional parliament in November 2016 replaced the direct election of the Mayor with an election by the city council (in 2018, direct elections of the Mayor were held only in ten cities of the Russian Federation). The Mayor was deprived of voters' support and became much more dependent on the support of the circuit authorities.

Simultaneously with the strengthening of the governor's position and centralization of management in the Region, local authorities were weakened and municipal authorities were diminished. The reform of strengthening the governor's position was justified by better and more coherent planning of the region's infrastructure development and the need to fight corruption. As a consequence of this reform, a partial rotation was also carried out among the heads of municipal units.

After the changes were implemented, the position of the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region against the background of other heads of regions in Russia started to be assessed in many rankings as strong. In the governors' strength ranking, developed in January 2019 by the APEK Political and Economic Communications Agency, the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region took fifteenth place among 85 governors in the RF. According to the ranking of the expert group "Minchenko Consulting", announced in September 2018, the position of the Kaliningrad Region Governor slightly weakened. However, it ranks second in the ranking of governors of the North-western Federal Region. However, according to the ranking of the Medialogia agency, in 2018 the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region deteriorated its position to other governors (it was its decline from thirteenth to twenty-third place) ('Fortress Kaliningrad 2019').

It is the duty of public authorities in the region to guarantee citizens the possibility of direct and indirect – through representatives – participation in power, including the preparation of cyclical general elections to the

legislative body and to local government. There is also a local government in the Kaliningrad Region. However, its real significance in the system of authorities in the Region is difficult to determine. The basic legal functioning of local government is contained in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. In the Kaliningrad Region, the creation of local self-government is laid down in the Statute of the Region of 1995 (Articles 58-65).

In addition, in 2003 the Act on General Principles for the Organization of Local Government in the Russian Federation was adopted. This Act provides:

- creation of a uniform, two-tier system of local government bodies throughout the country;
- defining the basics of local government;
- clear definition of the competences of local government bodies;
- financing the local government.

In accordance with the Act, the competences of local government bodies have changed. There is also a vertical division. Most of the administrative regions of the Kaliningrad District of the Russian Federation have been granted municipal status since January 2006. All pre-existing city districts have also preserved it. First level municipal units were created in some former administrative areas. In each of these regions, four to seven first-level municipal units were established. At each level of a local government there are legislative and executive bodies.

To sum up, the specificity of the administration of the Kaliningrad Region is primarily a consequence of the geopolitical location of the Region. This location means that the central authorities of the Russian Federation may not allow a situation in which they lose control of the circuit. Therefore, changes were made following which the power of the circuit governor was significantly strengthened. This weakened the importance of other authorities in the Region, especially the Mayor of Kaliningrad. Currently, the governor is the administrative centre of the circuit. It seems that such significant changes in the administrative system have not yet taken place in other regions of the Russian Federation. It is the Kaliningrad Region that is one of the most significant in the geopolitical and strategic system of the Russian Federation.

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Political Participation in the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation

Karolina Tybuchowska-Hartlińska

Abstract

This publication presents the types and significance of political participation of the residents of the Kaliningrad Region. The data presented was collected using the desk research method. The level at which people participate in politics depends on many contexts. Individual features such as gender, age, education, as well as historical, cultural and economic considerations are taken into account. The geographical location and traditions of the region are also important. Therefore, political participation in the Kaliningrad Region seems to be an interesting subject and requires in-depth research. A significant aspect for the research seems to be the forms of conventional and unconventional participation which citizens most willingly or least willingly exercise, and which institutional barriers they face. Given the exclave with such a diverse and multicultural society, a unique image of the regional and local community is in place.

Keywords: political participation, elections, Kaliningrad Region

1. Introduction

In democratic countries, citizens have the opportunity to participate in the political life. The activity can be implemented in two ways: by engaging in legitimate activities, e.g. elections, referenda and initiatives, and through actions indicating dissatisfaction such as protests, demonstrations, boycotts or petition signing. Many researchers recognize that such non-electoral political participation is of great importance for the functioning of a state and is an actual indicator of how democratic a political system is.

The specific location of the Kaliningrad Region as an exclave is important in the context of trends that we see in Europe and in terms of the impact of the political, social and economic situation of the Russian Federation itself. In the case of the Central Eastern European countries and former Soviet bloc

countries, a lower level of political participation is observed than in Western European countries.

The purpose of the work is an attempt to describe and preliminary interpret the forms of political participation in the Kaliningrad Region, belonging to the Russian Federation. The issues raised above rarely appear in either Russian or English language. Most studies deal with electoral issues, but in relation to the entire Federation, however, there are no studies focusing on regional and local elections, and – interestingly – aspects related to direct forms of political and social participation are even more marginalized.

2. Theoretical Framework for Political Participation

According to the Oxford Encyclopaedia (van Deth, 2016), political participation is any voluntary, unprofessional activity centred around government, politics or a state. The term ‘political participation’ has been defined by many researchers, for example Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie indicated that participation is the activity of citizens who have (more or less) influence on the choice of those in power or the actions they take. They also noticed a strong positive relationship between political commitment and active political participation (Verba, Nie, 1972).

According to Giovanni Sartori, participation should base on personal engagement, active and continuous joining without any coercion (Sartori, 1987, 148). The literature on the subject uses a variety of terms, among which the most popular are: ‘in addition to political participation’, ‘civic participation’, ‘political commitment’ and ‘political activity’.

In democracies with a short democracy experience, legitimacy through political participation is of great importance. It is recognized that certain socio-political forms can only be achieved if the authorities seek their social acceptance in the forms of participation generally accepted for a given system (Huntington, Nelson, 1976, 2-3).

In addition to theoretical justification, there are results of empirical research conducted on the example of other countries. Among many of them, in the context of the idea of the study, it is worth recalling the following conclusions. For example, in his research, Daniel Stockemer (2014) pointed to the impact of such factors as education, voting in elections, participation in organizations related to civil society and lack of satisfaction with governments on the citizens’ involvement in boycotts, demonstrations and petition signing. However, the joint research of Daniela Melo and Daniel Stockemer (2014) sought to show the relationship between age and three types of political participation, taking

into account voting, demonstrations and signing petitions. They indicate that younger people vote less often than older ones, and more often take part in direct actions, such as demonstrations and petition signing. Lesser protesting political activity of the elderly is also confirmed by other studies (Jennings, Markus, 1988).

Confirming the legitimacy of a given system is associated with involvement in conventional forms of participation. In those systems where legitimacy is lower, citizens more often reach out for unconventional forms of participation (pickets, demonstrations, petitions) (Duverger, 1966, 159).

Smith (2009) notes that the debate emphasizes the importance of differentiating the forms of political participation when studying their sources. Such differentiation becomes even more significant, considering that individual motivations to engage in conventional forms of political participation, such as voting, contact with a public official or work for political parties, differ from the motives for participation in unconventional forms (protests, petitions, boycotts or strikes).

Studying the relationship between unconventional political participation and consolidation of democracy, Daniel Stockemer and Benjamin Carbonetti (2010) found no links between them. However, Patrick Bernhagen and Michael Marsh (2007) pointed to lower political activity of citizens in post-communist countries compared to established democracies. Interesting research results show that in many cases the prerequisites for political participation are different for both groups of the countries. In view of this analysis, it is important to note that leftist beliefs are prevailing among protesters in Western countries. However, the right-wing ones clearly reduce such dependence in the West and increase in the East.

Anna Kern, Sofie Marien and Marc Hooghe (2015) pointed out that an economic crisis causing an increase in unemployment is conducive to increasing the level of non-institutionalized political participation. In addition, their research confirmed that age (younger more often), education (higher more often) and gender (men – more often institutional; and women – non-institutional forms of participation) play a role.

Voter turnout is one of the directions of research in the context of age (Bhatti, Hansen, 2012a; Bhatti, Hansen, 2012b; Bhatti, Hansen, Wass, 2012; Konzelmann, Wagner, Rattinger, 2012). However, these trends indicate that young voters vote less often than older people (OECD 2011). In the case of ageing societies, it can be of great importance. And among the explanations that appear, this is because of low interest in politics, less knowledge about politics, and a lack of sense of duty to vote (Franklin at al. 1992; Topf, 1995, Blais at al. 2004, Wass, 2007). However, one can notice and describe the changes taking

place in electoral regulations, including the reduction of the voting age, aimed at mobilization and political socialization of younger generations enabling, for example, voting from 16 years of age, as it is in Austria (Wattenberg, 2008; Wagner, Johann, Kritzingler, 2012; Zeglovits, Aichholzer, 2014).

Thus, based on the cited literature of the subject, it can be pointed out that political participation is researched primarily in the context of voting, a popular and firm element taken into account. However, you can also find examples of research relating to other activities such as signing a petition or participating in demonstrations. The ever-present theme is the individual characteristics of people and attempts to find relationship between sex, age and education in the context of political participation.

Proponents of direct democracy argue that its dissemination is a way to make politics more accessible to individual citizens. Over the last decade, direct participation has gained approval and taken various forms, and citizen involvement in Europe has become more widespread thanks to the universal access to the Internet, which is used to inform citizens about initiatives (formal and informal) and which also gives the possibility of remote voting (Trescher, 2007).

3. Conventional Participation – Elections

The participation of citizens in a political process is regulated by law. The idea of civic participation is based on a constitutional guarantee for exercising state power, also by state organs. The Kaliningrad Region, along with all federal entities¹, has subjected its electoral legislation to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Federal Bill on Basic Guarantees of Electoral Law and the Right of Citizens of the Russian Federation to Participate in a Referendum and other federal laws, the Statute of the Kaliningrad Region, the Act on the Election of Deputies to the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region and other internal regulations (Electoral Law KR, Section 2).

In accordance with the Statute of the Kaliningrad Region, the authorities ensure the exercise of civil rights to enable the citizens to participate in the management of state affairs, both directly and through representatives.

According to law, the main forms of participation in the Kaliningrad Region are:

- regional referendum;
- local referendum;

¹ The Russian Federation consists of 21 republics, 46 regions, 9 provinces, 2 cities of federal significance (Moscow and Saint Petersburg), 1 autonomous district and 4 territorial autonomies.

- election of deputies to the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region;
- election of local councillors.

In addition, the statute enables:

- citizens' legislative initiative;
- public discussion on important regional issues.

Discussing issues related to elections in the subjects of the Russian Federation is quite an effort, as it includes 110 million citizens eligible to vote with the assistance of one million election officials, and the elections are held in nine time zones. Elections are conducted by standing electoral commissions. The election administration is five-level, hierarchical and consists of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, election commissions of the subjects of the Russian Federation, district election commissions, territorial (rayon, city, etc.) election commissions and precinct election commissions. The precinct election commissions are set up for a permanent period of 5 years, in addition to them special constituencies are established – in hospitals, sanatoriums, airports, railway stations, jails and abroad. In the case of garrisoned units, it is allowed for soldiers stationed there to vote at the request of the commander. Voters also have the option of casting votes earlier and in the case of districts distant from a polling station or hard to reach, they are allowed to use so called 'mobile ballot boxes' on the election day. In 2011, new voting technologies were applied for the first time by using a voting scanner and touch screens for electronic voting. Since 2012, in accordance with the federal law, all elections have been held on one day, i.e. the second Sunday of September of the year in which the term of office of the authority expires (Electoral Law FR).

According to the federal electoral law, the number of deputies in individual federal subjects is determined in relation to the number of registered voters on the territory of the Russian Federation (from 15 to 50 deputies – 500,000 voters; from 25 to 70 deputies – from 500,000 to 1 million voters; from 35 to 90 deputies – from 1 to 2 million voters; from 45 to 110 deputies – over 2 million voters).

In the case of the unicameral Kaliningrad Regional Duma, the number of deputies is 40. A mixed electoral system is used for elections – 20 deputies are elected in one-mandate constituencies, and the remaining 20 – by a proportional system, where the area of the entire precinct is one constituency. Candidates for deputies are nominated by 'electoral associations' of political parties in the form of lists of candidates.

The results of the last elections held in September 2016 to the Kaliningrad Regional Duma clearly show the victory of the United Russia party, which received 41.17 per cent support thus winning 29 seats.

On the same day, elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation were also held, and the results in Kaliningrad were very similar; the United

Russia obtained 43.39 per cent support (the national result of the party was 54 per cent)².

Governor is the most important official. He or she is elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct elections by secret ballot by the citizens of the Russian Federation residing in the territory of the country, who have electoral rights in accordance with the federal law. The five-year term of office is counted from the date of taking office. One re-election is allowed. Russian citizens who are over 30 years of age have passive voting rights. In 2010, the Federation Council approved of the regulations concerning the names given to the executive organs in the subjects of the Federation. According to the said law, individual subjects have the right to self-determine a name of an executive body, taking into account historical and ethnic factors and other traditions, but they cannot contain words that would be confusing with the definition of the Federation's executive power.

The governor's competences revolve around administering the territory, representing the country in relations with federal authorities, other federation entities and local governments, with the right to sign contracts and conclude agreements.

The procedure for obtaining legitimacy is one of the factors positioning the head of state in relation to other authorities. Direct elections of the heads of the subjects of the Federation were lifted in 2004 (after the massacre in Beslan). The one-man executive bodies of the subjects of the Russian Federation are to be elected in general elections, however, the election results must be approved by the President of the Russian Federation.

The first (restored) direct elections of this type were held in 2012 and were conducted in those subjects in which the powers of attorney of the executive authority expired on the day the said law came into force. Four candidates ran in the early elections in 2017 and Alikhanov Anton Andreyevich, the youngest governor in history, was elected. He obtained 81.06 per cent of the votes.

In the case of elections held in Kaliningrad, attention should be paid to the high level of citizen participation in all types of elections. The turnout was respectively: in the elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation – 92.85 per cent, in the election of the President of the Russian Federation – 92.07 per cent, to the Regional Duma of Kaliningrad – 84.61 per cent, in the election of the Governor – 81.06 per cent.

It should also be noted that since 2001 only two local referenda have been held in the Kaliningrad Region.

² Kaliningrad belongs to the Northwestern Federal District. In proportional elections to the State Duma, it is divided into two constituencies (nos. 97 and 98).

4. Other Forms of Participation

In 2017, the Public Chamber of the Kaliningrad Region was established. The essence of the functioning of this chamber is the cooperation of the citizens of the Russian Federation residing in the Kaliningrad Region with non-profit organizations created to represent and protect the rights and interests of professional and social groups in cooperation with regional and local authorities. The aim of this cooperation is the economic and social development of the Kaliningrad Region, the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms, and the development of democratic institutions. The chamber consists of 39 members elected for a three-year term (KR Law).

The main tasks of the chamber are:

- putting forward and supporting citizens' initiatives aimed at implementing the constitutional rights, freedoms and interests of citizens;
- formulating recommendations for the state authorities of the Kaliningrad Region when determining the priorities for the development of civil society;
- providing information and methodological support to state bodies and institutions at various levels.

Citizens' democratic involvement is a key element of modern democracies, without which democracy cannot function. Democratic political participation must be understood as an equal opportunity for every person whose decision has the potential to influence the outcome (Verba, 2003).

In the case of post-communist countries, elections are not the only option for citizens to dialogue with authorities. In addition to elections, forms of direct participation include referenda, public consultations and civic initiatives. Referenda are organized to decide on relevant matters, are binding and do not require additional approval. The main purpose of public consultations on matters of public interest is to probe opinions and give recommendations for action. The citizens' initiative, on the other hand, is a citizen's right to submit a petition to a deputy regarding changes in the relevant law (Radikow, 2015).

It is obvious that the participation of citizens and the exercise of power should be most visible in local governments. In stabilized democracies, local communities are the basis of the system, as they are the source of inspiration and opportunities for action and they prepare for work in state administration (Radikow, 2015). Along with the development of the idea of participation, in addition to traditional forms of civic participation (such as participation in elections or referenda), new tools began to appear, e.g. civic budget, deliberative surveys, civic panels as well as unconventional forms such as petitions and demonstrations.

5. Conclusions

Due to the specificity of its location, the Kaliningrad Region differs from any other subject of the Russian Federation in many respects. However, one of the two most important differences is the fact that it borders on other countries and has no passage to the rest of the Federation. Secondly, it is immigrants that form the population of the Region: this national, cultural and religious patch of the immigrant population creates a unique picture of the regional and local community.

The influence of central policy is of great importance, primarily with the supreme constitution and federal law. The results of federal elections are perceived as voters' reactions to socio-economic changes caused by the situation of the exclave, as well as to the policy of the federal authorities towards the region. However, the proximity of European countries contributes to the penetration of news and trends from this part of the continent.

To sum up, it must be said that political participation in the Kaliningrad Region clearly indicates who more often or less often undertakes activity in this area. This seems to be an important clue for people who want to take effective measures to increase citizens' involvement.

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The Attitude of Polish Political Parties towards the Kaliningrad Region in 1989-2019

Tomasz Bojarowicz

Abstract

The aim of the study is the analysis of the attitude of Polish political parties towards the Kaliningrad Region in the years 1989-2019. The interest of Polish parties and political groups in the Kaliningrad Region has been observed since the fall of the Soviet Union. The change in the geopolitical situation aroused interest in the possibilities of establishing mutual relations on both sides. The author identifies and analyses the activity of the politicians who represent political parties on the parliamentary and cabinet arena, and the activity of local politicians from the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodship). The study presents a cross-section of the attitudes of political parties towards the Russian enclave bordering on Poland.

Keywords: Kaliningrad Region, Polish Eastern Policy, Polish political parties

The subject of the study is the analysis of the concepts of several Polish political parties regarding the place and role of the Kaliningrad Region in the Eastern policy of the Republic of Poland. That is why the research focuses on the agendas of Polish political parties and the positions of politicians representing them. The aim of the study is to show the attitude of selected Polish political parties towards the Kaliningrad Region in the years 1989-2019. The study refers to the activity of the politicians who represented political parties on the parliamentary and cabinet arena, and to the activity of local politicians from the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodship). This voivodship is the area which directly borders the Kaliningrad Region. For the sake of the analysis it is necessary to ask the following research questions: What was the attitude of the selected Polish political parties towards the Kaliningrad Region? How did the foreign policy shaped by political parties at the government level affect the activity of political parties in the regional dimension? What was the activity of politicians representing political parties, performing controlling functions in the central and local dimensions, in relations with the Kaliningrad Region? The term 'Kaliningrad Region' is used in the paper. It should be noted that

other terms are also used in Anglo-Saxon literature, e.g. "Kaliningrad Oblast" or "Kaliningrad District".

The change in the geopolitical situation after 1989 resulted in significant transformations of the Polish national borders. Following the dismantling of the bloc of socialist countries, the eastern border of Poland ceased to be a border with the Soviet Union as Belarus and Ukraine had come into being as independent states. The only border with the Soviet Union remained in Poland's north-east touching on the Kaliningrad Region. It was created in 1945 cutting through the northern part of East Prussia. In 1991, the Kaliningrad Region became a part of the Russian Federation.

The interest of Polish parties and political groups in the Kaliningrad Region has been observed since the fall of the Soviet Union. It has been reminded in the political discourse that at the Potsdam Conference in 1945 it was agreed that the former northern part of East Prussia – together with Königsberg (in Polish "Królewiec"), today Kaliningrad – would be handed over to the Soviet Union (Affek, 2014, 188). In connection with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, questions arose about the further status of the Kaliningrad Region.

In the initial period of political transformations, most Polish parties and political groups decidedly opted for the existing *status quo* (many of them, especially right-wing political parties, used and still use in their documents not the official name "Kaliningrad" or "Kaliningrad Region", but the Polish historical name "Królewiec" and "Okręg Królewiecki"). The position resulted from various reasons. It was feared that possible claims of Poland against the Region could become a hotbed of a conflict between Poland, Russia, Lithuania and Germany (Sakson, 1993, 54). Until 1st July 1991, Poland was a member of the Warsaw Pact. In the Polish political discourse, there was a discussion about the formation of a new security system in the area of Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. It was thought that any possible territorial claims on the part of Poland would be negatively received not only by the Soviet Union (later the Russian Federation), but also by Lithuania and Germany. Representatives of Polish political parties also expressed their concerns that the initiation of a discussion about the revision of borders could result in similar aspirations on the part of Germany. For political parties, the fact of regaining sovereignty was a very important event; they were afraid of possible claims which could threaten the recently regained independence.

However, it should be emphasized that some of the newly formed political parties took a different position. Representatives of the national movement and some Christian and democratic formations called for the incorporation of the Kaliningrad Region into Poland (Sakson, 1993, 54). The Party of Loyalty to the Republic of Poland (*Stronictwo Wierności Rzeczypospolitej*) claimed that Poland should receive the Kaliningrad Region as compensation for the invasion

of 17th September 1939 and all the victims of the Polish nation resulting from Soviet operations (Waszkiewicz, 1991, 145). Christian Democracy – Labour Party (*Chrześcijańska Demokracja Stronnictwo Pracy – ChDSP*) considered:

Królewiec and its lands to be a Russian colony on geographically Polish and Lithuanian lands, limiting the sovereignty of Poland over the Vistula Lagoon, and the sovereignty of Lithuania over the Curonian Lagoon (Paszkievicz, 1996, 26).

ChDSP demanded diplomatic actions which within 10 years would lead to the incorporation of the Kaliningrad Region into Poland and Lithuania. Some of the groups even expressed the concerns that if Królewiec was not incorporated into Poland, the region would find itself under German influence (Paszkievicz, 1996, 265). These were, however, concepts of marginal parties which did not play a significant role on the Polish political scene.

From the beginning of the transformation period, an important issue was the number of Russian army units in the Kaliningrad Region. That is why e.g. the Coalition for the Republic of Poland (*Koalicja dla Rzeczypospolitej*) in 1993 demanded the demilitarisation of the Królewiec Region (Słodkowska, 1993, 390). The idea was later raised by other groups as well, among others in 1997 by the Solidarity Electoral Action (*Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność – AWS*), whose leader called for tripartite talks between Poland, Lithuania and Russia as part of regional cooperation, concerning the demilitarisation of the Królewiec Region and transforming it into a free trade zone which would be the area of international cooperation. Marian Krzaklewski, the leader of the Solidarity Electoral Action, considered the maintaining of “such an unparalleled in Europe concentration of offensive forces” to be a relic of the Cold War, creating the sense of danger for the countries in the Baltic Sea basin (Parliamentary, 1998).

Representatives of Polish political parties strongly opposed to the concept propounded in 1996 by the President of Russia Boris Yeltsin to create an extritorial corridor between the Kaliningrad Region and Belarus. The position of the politicians from the main Polish political parties on this issue was decidedly negative.

The change in the geopolitical situation aroused interest in the possibilities of establishing mutual relations on both sides. This concerned in particular cooperation at the local level. There appeared opportunities to make cross-border contacts between the areas which had been in mutual isolation for several dozen years.

In the first half of the nineties in the twentieth century, relations with the Russian Federation were regulated by a treaty. Moreover, in 1992 in Moscow, an agreement was signed between the Government of the Republic of Poland

and the Government of the Russian Federation on the cooperation between the northeastern voivodships of the Republic of Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation (Modzelewski, 2008, 166). This created an opportunity to start interrelations at the regional level. In the following years, politicians at the central and regional (voivodship) level developed contacts with the Kaliningrad Region. It should be emphasized that the policy of expanding cooperation was pursued by politicians who represented both post-communist parties and post-Solidarity parties. They actively participated in cyclical sessions of the Polish and Russian Council for the Cooperation of the Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation established in 1994.

Poland's relations with the Kaliningrad Region depended on the current state of relations between the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation. The quality of mutual contacts between Moscow and Warsaw translated into the activity of the cooperation between the Kaliningrad Region and the regions of northeastern Poland. Interrelations at the governmental level modelled contacts at the regional level. This was reflected in the activity of politicians representing political parties.

It should be noted that in the initial period of political transformation the external policy of Poland involved two basic strategic objectives: Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and to the European Union. These issues were more important than the ones regarding relations with eastern neighbours, including Russia. Both objectives were successfully achieved, they also had their consequences in the context of the Polish border with the Kaliningrad Region. After the accession of Poland to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1999, the southern border of the Kaliningrad Region became a border with a NATO member state. However, in 2004 after accession to the European Union, the border of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region became the external border of the European Union.

All major political left-wing and right-wing parties were in favour of joining the NATO. They viewed full NATO membership not only as the guarantee of national security, but also as the emphasis on Poland's affiliation with the Western world.

Bearing in mind Russia's negative attitude towards Poland's accession to the EU, Polish political parties indicated the need to shape good relations with Russia. Before accession to NATO, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Bronisław Geremek (Freedom Union – *Unia Wolności*) drew attention to the simultaneous necessity of developing good relations with Russia, based on the principles of equality and mutual benefits.

One of important directions in our relations with the Russian Federation is the development of direct contacts with its entities, republics and other administrative units. We particularly care about getting closer to the entities that have already developed a certain tradition of contacts with our country. We want the cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region to take a special place in our relations with the Russian Federation (*Parliamentary*, 1998a).

The Freedom Union politicians also noticed the efforts of Russia who aimed at keeping a large number of troops in the Kaliningrad Region. They expressed alarm over such decisions of Russian authorities including the transfer of some armed forces stationed in Kaliningrad to naval forces, which excluded them from a normal negotiation procedure regarding the number of land forces (*Parliamentary*, 1999). The MPs were also aware that the presence of the Russian army in the Kaliningrad Region resulted from Russian fear of Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. MP Kazimierz Dankowski (Democratic Left Alliance – *Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*) asked Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek in 1999:

Or is it not the case that the closer we are to NATO, the larger the concentration of the troops in the Kaliningrad Region, the lower sense of security on the Russian side, and thus the greater threat on the eastern border? How does the government intend to solve the dilemma in the end, as the current actions seem insufficient to me? (*Parliamentary*, 1999a).

The decisive position of the United States of America regarding the enlargement of NATO forced Russia to accept the accession of Poland to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Kazanecki, 2007, 326).

The majority of both left-wing and right-wing Polish political parties had a positive attitude towards Poland's accession to the European Union. However, some political parties opposed this initiative. The argumentation of the supporters and opponents of joining the European Union included also direct references to the Kaliningrad Region. Supporters of the accession of Poland to the EU were aware of Russia's reluctant position so, instead, they proposed the expansion of mutual economic, tourist and cultural cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region. Opponents to the accession of Poland to the EU were afraid of Germany's hegemony in the EU and of the risk of losing some of their sovereignty and possible Germany's support for the idea of a corridor between the Kaliningrad Region and the Russian Federation through Poland

and Belarus. Such an attitude was noticeable in the addresses of national Catholic politicians, among others from the Catholic-National Movement (*Ruch Katolicko-Narodowy*).

In the light of recent statements by German politicians, shouldn't the European Union be treated as a tool to consolidate Germany's hegemony, and in the case of Poland to gradually absorb our western and northern lands? The more so because it is Germany that is in favour of the European Union as a federalist state and it is the German delegates – as we have heard – who want the majority and not unanimity when making decisions in the EU bodies. I ask: what are you going to tell the society, Poles, if Germany and their allies in the European Union vote by qualified majority, with Poland's ineffective protest, the creation of not a Berlin – East Prussia corridor, but a Minsk – Kaliningrad corridor this time? (*Parliamentary*, 2002).

National-Catholic parties also expressed their concerns about the revival of the initiative to reconstruct East Prussia, which was to be facilitated after the abolition of the border between Poland and Germany. This position was held mainly by the League of Polish Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin* – LPR).

After the Potsdam Conference of 2nd August 1945, on 25th February 1947 the Allied Control Council for Germany was established, which issued Act 46 on permanent liquidation of the Prussian state. The Prussian state, the leading state of the German Reich, ceased to exist, which was additionally approved by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of four superpowers at a conference in Moscow in 1947. One part of the Prussian state was given to Poland, and the other part to Soviet Russia. Therefore, any reconstruction of the Prussian state or any of its parts is punishable to this day under international law [...] Germany does not intend to abide by the Potsdam agreement, it does not disavow imperialism, it wants to regain all its former territories from the time of war one after the other, that is our western lands, Silesia, Western Pomerania, and recently also former East Prussia, i.e. the Kaliningrad Region which belongs to the Russian Federation, and wants to name it Prussia [...] Is the government aware of the fact that under the guise of creating Euroregions of 10 Slavic countries Germany aspires to regain all the lands within Polish borders and to reconstruct East Prussia? (*Parliamentary*, 2004a).

It should be emphasised that such opinions were rare.

Among the few there are statements by the politicians from the League of Polish Families, which expressed fear of agreements being made between the leading European Union country, Germany, and Russia, also regarding the Kaliningrad Region.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union it poses a serious political threat to Lithuania and Poland. This is demonstrated, among other things, by the form of celebrations of the 750th anniversary of Königsberg/Królewiec organised by President Putin at this time. The relations between the European Union and Russia, including the problem of goods and passenger transit to Kaliningrad, were discussed without the participation of leaders of Lithuania and Poland. These are matters which directly concern Lithuania and Poland, and not France or Germany. The reason of state of Lithuania and Poland is political neutralisation of a foreign body in this part of Europe, which undoubtedly is the Russian Królewiec enclave (*Parliamentary*, 2005).

Major political parties referred to the need to intensify economic relations. Among others, politicians from the Democratic Left Alliance spoke in this tone.

The Kaliningrad Region is a great opportunity for us. Lithuanians, whose export dynamics exceeded 60 per cent and their subsequent investments can arouse envy, understood this. [...] I appeal, let us deal with the Kaliningrad Region seriously. Let us take advantage of the opportunity offered by the Polish-Lithuanian-Russian Interreg 3A Programme, and first of all let us start work aiming at bringing the Region closer to the Union. After all, it is a great stronghold for an offensive in this direction (*Parliamentary*, 2004).

Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 coincided with the disintegration of Polish political scene. The former system in which post-communist and post-Solidarity parties exchanged power was exhausted.

Since 2005, post-Solidarity groups have participated in the system of the alternation of power: the Civic Platform (PO) and the Law and Justice (PiS) parties. Despite common roots and traditions, they were characterised by different concepts of shaping the Polish foreign policy. This was particularly evident in the period when Lech Kaczyński from Law and Justice was President of Poland, and Donald Tusk from the Civic Platform was the Prime Minister of Poland. In L. Kaczyński's opinion, Russia should remember that Poland was not situated in its sphere of influence, and Polish-Russian relations could not

depend on the obligation to get on well at all costs (Podgórzńska, 2007, 144-145), while D. Tusk saw the shaping of Polish-Russian relations on the basis of the common eastern policy of the European Union. The differences in the understanding of external policy were evident in the President's involvement in the conflict between Georgia and Russia and the creation of an anti-Russian coalition from Central and Eastern European countries.

The effect of the foreign policy of the Civic Platform was a specific reset in mutual Polish-Russian relations. It was symbolised by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin's visit in Poland during the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War. The talks between V. Putin and D. Tusk in Sopot were the beginning of the new stage in the relations between Poland and Russia.

A thaw in Polish-Russian relations during the rule of the Civic Platform allied with the Polish People's Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe – PSL*) in 2007-2015 translated into the activity of the government administration in the field and the activity of the local governments (self-governments). It should be noted that Polish regions (voivodships) are of dual nature: governmental and local. The voivode (governor) is a representative of the Government in a region, while the Voivodship Regional Parliament and the Marshal of the Voivodship are local authorities. During the rule of the Civic Platform and the Polish People's Party coalition, the voivodship authorities demonstrated great activity in deepening the relations between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region. In September 2009, the Voivode of the Warmia and Mazury Voivodship Marian Podziewski (Polish People's Party) was the first foreign guest of the new Governor of the Kaliningrad Region Nikolay Tsukanov. In the following years, both politicians regularly met and took part in joint ceremonies. In 2013, the voivode together with the governor paid homage to the soldiers of the Red Army buried at the cemetery in Braniewo, a town situated near the border. The participation of voivodship authorities was negatively assessed by the representatives of the opposition Law and Justice party. In a statement which commented on the voivode's address MP Jerzy Szmit (Law and Justice) wrote as follows:

The address which praised the liberation by the Red Army was probably rewritten from the speeches delivered by the Voivodes of Olsztyn in the forties and fifties of the last century, during fraternal Polish-Soviet meetings (Białous, 2013).

Improved relations at the governmental level also resulted in changes in the cross-border area. A landmark event in the cross-border relations was the

signing of the agreement on the implementation of the Local Border Traffic. On 14th December 2011, the agreement was signed by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski (Civic Platform) and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov. It covered the entire Kaliningrad Region and a part of Warmia, Mazury and Pomerania. An exception was made there, as usually such types of agreements apply only to a 30-50 km border belt. The signing of the agreement resulted in the introduction of significant facilitation in the cross-border traffic. After the agreement had been concluded, there occurred a decided increase in the number of people crossing the border in both directions. It also resulted in the growth of trade. The issuing of permits for travelling between Poland and Russia as part of the Local Border Traffic began in July 2012. It should be emphasized that the agreement on the Local Border Traffic was signed on the initiative of both countries.

In 2015, the Law and Justice party won parliamentary elections in Poland, which also translated into a change of tones in Polish foreign policy, including the aspects concerning the Kaliningrad Region.

When analysing the policy documents, political activity and statements of politicians from Law and Justice, it must be stated that the views of this party on the Kaliningrad Region are part of its eastern policy. It is based on the rejection of a reset in the relations with Russia and the conviction that Russia's policy is a threat to building Poland's subjectivity in international relations. According to Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz:

Russia is seeking the revision of the political order in Europe which was implemented after 1989, and which restored independence in Poland. Instruments to achieve this goal are the destabilisation of numerous regions in the closer and further neighbourhood of Poland, actions aiming at the exacerbation of political divisions within individual countries as well as between them, breaking up the transatlantic unity and deepening the divisions within the European Union (*Parliamentary*, 2018).

Law and Justice sees a threat in the proximity of the Kaliningrad Region, pointing mostly at its military potential.

Our services constantly monitor threats to the security of Poland. The negative phenomena which have intensified in the past few years, especially recently, in connection with the Zapad exercises of Russian armed forces, primarily include the growing militarization of the Kaliningrad Region. It is accompanied by the process of settlement of military corps in this area, and by the increased activity of special services and other

Russian state power ministries. Additionally, attention must be paid to other potentially dangerous activities of hybrid nature, consisting in intelligence activity, provocations, cyberattacks and economic pressure, among other things (*Parliamentary*, 2017).

That is why during the campaign before the parliamentary elections in 2019, at the convention in Olsztyn, the leader of Law and Justice Jarosław Kaczyński talked about the need to ensure national security due to the proximity of the Kaliningrad Region. J. Kaczyński also referred to the flagship idea of Law and Justice – the cross-cutting of the Vistula Spit. This investment was to give Poland full sovereignty in the area of the Vistula Lagoon by becoming independent of the necessity to navigate through the Baltiysk/Pilawa Strait controlled by the Russians.

The change in the perception of the Kaliningrad Region also applied to voivodship authorities. The policy of the new voivodship authorities towards the Kaliningrad Region was different from the one pursued by their predecessors from the Polish People's Party. The new Voivode Artur Chojecki (Law and Justice) drew attention to the threats resulting from the proximity of the Region, he pointed to the need to increase the security of the Warmia and Mazury Region, passing over the concept of cooperation (*Rozmowa*, 2017).

The events in Ukraine in 2014 significantly affected the attitude of Polish political parties towards the Kaliningrad Region. The subsequent tensions in Polish-Russian relations were connected with the involvement of Polish politicians in the resolution of the conflict in Ukraine. The Polish side strongly opposed the annexation of Crimea and the involvement of the Russian Federation in separatist actions in Donbass. Politicians of all political parties in Poland firmly condemned the annexation of Crimea by Russia. That is why, in May 2014 the Voivode of Warmia and Mazury renounced his participation in the ceremonies at the cemetery of Soviet soldiers in Braniewo.

The most evident consequence of the tension due to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict was the decision made by the Polish side to stop the Local Border Traffic. The Law and Justice government justified this decision by security measures before the upcoming important events in the territory of the Republic of Poland. In July 2016, in Warsaw at the National Stadium there was to be held the summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, whose main topic was supposed to be the security of the NATO eastern flank countries. Catholic World Youth Days with the participation of Pope Francis and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world were also planned at the end of that month. Representatives of the Polish Government explicitly indicated the connection

between the suspension of the Local Border Traffic and the conflict in Ukraine. This was clearly admitted by Minister of the Interior and Administration Mariusz Błaszczak, representing Law and Justice (Kotowicz, 2018, 85). Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Development Jerzy Szmit, a politician from the Warmia and Mazury Region, also conceded in his statements concerning the suspension of the Local Border Traffic: "One must not forget that Russia is at war with Ukraine and we cannot turn a blind eye to it" (*Komitet*, 2016). According to the Law and Justice politician, on the Polish-Russian border smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes takes place, and there is no impulse for other ways of development of the border regions in the cross-border cooperation. The decision was made suddenly, without a prior announcement. At the same time, the similar Local Border Traffic agreement with Ukraine was suspended. As part of retaliation, the Russian Federation also suspended the Local Border Traffic. Since then, crossing the border of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region has only been possible with a valid visa.

Representatives of the opposition parties: MPs from the Civic Platform, the Polish People's Party and the Democratic Left Alliance demanded the restoration of the Local Border Traffic. The decision to suspend the traffic was not agreed upon and regraded as negative economic consequences for the Warmia and Mazury Region. Ryszard Petru, the leader of the Modern Party (*Nowoczesna*), said during a press conference in Olsztyn:

We are a country which has neighbours, we take advantage of that not only on the basis of friendship and talks, but they also create jobs. In this part of Poland Russians previously spent PLN 300 million a year, and this money may disappear. It will disappear not only from Polish pockets, because some people will not earn money, but this can also cause real tragedies, because some people may lose their jobs. This is a blow to a region which does not live only off tourism (*Petru*, 2016).

Representatives of the Civic Platform and the Polish People's Party governing in the Warmia and Mazury Region also adopted an unequivocal position. According to the former Marshal of the Voivodship Jacek Protas:

The introduction of the Local Border Traffic was supposed to limit negative consequences of the peripheral location of the Warmia and Mazury Region and at the moment the suspension of this form of crossing the border squanders this situation in an incomprehensible way (*Komitet*, 2016).

From the beginning of the political transformation, the representatives of political parties who had seats in the Voivodship Government were very active in the shaping of mutual relations between the Kaliningrad and the Warmia and Mazury Regions. Since the establishment of the Voivodship Government in 1998, there has been an intensive development of relations between the neighbouring regions. Politicians of the parties which formed the governing coalitions: Democratic Left Alliance, Freedom Union, Polish People's Party, Civic Platform played a significant role in establishing and developing the cross-border cooperation. Politicians of these parties were the creators of numerous initiatives which were to bring both border regions closer. They also participated in symbolic activities which pulled down mutual barriers. For example, in September 2001, the Marshal of the Voivodship Andrzej Ryński (Democratic Left Alliance) together with Mikhail Tsikel, Deputy Governor of the Kaliningrad Region, for the first time crossed in canoes the water border on the river Łyna. The cooperation was developed by subsequent Marshals of the Voivodship: Jacek Protas (Civic Platform) and Gustaw Marek Brzezina (Polish People's Party). The self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region carried out activities consisting in the promotion of economic relations, organisation of fairs and exhibitions which promoted cross-border contacts, it acted as an agent in the establishment of relations between the local governments (Modzelewski, 2008, 172-173).

It should be emphasised that the cooperation was continued at the regional level, despite tense interstate relations. Local authorities on both sides of the border wanted to maintain mutual relations. The cooperation was not stopped after 2014 because of the situation in eastern Ukraine, but it slowed down to some extent. The Government of the Warmia and Mazury Region was very active in this regard.

On 15th December 2016, the Third Seminar took place in Kaliningrad: economic cooperation between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region – Warmia and Mazury Region: traditions and new opportunities for cooperation. During the meeting, the Marshal of the Warmia and Mazury Region Gustaw Marek Brzezina (Polish People's Party) and acting Governor of the Kaliningrad Region Anton Alikhanov ceremoniously signed the Work Plan of the Warmia and Mazury Region of the Republic of Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation for 2017-2019. Additionally, a Work Plan in the field of tourism was concluded between the Tourism Department of the Marshal's Office of the Warmia and Mazury Voivodship and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region for 2017-2019 (*Polsko-Kaliningradzkie*, 2016).

In March 2017, the 15th anniversary of the conclusion of the agreement on cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad

Region was celebrated in Olsztyn. Local authorities were represented by the Marshal of the Warmia and Mazury Region Voivodship, while the Ambassador of the Russian Federation in Poland, Sergey Andreev and Deputy Governor of the Kaliningrad Region, Alexander Rolbinov represented the Russian side. In June 2019, representatives of the Voivodship Government actively participated in the 9th Forum of Partner Regions of the Kaliningrad Region (*Forum*, 2019). In April 2019, representatives of the self-government covering the County (*Powiat*), Town and Municipality of Braniewo and Marshal's Office in Olsztyn on the Polish side laid flowers and wreaths at the monument to the fallen Soviet soldiers.

G.M. Brzezina, the Marshal of the Warmia and Mazury Region, during the 29th Economic Forum held in Krynica in September 2019, at a panel discussion on the Polish-Russian cross-border cooperation emphasised that long-term contacts of the Warmia and Mazury Region with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation were evident mostly in such areas as tourism, culture, social policy, sport, health and cooperation between non-governmental organisations and associations of the Polish community abroad. He also recalled the significance of the Local Border Traffic for this cooperation and interpersonal contacts. He pointed out the important role of the EU Poland-Russia Programme, which undoubtedly revived the cross-border cooperation (*Na XXIX Forum*, 2019).

When analysing the attitude of parties and political groups towards the Kaliningrad Region, one cannot rely only on the programme materials of political parties. Rarely can one find references to the Russian enclave there; in the programme documents on foreign policy there are usually postulates regarding the Russian Federation as a whole. Of course, there are exceptions taken into consideration in this study. Therefore, the way the Kaliningrad Region is perceived by political parties should be considered through the attitudes of the politicians who represent political formations. That is why it was necessary to analyse the Sejm addresses of representatives of the parties and political groups as well as the Government and self-government activities of politicians belonging to political parties. On this basis one can present a cross section of the positions of political parties towards the Russian enclave bordering on Poland. This analysis seems to be extremely important from a geopolitical viewpoint. The specific location of the Kaliningrad Region, historical reminiscences and Poland's accession to the EU (the border with the Kaliningrad Region became the EU border) require Polish politicians to remain keenly interested in the problems of the exclave.

When analysing the way of perceiving the Kaliningrad Region by Polish parties and political groups, one can observe several regularities. In the initial period of the political change, interest in the Russian enclave was demonstrated

mainly by far-right parties, which raised claims on that part of former East Prussia. This resulted from the national parties' conviction that the position of the Soviet Union after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc was weakened. However, it soon turned out that the heirs of the USSR (Commonwealth of Independent States, Russian Federation) did not intend at all to give up the westernmost part of their state. Most parties accepted the current status of the Kaliningrad Region from the beginning, fearing that making territorial claims could have negative consequences for Poland. Also characteristic for the beginning of the transformation were fears of the military potential of the Region, expressed mainly by representatives of centre and right-wing parties.

It should be noted that for Polish political parties and groups the status of the Kaliningrad Region does not seem to be a matter which is in their scope of constant interest. As regards the issues of the Kaliningrad Region, representatives of political parties take positions occasionally, when important or sensitive problems arise. That is why political debates were usually launched after such important events as the fall of the Soviet Union, the accession of Poland to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union, the emergence of the concept of a corridor between Russia and the Kaliningrad Region, negotiations between the EU and Russia concerning the movement of Russian citizens, or publications in Western press about a possible arsenal of nuclear weapons in the Kaliningrad Region. The problems of the Kaliningrad Region also aroused the interest of politicians after the annexation of Crimea and the involvement of the Russian Federation in separatist actions in Donbass.

The attitude of Polish political parties towards the Kaliningrad Region was conditioned by many factors. First of all, it depended on the current geopolitical situation. The perception of the Kaliningrad Region also depended on Russian policy. The implemented concepts of eastern policy created by Polish political parties, which fulfilled the governmental function, had a significant influence as well. It is also worth noting that the politicians from the Warmia and Mazury Region, which directly borders on the Kaliningrad Region, expressed more interest in the Region. This resulted primarily from its proximity and the fact of establishing direct relations with the representatives of the authorities of the Kaliningrad Region.

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The Kaliningrad Region in the Olsztyn Media

Katarzyna Maciejewska-Mieszkowska

Abstract

The relations between residents of cross-border areas are largely conditioned by experiences resulting from mutual contacts and by regulations governing the interactions between neighbouring countries. The main carrier of information about these relationships are regional media, which are active participants in international communication at the level of cross-border cooperation. In the case of Olsztyn based media, the news regarding cooperation and the situation in the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation are of particular importance. Especially noteworthy is a series broadcast by Radio Olsztyn, titled '*Shto u vas*' [How are you doing?] which commented on the various lifestyles of the residents of the Kaliningrad Region in the broad political, social and historical context.

Keywords: international communication, Kaliningrad Region, '*Shto u vas*'

1. Introduction

Polish-Russian relations are a frequent topic of debates and various researches (Bieleń, Skrzypek, 2012, 222; Czachor, 2011, 109-131; Bieleń, 2012, 5-27; Zięba, 2011, 35-60; Kotowicz, Modzelewski, Żukowski, 2013, 362). This is so not only because of the proximity and shared history, but also because the relations between Warsaw and Moscow resemble a sine wave reflecting the degree of 'warming' or 'cooling' of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Regarding the different positions of the Polish and Russian authorities on the crisis and conflict in Ukraine Mieczysław Stolarczyk states,

In the years 2014-2015, Poland almost froze political relations with Russia at the highest level. It can be said that Polish-Russian relations reached the 'arctic' level. The exception was the tripartite meeting of foreign ministers of Poland, Germany, and Russia in St. Petersburg as part of the so-called Kaliningrad Triangle (10th June 2014) (Stolarczyk, 2016, 387).

Among the events that intensified tension between the countries in that period, M. Stolarczyk also included the dispute regarding the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War which involved the dismantling of the monument to General Ivan Chernyakhovsky in Pieniężno in Poland (Warmia and Mazury Region) in September 2015, and issues related to the plans of building a missile shield in Poland by the USA and NATO (Stolarczyk, 2016, 391-394).

At the same time, a report by the Centre for Eastern Studies for the years 2016-2019 showed that regardless of tensions on the inter-state level, the inter-regional contacts between Polish provinces (Pomerania Region and Warmia and Mazury Region) and the Kaliningrad Region continued to function, which does not mean that they ran smoothly as exemplified by the suspension of the agreement on the Local Border Traffic by Poland in 2016 (Żukowski, 2013, 55-62) or in 2018 the plan to excavate a canal across the Vistula Spit (Kotowicz, 2013, 122-137), which caused dissatisfaction on the Russian side (Domańska et al. 2019, 54-55). Contacts on the regional level concerned primarily the cross-border cooperation (Dumała, 2012, 91-105; Palmowski, 2010, 706-715) and were implemented under national programmes as well as the activities undertaken and financed under European Union programmes (e.g. the programme Lithuania-Poland-Russia for the years 2007-2013 financed from the funds of the Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme for the years 2014-2020) (Domańska et al. 2019, 56-57).

Besides, one of the essential elements of this cooperation were the meetings of the Council for the Cooperation of Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, whose scope of activities was determined by eleven thematic committees dealing with such matters as border crossings, transport, agriculture, environmental protection, culture, sport, and tourism. In 2016, official contacts on the Council level were suspended, however, the so-called current working contacts were maintained, for example, between the representatives of border guards. Other forms of cooperation included meetings of industry and commerce chambers and economic chambers, joint business forums, as well as study meetings and seminars by the representatives of local authorities (Domańska et al. 2019, 56).

2. Social Assessment of Polish-Russian Relations and its Coverage by the Polish Media

Opinions of Poles on Polish-Russian relations are shaped mainly by their own experiences related to both contemporary and historical events as well as by media messages. In the nationwide media, relations between Poland and

Russia are usually publicized in the context of tensions between the countries and their sources, such as the conflict in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea by Russia (Krzywdzińska, 2012; Massaka, 2016, 67-79; Głuszek-Szafranec et al. 2015, 165-194; Grigorev, 2014, 90-101; *Od ucieczki*, 2015). To what extent current events shape Polish people's views on the issue of Polish-Russian relations, and how they have changed over the months and years, is shown in the reports of the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS)¹, which analyse, among other things, the attitude of Poles towards other nations.

The crucial point in the analysis of Poles' opinions about Polish-Russian relations seems to be the attitude of the respondents to the Russians as a nation, because "in the attitude towards the Russians there is a noticeable high ambivalence of assessments, which in the most simplified way can be expressed in words: good people – bad government" (Omyła-Rudzka, 2015a, 10). In addition, research conducted from 1993 to 2015 shows that in the twenty-first century a significant decline in friendliness towards the Russians occurred in 2014, which was undoubtedly closely associated with the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine (Omyła-Rudzka, 2015b, 6-7) (see: Charts 1 and 2).

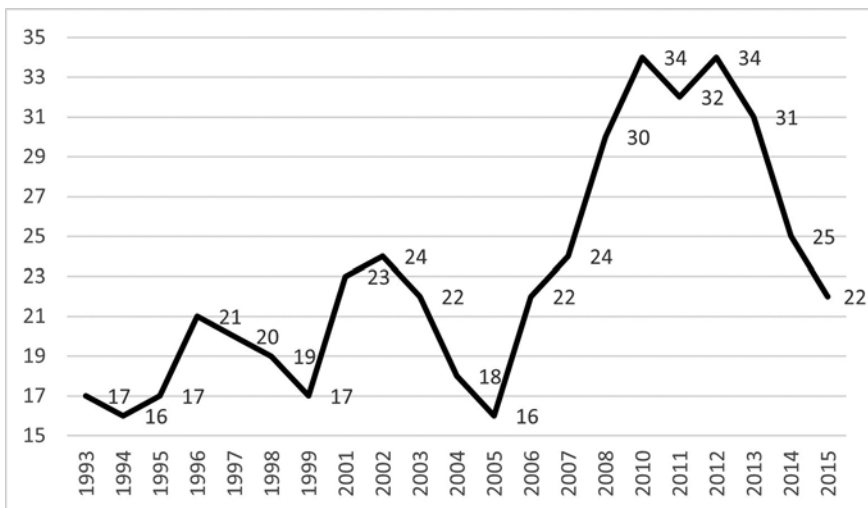


Fig. 9.1 Changes in friendly attitudes to the Russians

Source: Own study based on data contained in: Omyła-Rudzka, Małgorzata

(2015b). "Stosunek do innych narodów." *Komunikat z badań CBOS* 14.

<https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2015/K_014_15.PDF> (December 15, 2019).

1 All of the CBOS reports presented in the article were obtained by means of face-to-face computer-assisted interviews (CAPI), on representative random samples of adult citizens of Poland, with the number of respondents varying from 936 to 1040.

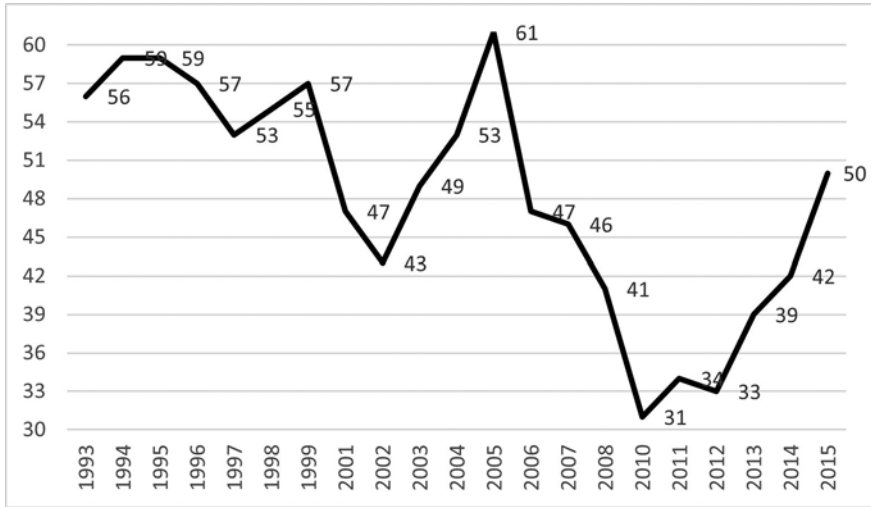


Fig. 9.2 Changes in dislike for the Russians

Source: Own study based on data contained in: Omyła-Rudzka, Małgorzata (2015b). "Stosunek do innych narodów." *Komunikat z badań CBOS* 14.

<https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2015/K_014_15.PDF> (December 15, 2019).

The results of the research conducted in 2014 showed that the escalation of the conflict also caused the respondents to increase their sense of threat to Poland's security (see: Table 9.1) and concerns about a disturbance of the Pan-European order (71 per cent) and generally about the world peace (52 per cent) (Kowalczyk, 2014, 2).

CBOS research conducted over a dozen of years also allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the assessment of Polish-Russian relations in the long term. The comparison of results from the period 2000-2014 shows that Poles most often rated Polish-Russian relations as "neither good nor bad." At the same time, they much more often rated them as bad rather than good (see: Table 9.2). The exceptions were February 2002 and May 2010. In the first case, the improvement in the assessment of Polish-Russian relations was associated with the visit of President Vladimir Putin to Poland and the so-called rapprochement between the Russian Federation and the West as a consequence of which "Poles' fears of Russia's aspiration to regain domination in our region have diminished" (Strzeszewski, 2002, 4). In the other situation, the change of views resulted from the initially positive assessment of the reaction and actions of the Russian authorities just after the plane crash in Smolensk, in which Polish President Lech Kaczyński with his wife and representatives of the most important state organs and political elites were killed.

Table 9.1 Sense of threat to Poland's security

Do you think the situation in Ukraine threatens Poland's security or not?	Respondents' answers according to research dates																	
	II		III		IV		V		VI		VIII		IX		X		XI	
	2014		2014		2014		2014		2014		2014		2014		2014		2014	
	In per cent																	
Definitely yes	5	30	28	72	15	61	14	52	9	49	28	78	29	78	19	67	19	69
Rather yes	25		44		46		38		40		50		49		48		50	
Rather not	50	60	22	24	27	33	32	39	36	42	14	16	17	19	24	28	24	25
Definitely not	10		2		6		7		6		2		2		4		1	
Hard to say	10		4		6		9		9		6		3		5		6	

Source: Omyła-Rudzka, Małgorzata (2014). "Poczucie zagrożenia i zainteresowanie sytuacją na Ukrainie." *Komunikat z badań CBOS* 164. <http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2014/K_164_14.PDF> (December 15, 2019).

Table 9.2 Assessment of Polish-Russian relations in the years 2000-2014

How do you assess current Polish-Russian relations? Are they:	Indications of respondents according to research dates																			
	'00		'02		'05		'06		'07		'08		'09		'10		'11		'14	
	I	II	IV	II	IV	VI	XII	XII	VI	IV	IX	IX	III	V	IX	II	V			
	In per cent																			
good	7	3	2	19	6	3	3	2	2	12	5	4	8	29	19	12	3			
neither good nor bad	67	53	47	66	55	33	41	24	37	56	36	51	50	52	46	43	27			
bad	17	37	40	9	31	57	51	63	54	27	56	40	38	15	28	42	65			
hard to say	9	7	10	6	8	7	5	11	7	5	4	5	4	4	7	3	5			

Source: Badora, Barbara (2014). "Polacy o stosunkach polsko-rosyjskich i polityce wschodniej Polski." *Komunikat z badań CBOS* 77. <https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2014/K_077_14.PDF> (December 15, 2019).

Considering the fact that public opinion in the field of international relations is shaped primarily by media coverage, it should be noted that the special role of the media in informing about relations between states at the international level was already defined in 1956 at the 9th General Conference of UNESCO in New Delhi. The resolution adopted there called for the use of media in cooperation between nations and states and mutual understanding, as well as to reduce international tensions and maintain peace (*Records*, 1956, 28-31). It should be noted that in practice

Knowledge of a foreign nation accumulates as a result of specific activities of institutions, different organizational structures established for the above purpose (so-called institutional forms of influence) as well as spontaneously, during direct contacts between people (so-called interpersonal interaction). This division into two types of international communication is particularly evident when we ask about the tasks and goals of the information activity of the broadcaster (Olędzki, 1998, 26).

Therefore, the residents of border areas are in particular situations as they can, to some extent, verify media reports on a regular basis (institutional forms of influence), comparing them with experiences resulting from their direct contacts with neighbours from 'immediate abroad' (interpersonal interaction). Knowledge resulting from direct contacts also allows them to react to such phenomena as operating stereotypes about 'neighbours' (Golka, 2008, 173-176) and to determine their own attitude towards the actual quality of cooperation at the level of cross-border contacts. Jerzy Olędzki also notes that with regard to international communication

Institutional forms of communication have the task of providing opinions, which are accomplished by means of broadcast information. A specific purpose, in the case of government bodies, is most often initiating and supporting benevolent opinions and creating a positive image of the country, which in turn promotes the development of international economic, cultural, and technical cooperation. [...] In turn, non-governmental media participate in the international flow of information, pursuing their own statutory goals, e.g. the promotion of particular religions, ideology, adverts of various products, music programmes or information materials on request of a foreign recipient (Olędzki 1998, 26).

In the case of cross-border cooperation, this is a relevant duty of regional media. These media, being close to the inhabitants of the region, assess the

quality of relationships within the co-operation and cross-border contacts. It is based on their activity and experience.

In the Warmia and Mazury Region – ‘Gazeta Olsztyńska’ (newspaper), TVP Olsztyn (TV station) and Radio Olsztyn (radio station) are the major media providing knowledge about the developments in the region, including the cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region. It should be noted, however, that TVP Olsztyn and Radio Olsztyn as public media have a statutory duty to “accurately show the entire diversity of events and phenomena in the country and abroad” (Law, Art. 21, Paragraph 2(2)). Therefore, the media carry out tasks assigned to the institutional forms of communication, insofar as it is described by the legislator.

In addition, they are also obliged to make airtime available to ethnic and national minorities living in the territory of Poland, during which the minorities can broadcast programmes in their native languages on issues relevant to the ethnic or national community (Law, Art. 21, Paragraph 1a(8a)). Fulfilling this task, Radio Olsztyn provides its airtime to the Ukrainian ethnic minority (titled ‘Programmes in Ukrainian’), and to German ethnic minority (titled ‘Programmes in German’), while TVP Olsztyn broadcasts a programme titled ‘Ukrainian news’.

In contrast, ‘Gazeta Olsztyńska’, as a commercial medium, selects its topics depending on their attractiveness for readers, which ultimately results in the sales volume of the daily. Indeed, there are no statutory duties imposed on commercial media which concern the presentation of international issues. Their information and opinion-making function in this area depends on the decisions of the owners and editors of particular journals, who focus primarily on the implementation of their own statutory objectives.

But what unites ‘Gazeta Olsztyńska’ and TVP Olsztyn is that both media focus in their communications concerning relations with the Kaliningrad Region mainly on individual, current events, which primarily concern the following issues:

- the situation on the border between Poland and the enclave (including the military situation);
- issues related to the Local Border Traffic;
- official contacts between the representatives of the regional authorities as well as academic, social, and artistic communities (Sakson, 1995, 301-304; Maciejewska, 2004, 59-65; Maciejewska, 2008, 209-216; Szurmiński, 2007, 104-119).

However, in the context of the issues related to the Kaliningrad Region, special attention should be paid to the materials of Radio Olsztyn which used to present the relations with the enclave not only in the context of one-off reports on

events related to cross-border cooperation in broadcasts such as 'Echoes of the day' or 'Morning questions', but mainly in the series of broadcasts titled '*Shto u vas*' [How are you doing?].

3. Analysis of the Research

'*Shto u vas*' was a weekly commentary on current issues concerning Kaliningrad and the Kaliningrad Region. The programme started in the Autumn of 2005 and had a formula of conversations between Leszek Cimoch, a journalist and Tadeusz Baryła, an expert of *Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. Wojciecha Kętrzyńskiego* in the Olsztyn Research Centre. Its target group were listeners aged 30+. Originally, the programme was broadcast on Saturdays at about 7:30, it lasted an average of three minutes and was dedicated to one specific theme or event. From 15th February 2014, the programme became one of the four parts of the magazine 'Between East and West', which was broadcast on Saturdays around 13:15 and lasted about 40 minutes. The section on the situation in the Kaliningrad Region retained a formula from the period when it had been a separate radio programme. The magazine itself raised issues regarding both Poland's relations with its neighbours and the situation in those countries. Extending the scope of presented issues concerning international relations by Radio Olsztyn resulted from the suggestion of the National Council of Radio and Television. The new formula, increasing airtime and changing the broadcasting time from morning to afternoon suggested that the broadcaster would like to reach a wider audience with international issues than was the case in the previous years. In light of the above, it is surprising that the broadcasting of the magazine was terminated in 2016.

This analysis covers the research programmes in the series '*Shto u vas*' issued from 2008 to 8th February 2014. There were 253 pieces of the cycle, and the total time of their emission was 14 h 7 min. In 2014, the analysis included only those programmes that were broadcast before the appearance of the magazine 'Between East and West'.

Quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted on a sample of the content of the whole. A categorizing key was used as a research tool. The research unit adopted was all programmes broadcast within one year. A registration unit was a single programme and turnout was used as a unit of measurement (Lisowska-Magdziarz, 2004, 54, 59, 66). The number of broadcasts and the time of their emissions each year are presented in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 Number and emission time of the '*Shto u vas*' programme in 2008-2014

Year of issue	Number of programmes	Total time
2008	38	1 h 49 min.
2009	42	2 h 16 min.
2010	39	1 h 55 min.
2011	45	2 h 24 min.
2012	44	2 h 23 min.
2013	41	3 h 41 min.
2014	4	14 min.

Source: Author's own calculations based on data obtained from the Polish Radio Olsztyn.

Problems discussed in the '*Shto u vas*' can be divided into the following categories:

- Political events;
- The military situation;
- The cross-border cooperation (visas and border traffic);
- The standard of living of the Kaliningrad Region inhabitants;
- Crime and corruption;
- Tourism and sightseeing;
- Anniversaries, holidays and celebrations;
- Other.

The quantitative analysis showed that the subjects most often undertaken in the test interval were the living standards of the inhabitants of the enclave, political events, cross-border cooperation and tourism, sightseeing.

Noteworthy is the fact that over the research period not much attention was paid to the military situation in the Kaliningrad Region. This theme held only the third position among the most commonly undertaken issues, and it took place only in 2008 and 2009.

It is also worth noting that in 2013, the 'Other' category was the third among the most commonly tackled issues the topic of which in a given year was undertaken only once. In 2013, there were six such programmes, and they raised the following issues:

- summary of the events of 2012;
- analysis of the possibility of obtaining by Kaliningrad a billion dollars' worth donation of private collections of works of art;

- discussion about amber output in 2012;
- presenting the situation of Polish ethnic organizations in Kaliningrad;
- analysis of plans to build a nuclear power plant in the enclave and of reduction of its power in relation to the original design;
- discussion about plans to build a mosque in Kaliningrad and related problems.

The summary of the most common issues undertaken each year is shown in Table 9.4.

Table 9.4 Summary of the three most common themes undertaken by the 'Shto u vas' programme in 2008-2014

Year of issue	I	II	III
2008	standard of living of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region (9 programmes)	political events (7 programmes)	military situation (6 programmes)
2009	standard of living of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region (10 programmes)	political events (9 programmes)	military situation (5 programmes)
2010	standard of living of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region (14 programmes)	cross-border cooperation (7 programmes)	political events (4 programmes)
2011	political events (14 programmes)	cross-border cooperation, tourism and sightseeing (after 7 programmes)	standard of living and crime level (after 5 programmes)
2012	tourism and sightseeing (11 programmes)	political events (9 programmes)	cross-border cooperation (7 programmes)
2013	standard of living of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region (12 programmes)	cross-border cooperation (9 programmes)	others (6 programmes)

Table 9.4 Summary of the three most common themes (*cont.*)

Year of issue	I	II	III
2014	cross-border cooperation (2 programmes)	standard of living of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Regions, anniversaries, holidays and celebrations (after 1 programme)	-----

Source: Author's own calculations based on data obtained from the Polish Radio Olsztyn.

In the context of other thematic categories, the following issues were raised, *inter alia*, over the period considered:

1. Political events:
 - the visit of Prime Minister Donald Tusk in Moscow in 2008 and its possible influence on the Polish-Russian cross-border cooperation;
 - the situation in the Kaliningrad Region and Russia before and shortly after the presidential elections in Russia in 2008;
 - the influence of election results on the relations between Russia and Europe (2008);
 - a change in electoral rules for the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region (in 2009);
 - the elections on federal, regional and municipal levels in 2011;
 - the administration personnel changes and the evaluation of the Kaliningrad authorities' activities.
2. The military situation:
 - the reaction of the Kaliningrad Region authorities to the plan of deployment of the missile defence system in Poland;
 - the presence of nuclear ships in Baltiysk;
 - the announcement of the deployment of Iskander missiles in the enclave, and the construction of military radar in response to the missile defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic (2008);
 - the military reform in Russia and the enclave;
 - the reform of the Baltic Fleet;
 - the importance of military exercises called 'Zapad 2009', organized in the Kaliningrad Region.

3. The cross-border cooperation (visas and border traffic):
 - the negotiations on the Local Border Traffic regimes between Poland, Lithuania, and Russia (2008);
 - the cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region within Euroregion Baltic during the Polish presidency in the organization;
 - the issue of visas and implementation of the Local Border Traffic regime in the Kaliningrad Region (e.g. a joint action of Polish and Russian Ministers of Foreign Affairs in the UE on behalf of the Local Border Traffic in the enclave);
 - the issue of introducing the Local Border Traffic and the situation at border crossing points (2011);
 - the Local Border Traffic, which took effect in July 2012 and topics related to it (e.g. rules for the Local Border Traffic, the opening of the visa centre in Kaliningrad, and new rules for issuing visas at the consulate in Kaliningrad (2012).
4. The standard of living of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region:
 - the economic and financial situation of the inhabitants (e.g. rising prices of food products, salaries);
 - the quality of tap water;
 - the replacement of the gas supplier to the enclave;
 - plans for building nuclear plants;
 - a difficult demographic situation (2008);
 - the economic and financial crisis (e.g. demonstrations which took place in Kaliningrad and Chernyakhovsk);
 - the request of the governor of the enclave to the authorities of Russia for remission of taxes for those inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region who were behind with them (2010);
 - the comparison of wages.
5. Crime and corruption:
 - the problem of cigarette smuggling from Kaliningrad to the EU countries;
 - the clashes between criminal groups in Kaliningrad (2011);
 - trading with high positions in the state administration (2011).
6. Tourism and sightseeing:
 - monuments, history and traditions in Kaliningrad, Svetlogorsk, Zelenogradsk, Pionersky Yantarny, as well as the Curonian Spit Circuit and District Moose;
 - possible problems tourists and visitors may face while visiting the Kaliningrad Region.

7. Anniversaries, holidays, and celebrations:
 - Christmas holidays;
 - Russian fans at Euro 2012 matches;
 - celebrations of the Kaliningrad Days organised in Warsaw.
8. Other:
 - the fire of one of the largest factories in Kaliningrad;
 - excavation of amber deposits;
 - the monopoly of state-owned fisheries on fish catching.

4. Conclusions

While analysing the '*Shto u vas*' radio cycle it can be concluded that Leszek Cimoch and Tadeusz Baryła wanted to show the complicated reality of the Kaliningrad Region in an accessible way. Discussing the standards of living of the average inhabitants of Kaliningrad they portrayed citizens and their problems, which had been rooted both in the difficult economic situation as well as in the specific geopolitical location of the enclave. At the same time, by presenting the history of the region and its tourist attractions, the authors of the cycle encouraged listeners to visit the 'next door' neighbours, often facing the same problems as the inhabitants of Warmia and Mazury (e.g. unemployment or financial problems).

The series of broadcasts called '*Shto u vas*' actually 'lived the everyday life' of the residents of the Kaliningrad Region. For each planned broadcast, the hosts of the programmes carefully selected current topics which were not only up-to-date but which seemed to be very important for those people. The problem of relationship and cross-border cooperation between Russia and Poland did not receive any particular attention but appeared as one of many other issues discussed by L. Cimoch and T. Baryła. Generally, the emphasis was put on discussing the everyday reality in Kaliningrad and on the political impact on the situation in the Region, and as such, it referred to the relationships with the Warmia and Mazury Region.

Therefore, the '*Shto u vas*' series played an important role in the process of international communication between cross-border inhabitants. By introducing the reality of inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Regions to Polish listeners, the authors of the broadcast supported the process of understanding the culture, attitudes, and behaviour of the citizens of the enclave. Thanks to this broadcast, its creators gave feedback to the postulates contained in the UNESCO Resolution of 1956 regarding the use of media for cooperation between states

and nations. The fact that the postulate was fulfilled by the public medium means that institutional forms of influencing the inhabitants of the borderland were employed in order to create positive relations between the residents of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region regardless of the degree of tension on the Warsaw-Moscow line. Therefore, the main task of the broadcast was primarily to explain the causes and possible consequences of the discussed phenomena and events. Despite time restrictions (the duration of one episode was about three minutes), the hosts of the series tried to analyse events in a broader context, e.g. historical, social or political, depending on what aspect of the enclave was presented. In this perspective, the picture of the relations with Russia and the Russians obtained by the recipients of Radio Olsztyn was more in-depth than the information on the subject only from mainstream media broadcasts. Significantly, *'Shto u vas'* became the foundation for a magazine which expanded the coverage of relations with the countries neighbouring Poland.

For the residents and listeners of the Warmia and Mazury Region, it was also important that the content of the cycle *'Shto u vas'* was in many cases useful in dealing with the inhabitants of the enclave and for verifying their own experiences with the reality of their neighbours 'closely abroad'.

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The Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Russia – Political and Security Dimension

Wojciech Kotowicz

Abstract

On 21st December 2007, Poland became a member of the Schengen area, which resulted in the abolition of border controls with Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Lithuania. The Polish accession to the Schengen zone has transformed the northeastern and eastern Polish borders with Russia, Belarus and Ukraine into the eastern frontier of the European Union. The Polish accession to this zone also meant the introduction of uniform visa rules for Russia, the same which are used by other countries of the Union thus sealing the Polish border with its eastern neighbours. Therefore, control procedures have been modified and customs inspections have become tougher. It was feared that the introduction of the visa regime would cause a decrease in trade and tourism with the eastern neighbours, hinder contacts between local communities, and – in political terms – would cause the deterioration of relations with Russia. To overcome these problems, the EU has created a special policy on external borders and border regions. According to the EU, borders between countries should not be an obstacle to sustainable development and integration of border areas. The EU policy recognizes that in the border regions, both economic and socio-cultural rights are important factors for applying mitigating solutions or even abolishing the visa regime. In order to accomplish this, the EU has drawn up a local border mobility system, the so-called Local Border Traffic.

Keywords: Kaliningrad Region, Russia, Poland, Local Border Traffic, cross-border cooperation

At the turn of the twentieth and twenty first century, foreign policy must have taken into account the challenges connected with the processes of globalization and international integration. The task of setting priorities, implementing appropriate methods and measures and achieving chosen goals hinges upon numerous internal as well as external factors. However, the politics of a state depends mostly on geopolitical changes influencing that particular country.

Foreign policy of the modern European countries has to additionally take into consideration the character of the EU whose most prominent characteristic is the fact that decisions regarding external policies of the member states take place on two levels, namely supranational and national. Poland, which is a member state of the EU, has limited sovereignty as far as making decisions about its political relations with other countries (and obviously with Russia) is concerned.

After Poland's joining the EU structures in 2004, the terms of Poland's relations with the Russian Federation and its organs have been conditioned not only by the reciprocal agreements between the two countries but also by the treaties signed by the EU and Russia. Such a legal system also pertains to cross-border cooperation between the northeastern regions of Poland and the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast). As far as Poland is concerned one of the priorities of the international and cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region is the collaboration with the Kaliningrad Region. So far, the legal footing of the cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region has been determined by intergovernmental arrangements, agreements on forming Euroregions as well as agreements between regional and local authorities (Kotowicz, 2012, 215).

In the framework of Poland's admission to the EU the issue of visas for the Russians was a vital one. The consultation on regularizing this issue commenced in March 2000. Both sides of the negotiations concurred that the visas ought to be multiple-entry ones and they ought to be inexpensive. 1st October 2003 was set as the date of introducing the visas. On that day Poland denounced visa-free travel over the border between Poland and Russia.

The implementation of the new rules concerning visas significantly influenced the cooperation on the borderland. There appeared additional formalities on the border which occasioned the situation that in the first year of the visa system being in force there occurred a major diminution of the arrivals in Poland.

Polish authorities perceived it as important that the collaboration with the eastern neighbour in the new international and legal framework did not lead to the isolation of the Kaliningrad Region from the northeastern regions of Poland. Consequently, the EU fostered Lithuania, Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of Russian Federation Neighbourhood Programme (INTERREG III A/TACIS) which was in force in the years 2004-2006. The means from the European Regional Development Fund which were obtained by the Warmia and Mazury Region (Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship) amounted to EUR 4.8 million which constituted 14 per cent of the countries' funds. As far as the money is concerned, about EUR 1.6 million were designated for the projects concerning the development of tourism and tourism infrastructure

as well as places of historical interest which have trans-border importance. Over EUR 1 million were designated for works on the state border such as the infrastructure in Elbląg harbour. The rest of the funds was committed to the projects dealing with the protection of the environment (*Regionalny Program*, 2012, 55).

After 1st May 2004, the most significant role in the cross-border cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Russian Kaliningrad Region has been played by the Euroregion "Baltic" (apart from the contribution of the new "Szeszupa" and "Łyna-Lawa" Euroregion). It was created in order to particularly intensify the cooperation from bilateral to multilateral.

In recent years, the Lithuania-Poland-Russia ENPI Cross-border Cooperation Programme has been a vital project boosting the collaboration of the Warmia and Mazury Region with the Kaliningrad Region. Its aim consists in enhancing the contacts between Poland, Russia and Lithuania through bipartite and tripartite cooperation. The specific objectives are fostering of social and economic development in both countries, interoperability aiming at elaborating attitudes on common challenges and problems as well as supporting interpersonal contacts. The programme has been offering support for social and economic development and has been pursuing the objectives of improving living conditions for the inhabitants of the region. During the implementation of this programme within the years 2013-2020, more than 60 projects have been completed, with EUR 100 million allocated in them. In December 2016, the Polish-Russian Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 was launched, with a budget of more than EUR 62 million. The support funds tasks related to the protection of cultural heritage, environmental protection, accessibility and management of border crossings (*8 grudnia w Gdańsku*).

A new stage in the relations of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region was marked by the implementation of laws specifying the Local Border Traffic.

According to the Lisbon Treaty, one of the main objectives of the EU is providing its citizens with freedom, safety and justice without internal frontiers (Treaty of Lisbon). As far as external relations are concerned, free movement of persons, goods, capital are considered as one of the greatest achievements of the European Community. One also has to bear in mind that it is vital for the EU that the borders with neighbouring countries be no barriers for commerce, social interactions, cultural exchange or regional cooperation (Fieduciuk, 2009, 37).

This objective is accomplished through implementing by the EU special policies for external borders and cross-border regions (Szymański, 2009, 76). The borders between the countries ought not to pose obstacles to development or integration of cross-border regions (Trojanowska-Strzęboszewska, 2011, 119).

The regions situated along the external land borders of the EU are deemed to have the most adverse conditions where problems typical of cross-border regions are exacerbated by the closure of the borders for almost half a century and by a considerable difference in economic development between the EU countries and the countries beyond its borders. These problems were particularly identified after Austria and Finland's accession to the EU. Due to this enlargement, the eastern borders of the EU almost coincided with the Iron Curtain. The enlargement of the EU in 2004 also highlighted problems of the eastern borders, especially disparities in economic and social development of cross-border regions (Trojanowska-Strzęboszewska, 2011, 122). It had considerable relevance for the eastern border of Poland, which until 1991 had generally been a sealed one, responsible for the social and economic alienation of the cross-border region (Dołzbłasz, Raczyk, 2011, 66).

The level of development of the regions bordering the EU was lower than the average of all EU regions. The insufficient infrastructure (transport, energy supply, waste management) is considered as the most pernicious factor for integrating the borderland regions. This factor is noticeable beyond the EU and it translates into considerably lower rates of income *per capita*, GDP as well as productivity (Trojanowska-Strzęboszewska, 2011, 123). Thus, in order to overcome these disparities a special role was given to the cross-border cooperation of these regions.

For the EU, the main goal of cross-border cooperation are the matters of solving mutual problems in cross-border regions such as poor accessibility to information technology, weak local industry, insufficient business infrastructure, lack of links between local and regional levels of administration, low level of research and innovation, environmental pollution, negative attitude of the citizens of the neighbouring countries as well as unsatisfying job market integration and cooperation between educational institutions (*Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013*).

Eliminating barriers in mutual relations is vital for cross-border areas since their residents traditionally rely highly on local border trade. The EU policy acknowledges economic, social and cultural issues as well as import and premises for reducing or eliminating visa requirements. Consequently, the EU implemented special rules for the Local Border Traffic, otherwise called the 'small border traffic' (Doliwa-Klepacka, 2011, 147).

According to these rules, the residents of the border areas are entitled to travel across the land border of the neighbouring country on condition that:

- a) they obtain a permit for crossing the border according to the rules of the Local Border Traffic if it is needed by bilateral agreement under article 13 and possess a travel document;

- b) they are not persons who are enlisted in the Schengen Information System for the purposes of their entry refusal;
- c) they do not pose a threat to the public order, internal security, public health and international relations of any of the member states (*Regulation (EC) No. 1931/2006*).

One has to emphasize that Poland, being the country with the longest external border in the EU with non-member states, has been interested in developing relations owing to the Local Border Traffic and its representatives have participated in the preparation concerning the said facility (Fieduciuk, 2009, 38). Similar agreements have been signed so far:

- between Hungary and Ukraine (December 2007);
- between Slovakia and Ukraine (May 2008);
- between Poland and Ukraine (March 2008);
- between Romania and Moldova (November 2009);
- between Poland and Belarus (February 2010);
- between Latvia and Belarus (August 2010);
- between Lithuania and Belarus (October 2010);
- between Russia and Norway (November 2010);
- between Latvia and Russia (December 2010);
- between Poland and Russia (December 2011) (*Communication from the Commission*).

In 2011, the European Commission reviewed the process of implementation and operation of the rules concerning the Local Border Traffic and concluded that the agreements lived up to the expectations since they facilitated trade and mutual relations. There were few cases of malpractice. The said Commission also stated that there was a proper relation between the implemented facilitations and the issue of safety in the Schengen area (*Report from the Commission*).

On 20th December 2006, the European Parliament and the EU Council adopted a regulation laying down the rules for the Local Border Traffic systems on the external land borders of the Member States (*Regulation (EC) No 1931/2006*) which allows derogating, for persons living in a border area, from the general rules on border checks set out in the Schengen Borders Code (*Regulation (EC) No. 562/2006*).

The term Local Border Traffic should be understood as a crossing of the external land border by borderland residents in order to stay in the border area for social, cultural or substantiated economic reasons, or for family reasons for a period not exceeding the time limits laid down in this Regulation (*Regulation (EC) No. 1931/2006*). The Local Border Traffic, understood as the possibility of frequent and regular crossing of a state border by the people living in the borderline area of a neighbouring country, was known and used in international

law already within the interwar period (Zdanowicz, 2013, 77). The term Local Border Traffic which also referred to local border mobility, particularly in the first documents of the European Community dealing with the issue in question, was not subject to the regulations of the Community law until the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 1931/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20th December 2006 laying down provisions of the Local Border Traffic regulations at the external land borders of the Member States and amending the provisions of the Schengen Convention.

The main purpose of the Local Border Traffic is to prevent the emergence of barriers to trade, social and cultural interchange or regional cooperation with neighbours; it refers both to physical and mental contacts between borderland communities (Gruszczak, 2005, 13). In implementing the Local Border Traffic regime, the Member States in question may conclude bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries (beyond the Schengen Agreement) aimed at addressing specific needs in relation to their respective neighbours, as these needs vary because of different local, geographical, social and economic situations. These agreements should be in line with the Local Border Traffic principles, laid down in the EU regulation.

By introducing criteria and conditions to be complied with when the crossing an external land border under the Local Border Traffic regime meaning easier rules for border residents, the EU had to strike a balance between facilitating border crossing for border residents acting in good faith, having legitimate reasons for frequent external land border crossing, on one hand, and the need to prevent illegal immigration and threats to security posed by criminal activities, on the other (*Wniosek*).

The agreement on the Local Border Traffic was concluded at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of Poland and Russia; respectively Radosław Sikorski and Sergey Lavrov. The meeting was held on 14th December 2011. According to the statements of both parties, the arrangement constituted a significant milestone in the relations between the two countries and enabled a further opening up for the cooperation of the Kaliningrad Region with the EU in the future (Żołądek, 2013, 3). It was decided that the borderland would include the whole area of the Kaliningrad Region and the same size area in Poland, i.e. the Pomeranian Region (Voivodeship) with the cities of Gdynia, Gdańsk, Sopot and adjacent counties (poviats): Puck, Gdańsk, Nowy Dwór, Malbork; as well as the Warmia and Mazury Region cities: Elbląg and Olsztyn along with the counties of Elbląg, Braniewo, Lidzbark, Bartoszyce, Olsztyn, Kętrzyn, Mrągowo, Węgorzewo, Giżycko, Gołdap, Olecko. The terms of the Local Border Traffic applied to 2 million people in Poland and 940,000 people in the Kaliningrad Region.

The regulations of the agreement pertained to the whole Kaliningrad Region which is an exemption from the customary practice considering a borderland an area from 30 to 50 km off the border. The agreement entered into force on 27th July 2012. The inhabitants of the borderland wanting to travel more freely were able to obtain special multiple exit and re-entry permits (Subocz, Sternicka-Kowalska, 2015, 54).

The agreement on the Local Border Traffic facilitated direct local commercial, tourist and other people-to-people contacts. The immediate result of the implementation of the Local Border Traffic regulations was the increase of trade flows over the borderland. The introduction of this agreement was regarded as an outstanding achievement (Żęgota, 2013, 75). On 11th May, 2013 R. Sikorski stated:

Thanks to the Russian customers [...] the turnover in our shops in the region which is included in the terms of the agreement has increased by 30 per cent [...]. It strengthens our determination to eliminate the barriers in the human traffic and to re-establish visa-free movement with all our neighbours including the Russian Federation (Giziński, 2013).

In turn, S. Lavrov evaluated the agreement as a positive one. He said that the free-visa travel of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region and Polish inhabitants of the borderland did not pose any problems (Wojciechowski, Belza, 2011).

It ought to be noted that there were no serious violations of the rules of the Local Border Traffic. Since the moment of issuing of the permissions for crossing the border there had been an increase in the human mobility and it reached the level of neighbourhood travelling before Poland's entering the Schengen Zone.

This agreement was based on existing institutional infrastructure, namely on provisions of the Treaty between the Republic of Poland the Russian Federation on Friendly and Good Neighbourly Cooperation of 22nd May 1992. Both contracting parties declared that they wished to promote and strengthen good-neighbourly relations between the two countries, as well as economic, commercial, technical, cultural and other fields of cooperation, thereby supporting the development of contacts between the inhabitants within the border region (Żukowski, 2013, 56). Successful negotiations on the local cross-border movement were deemed by the authorities of the two countries as great success in bilateral relations after Poland's becoming the member of the EU.

Under the terms of the agreement, the permits were issued on the basis of a valid travel document and a certificate of permanent residence in the border area for at least three years (Polish or Russian Citizenship not required). Social,

cultural, family and other substantiated economic considerations were a good cause to cross the border (Art. 3). As a rule, the authorized stay in the border area of the other country may take up to 30 days after crossing the border, but no longer than 90 days in total during every 6 months from the date of the first border crossing. The first permit is issued for two years, and the next one for 5 years (Art. 4). It should also be noted that the Local Border Traffic applies only to travels on land. In the Kaliningrad/EU case, it is worth noting that the Local Border Traffic greatly eased the regular crossings of the external land border of the EU by borderland residents. It was noted that the number of people crossing the Polish-Russian border was in an increase. Since the introduction of the agreement on the said Local Border Traffic, the Border Guards had recorded dynamic growth of crossings between Poland and Russia.

The introduction of the Local Border Traffic was undoubtedly an important element in facilitating border crossings, which significantly contributed to the development in the border zone. It should be emphasized that the Local Border Traffic with Kaliningrad was a success both in economic and social terms. Poland benefited more on the agreement, not only because of the revival of trade, but also – thanks to well-prepared accommodation facilities – on the increase of intensity of tourist traffic from Russia. Nevertheless, the Russian side also noted benefits such as boosting people-to-people contacts, an overall increase in the number of joint projects received by NGOs, local governments or universities, closer cooperation between border services and the expansion of the infrastructure at crossing points.

During the implementation of this programme within the years 2013-2020, more than 60 projects were completed, with EUR 100 million allocated in the projects. In December 2016, the Polish-Russian Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2014-2020 was launched, with a budget of more than EUR 62 million. The support will involve tasks related to the protection of cultural heritage, environmental protection, accessibility and management of border crossings.

The Local Border Traffic understood as the possibility of frequent and regular crossing of a state border by the people living in the borderline area of a neighbouring country, was known and used in international law already within the interwar period. Particularly in the first documents of the European Community dealing with the issue in question, Local Border Traffic, was not subject to the regulations of Community law until the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 1931/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20th December 2006 laying down provisions of the Local Border Traffic at the external land borders of the Member States thus amending the provisions of the Schengen Convention.

According to experts, the Local Border Traffic provided a number of measurable benefits for the inhabitants of the borderline area, related to the intensification of social, cultural, tourist and economic contacts, and this solution also expanded the possibilities for supporting the tourist functions of northern Poland (Żęgota, 2014, 223). Other researchers have even claimed that the Local Border Traffic opened a new chapter in the formation of cross-border connections in this part of Baltic Europe (Anisiewicz, Palmowski, 2016, 23). They pointed out that the number of trips initially referred to as shopping tourism, increased significantly, trips aimed at leisure or participation in cultural, sporting and other events were observed more frequently, and these activities fuelled the local economy. Equally important – it was added – a growing number of contacts resulted in increasing openness of local communities inhabiting both sides of the border. According to Russian researchers, the Local Border Traffic was to be the way to fully lift restrictions on travelling from Russia to Poland (Kretinin, Mironyuk, 2014, 36).

It is worth adding that the inhabitants of both border regions did not raise any objections regarding the presence of the Russians in Poland. Travellers from Kaliningrad were perceived

as well-educated guests, normally behaving in a shop, restaurant or hotel, and different opinions appeared sporadically and concerned the behaviour of a particular individual rather than the whole group (Wenerski, Kaźmierkiewicz, 2013, 34).

The overall assessment of the social impact of the introduction of the Local Border Traffic was also optimistic. The apparent neutrality and normality in Polish-Russian relations was seen as a great achievement and a good basis for working for the future. It was noticed that the reconciliation of both nations and the approach of the Russians to the values and standards of the European Union began on the Polish-Russian border.

The same opinion was expressed by representatives of the authorities of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region, diplomats, local government officials and local entrepreneurs who, at a conference summing up the functioning of the Local Border Traffic, stated that it operated well and fulfilled its primary role, i.e. enabled getting to know each other and bringing citizens of both countries closer to each other (Grabowski, 2014). The assessment of the Local Border Traffic impact was so positive that it evoked intentions to extend the system over all counties (poviats) of the Warmia and Mazury Region and it was planned to launch a sea border crossing point in Elbląg,

as well as a railway crossing along the new Olsztyn-Kaliningrad railway line. Nikolay Tsukanov, Governor of the Kaliningrad Region, stated then that the need to maintain the Local Border Traffic was evidenced by the fact that the number of people using this facility increased every year, reaching 6-7 million border crossings. The said border mobility was – said N. Tsukanow – “a positive example that we want to show in order to eventually lead to visa-free travelling between Russia and the European Union. This is our future” (Grabowski, 2014).

The decision of the Polish Government to suspend the Local Border Traffic was a big surprise for both the inhabitants of the two areas and the border authorities. On 1st July 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that due to the Summit of the North Atlantic Alliance to be held in Warsaw on 8-9th July 2016 and the World Youth Day in Krakow (20th-31st July 2016), Poland decided that on 4th July they would suspend the application of Art. 5 sec. 1 of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on the principles of the Local Border Traffic, signed in Moscow on 14th December, 2011 in the part concerning the entry and stay on the territory of the Republic of Poland of the inhabitants of the border zone of the Russian Federation, authorized by the competent authorities of the Republic of Poland (Grabowski, 2016a). A day later, on 2nd July 2016, Russia announced the suspension of the Local Border Traffic on their part (*Czasowe zawieszenie*). The Consulate General of Russia in Gdańsk informed that in connection with the decision of the authorities of the Republic of Poland, starting with 4th July 2016, the citizens of the Russian Federation were temporarily refraining from crossing the Russian-Polish border on the basis of permits issued as part of the Local Border Traffic regulations. Analogous temporary restrictions were introduced by Russia against the citizens of the Republic of Poland – the announcement said. A spokesman for the Warmia and Mazury Border Guard Unit, Mirosław Aleksandrowicz explained that the decision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not close the border traffic with the Russian Federation, and the citizens of the Russian Federation would be able to enter the territory of Poland after 4th July if they had a visa (Grabowski, 2016b).

Explaining the reasons for the discontinuation of the Local Border Traffic with Russia, Mariusz Błaszczak, Minister of the Interior and Administration explained that this decision “is based on strong premises”, adding at the same time that “for obvious reasons it is impossible to disclose the details of the activities of the Polish services responsible for Poland’s security”. He noted, however, that this decision was dictated by national security and the need to ensure security Europe-wide resulting from the fact that the Polish border with the Kaliningrad Region was both the external border of the EU and the

Schengen Area (Błaszczak, 2016, 11). Among the threats constituting the cause for concern, minister M. Błaszczak mentioned the occupation of Crimea and the protracted conflict in Donbass as well as the recent provocations in the Baltic states and Poland which lowered Poland's security standards. According to M. Błaszczak, after the suspension of the Local Border Traffic, similar provocations would no longer be possible. He also pointed out that in the strongly militarized Kaliningrad Region the authorities had recently been replaced, where the governor was a person strongly associated with President Vladimir Putin.

On 6th September 2016, Sebastian Chwałek, Deputy Secretary of State in the Ministry of the Interior and Administration explained that the Government's decision had reduced the threat associated with the possible arrival of risk posing individuals in Poland. There was a more effective monitoring of the flow of people, which prevented the influx of unwanted persons without hindering the movement of well-intentioned travellers based on visa traffic (*Odpowiedź na interpelację*). S. Chwałek emphasized that the information gathered by Polish services pointed to the existence of threats to security and actions which could result in destabilization in Poland. An example of the above, according to S. Chwałek, would be the actions taken by Russia in Ukraine before the annexation of Crimea and an attempt to destabilize the situation in the Baltic countries. S. Chwałek stated that the available information indicated the intensification of such a threat. The Ministry of the Interior and Administration also noted that, given the degree of militarization of the Kaliningrad Region, the Government of the Republic of Poland 'will take all necessary actions in the area to secure state borders, taking into account all security considerations.'

In its assumption, the implementation of the Local Border Traffic agreement was to improve cross-border relations. Therefore, the suspension of this form of traffic was a big surprise for both Russia and the community inhabiting the Polish-Russian border. It seemed that the arguments raised by the Polish authorities relating to the security of the state were so important from the point of view of Poland's national interests that it is difficult at the moment to talk about the chances of restoring the Local Border Traffic with Russia. Recent statements by representatives of the Polish Government have indicated that the Kaliningrad Region was currently a threat to Poland's security. It is worth recalling here the words of Sebastian Chwałek, Deputy Secretary of State at the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, who said:

The negative phenomena that have recently intensified include, above all, the growing militarization of the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast), which is accompanied by the process of settling the necessary military

personnel in this area, and increased activity of special services and other force departments (Groń, 2017, 4).

As S. Chwałek added that in addition to militarization, “attention should be paid to possible actions, including intelligence, cyber attacks and economic pressure” (Groń, 2017, 4).

In the face of this perception of the Kaliningrad Region, it is hard to expect that a return to Local Border Traffic would be possible.

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Paradiplomacy Between Polish Regions and the Kaliningrad Region

Wojciech T. Modzelewski

Abstract

Foreign activity (paradiplomacy) of local governments is one of the elements of Polish foreign policy, changing the traditional approach to foreign policy and diplomacy in our country. Paradiplomacy is an activity that is parallel and complementary to the classic understanding of diplomacy and which is implemented by the government. This paper presents the results of several investigations concerning foreign activity of Polish local and regional governments in the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast). From the geopolitical point of view, the Oblast constitutes for Poland an important region. In particular, the intensive cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodeship) and the Kaliningrad Region which form the Polish-Russian borderland. Relatively intense relations have been established between the Kaliningrad Region and Pomeranian and Podlaskie Regions (Voivodeships). For the Polish side, the development of this type of relations with Russia, and especially with the Kaliningrad Region, was and still is part of a peaceful transformation of this part of Europe.

Keywords: paradiplomacy, partnership agreements, Polish-Russian borderland, Warmia and Mazury Region, Kaliningrad Region

1. Introduction

Modern international relations are characterised by several levels on which states operate, as well as the multiplicity and diversity of participants other than states themselves. As a consequence, various levels of analysis have to be considered to discuss international relations at present.

Modern states are multivocal actors. In the world of interdependencies, such a polyphony is a result of the international mixing with the national. This has led to the situation in which organisational units of states are perceived internationally as independent subjects and they are increasingly active on

the international scale (Duchacek, 1984, 5-31). Territorial units (regions, communes or cities) which start cooperating with foreign partners are counted among the so-called subnational participants of international relations. Their cooperation is realised in line with conditions established by internal laws and international agreements; to a certain extent it is controlled by the authorities of the relevant states; however, it is not an automatic extension of their foreign policy. Local and regional authorities have a considerable amount of freedom, which makes it possible to treat them as participants of international life independent of the states within which they act (Popiuk-Rysińska, 2006, 86-106).

International cooperation of regional and local territorial units is more and more often referred to as paradiplomacy. It is divided into cross-border cooperation and interregional cooperation. The first type refers to neighbourly relations, while the second one encompasses units which do not have a common border. Paradiplomacy should also be considered from the point of view of the creation of qualitatively new international relations, decentralization of international relations and diplomacy, and the growing role of non-state actors in international life. To describe the symbiosis of state activity and non-state actors, Brian Hocking uses the phrase 'catalytic diplomacy' proving that both groups use their resources, thereby strengthening their potential (Hocking, 1999, 37). Therefore, two dimensions of contemporary international relations can be distinguished: the inter-state and non-state. Paradiplomacy co-creates the latter and creates a parallel structure of international relations. The international role of territorial governments is particularly visible on the forum of the European Union, and paradiplomacy is an example of diversifying relations on the European scene and the concept of multi-level relations (see: Hooghe, Marks, 2001; Stubbs, 2003; Dickson, 2014).

Paradiplomacy of the Polish self-government units started in the 1990s and since then it has become a permanent social element of Poland's international activity and its foreign policy, complementing the traditional diplomacy. It played an especially positive role in the integration process between Poland and the European Union, and after the Polish accession to the EU in 2004 it was actuated and gained new importance. As the matters falling within the responsibility of self-government became more international and as they got incorporated in the multilevel system of government, regional and local authorities can at present exercise influence not only on intra-national matters but also – to a certain extent – on the state's foreign policy. This is especially visible in the European Union, where territorial units try to have impact on the European decision processes, e.g. through the European Committee of the

Regions or conducting their own lobbying activities through regional offices in Brussels.

The origin of the right to cooperate with local and regional communities of other countries and the right to establish international associations which local governments enjoy can be seen in international multilateral agreements (such as the European Outline Convention of Transfrontier Cooperation, ratified by Poland), international bilateral agreements (such agreements were signed by Poland with all its neighbouring countries), as well as Polish internal law. Political conditions of paradiplomacy are worth noting as they are especially important in contacts with the Russian partners (Modzelewski, 2006).

The legal basis for the cooperation between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast) on the local and regional level comprises primarily three agreements: the Treaty on Friendly and Good Neighbourly Relations between the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation, the Agreement on the Cooperation of Poland's Northeastern Provinces and the Kaliningrad Oblast (Russian Federation) concluded by the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation (both documents signed on 22nd May 1992), and the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cross-border Cooperation of 2nd October 1992. Considering the existence of the common border, one needs to mention here also the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on Border Crossings of 22nd May 1992, whereby four road and three train border crossing points were provided.

The Polish-Russian cross-border and interregional cooperation (paradiplomacy) maintained on everyday basis had preceded the establishment of any institutional framework for its existence and had been characterised by an energetic grassroots development of mutual contacts. The first documents signed between Poland and its partners from the Kaliningrad Region included: the Protocol of Cooperation between the Kaliningrad Oblast and the Elbląg Voivodeship – concluded by the Elbląg Voivode (Voivodeship Governor) and the Deputy-Governor of the Oblast in October 1990 as well as the Protocol of Intent on Cooperation of the Kaliningrad Oblast, the Elbląg Voivodeship and the Blekinge Province of June 1991. In November 1991, the Agreement on Cooperation between the Olsztyn Voivode and the Chairman of Administration of the Kaliningrad Region was concluded. Similar agreements with the Region's administration were signed by the voivodes of the then current Voivodeships: Szczecin (1991), Elbląg (1992), Suwałki (1992) and Gdańsk (1992). Moreover, in 1997 the Regional Council of the Olsztyn Voivodeship (Region) signed two

agreements with the Kaliningrad Region: a bilateral and a trilateral one, the latter including partners from Kommunförbundet Halland in Sweden. The partners declared their will to develop cooperation in fields related to local democracy, economy, ecology, education, science and culture, which was to be achieved through sharing skills and experience, organising workshops and seminars, and establishing committees and working groups.

2. Cross-Border Cooperation

The Warmia and Mazury Region, since its establishment in 1999, has become the main partner in contacts with the Kaliningrad Region. The two entities entered cross-border cooperation which is defined as neighbourly cooperation conducted across the border within the adjacent cross-border regions constituting a common borderland (Modzelewski, 2015, 5-24). Such cooperation is one of the elements of the regional development policy executed by the Voivodeship Self-Government. The present development strategy of the Warmia and Mazury Region embraced in 2013, encompasses an assumption that cooperation with the countries and regions within the Baltic zone constitutes an important impulse in the overall development of the region. Among all the partners, the Kaliningrad Region occupies a unique position as it is the closest neighbour of the Voivodeship (*Uchwała nr XXVIII/553/13*). The Voivodeship Government has an important task of providing the right conditions and functioning as an intermediary for other self-government units when it comes to establishing international contacts. These steps should be taken in line with the priorities of the foreign policy of the Voivodeship, passed by the regional assembly [first in 1999, with subsequent amendments in 2002, 2006, 2009, and 2014 (*Załącznik nr 1 do Rezolucji*)]. In every version of the resolution, the Russian enclave neighbourhood was referred to as a significant developmental impulse for the region. In every version there is also a statement that the foreign policy of the Voivodeship is conditioned first of all by the neighbourhood of the Kaliningrad Region and chances thereof.

Implementing the set priorities, the Voivodeship Marshal signed an agreement with the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region in September 2001, followed by another one concluded by the chairman of the Voivodeship Assembly and the chairman of the Regional Duma in April 2002. In September 2002, the Voivode signed a letter of intent on trilateral cooperation, including a Danish county of Bornholm.

The Voivodeship Government promotes all contacts with the Kaliningrad Region, also those in the sphere of economy through such activities as

supporting the entrepreneurs willing to enter Kaliningrad's market. They can receive all the necessary information and patronage of fairs, conferences, trainings and business trips. Initiatives facilitating the development of regional and cross-border tourism are also supported. When it comes to the social and cultural undertakings, a few dozen events are organised each year. These are festivals, open air artistic workshops, city festivals, and other cross-border projects. Among the biggest events, the Days of the Kaliningrad Region festival organised in the Warmia and Mazury Region must be mentioned, and the Days of the Warmia and Mazury Region festival organised in the Kaliningrad Region. Some of the events are held on a regular basis, permanently shaping the Polish-Russian relations in the borderland. These are for instance the International Cycling Race for the Cup of Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad or the International Łyna-Lava Canoeing Rally.

The cooperation of Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region became more dynamic as a result of the implemented system of the Local Border Traffic (LBT) in July 2012, following the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on the Rules of the Local Border Traffic of 14th December 2011. This agreement granted the privilege of the Local Border Traffic to all the citizens of the Kaliningrad Region and some of the citizens of the Warmia and Mazury Region and Pomerania Region (15 counties as well as the Tricity: Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot; Olsztyn and Elbląg). Since its implementation, the border traffic had been considerably growing: in 2012 it was 4.7 million people (while a year before only 2.3 million), in 2013 it exceeded 6 million, in 2014 likewise (*Ruch osób* 2014). In 2012, the Polish partner issued 12.5 thousand permits entitling people to cross the border in line with the rules of the Local Border Traffic (the LBT cards). In 2013, the number of permits was over 184 thousand, in 2014 – 53 thousand (<http://www.kaliningrad.msz.gov.pl>). Also the nature of the cross-border cooperation changed. The Polish part of borderland, due to its pretty landscapes and attractive prices, among other factors was more often visited by Russians who came to visit, stay in hotels, use various forms of entertainment, as well as do shopping in shopping centres and shops close to the border. For instance Braniewo, with its 17 thousand citizens, has a few discount chain shops in which Russians used to be the majority of customers (Wenerski, Kaźmierkiewicz, 2013, 10-12). In July 2016, the Local Border Traffic was suspended by the Polish side for security reasons (reducing illegal cross-border trade at the same time). Since then, the border traffic has slumped: in 2017 it was 3.9 million people, in 2018 – 3.6 million (<http://www.wm.strazgraniczna.pl>). The downward trend was not even stopped by the organization of four matches of the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Kaliningrad.

At the local level, most of the counties (poviats) in the Warmia and Mazury Region have established some contacts with the partners in the Region, with 8 counties having signed partnership agreements. The Bartoszyce County signed an agreement with Bagrationovsk, Giżycko with Nesterov, Kętrzyn with Pravdinsk and Oktiabrsk, Lidzbark Warmiński with Bagrationovsk, Ostróda with Pravdinsk, Węgorzewo with Chernyakhovsk, Ozyorsk and Pravdinsk. For many years Polish municipalities have been cooperating with their Russian partners: Olsztyn with Kaliningrad (since 1993), Elbląg with Baltiysk and Kaliningrad (since 1994).

When it comes to the number of Russian partners, the Węgorzewo County is a record holder. The range of cooperation encompasses: tourism (exchange of information about the local accommodation, cycling races, walking tours, International Canoeing Rally on the Sapina and the Węgorapa rivers), culture (artistic exchanges, exhibitions, sharing experience in the field of cultural heritage protection), and education (holiday youth exchanges with language courses). Russian guests take part in regular events co-organised by the Museum of Folk Culture in Węgorzewo, such as International Folklore Fair, the Węgorzewo Rally or the Days of Węgorzewo Festival. The County authorities in cooperation with the Commune of Węgorzewo shape the ongoing programmes, initiate new enterprises and provide financial and organisational support (<http://www.powiatwegorzewski.pl>).

At the commune level in the Warmia and Mazury Region, there are Euroregional contacts (“Bałtyk,” “Niemen,” “Łyna-Lava”) and cooperation not based on formal agreements. It is worth emphasising that beneficiaries from both sides of the border have to apply for the funding if the project is to be funded by the EU, which often constitutes a reason to undertake an *ad hoc* cooperation. This pertains to Małdyty and Ozyorsk, Biskupiec Pomorski, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and Pionersky, Ostróda and Nieman, Gusev and Ozyorsk. Besides, 16 communes signed agreements with their partners in the Kaliningrad Region: Banie Mazurskie – Ozyorsk, Barciany – Zheleznodorozhny, Bartoszyce – Pionersky and Bagrationovsk, Braniewo – Zelenogradsk, Frombork – Svetly, Gołdap – Gusev, Górowo Iławeckie – Bagrationovsk, Kętrzyn – Svetly, Kowale Oleckie – Krasnoznamensk, Lidzbark Warmiński – Sovetsk, Miłakowo – Slavsk, Miłomłyn – Ozyorsk, Olecko – Gusev, Olsztynek – Polessk, Sępólno – Pravdinsk, Węgorzewo – Chernyakhovsk.

The fact that Bartoszyce is located less than 20 km from the major border crossing point in Bezledy naturally facilitates cooperation with the Russian counterparts. The town’s partner towns are its closest neighbours: Pionersky and Bagrationovsk, with Ozyorsk cooperating with Bartoszyce informally. The town focuses on culture-related projects which are regularly developed during

the International Days of the Bartoszyce Region festival, Borderland Fairs, folk festivals and sports tournaments. It is worth adding that apart from the direct contacts exercised at the level of the city authorities, there are also those established at lower levels, e.g. by the Municipal Social Aid Centre, the local lower secondary school or the Bartoszyce Culture Centre. New areas of cross-border cooperation are sought to involve local businesses, hospitals and non-governmental organisations.

All border counties and communes cooperate with the Russian partners, and those which do not keep in contact with the Kaliningrad Region are located in the southern part of the Warmia and Mazury Region. Olsztyn and Elbląg are the most active – these are the entities with the greatest potential as well as Bartoszyce, Gołdap and Węgorzewo – the closest to the border. Thus, it is clear that the cooperation is determined by geographical vicinity and financial abilities of the partners. Moreover, personal involvement of self-government representatives also plays an important role when it comes to the intensity of the contacts. Majority of the cross-border undertakings are related to the policy of local development and refer to common projects, mainly in the social and cultural sphere. The important fields of cooperation include lobbying for the establishment of new border crossings, such as Perły – Krylovo (the Węgorzewo Commune and County), Michałkowo – Zheleznodorozhny (Barciany Commune, Kętrzyn County), Rapa – Ozyorsk (Banie Mazurskie Commune, Gołdap County), Stopki – Ostre Bardo on the Łyna River (Sępopol Commune, Bartoszyce County), Piaski – Baltiysk on the Vistula Spit (Krynica Morska Commune, Nowy Dwór County) and Głębock – Kornyevo (Lelkowo Commune, Braniewo County).

3. Interregional Cooperation

Relatively intense relations have been established between the Kaliningrad Region and its neighbourly Polish regions (Voivodeships): Podlaskie and Pomorskie (Pomeranian – with the national border on the Vistula Spit). Occasional contacts with the Russian partners are undertaken by the Podlaskie Voivode (Governor), who signed a Letter of Intent with the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region in April 2003 with a view to strengthen and develop good-neighbourly relations. The government of Podlaskie Region cooperates with the Russians from time to time without any partnership agreements, although a plan for cooperation for the years 2008-2009 was concluded. Interestingly, the priorities of international cooperation of the Podlaskie Region included two Russian regions: Kaliningrad and Kursk (*Uchwała nr XXXVII/480/06*). The

Pomeranian Region (Voivodeship) has been cooperating with the Kaliningrad Region since its establishment, continuing the contacts of the former Gdańsk Region (Voivodeship). The resolution by the Pomeranian Region assembly on the priorities of foreign cooperation, put this Russian region as one of the main directions of the activity in the Baltic Sea area. Consequently, the chairman of the assembly and the Marshal signed agreements with the Russian regional administration in 2002. This provided a basis for institutional cooperation of both regions, among others, in the sphere of training self-government clerks, exchange of information on legal regulations concerning entrepreneurship, trade, tourism and maritime economy. Other fields of cooperation include multilateral organisations, such as the Union of the Baltic Cities and the Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Cooperation Conference (Gdańsk).

The West Pomeranian Region (Voivodeship), continuing a long-term cooperation started by the Szczecin Voivode in 2004 signed an agreement with the Kaliningrad Region administration, and in 2007 an agreement was also signed by the representative of the Voivodeship Assembly and Regional Duma. Since 2009, the Marshal of the West Pomeranian Region has been a member of the Polish-Russian Council for Cooperation between Regions of the Republic of Poland and the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation. Apart from formal relations, a few Polish regions have been maintaining occasional contacts with partners from Kaliningrad, e.g. the former Łódź Region (Voivodeship) and the Lublin Region (Voivodeship).

It is worth pointing out that in order to develop the cooperation at the level of regions, the 1st Forum of Regions Poland-Russia was organised in Moscow in September 2009 under the patronage of the Senate of the Republic of Poland and the Federation Council of the Russian Federation. The discussions included the issue of terms and conditions of the cooperation and opportunities for its development. Particular regions presented their offers. The following meetings took place alternatively in Poland (2nd in Warsaw, 4th in Tomaszowice) and in Russia (3rd in Skolkovo n. Moscow, 5th – so far the last – in 2013 in Nizhny Novgorod). The 6th Forum of Regions Poland-Russia in Gdańsk planned for 2014 did not take place (Poland cancelled it) due to the international situation and tension in the Russian-Ukrainian relationships.

Apart from the cities of Warmia and Mazury, the list of Kaliningrad's twin cities includes: Białystok, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Łódź, Racibórz, Starogard Gdański, Toruń and Zabrze. Bełchatów and Kutno signed partnership agreements with Sovetsk, Brzeg Dolny and Grudziądz with Chernyakhovsk, Goleniów with Guryevsk, Krynica Morska with Baltiysk, Łeba with Zelenogradsk, Nysa with Baltiysk, Pabianice with Gusev, and Świnoujście with Svetly. Contacts not based

on formal regulations have also been established between the Kaliningrad Region and Ruda Śląska, Środa Śląska, Szczecin and Nowy Sącz Counties (see: Modzelewski, 2017).

4. Conclusions

The intensity of paradiplomacy between Polish regions and the Kaliningrad Region results primarily from the geographic location. For the local governments functioning in the closest vicinity of the border, cooperation with Russian partners is natural; the further from the border we move, the less interest in this cooperation there is. Furthermore, mutual relations are determined by the Polish membership in the European Union and the character of the Polish-Russian border pursuant to this, including formal and legal conditions to cross the border (the visa system, Local Border Traffic permits). From the perspective of the regional development, it is a priority for the self-governments to use the available funds devoted to cross-border projects.

The cooperation is dominated by socio-cultural and economic projects, including tourism. Territorial governments use paradiplomacy for promotion to support the development of their regions and increase their attractiveness and economic competitiveness. An equally important long-term goal of paradiplomacy is to enable the communities living in cooperating regions to get to know one another and to strengthen bonds between them. Such an assumption pertains also to the Polish-Russian contacts which are particularly difficult politically; however, the cooperation of local governments as well as human relationships are truly satisfying.

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Cooperation Between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region and its Perspectives

Lukasz Bielewski

Abstract

This paper is devoted to the cooperation linking the Warmia and Mazury Region (Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship) in Poland and the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast) in Russia. The main aim is to show it from a practical point of view, namely through actual documents, initiatives and actions initiated and implemented in bilateral contacts.

The paper begins by looking at strategic documents (intergovernmental, interregional) which establish the framework for collaborations. Several forms of political cooperation are also described: both those initiated by regional authorities and those governed by state bodies with the participations of regions. It is also shown how some of them have been influenced by international situation and the Polish-Russian political crisis. Then it concentrates on selected areas of cooperation with some examples of common events and tools dedicated to support Polish-Russian initiatives. In this context special attention is given to the sector of tourism. This text also considers how the introduction of the Local Border Traffic changed the reality of cross-border cooperation. It also shows the meaning of the Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme as a very concrete tool fostering bilateral relations. Lastly, in its final part the text points out a few issues worth monitoring in the coming months since they may have impact on Polish-Russian interregional cooperations.

Keywords: Warmia and Mazury Region, Kaliningrad Region, Local Border Traffic, cross-border cooperation

1. Introduction

The Polish-Russian border is a space in which interregional, intermunicipal and cross-border collaborations have emerged over the past years. Therefore, the

cooperation linking the Warmia and Mazury Region (Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship) and the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast) is a phenomenon worth observing since not only does it (to some extent) reflect current Polish-Russian bilateral relations, but it may be a great example of what can be achieved on the European Union external border as well.

2. Strategic Documents

As far as the intergovernmental level is concerned, fundamental documents regulate the cross-border cooperation: the Treaty on Friendly and Good Neighbourly Relations between the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation and the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation of the northeastern Voivodships in Poland and Kaliningrad Oblast, were signed on 22nd May 1992 and created new space for common local initiatives. They were then followed by the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on cross-border cooperation on 2nd October 1992. These legal acts played a significant role in establishing cross-border cooperation, but a ground-breaking decision was yet to be made. The signing of the Polish-Russian Local Border Traffic Agreement on 14th December 2011 introduced a completely new reality for the borderland.

Important documents can be found at the regional level as well¹. On 19th September 2001, the Agreement on Cooperation between the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship and the Kaliningrad Oblast was concluded and indicated a strategic framework for common initiatives. This Agreement was accompanied by the Action Plan drafted for a period of two or three years to identify concrete Polish-Russian undertakings and partners involved in their implementation. The currently binding Action Plan is for the years 2017-2019². Additionally, a separate Action Plan exists for the area of tourism.

The neighbourhood surrounding the Kaliningrad Region is also taken into account in terms of strategic regional management. For example, the Strategy of Socio-Economic Development of the Warmia and Mazury Region until 2025 mentions Kaliningrad a number of times underlining “certain hopes related

1 I refer to activities run by the Warmia and Mazury Region's authorities (the Region was formed in 1999) while I do not describe the previously existing Olsztynskie Voivodship which also cooperated with the Russian partner.

2 It was signed on 15th December 2016 in Kaliningrad on the occasion of the third seminar “Economic Cooperation of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region – Warmia and Mazury: traditions and new opportunities for cooperation”.

to the Local Border Traffic” or seeing the Russian region as a commercial hub between China and Russia and EU (*Strategia rozwoju*, 27, 32). Similarly, major cities in the Warmia and Mazury Region such as Olsztyn, Elbląg and Elk also see the proximity of Kaliningrad as an opportunity and this is confirmed in their strategic documents.

Moreover, the Polish-Russian context is visible in another highly important regional document, the Priorities of the International Cooperation of the Warmia and Mazury Region³. It names the Kaliningrad Region an “important and natural” partner and indicates this neighbourhood and especially the Local Border Traffic as factors for economic development and for good neighbourly relations (*Priorytety współpracy*, 4).

3. Political Cooperation

Before describing the forms of political cooperation involving both Regions, one must start with specifying the international context and the state of play of the Poland-Russia relations. First of all, the hybrid war against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 led to the EU imposing sanctions on Russia and to, generally speaking, the cooling of the relations. The new Polish Government, formed in November 2015 by the conservative Law and Justice party (PiS), confirmed the support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the EU sanctions policy. Then, the same Government presented the idea of the excavation of the navigable canal through the Vistula Spit, intended to open a new waterway independent of Russia’s goodwill⁴. The process of the militarization of the Kaliningrad Region, with the deployment of new types of weaponry and different military exercises, was another factor affecting the political climate. Finally, in summer 2016 the Polish Government unilaterally decided to suspend the Local Border Traffic between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region raising security reasons.

Therefore, it should not be surprising that the Russian Ambassador in Warsaw, Sergei Andreyev, more than once judged the Polish-Russian relations as the worst since the Second World War. As for the ministers of foreign affairs,

3 It is a compulsory document passed by the Regional Parliament (Sejmik Województwa). It must be consistent with the principles of foreign policy of Poland and presents the main aims and geographical directions of the international cooperation for the Region as well as its plans to join international regional associations. The currently binding document entered into force on 18th July 2019.

4 This question is described in a complex manner in the report published recently by the Centre for Eastern Studies (Fortress Kaliningrad. Ever closer to Moscow, 2019, 52-55).

Jacek Czaputowicz of Poland met with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on the occasion of the 129th session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Helsinki in May 2019. It was the first meeting of Polish and Russian foreign ministers in five years.

The above-sketched geopolitical situation and its results for the bilateral relations between Poland and Russia have also had an impact on the cooperation at local and regional levels. However, it is still to be noted that there are a couple of forms of political cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region which have been continued on different platforms. Some of those platforms are the result of a bottom-up approach and have been initiated by regional authorities, the other are governed by state institutions to which both Regions have been invited.

The flagship initiative co-organised by the two Regions was⁵ a huge exhibition held in Poland one year (the Days of the Kaliningrad Region festival in the Warmia and Mazury Region) and in Russia the following one (the Days of the Warmia and Mazury Region festival in the Kaliningrad Region). Usually taking place in Spring, it covered different areas of mutual interest gathering different actors from both countries. Among the numerous elements, there were always cultural initiatives, local business-oriented B2B meetings, sports events and science sessions. Furthermore, these activities were not limited to main cities (Olsztyn, Kaliningrad), as the Days events were spread throughout the territory.

An important element of the Days event agenda was the meeting of the heads of the two regions. Such official talks usually covered a limited number of current and long-term questions and helped to discuss common interests. Not only representatives of the executive office (Marshal, Governor) were present, but chairpersons of the regional parliaments (Sejmik, Duma) and Polish and Russian diplomats gathered at the table as well.

It must be underlined that the regional parliaments also collaborate in different contexts. Firstly, their committees responsible for international cooperation remain in contact and for a long period have held joint meetings every year. Secondly, both Sejmik and Duma are members of the Forum of the Regional Parliaments of the South Baltic⁶. In 2014, the Kaliningrad Regional Duma for the first time hosted the annual assembly.

As far as the Baltic Sea Region is concerned, both the Warmia and Mazury and the Kaliningrad Regions were among the founders of the Euroregion

5 Its last edition was organized by the Warmia and Mazury Region in May 2014.

6 The Forum gathers partners from Poland, Russia and Germany.

“Baltic”. This structure covers regions in Poland, Denmark, Sweden, Lithuania and the Russian Federation which collaborate to promote sustainable development around the Baltic Sea. It is the first Euroregion officially involving the Russian partner.

Another official meeting held regularly is the Kaliningrad Forum of Partner Regions. Each year it offers space for thematic meetings of experts and best practices exchange. The Warmia and Mazury Region always actively participates in the event.

In addition to regionally animated political initiatives, there are other inspired by the state bodies. The Forum of the Regions Poland – Russia was established by upper chambers of both parliaments, the Senate of the Republic of Poland and the Council of the Federation. Its first edition was organised in Moscow in 2009 and in the following years it engaged numerous politicians and experts from Polish and Russian regions offering space for bilateral discussions. Different Polish and Russian cities hosted this cyclical meeting on various topics and the Warmia and Mazury Region representatives always participated. Such a promising situation changed in 2014 when the 5th Forum planned in Gdańsk was cancelled due to Russian military involvement against Ukraine.

Another Polish-Russian body managed by the central authorities is the Polish-Russian Council for Cooperation of the Regions of the Republic of Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. The Council is co-chaired, as well as its committees which work on different issues vital for both parties. Joint work refers, for instance, to infrastructure, agriculture or culture and education and are summed up during the annual sitting held in turns in Poland and in Russia. Although it is supposed to gather yearly, the last meeting of the Council took place in October 2016 in Olsztyn.

To make this “political” picture complete, it must be mentioned that both the Warmia and Mazury and the Kaliningrad Regions collaborate also with diplomatic representations. In this context, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad and the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Gdańsk remain key partners.

4. Chosen Areas of Cooperation

Although official political contacts are indispensable for bilateral relations, people-to-people meetings play an important role as well. Therefore, regional administration supports local initiatives using different tools. For instance,

each year in the the Warmia and Mazury Region an open call of interest is announced for non-governmental organisations which may apply for grants. Such a call embraces various areas ranging from environment, health, culture and education to European integration and international cooperation. Local Polish-Russian events always make up a noticeable number of all applications and some of them are chosen to be co-financed. What is more, regional authorities want to assist in creating common space for NGOs from Poland and Russia, thus contact-making meetings and forums are organised. Another mechanism fostering international projects is a regional programme launched in 2018 and addressed to local entities (i.e. communes and districts) from the Warmia and Mazury Region willing to collaborate with foreign partners. For many of them, a partner from the Kaliningrad Region is a natural choice.

Alongside the above mentioned general tools dedicated to strengthening people-to-people contacts, certain local events, many with long-standing traditions, obtain support from regional authorities. For example, every May the bike rally on the Kętrzyn-Pravdinsk route gathers a few dozens of participants from both countries. Obviously, other youth exchanges or sports projects can count on regional support as well.

Tourism is a field of cooperation that involves a significant number of subjects on both sides of the border. Taking into consideration the Warmia and Mazury Region landscape, one cannot doubt how strategic this sector is for the regional economy. Local and regional authorities together with business partners have been striving to make the Polish-Russian borderlands fruitful in terms of tourism development. The introduction of the Local Border Traffic naturally opened a new window of opportunity.

The launch of the LBT has also revealed the enormous flexibility of the services sector (hotels, retail chains, restaurants), which promptly adjusted to Kaliningrad customers, introducing Russian-language services and signage. The Russian language even was added to road signs in Warمیńsko-Mazurskie and Pomorskie Voievodships [...]. Other welcome outcomes have included the greater intensity of trade contacts (such as study visits by hoteliers and restaurateurs); expansion of recreational facilities, especially in Warمیńsko-Mazurskie and tighter cooperation among local self-government administrations (again, especially in Warمیńsko-Mazurskie), most notably in transport and tourist infrastructure. One example here is the establishment of the Mazurskie Tourist Cluster where a major goal is to exchange information about the Russian market. Local governments also coordinate their activities with respect to future projects such as the construction of a biking route along

the northern counties (poviats) of Warmińsko-Mazurskie (Dudzińska, Dyner, 2013, 4).

Furthermore, to attract Russian tourists various initiatives are undertaken by tourist organisations in cooperation with the industry representatives (e.g. hotels and restaurants), often with the support of a professional PR agency. The most popular ones are combined product and image promoting campaigns on Russian radio and television as well as happenings organised in the centre of Kaliningrad (Wenerski, Kaźmierkiewicz, 2013, 7).

The above mentioned actions have often been inspired or supported by the regional administration both from the Warmia and Mazury and the Kaliningrad Regions. In practical terms, it embraces such forms of cooperation as participation in various fairs and presentations (e.g. International Jantur Tourism Fair in Kaliningrad, Russian tour operators' visits to Warmia and Mazury), promotion of local tourist agencies' initiatives or creation of products for trans-frontier tourists. However, although there are reasons for satisfaction, there is still much to be done to boost tourism across the Polish-Russian border⁷.

A separate category of actors contributing to bilateral cooperation are various regional institutions working together in their specialised areas. The Voivodship Labour Office in Olsztyn and the Agency of Employment in the Kaliningrad Region hold cyclical seminars. Some joint initiatives are shared by regional hospitals as they organize seminars or technical meetings, however bilateral EU projects can also be noticed in this case. Culture is another area of cooperation. Regional entities such as theatres in Elbląg and Olsztyn, the Warmia and Mazury Philharmonic Hall or the Folk Architecture Museum and Ethnographic Park in Olsztynek represent a good example of these contacts. Generally speaking, most regional institutions develop partnerships and projects in conjunction with their Russian counterparts.

5. Local Border Traffic. Will it Ever Come Back?

On 27th July 2012 when the Local Border Traffic (LBT) regulations entered into force, Polish-Russian regional cooperation gained a new dimension. The experts then noticed:

The agreement on the Local Border Traffic between Poland and Russia is not a typical one, as in its assumptions it goes beyond the standard

⁷ Some challenges for the Kaliningrad tourist sector are highlighted in: Wenerski, 2014, 9-10.

framework laid down in the Regulation of the European Parliament and the EU Council. The adopted solutions are more advantageous than in other agreements of this type, which made it possible to cover a much greater area with the regime. The above mentioned EU instrument defines border area as the area reaching not further than 30 km off the border or, in certain cases, not further than 50 km. Whereas the area covered by the LBT regime, both on the Polish and on the Russian side of the border goes far beyond these limits. (Wenerski, Kaźmierkiewicz, 2013, 4-5).

Experts were certain that this new cross-border regime had profound consequences and

[...] proved to be a success, both economically and socially. On the surface, it might appear that Poland has the upper hand, with higher retail sales and receipts from hotel and service establishments catering to increased inflows of Russian tourists. But benefits were seen by the Russian partners, too, in the form of more intense people-to-people contacts, higher numbers of joint NGO projects, closer border guard cooperation and expanded border-crossing infrastructure. (Dudzińska, Dyer, 2013, 5)⁸.

This phenomenon of the Polish-Russian borderland gained the attention of not only think tanks and their experts but international press as well: in October 2013 "The Economist" published an article describing various aspects of the LBT while in October 2016 "Deutsche Welle" broadcast a short reportage from the border zone.

In that period also political leaders from different levels expressed many opinions on the LBT. For example, in December 2013 Ministers of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski and Sergei Lavrov chaired the 8th meeting of the Committee for Polish-Russian Cooperation Strategy underscoring the Local Traffic Border Agreement's great success. Moreover, the LTB became a permanent point of the annual address by the minister of foreign affairs. In 2013, minister Sikorski stated in the Polish Parliament that, "The Local Border Traffic Agreement is working well, which enables the inhabitants of northern Poland and the Kaliningrad Oblast to get to know one another. Increasingly open borders also lead to notable economic benefits" (*Informacja*, 2013) while in 2014, "We are optimistic about both the social and economic success of the

⁸ According to other experts, the Local Border Traffic was "a tangible result" for Russia (Devyatkov, 2013, 9) or "important for Russia for a number of reasons" (Wenerski, 2014, 7).

Local Border Traffic with the Kaliningrad Oblast” (*Informacja*, 2014). Such a policy was continued by the next Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Grzegorz Schetyna, who – during a speech to Parliament – claimed in November 2014:

We believe that Polish-Russian relations can be good. We have positive examples to prove it, namely the Local Border Traffic with the Kaliningrad Oblast, which has yielded tangible economic and social benefits for both countries (*Informacja Rady Ministrów* 2014-2015).

Moreover, in his address in April 2015, minister Schetyna said:

We want to hold talks in the framework of the Polish-Russian Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation and Interregional Cooperation. We will develop cross-border cooperation with the Kaliningrad Oblast (*Informacja*, 2015).

On 8-9th July 2016, Poland hosted the NATO Summit in Warsaw while the World Youth Day took place from 26th to 31st July 2016 in Cracow. In this context the Polish Government decided to suspend temporarily the Local Border Traffic agreements with Russia and Ukraine on 4th July. Russia immediately responded in the same manner. On 3rd August Poland resumed the LBT with Ukraine whereas the Polish Government officials informed it would remain suspended on the border with the Kaliningrad Region. This decision was motivated by security reasons which, however, were not indicated very precisely.

Four years of the Local Border Traffic operation between Poland and Russia can be seen as a very fruitful period in terms of trade, people-to-people contacts and interregional cooperation. There is no doubt the LBT was a great impetus towards Polish-Russian collaboration and was well regarded by local citizens. Thus, it should come as no surprise there are still many people in the borderland hoping the Local Border Traffic will be reintroduced in the nearest future.

6. Poland-Russia CBC Programme: a Concrete Tool

Another dimension of cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region has been created thanks to the EU cross-border policies. The Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme for the programming period 2014-2020 is a mechanism that undoubtedly encourages Polish and Russian actors to work together on tackling concrete problems and

obtaining tangible results. It is the successor to The Lithuania-Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme that was successfully implemented between 2007 and 2013⁹.

As far as the Programme area is concerned, it covers the entire Kaliningrad Region and the entire Warmia and Mazury Region. Additionally, in Poland a part of the Podlaskie Region as well as a part of Pomorskie Region (Pomerania) also belong to the eligible area. Joint Technical Secretariat of the Programme has been located in Olsztyn while its Branch Office in Kaliningrad.

The Programme for the period 2014-2020 has set four priorities. First of them focuses on cooperating on historical, natural and cultural heritage for their preservation and cross-border development. Another one is cooperation for the clean natural environment in the cross-border area. Polish-Russian projects are also expected to work on sustainable cross-border transport and communication and to make the area covered by the Programme more accessible. Lastly, joint actions should improve border efficiency and security.

The total budget of the Programme amounts to EUR 62.3 million of which EUR 20.65 million comes from the European Regional Development Fund, another EUR 20.99 million from the European Neighbourhood Instrument whereas the Russian Federation contribution is EUR 20.65 million.

As stated before, the Programme creates extra opportunities for the cooperation and offers well tested tools, hence great interest observed among local and regional bodies. One of the most covered by the media on both sides of the border is the project managed by the Warmia and Mazury Regional Roads Authority. It has been implemented in the partnership with the administration of "Gusev city district" Municipality (Russia) and local administration from Bartoszyce (Poland). The project embraces the renovation of a number of streets and pavements in Gusev as well as the construction of the new route of the regional road no. 512 with the construction of a bridge over the Łyna River in Bartoszyce. The result of those remarkable infrastructure works will be the improvement of the access to the Bezledy-Bagratiionovsk border crossing point. Another example of a bilateral initiative that involves a regional entity from Warmia and Mazury is a project titled 'Olsztynek – Kaliningrad: from the common history to the future partnership' with the Kaliningrad Zoo as its leader and the Folk Architecture Museum and Ethnographic Park in Olsztynek as a partner. The project will allow certain infrastructure investments but also some educational activities. There is also one more project to be listed as an example, chiefly because it directly involves the Warmia and Mazury regional

9 More about the trilateral Programme and its implementation in: Mironyuk, Żegota, 2017, 122-123.

administration (precisely Department of Tourism). Led by Ministry for Tourism of the Kaliningrad Region and titled "CBCycle: Cross-border cycle routes for promotion and sustainable use of cultural heritage", it aims at building a cycle route on the Russian side of the border which then would be integrated with 'EuroVelo' cycle routes and improve the tourism attractiveness of that area.

As of the end of November 2019, there are no more calls for proposals planned as all the funds dedicated to bilateral undertakings have been contracted and the approved projects have been under implementation now. At the same time, expert and political discussions concerning the future of the Programme continue and, hopefully, they will lead to its new edition for the years 2021-2027.

7. Perspectives

The cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury and the Kaliningrad Regions is considered to be fruitful and beneficial for both parties. The role played by the regional administration to date has been vital in inspiring various forms of collaboration, engaging different local partners and maintaining official relations. However, this cooperation has been facing negative effects of the political crisis dividing the European Union and Russia and due to the cooling of official Polish-Russian relations.

The last years have shown that there are mechanisms that may facilitate and foster bilateral relations. The introduction of the Local Border Traffic gave a significant impetus for Polish-Russian border trade and people-to-people contacts. The Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme has been another proof of the potential and the willingness of local and regional subjects to engage in Polish-Russian initiatives. It should be considered a solid base for new forms of future cooperation once the political climate changes.

Furthermore, there are a couple of issues that should be followed in the coming months as they may have an impact on the framework and conditions of Polish-Russian interregional cooperation. Firstly, in July 2019 free electronic visas to visit the Kaliningrad Region were introduced and are available to citizens of 53 countries, including Poland. It seems it should open new possibilities for the tourism sector in both countries. Moreover, there are huge expectations that the Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme will be continued after 2020, therefore discussions at the European Commission level and between the two Governments must be monitored. What is more, the construction of the navigable canal through the Vistula Spit will still remain an extremely important issue for both Governments. All those questions and

their developments will have a crucial importance for both the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region.

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Cooperation of the Regional and Local Authorities of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region

Teresa Astramowicz-Leyk

Abstract

The aim of this study is to present and analyse forms of cooperation between local and regional self-government authorities of the Warmia and Mazury Region (Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship) and the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast) in the context of the European Union policies.

Keywords: regional cooperation, local self-government, Warmia and Mazury Region, Kaliningrad Region

1. Introduction

In this study, the cooperation of local and regional self-government authorities of the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodeship) and the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast) makes the objective of the research. For this purpose, it has been assumed that the term 'region', belonging to ambiguous terms, is understood as an area, land, part of a larger area (from the Latin *regio, regione*) and derives from the verbs 'to rule, to govern' (from the Latin *rego, regere*) (Kumaniecki, 2002, 365; Zasada, 2018, 16). In the social sciences, the term 'region' is understood as a territorial unit of the country's organizational structures, having administrative status with legally assigned tasks and borders (Zasada, 2018, 16-17). According to the definition adopted on 4th December 1996 by the Assembly of European Regions (Article 1), a region is

1. [...] the territorial body of public law established at the level immediately below that of the state and endowed with political self-government.
2. The region shall be recognized in the national constitution or in legislation which guarantees its autonomy, identity, powers and organisational structures (*Declaration 1996*).

In the following considerations, a region is considered as a territorial unit of a state with elected authority, defined boundaries, autonomous policies, legal personality and its own budget (Zasada, 2018, 17).

The term 'international cooperation' is also ambiguous. For the purposes of this study, a liberal approach has been adopted stating that the state is not the only participant in international relations, as non-state actors play an equally important role (Halizak, 2006, 239-241). The term 'international cooperation' in this study will mean any socio-economic activity that makes use of the border and cross-border location of local and regional self-governments, where each international cooperation is based on the conviction that every region, due to its location, must build an administrative capacity capable of handling international contacts (Szmigiel, 2004, 45; Zasada, 2018, 23).

Due to the decentralization of international cooperation in recent decades, the number of actors in international relations has increased (Buczowski and Żukowski, 2014, 13-51). There is also the term 'cross-border cooperation' (also referred to as 'trans-frontier cooperation') which in the European Framework Convention on Trans-frontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities and Authorities, drawn up by the Council of Europe on 21st May 1980, is understood as

[...] any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose. Trans-frontier co-operation shall take place in the framework of territorial communities' or authorities' powers as defined in domestic law (*European 1980*).

For the purpose of this study, the term cross-border cooperation is used as related to the maintenance of mutual relations between local and regional entities located at national borders (Zasada, 2018, 22).

Research on the cooperation between the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region is an important voice in the discussion on the forms, effects and barriers of international cooperation at the regional level. It is not only important from theoretical point of view but the conclusions from the research can be useful in political practice. Their possible use can influence the further development of international relations at the regional level.

The leading research method adopted for the purposes of this study is the institutional-legal method. The scientific experiments were accompanied by the following research hypothesis: the cross-border cooperation at the level of

the Warmia and Mazury Region and Kaliningrad Region is based on common interests and priorities aimed at the development of the Regions.

The basic research problems revolve around the questions: What were the objectives of the concluded cooperation agreements? Who was the initiator of them? What were the basic forms of cooperation? What was the role of the Regional Duma and the Regional Assembly? What is the role of cross-border cooperation of the said Regions in relation to the European Union policy? Are there any relations between the scope of the examined cooperation and the European Union policy?

2. The Diversity of Cooperation Forms

The cooperation between the self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region has a long tradition and is characterized by the richness of forms of undertaken activities (*Współpraca*, 1-184). Although the Marshal of the Region (Voivodeship) and the Marshal's Office on the Polish side and the Governor and his administration on the Russian side were understandably more active, the Warmia and Mazury Regional Parliament (*Sejmik*) and the Kaliningrad Region Parliament (*Duma*), also took joint actions.

The official cooperation of both administrative regions began on 19th September 2001 and was initiated by the "Agreement on Cooperation Between the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship Authority and the Kaliningrad Oblast Administration of the Russian Federation" concluded by the Marshal of the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodeship) Andrzej Ryński and the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region Vladimir Yegorov.

On 9th April 2002, the "Agreement on Cooperation Between the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region (Sejmik) and the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation" was concluded in Olsztyn. The agreement was signed by Miron Sycz, then Chairman of the Local Parliament, and Vladimir Nikitin, Chairman of the Duma.

The cooperation between the two Regions is very diversified, and its main areas include: culture and education, health, tourism and sport, youth exchange, social policy, environmental protection and ecology, rural areas and agriculture, as well as activities aimed at supporting Polish Diaspora communities living in the Kaliningrad Region. Numerous conferences, forums, seminars, meetings, debates, fairs and exhibitions have been organized within the framework of the cooperation and attempts have been made to revive economic cooperation.

Within the framework of the cooperation between the local governments of the two examined Regions, activities aimed at strengthening contacts in the area of science were also undertaken. The Wojciech Kętrzyński Research Centre in Olsztyn, with the financial support of the regional self-government, in 2003-2004 published a monthly magazine entitled "*Obwód Kaliningradzki. Przegląd faktów, wydarzeń, opinii*" ["Kaliningrad Region. Review of facts, events, opinions"]. It also published a selection of 1994-2004 documents entitled "*Obwód Kaliningradzki Federacji Rosyjskiej*" ["Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation"]. At the beginning of 2008, the Centre for Eastern Research started to operate within the Wojciech Kętrzyński Research Centre in Olsztyn¹. Its representatives, together with officials from the Marshal's Office, went on a study tour to Kaliningrad in May 2008 to renew contacts with their regional scientific institutions. As an instant result of this trip, the Centre for Eastern Research held a public discussion entitled "Kaliningrad through the eyes of Russian historians" in June. Professors of the I. Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad took part in the discussion. The science cooperation with partners from the Kaliningrad Region was developed by the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, especially the Institute of Political Science (see: Part Four of the book). An important stimulus for cooperation until 2016 was the Polish-Russian Council for the Cooperation of Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation (in Polish: *Polsko-Rosyjska Rada ds. Współpracy Regionów RP z Obwodem Kaliningradzkim FR*)².

A number of activities undertaken by the said institutions were attended by many groups representing the sectors mentioned above. Thus, the cooperation initiated by the self-government authorities had gone down to the lowest and most desirable level, i.e. inhabitants and entities created by them. It used to be attended by hospitals (including the International Medical and Cosmetology Fair), schools (including primary and secondary schools as well as high schools and post-secondary schools, and on the Polish side Teacher Training Centres [*Ośrodki Doskonalenia Nauczycieli*] in Olsztyn and Elbląg), cultural institutions including theatres, museums, libraries, philharmonic

1 The Wojciech Kętrzyński Research Centre in Olsztyn was transformed into the Wojciech Kętrzyński Northern Institute in Olsztyn in 2019.

2 This body was established in 1993 on the basis of an agreement (dated 22nd May 1992) between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation between the northeastern regions of Poland on one side and the Kaliningrad Region on the other. The Council meetings were held alternately in both countries. The Council has over a dozen thematic committees. In 2016 the activity of the Council was suspended.

halls, sports and tourism centres (canoeing events, study tours for journalists and tour operators, tourist fairs were organised, including the city of Olsztyn and Elbląg). International Tourist Fair “Yantur” in Kaliningrad, tourist forums, publication of the Map of the Local Border Traffic Area, creation of thematic tourist routes – among others: The Route of the Gothic Castles, The Route of Immanuel Kant, The Route of Napoleonic Army, The International Regatta for the Three Marshals’ Cup (Pomerania, Kaliningrad and Warmia and Mazury) in the Vistula Lagoon/Kaliningrad Lagoon, summaries of the sailing year – annual Grand Prix of the Vistula Lagoon, The International Motorcycle Rallies along the Olsztyn-Kaliningrad route, The International Cycling Rallies for the Cup of the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad, The International Łyna-Lava Canoeing Rally, job-centre-organized meetings and seminars, during which the economic, tourist and cultural values of the studied regions were promoted.

The Romincka Forest Landscape Park also participated in the regional cooperation. The cooperation in the field of environmental protection included, among others, the Youth International Ecological Action “Days of the Earth” with the participation of school children. There was also cooperation in the field of infrastructure. An example of this was the partnership between the Regional Roads Authority from the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Gusev District Administration in the European Union Poland-Russia Programme 2014-2020. There were Polish-Russian Forums of Non-Governmental Organizations, International Patriotic and Soldier Song Festivals, exhibitions, Polish Diaspora Organizations Forums of the Kaliningrad Region and Polish Culture Days in Chernyakhovsk.

3. South Baltic Regional Parliaments Forum

The self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region (*Sejmik*) and the Kaliningrad Region (*Duma*) cooperate closely also within the South Baltic Regional Parliaments Forum³. The first Forum – the founding one – took place

3 The South Baltic Regional Parliaments Forum is a form of cross-border cooperation at the level of regional parliaments: German Länder (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schleswig-Holstein and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg), Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, Polish regions (Pomerania, Warmia and Mazury, West Pomerania). The initiative appeared just before the largest ever enlargement of the European Union planned for 2004. In 2008, the Forum was joined as full members by the Local Parliament (Sejmik) of the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodship) and the Parliament (Duma) of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, and since 2009 the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg

in 2004 in Gdańsk (Pomeranian Region/Pomorskie Voivodeship). The cooperation within the Forum is based on common interests and priorities aimed at the development of the South Baltic areas and a coherent regional policy of the European Union in search of a common identity and respect for differences (Grzelak, 2016, 19-20).

The main objectives of the South Baltic Regional Parliaments Forum are the attempts to promote inter-regional and cross-border cooperation in line with the European Union policies, to create stronger ties resulting from bilateral partnership and to elevate it to the interregional level.

The aim of the participation of the regional parliaments in the Forum (including the Parliament (*Sejmik*) of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Parliament (*Duma*) of the Kaliningrad Region) is the will to institutionalise cooperation, search for common interests of the entities participating in the context of the expanding European Union and the willingness to represent the interests of the South Baltic region in the EU.

The topics of individual conferences are closely related to the regions of the South Baltic area that are part of the European Union (except the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation). The Forum's resolutions are addressed not only to national authorities and organisations dealing with the cooperation of the Baltic Sea states, but also to the European Union institutions. Following EU policy and law, common goals are sought for the participating regions. EU funds are used to finance programmes concerning youth cooperation within the Forum, which has been part of the work since the second Forum. No youth workshops were organised in 2011-2016. In 2017, the Parliament of the West Pomeranian Region re-invited young people and organised a youth forum.

Council. Swedish Skåne has been an observer of the Forum since 2004. Subsequent meetings of the Forum are held in the individual regions of this cross-border cooperation initiative. So far, there have been 17 sessions, and the next one is planned in Gdansk in 2020. The leading theme is proposed by the region hosting the Forum. Each Forum ends with the adoption of a jointly agreed and worked out resolution. In the Warmia and Mazury Region, the draft document is discussed at meetings of the Parliamentary Commission for International Cooperation. The Chairperson of the Commission takes part in the work of the Editorial Committee of each Forum. The resolution is adopted in the form of a resolution of the Parliamentary Commission for International Cooperation. Information from the course of each Forum together with the content of the resolution is presented at the session of the Local Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region (*Sejmik*). In the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation the draft resolution is discussed at the meeting of the Committee for International and Regional Cooperation. Motions for the resolution, after agreement with the Chairperson of the Duma, are submitted to the motion for a resolution, a delegation of the Duma Region has the mandate to accept and vote on the content of the resolution in the Plenary Forum. The resolution as a document is submitted to the Regional Duma and the Regional Government for further use.

Also in 2018, when the Forum was hosted by the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region, young people had their workshops and participated in the preparation of the final resolutions. In 2019, young people were also invited to cooperate within the Forum.

4. The Local Border Traffic Between the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation

Local Border Traffic by its nature concerns borders between countries, which are not members of the European Union and its rules of operation are based on the European Parliament Regulation of 2006, which defined the rules of trans-border mobility for persons residing in the borderland area.

It should be stressed that the agreement was signed as a result of several years of negotiations, initially the Local Border Traffic (LBT) was to cover Lithuania, Poland and the Kaliningrad Region, but eventually Lithuania withdrew from the project.

The agreement on the LBT rules between the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation entered into force on 27th July 2012. The Governments of both countries signed this agreement on the 14th December 2011. This was a result of numerous talks at the EU level, as well as the efforts of regional and local self-governments located in the LBT area⁴. In connection with the preparation of the LBT agreement, the self-governments of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region undertook information activities. One of them was a conference organised on the 1st-2nd March, 2012 in Kętrzyn, entitled: *“Mały Ruch Graniczny. Szanse i zagrożenia”* [“Local Border Traffic. Chances and Threats”]. It was attended by Sergey Puchkov – Consul General of the Russian Federation in Gdańsk, Jacek Protas – Marshal of the Warmia and Mazury Region, Jan Maścianica – Deputy Governor (Voivode) of Warmia and Mazury Region. The experts panel included the Consul of the Republic of

4 The ratification of the agreement on the LBT rules was preceded by a law passed by the Polish Parliament on the 16th March 2012, expressing consent to the ratification of the agreement by the President of Poland. The Senate of the Republic of Poland considered and adopted this law on the 12th April 2012. The Act was signed by the President of the Republic of Poland Bronisław Komorowski on the 4th May 2012. The ratification on the Polish side was completed on the 14th May of the same year. The Russian side proceeded with the agreement starting from its adoption by the lower house of parliament – the State Duma – on the 25th May 2012. The Federation Council (the upper chamber of the Russian Parliament) approved the agreement on 6th June, and the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed a federal law on the ratification of the agreement, which completed the process of the agreement’s validation on the part of the Polish partner (*Współpraca* 2012, 85).

Poland in Kaliningrad, employees of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Director of the Customs Chamber in Olsztyn, the Commander of the Warmia and Mazury Border Guard Branch, the Provincial Commander of the Police in Olsztyn as well as officers from the Bug River Branch of the Border Guard and Deputy Head of the Hrubieszów County, who passed on information from the experience of the LBT on the Polish-Ukrainian border. The conference was also attended by representatives of the Warmia and Mazury Special Economic Zone, Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency and the Centre for Eastern Studies. What is important, the conference was preceded by Polish-Russian consultations on the implementation of the LBT Agreement, which took place in Kaliningrad on the 28-29th February 2012. They were organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland and the Kaliningrad Region Government Administration of the Russian Federation. These consultations were attended by a representative of the Warmia and Mazury Region self-government (*Współpraca*, 85-86).

In order to present the issues related to the functioning of the LBT, on the 27th June 2012 the Regional Marshal's Office of the Warmia and Mazury Region in Elbląg organised a conference entitled: "*Mały Ruch Graniczny – duża szansa na współpracę*" ["Local Border Traffic – a great chance for cooperation"]. The conference was attended by 70 people, including representatives of self-governments of the Warmia and Mazury, the Pomeranian Regions and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, as well as representatives of tourist organisations, chambers of commerce and the media (*Współpraca*, 86-87). The expert voice was given by the Consul General of the Russian Federation in Gdańsk, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad, the Director of the Customs Chamber in Olsztyn and the Commander of the Elbląg Branch of the Border Guard.

In order to disseminate information about cultural, social and economic ties between the Warmia and Mazury and Kaliningrad Regions, the self-government of Warmia and Mazury Region in cooperation with 'Edytor Co. Ltd' published two editions (September and November) of the newspaper called "*Po sąsiedzku*" ("The Neighborhood") in 2012. They described cooperation in the field of business and tourism and other spheres. The main intention of this undertaking was to promote good neighbourly relations between the bordering regions as well as to broaden the knowledge and current information about events in the Warmia and Mazury and Kaliningrad Regions (*Współpraca*, 87).

In turn, within the framework of the Polish-Russian Forum of Non-Governmental Organisations, co-financed by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a bilingual guide entitled "*Mały Ruch Graniczny z Obwodem*

Kaliningradzkim – informacje praktyczne [“Local Border Traffic with Kaliningrad Region – practical information”] was published (*Współpraca*, 87).

Information activities concerning the LBT were also undertaken by the self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region in the following year, when it received funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a competition for activities emphasizing the civic and local dimension of the Polish foreign policy. The project entitled “*Mały Ruch Graniczny po pierwszym roku funkcjonowania – oczekiwania a osiągnięcia*” [“The Local Border Traffic after the first year of operation – expectations and achievements”] was implemented between June and November 2013 and made a specific platform for dialogue with partners from the Kaliningrad Region. Scientific seminars, information meetings for entrepreneurs, study tours and meetings of the NGO representatives were organised. The project was a joint undertaking of the Department of International Cooperation and the International Cooperation Commission of the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region, the Customs Chamber in Olsztyn and the Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency in Olsztyn. The project included a joint meeting of the Standing Committee on International and Interregional Relations, Security and Public Order of the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region with the International Cooperation Commission of the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region, during which issues arising from the functioning of the LBT were discussed (*Współpraca*, 105-106).

On the 15th October 2014, the self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region in cooperation with the County Office in Bartoszyce (directly neighbouring the Kaliningrad Region) organised a conference entitled “*Mały Ruch Graniczny – dwa lata doświadczeń*” [“The Local Border Traffic – two years of experience”]. The conference under the patronage of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland was attended by 120 persons, including a delegation from the Kaliningrad Region headed by Governor Nikolay Tsukanov. Both regional and local authorities, diplomats and businessmen emphasized the great success the implementation of the LBT on the Polish-Russian border proved to be. The possibility of visa-free border crossing by the inhabitants of both neighbouring Regions was appreciated, as well as the development of cooperation between local and regional governments, cultural institutions, social organisations and business. The potential of the tourism sector was emphasized, which by enriching its offer encouraged Poles and Russians to visit the neighbouring region (*Informacja*, 5).

After two years of the the LBT in force, the self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region was of the opinion that the entire Region (Voivodeship)

should be covered by the Local Border Traffic opportunity⁵. This was confirmed in the Priorities of Foreign Cooperation of the Warmia and Mazury Region of the 24th June 2014 (*Priorytety*, 3). It is worth noting that even before the implementation of the LBT, the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region (*Sejmik*) insisted on including the entire Voivodeship and Kaliningrad Region in the LBT system (*Załącznik*).

Since the introduction of the LBT in 2012, the International Cooperation Commission of the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Standing Committee on International and Interregional Relations, Security and Public Order of the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region had held regular meetings⁶. The following joint meeting of the Commission of Regional Parliaments was held on the 2nd June 2015 in Mamonowo (Poland). The main topic was the functioning of the LBT – effects and prospects for development. What is important, apart from MPs, representatives of border and customs services of Poland and the Russian Federation took part in that session.

After three years of the LBT operation, the self-government of Warmia and Mazury Region in cooperation with the County Office (*Starostwo Powiatowe*) in Giżycko organised a conference entitled “*Mały Ruch Graniczny: impuls dla rozwoju turystyki*” [“The Local Border Traffic: an impulse for tourism development”]. The conference was attended by local government officials, diplomats, representatives of the Kaliningrad Region Government, representatives of the Polish Border Guard, companies within the tourism and hotel industry, as well as representatives of non-governmental organisations. The event was held under the patronage of the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs. The discussion concerned the impact of the LBT on the development of tourism and promotion of the Regions, as well as health tourism and the upcoming 2018 World Cup as an opportunity for Polish and Russian business, and the Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020.

5 The Local Border Traffic covered the whole Kaliningrad Region (with the exception for regulated access to such locations as some border areas, including military ones), and on the Polish side part of the Pomerania Region: Tricity (Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot) and counties (poviats): Gdański, Nowodworski, Pucki and Malborski and most of the Warmia and Mazury Region excluding counties: Ostródzki, Nowomiejski, Działdowski, Hławski, Nidzicki, Szczytnowski, Piski and Elcki. It is worth noting that covering such a large area the Local Border Traffic was unique in the European Union. Within the framework of this Agreement, the residents of the border zone from both countries were allowed to cross the border (only land crossings) if they had lived there for at least three years prior to the Agreement. Border crossing permits were issued by the Polish Consulate in Kaliningrad, the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Warsaw and the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Gdańsk.

6 Joint meetings were launched in 2007 but were not held regularly until 2012.

In July 2016, after four years of operation, the Polish Government suspended the LBT agreement with the Kaliningrad Region. In view of the above, having numerous signals from the Region's inhabitants, including entrepreneurs, representatives of regional and local authorities and parliamentarians from various political groups, advocating the restoration of the LBT, on the 30th August 2016 the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region took a stand on the reintroduction of the LBT between Poland and the Russian Federation on the border with the Kaliningrad Region (*Stanowisko*, 11-12). In their grounds for the application to the Polish Government, the regional parliamentarians (*Sejmik* councillors) emphasized that the suspension of the LBT made it impossible to carry out many investments planned in the border zone and that the functioning of the Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 was at risk. The regional parliamentarians emphasized that the inhabitants of the Region expected the LBT to be restored immediately after the World Youth Days in Kraków had ended, as was the case on the border between Poland and Ukraine (*Stanowisko*, 12).

Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the self-government of the Warmia and Mazury Region to restore the LBT, the central Government remained silent.

5. Final Conclusions

As a result of the research, its hypothesis was positively verified. It is the common interests and development priorities of the areas of both Regions that determine the cooperation at the level of self-governments of the examined border Regions.

The objectives underlying the cooperation were the will to develop the Regions with the involvement of the inhabitants.

In response to another research question about the role of the cross-border cooperation of both Regions in relation to the policy of the European Union, it should be noted that the involvement of the Parliament of the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Duma of the Kaliningrad Region in the work of the South Baltic Regional Parliaments Forum strengthens the ties resulting from the bilateral partnership and supports interregional and cross-border cooperation in accordance with the policy of the European Union. Both Regions can lay their interests, needs and aspirations on the EU through the South Baltic Regional Parliaments Forum. The Local Border Traffic (LBT) met the arrangement of crossing borders with countries other than members of the European Union and its principles resulted from the Regulation of the European Parliament laying down rules on border traffic for persons residing in the border areas.

It is also worth noting that there are links between the EU policy and the variety of objectives and forms of cooperation of the very numerous inter-regional organisations in the Warmia and Mazury Region and Kaliningrad Region.

The initiators of the cooperation were executive bodies and self-governments of the examined Regions. In the opinion of the author, all forms of cooperation so far are worth continuing while the self-governments of the examined Regions should make their best to include young people in joint undertakings. In connection with climate change, in the coming years more emphasis should be put on cooperated actions concerning this issue. The regional and national politicians should also take greater account of the needs and well-being of future generations and in order to combat climate change, they should also involve young generations of Poles and Russians to a greater extent.

A separate issue remains to be sorted out whether the deteriorating relations between Moscow and Warsaw will not prevent these important and necessary expectations and aspirations of the inhabitants of both border Regions come true.

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PART III

Geopolitical Perspectives

The Lasting Consequences of Geopolitical Mistakes – Some Realist Conclusions on the Duchy of Prussia and its Role in the History of Poland

Jacek Więclawski

Abstract

This chapter considers the Kingdom of Poland's relations with the Duchy of Prussia, as well as the impact of Ducal Prussia and its Hohenzollern rulers on the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It ponders a realist perspective on the importance of the Duchy of Prussia for the rise of Brandenburg-Prussia and the place of Ducal Prussia in the Polish-Lithuanian foreign and domestic policies. Finally, it asks a principal question about mistakes in the approach of Polish kings towards their Prussian fiefdom.

Keywords: the Duchy of Prussia, Brandenburg-Prussia, the Kingdom of Prussia, the Kingdom of Poland, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, realism, geopolitics

1. Introduction

Albrecht of Hohenzollern's feudal homage to the King of Poland, Sigismund I in 1525 and the emergence of the Duchy of Prussia marked the end of long and inconclusive wars with the Teutonic Order. Yet, in a realistic view, it was a halfway solution to the Polish-Lithuanian geopolitical competition with the Order in the fifteenth century. Nevertheless, Albrecht's rules in Ducal Prussia became acceptable for the Polish nobles since the latter were interested in expansion of the eastern and south-eastern borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and began to consider the Prussian case as secondary. In the same vein, the policy of subsequent Polish kings towards their Prussian fiefdom served their *ad hoc* interests and lacked any general and consistent strategy. This stimulated the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns' attempts to break the feudal ties and become the sovereign rulers in Ducal Prussia. The power preponderance of the Polish-Lithuanian state over the Brandenburg-Prussia reduced the

Hohenzollerns' ambitions and their political opportunism for a long time. Yet the obvious overextension of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its deep domestic crisis in the middle of the seventeenth century marked dynamic changes in the power relations between the two states.

Indeed, the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian power and the spectacular rise of the Kingdom of Prussia completely reversed the geopolitical relations in the region a century later. It was now Polish Prussia, the Polish province on the Baltic coast, which became an object of interest to the Prussian expansion. Neither the considerable decline of the Polish-Lithuanian power nor the spectacular rise of the Kingdom of Prussia's military capabilities are unusual for a realism as the "oldest theory" of international politics. Yet, the course and consequences of its relations with the Prussian fiefdom provokes a fundamental question about geopolitical mistakes in the Kingdom of Poland's foreign policy. In a realist's view, the mistakes were obvious and their consequences lasting.

Nevertheless, the chapter is not a historical study. It is far from a "total explanation" which might offer a complete, detailed and nuanced picture of the problems (Roberts, 1995; Wohlforth, 2011). Besides, the case of the Duchy of Prussia and its relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a subject of extended historical works, including those by Janusz Małek, Karin Friedrich and Christopher Clark. Instead, it looks at the problems from the realist theoretical perspective, which focuses on power and the struggle for power, the competition of national interests as well as the hierarchy of power in the international system. The chapter combines in this regard both the structural realist considerations about the impact of systemic constraints on a state's foreign policy (Waltz, 1979) as well as more nuanced concepts of classical realism (Morgenthau, 1948), which pay more attention to leaders and nuances in foreign policymaking. The latter, including the perception of power, become indispensable in the analysis of the rise and fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its relations with the Duchy of Prussia.

Finally, references to the historical context in theories of international relations and studies in political science often face the "hindsight bias", meaning that the knowledge of the outcomes of historical processes affect their contemporary perception and assessment (Hawkins, Hastie, 1990). This is, in line with Igor Kąkolewski, the memory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's partition which has for a long time affected the study on the Commonwealth's relations with its Prussian neighbour (Kąkolewski, 2009, 273, 284-285). In this chapter, however, the "hindsight bias" does not change the general realist conclusions on the power relations between the two states and the mistakes in the Polish-Lithuanian policy towards its Prussian fiefdom.

2. Identifying the Geopolitical Problem – the Duchy of Prussia and the Consequences of the Polish-Teutonic Rivalry

The main religious function of the Teutonic Order, invited to Masovia in 1225 by Duke Konrad, was to Christianise the pagan tribes living in the Baltic area, and mainly the Masovia's pagan neighbours: the Prussians. In a political sense, however, the Order received a privilege granted by the Holy Roman Emperor that any lands captured by the Knights in Prussia would become the Order's own territory. This made the Order's expansion to the southeastern coast of the Baltic Sea a process of creating its own state, extending its territories and building their administrative and economic structures (Munro, 2009, 9-10, 14). In the late fourteenth century, the centralised and well-organised state of the Teutonic Order in Prussia became a powerful and active actor in regional affairs. Its expansion worried the rulers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, since the Lithuanians were the last pagan tribe in the area and the obvious target of the Order's religious and political expansion. Moreover, the Lithuanian region of Samogitia bordering the Baltic Sea separated the lands of the Teutonic Order in Prussia and the Livonian Order (the lands of contemporary Latvia and Estonia), which formally had been an autonomous branch of the Teutonic Order since 1237. This gave the Teutonic-Lithuanian rivalry a clear geopolitical context (Munro, 2009, 14-15; Hay, 2014, 245).

The Teutonic State became a political and geopolitical challenge for the Kingdom of Poland, as well. In 1308, the Knights took advantage of the feudal fragmentation of the Polish Crown and seized Pomerania, including the city of Gdańsk (Danzig). In so doing, they deprived the Polish Kingdom of an access to the Baltic Sea for over a century. The return of central royal power and the gradual rise of the Kingdom of Poland during the reign of Casimir III the Great (1333-1370) made tensions with the Order obvious and constant. In line with Munro,

it was no secret that Poland was seeking a better and more secure access to the Baltic Sea, while the Order sought to widen the land passage along the Baltic coast between Prussia and Livonia, effectively blocking access to the Baltic for Poland (Munro, 2009, 16).

In this realistic view, the struggle for power and position in the region between both states escalated as their interests became difficult to accommodate and a final confrontation appeared inevitable.

The Polish-Lithuanian personal union in 1385 changed the power relations in the region. The obvious aim of the Union of Kreva was to strengthen

both states' position against the Teutonic Order (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 39-40). The conversion of Jagiello, the new Polish King and the Grand Duke of Lithuania, to Christianity also undermined the sense of the Teutonic Order's original mission in the Baltic area since the pagan tribes there, including Lithuanians themselves, had already been christianised or open to christianisation (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 40; Munro, 2009, 15). This, however, did not prevent the struggle for power in the region and the Polish-Lithuanian political competition with the Teutonic Order from culminating in the Great War of 1409-1411. The Battle of Grunwald (Tannenberg) in 1410 was decisive in this campaign since it marked the Order's spectacular defeat, including the death of the Grand Master, Ulrich von Jungingen, and most of the Order's dignitaries (Kowalska-Pietrzak, 2015, 81-82; Hay 2014, 245).

The Battle of Grunwald diminished the military power of the Order and pushed it into the defensive. It undermined the Order's military prestige and the ransom the Order paid for their captives strained its treasury (Munro, 2009, 16; Kowalska-Pietrzak, 2015, 81-82). Yet, in the political and geopolitical sense the Battle of Grunwald did not bring about decisive solutions. The Polish-Lithuanian troops' attempts to capture the Order's capital, Marienburg, were sluggish and ineffective with Jagiello lacking (new) resources and additional funds (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 45; Munro, 2009, 16). Hence, the Treaty of Torun in 1411 did not radically change the Polish political position. The Treaty settled the high financial compensation to be paid by the Teutonic Order and a return to Lithuania of the disputed lands of Samogitia (Hay, 2014, 245; Munro, 2009, 16). In the case of the Kingdom of Poland, however, the territorial gains were minor. Above all, Pomerania, fundamental for the Polish geopolitical interest and its connections with the Baltic Sea, remained in the Order's hands (Kowalska-Pietrzak, 2015, 81-82). Considering the significance of the Polish-Teutonic rivalry for the Kingdom of Poland's principal interests and the spectacular Grunwald victory the shape of the Treaty of Torun seemed surprising if not disappointing and "[...] the war ended in a rather advantageous peace for the Knights [...]" (Hay, 2014, 245).

Further, seen from the realist perspective, the Treaty of Torun in 1411 did not finish the Polish-Teutonic competition and the struggle for power in the region. Both sides engaged in a series of wars in the first half of the fifteenth century yet none of them becoming decisive (Kowalska-Pietrzak, 2015, 81-82). Furthermore, the Polish-Lithuanian alliance faced some tensions and obvious divergences of interests. They reflected different attitudes to the Polish-Lithuania Union, as well. Hence, the Lithuanian determination to share the burden of new wars with the Order weakened and the concept of the Union with Poland faced some serious objection (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 44, 48; Kowalska-Pietrzak,

2015, 83). The personal union of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania survived, but in line with Lukowski and Zawadzki, “After 1422, Poland and Lithuania pursued different, if ever complementary, foreign policies, with Poland looking to the north and south and Lithuania to the east” (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 44). In the same vein, the wars with the Teutonic Order at the beginning of the fifteenth century “gave the Crown almost nothing in the territorial terms” (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 45-48).

The chance for a more decisive solution in the Polish-Teutonic struggle appeared in the middle of the century and with regard to domestic problems in the Teutonic Order's state. The defeat in the Battle of Grunwald and further periodic fighting with Poland caused the devastation of the Order's borderlands and a financial crisis. The shortages translated into the Order's brutal fiscal policy increasing tensions with its Prussian subjects (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 48; Friedrich 2000, 20-21). Following Karin Friedrich, “the Knights' increasingly arbitrary style of government triggered a new sense of political, economic and cultural solidarity among the Prussian townsmen and landed Freeman” (Friedrich, 2000, 20). The latter meant the growing political aspirations of Prussian burghers and nobles and the creation of the “Prussian League” (1440) – aimed at defending the rights of the Prussian estates and developing their independent institutions (Małłek, 2012, 170-172; Friedrich, 2000, 21-22). Finally, the resistance against the Order's repressions and new fiscal burdens resulted in the open rebellion in 1454 and the Prussian estates' “turning to the Polish King for political and military protection” (Friedrich, 2001, 95-96). The estates accused the Teutonic Order of tyranny and violation of their rights and offered the Polish King the incorporation of the Prussian lands into the Polish Crown “in exchange for” privileges, freedoms and liberties (Friedrich, 2001, 95-96; Friedrich, 2000, 21-23).

King Casimir IV of Poland responded with the Incorporation Act of 6th March 1454, which granted the Prussian estates the rights of citizens of the Polish Crown. It offered an extensive catalogue of economic and social privileges – which in the case of some economic rights of burghers and cities reached beyond the parliamentary model taking shape in the Kingdom of Poland in the middle of the century (Friedrich, 2000, 23; Hay, 2014, 257-258). The incorporation, however, meant the new war with the Teutonic Order in which both sides used mercenary forces but lacked funds for continued fighting. It was in fact the financial assistance of the Prussian estates for the Polish King and the empty treasury of the Order, which decided about the ultimate victory of the Polish party (Munro, 2009, 18; Hay, 2014, 257-258).

Nevertheless, the new Treaty of Torun in 1466 was surprising again. The obvious expectation of the Prussian estates, which had revolted against the

Teutonic Order and covered the costs of the war, was the Polish incorporation of the entire Prussian territories belonging to the Order (Małłek, 2012, 167). In line with the Treaty, however, the Kingdom of Poland seized their western part, considered now as Royal (Polish) Prussia, which in practice meant regaining Pomerania (with Gdańsk) occupied by the Order since 1308. Further, the Polish Kingdom took the province of Warmia [*Ermland*] and some of the earlier Order cities along the Vistula river, including Marienburg (now Malbork) itself. Yet the eastern part of the Prussian territories, with the new capital city of Königsberg, remained in the Order's hands. Finally, the reduced Teutonic Order in (eastern) Prussia became a fief of the King of Poland, and the Treaty obliged the Order's subsequent Grand Masters "to perform homage to the Kings of Poland" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 48; Munro, 2009, 18). The feudal dependence meant some control over the Order's political affairs yet the state did not become a part of the Polish Kingdom, retained the Order's administration and the Order's rules. In line with Friedrich, the Polish King declared some compensation for the Prussian nobles who "fled their lands in eastern Prussia" yet "even this could not completely eradicate their lingering resentment against the Polish monarchy for letting slip the opportunity of destroying the Teutonic state once and for all" (Friedrich, 2000, 24).

Indeed, in the realist perspective, the Treaty of Torun in 1466 meant that the Polish (Polish-Lithuanian) conflict with the Teutonic Order was solved half-way. The Kingdom of Poland restored its accesses to the Baltic Sea yet it did not take the opportunity to seize Prussia's territory in its entirety, to consolidate its Baltic presence and to remove any further problems from the Order's neighbourhood. Allied with the Prussian nobles and burghers, the Polish Kingdom did not risk any opposition of local population while the resistance of a small group of the Knights, the Order's elite, did not seem to be a significant obstacle for the annexation. In the same vein, the Kingdom of Poland could have marked its presence on the Baltic Sea coast much wider and firmer. It regained its access to the sea yet in practice it was reduced to the single port of Gdansk with an auxiliary role played by the port of Elbląg [*Elbing*]. Considering the privileges granted by the Polish King to the Prussian burghers, the existence of a single port only could reduce the King's role in shaping the state's maritime strategy and provoke tensions with the burghers of Gdańsk over trade benefits and self-government rights. It actually raised the aspirations of Gdańsk to create its own maritime policy quite soon (Małłek, 2012, 173-174).

Furthermore, the shape of the border between the Order in (eastern) Prussia and Polish Warmia remained highly irregular. Warmia drove a deep wedge into the Order's territory and remained isolated from the main body of the Polish Kingdom. This left the new Polish province and its communication routes with

other lands of the Crown difficult to defend. In the geopolitical context, finally the Order's state in (eastern) Prussia remained a territory that isolated Polish Pomerania and the lands of Lithuania (Samogitia). At the same time however, the relatively narrow Polish access to the Baltic Sea (Polish Prussia) separated the (reduced) Teutonic Order in Prussia and the lands of the Elector of Brandenburg and the Holy Roman Empire. The obvious political links between the Knights and the Emperor could not initially be decisive in the political calculations yet their role grew in the context of the dynastic rivalry of the Jagiellons and the Habsburgs in the late fifteenth century.

Thus, considering the political significance of the struggle with the Teutonic Order, the Treaty of Torun in 1466 meant a limited success for the Kingdom of Poland's foreign policy and confirmed some problems with the state's political determination. This lack of determination was a reflection of the state's financial problems, the pressure of the Polish nobles (the *szlachta*) for new privileges and a weakening position of the King in the Polish parliamentary system taking shape in the middle of the fifteenth century (Butterwick 2001, 1-4, 7; Hay 2014, 257-258). Yet, more importantly, the lack of determination in the Prussian case was a reflection of the Kingdom's changing geopolitical choices and the Jagiellons' dynastic policy. In fact, in line with Lukowski and Zawadzki, "The difficulties in the north seemed to be counterbalanced by advances in the south" (Lukowski, Zawadzki; 50). The Union with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania offered a new impulse for the economic expansion of the Polish nobles into the lands of the Rus' (Ruthenia) on the south-eastern borders of the Polish Kingdom (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 41, 53; Kowalska-Pietrzak, 2015, 78). In the same vein, the political ambitions of the ruling Jagiellons focused on the lands of Muscovy in the east or Moldova in the south. The final reach for the thrones of Bohemia and Hungary for the dynasty members made the Polish-Lithuanian rulers engaged in "all European tendencies" (Bues, 2001, 59; Hay 2014, 245-246, 258-259). Finally, in line with Bues, "At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Jagiellon dynasty dominated most of Central and Eastern Europe, ruling territories greater than those of any other European power" (Bues, 2001, 60).

This new (eastern and southern) direction of the Polish-Lithuanian expansion made the previous competition with the Teutonic Order a case of "secondary importance" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 41). The perception of the Polish preponderance of power over the Order in Prussia and its formal feudal dependence made the *status quo* in the relations with the Teutonic Order acceptable for the Polish kings. It did not contribute to a new and consistent concept of the Polish Baltic policy, either. Yet, in the realist perspective, the feudal suzerainty could guarantee the subordination of the fief only if accompanied by

the effective power in the King's hands and his determination to execute his rights. Otherwise, the feudal dependence would become an empty symbol. The Polish-Teutonic relations went exactly that way since the shifts in the Polish-Lithuanian policy in the late fifteenth century made the Polish determination problematic and translated into attempts of the subsequent Grand Masters to ignore their subordination and reject their vassal status (Hay, 2014, 257-258).

The continuing refusal to pay homage to the Polish King resulted in the Polish intervention and a new war with the Teutonic Order in 1519-21. The new conflict, however, ended with an "inconclusive truce" again (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 48-50) and meant a return to the *status quo*. Preoccupied with the dynastic rivalry with the Habsburgs over Bohemia and Hungary and a threat of the Turkish invasion in southeastern Europe, the Jagiellons faced a crisis and overextension of their dynastic policy (Hay, 2014, 258-259; Bues, 2001, 61). The Baltic issues became "secondary" again. It was in fact the Reformation and its impact on the religious relations on the continent, which contributed to further changes in the Teutonic Order's state in Prussia. Under Martin Luther's influence, Grand Master Albrecht of Hohenzollern, converted to Lutheranism. Upon the consent of the Polish King Sigismund I, he secularised the Order in Prussia and became the King of Poland's vassal in the new secularised Duchy of Prussia (Friedrich, 2000, 23; Munro, 2009, 18-19). Thus, according to the Treaty of Cracow in 1525, the Teutonic Order's state ceased to exist. Albrecht of Hohenzollern paid homage to King Sigismund I and received the Duchy of Prussia "as his hereditary possession and a fief of the Polish Crown" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 50). The Treaty confirmed the previous territorial decision taken in Torun in 1466, as well.

The "Prussian Homage" was symbolic. The new Lutheran prince in the Duchy of Prussia was in the Polish interest in the context of the Jagiellons' rivalry with the Habsburgs and the Emperor. Yet, in practice, the Treaty of Cracow retained the *status quo* and left the Prussian case solved halfway again. In line with Lukowski and Zawadzki

[...] contemporaries criticised Sigismund for not embarking on the outright annexation. Experience showed, however, that a course might well have led to more prolonged warfare and Poland and Lithuania had to face up to the constant prospect of fighting elsewhere on their far-flung borders (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 50).

It was indeed the context of the Jagiellons' overstretch and the gradual fall of their dynastic policy in south-eastern Europe, which engaged most of the

Jagiellons' attention. The defeat of King Louis II of Hungary (the Jagiellonian dynasty) in the Battle of Mohacs, against the Ottoman Empire in 1526, marked the partition of Hungary and the collapse of the Jagiellons' political ambitions in the region (Bues, 2001, 61). They finally lost Bohemia and Hungary and their status in the region in favour of the Habsburgs (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 55; Bues, 2001, 61). The Prussian problems could only be of the "secondary" importance in this context again.

Finally, "Secularised, Lutheran Ducal Prussia would be utterly reliant on the Crown and might yet revert to it" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 50). In the realist perspective, this calculation could be right as long as the power preponderance of Poland-Lithuania over Ducal Prussia (and its potential allies in the Holy Roman Empire) remained stable. Yet the engagement of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in a number of conflicts in the late sixteenth century proved its tendency to overextension and consumed enormous resources, which the state chronically lacked (Bues, 2001, 61; Hay, 2014, 258-259). This opened some space for the resistance of the rulers of Prussia or at least some political manoeuvres to strengthen their position *vis a vis* the kings of Poland. The conclusion that both the first Duke of Prussia Albrecht and the Electors of Brandenburg belonged to the Hohenzollern dynasty seems obvious in hindsight. Yet, even for some observers, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Hohenzollerns' attempts to unify two domains ruled by the same dynasty could easily be predicted. For the powerful Polish-Lithuanian State this question was marginal yet it could potentially cause problems for the overextended and weakening Commonwealth. Thus, in line with Lukowski and Zawadzki again, the long Polish-Lithuanian conflict with the Teutonic Order was eventually won "but never truly resolved" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 45).

3. **Opportunism, Integration and Geopolitical Challenges. Ducal Prussia and the Rise of Brandenburg-Prussia**

The Hohenzollerns had ruled the Electorate of Brandenburg since 1415. The limited resources of the Electorate made them the second tier political actor in the Holy Roman Empire. This translated into cautiousness in the Hohenzollerns' foreign policy and prudence in their relations with the Emperor. Hence, they joined the protestant camp, yet kept distance from the radical protestant claims and strove not to alienate the position of the Emperor. They remained for a long time "a loyal supporter of the Habsburg court" (Clark, 2007, 31-36). The need for moderation reflected limited economic and demographical capabilities of Brandenburg and nuances of power relations inside the Holy

Roman Empire. Yet, it did not reduce the Hohenzollerns' political ambitions and the "lust" for their own power. The obvious material constraints limited the Hohenzollerns' political flexibility, yet did not prevent them from seeking any political gains available in the course of international affairs and relations inside the Empire. This translated into the Hohenzollerns' principle "to secure the maximum advantage from the situation" and the policy focused on dynastic interests (Shennan, 2004, 3-5, 18-20).

One of the instruments in this regard was, in line with Clark, the "marriage policy" and a new area of the dynastic calculations became apparent in the Duchy of Prussia. In fact, Albrecht of Hohenzollern, the Duke of Prussia and the fief of the King of Poland, was the Elector's of Brandenburg cousin. This made Ducal Prussia a natural direction for the Brandenburg's interests and political expansion. The Elector's Joachim II marriage with the Polish princess Hedwig in 1535 strengthened his access to the Ducal Prussia's affairs. Yet, the main aim became the succession of the Brandenburg line of the Hohenzollerns in the Duchy of Prussia and the future "union of the two Hohenzollern principalities" (Clark, 2007, 36; Shennan, 2004, 4). The death of Duke Albrecht in 1568 meant taking power by his son Albrecht Frederick. However, the symptoms of mental illness of the new Duke several years later opened the question of who ruled in the Duchy of Prussia and gave an opportunity for the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns to claim regency. Following the strategy of "maximum benefits" from the course of international affairs they took advantage of the Polish-Lithuanian conflict with Muscovy in Livonia (northeastern Baltic coast) in the late 1570s and the Polish King's, Stephen Bathory, preparing for the new and costly campaign against Ivan IV. The engagement in the Livonian war made the Polish-Lithuanian interests in the problems of mentally ill Duke of Prussia limited and "secondary" again. This translated in 1578 into the King of Poland giving consent to the formal care over Albrecht Frederick and the regency in Ducal Prussia by the latter's cousin George Frederick, Margrave of Ansbach, and the Brandenburg line of the Hohenzollerns (Kąkolewski, 2009, 280).

The regency did not yet guarantee the formal succession for the Brandenburg line of the family after Albrecht Frederick's death and the next step in the Hohenzollerns strategy was the marriage of Albrecht Frederick's daughter, Anna of Prussia, with the Brandenburg Elector John Sigismund in 1594. Considering Albrecht Frederick's lack of a male descendant, this became a serious argument for the succession and the ultimate union of the two Hohenzollerns' principalities (Clark, 2007, 36-37; Shennan, 2004, 4). The final decision was still in the hands of the King of Poland as the Duchy of Prussia's feudal superior. Yet, the course of international relations in Central

and Eastern Europe and the Polish-Lithuanian engagement in the simultaneous wars with Sweden and the Grand Duchy of Moscow at the beginning of the seventeenth century helped the Hohenzollerns to capitalise on the political opportunity, as well. The permanent need of new resources for costly military campaigns and the Hohenzollerns' offer of generous financial support translated in 1611 into the Polish King Sigismund III, consenting on the Brandenburg line of the Hohenzollerns' succession in the Duchy of Prussia and the recognition of Elector John Sigismund as "heir to Anne's deranged father, Duke Albert Frederick" (Shennan, 2004, 4; Kąkolewski, 2009, 280-281). Ultimately, the "marriage strategy" became successful in 1618 – after Albrecht Frederick's death (with no male descendant) and John Sigismund's formal emergence as the Duke of Prussia (Clark, 2007, 36-37; Shennan, 2004, 4). The Brandenburg Hohenzollern rulers in Ducal Prussia remained the fiefs of the King of Poland but their succession was secured and changed their political perspective from the Electorate of Brandenburg alone to a broader domain of the whole of Brandenburg-Prussia.

The dynastic unification made the new Brandenburg-Prussian state potentially stronger in the regional relations and inside the Holy Roman Empire. In practice, however, its power was still limited since the territory of the state stretched along several hundred kilometres and was separated by lands of other German rulers or by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Royal (Polish) Prussia). It was not, in line with Clark "unusual in Early Modern Europe for geographically scattered territories to fall under the authority of a single sovereign, but the distances involved in this case were unusually great" (Clark, 2007, 37, 40-43). On one hand, this made the geopolitical position of Brandenburg-Prussia a serious problem for the Hohenzollerns for a long distance between two ends of the state, and (potentially) limited access to different parts of its territory, made the effective defence of Brandenburg-Prussia a challenge (Dwyer, 2013, 4). What is more, Brandenburg-Prussia bordered areas of increased political tensions. The possession of Kleve and Berg (in the west) exposed it to the competing interests of the Netherlands, Spain and France while the rule in Ducal Prussia introduced the Hohenzollerns to the competition over the domination in the Baltic Sea region. The limited power (including no standing army at the beginning of the seventeenth century) and limited resources in the Hohenzollerns' hands made the state vulnerable to all these geopolitical threats (Clark, 2007, 40, 44).

On the other hand, the emergence of the Brandenburg-Prussia entity made Royal Prussia, the Polish province on the Baltic coast, an obvious aim of the future Hohenzollerns' expansion. Royal Prussia separated the territory of the Duchy of Prussia and the lands of Brandenburg and any adherents to

the idea of territorial unification of the Brandenburg-Prussian state had to consider the Hohenzollerns' domination over that area. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, this scenario was impossible since the power of Poland-Lithuania reached its peak and the Duchy of Prussia, even if ruled by the Hohenzollerns, was still Kings of Poland's fiefdom. (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 91-92). Besides, the Thirty Years' War confirmed the limited capabilities of Brandenburg-Prussia to act independently on the international scene. The course of the war resulted in massive damages and the state was devastated by both imperial and protestant forces (Shennan, 2004, 9-10, 13).

Nevertheless, the taking of power by the "Great Elector" Frederick William (1640-88) marked a more pro-active Hohenzollerns' foreign policy. The Thirty Years' War revealed the limited power of Brandenburg-Prussia and reaffirmed its secondary role in political relations inside the Holy Roman Empire. The state lacked both human and material resources, effective political structures and an army able to defend its isolated territories. Thus, the obvious conclusion for the Elector was to build a more numerous military force, as well as strengthen his position *vis a vis* the Estates in the Brandenburg-Prussia's domestic affairs. Besides, Frederick William became confident that "a prince's independence was proportionate to his military might" even if this might was hardly achievable in the short-term perspective (Shennan, 2004, 16-18; Dwyer 2013, 2-5). Further, the experience gained from the Thirty Years' War strengthened Frederick William's tendency to political opportunism, securing "maximum advantage" from the course of international affairs and a foreign policy aimed at "selling" his political support "to the highest bidder" (Shennan, 2004, 19-20). The relations with the Polish neighbour became crucial in this regard since a deep crisis in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the middle of the seventeenth century, after a series of costly wars and a devastating Cossack uprising in 1648, encouraged the "Great Elector" to think about the final breaking of the Hohenzollerns' feudal dependence in the Duchy of Prussia.

This was in fact the Brandenburg-Prussia's attitude to the new war between Sweden and Poland-Lithuania in 1655-1660. To be sure, Frederick William's political calculations failed at the initial stage of this conflict. He underestimated the Sweden's determination to control the Baltic Sea region and was unable to prevent the Swedish forces from entering the Ducal Prussia's territory. Hence, in line with the Treaty of Königsberg (1656) and in consequence of Charles X Gustav military successes in Poland, the Duchy of Prussia became a Swedish fiefdom and Frederick William was obliged to assist his new Swedish overlord militarily and financially (Shennan, 2004, 23). The Treaty was a reflection of the Swedish arrogance of power and the difficulties in the Brandenburg-Prussia's political flexibility in the conflict. As a result, the Elector's army (about 8,500

troops) joined Carl X Gustav's forces in the Battle of Warsaw (1656) against the Polish-Lithuanian troops. The Swedish-Brandenburg victory did not fundamentally change the course of the war but the victorious battle contributed to Frederick William's personal legend (Shennan, 2004, 18-22; Clark, 2007, 67).

Nevertheless, a weakening position of Sweden, overextended in the long campaign in Poland-Lithuania, and the emergence of the opposite coalition (including the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Denmark and the Holy Roman Emperor) encouraged Frederick William to carry out a political volte. He finally left Carl X Gustav's camp and joined the anti-Swedish coalition at the final stage of the war (Shennan, 2004, 18-22; Clark, 2007, 68-69). Hence, the dynamics of the political military situation helped Frederick William to take advantage of both the crisis of Poland-Lithuania and the overextension of Sweden. The change of alliance was risky, yet the international environment became favourable and Frederick William was aware that both conflicted powers were interested in the Brandenburg-Prussia's support. This helped the "Great Elector" to raise the question of the Hohenzollerns' unconditional sovereignty in Ducal Prussia and breaking the Provinces' feudal ties with the Kingdom of Poland (Shennan, 2004, 21).

The decision remained in the hands of John II Casimir, King of Poland. It was of the utmost importance since even if the Polish King's control of the fiefs in the Duchy of Prussia had so far been inconsequential and selective (if not illusory) thus the formal resignation from the feudal rights meant there was no legal authority to intervene in the Ducal Prussia's affairs. Poland-Lithuania's simultaneous wars with Sweden, Khmelnytsky Uprising and the Tsardom of Muscovy supporting the Cossacks' rebellion made the Ducal Prussia's case secondary again in the political situation of the Commonwealth at the end of the 1650s (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 96-98; Kąkolewski, 2009, 283-284). The weakness of his Polish overlord benefited the "Great Elector". Besides, Frederick William capitalised on the Holy Roman Emperor's interests in steering the Brandenburg-Prussia away from a potential alliance with Sweden, which resulted in the Emperor pressuring the Polish King to meet the Elector's request. In consequence, John II Casimir made concessions to Frederick William in the Treaty of Wehlau in 1657 and recognised the rights of the House of the Hohenzollerns as the sovereign rulers in the Duchy of Prussia (Shennan, 2004, 21-22; Kąkolewski, 2009, 283-284). The legacy of the Prussian Homage became a thing of the past.

Nevertheless, the Treaty of Oliva in 1660, which ended the war between Charles Gustav X and the anti-Swedish coalition, ignored the "Great Elector's" wishes of territorial gains in Swedish Pomerania and "Frederick William learned again the harsh reality of politics, that a second-rate power is unwise

to abandon neutrality and fight alone” (Shennan, 2004, 22). This shows furthermore that the Hohenzollerns’ political opportunism could not work if conflicting with the interests of the system leaders and, in line with Waltz, the international system could “punish” the state’s policy that exceeded its actual power (Waltz, 1979, 73-74). Yet, the Treaty confirmed the Hohenzollerns’ unconditional sovereignty over the Duchy of Prussia and, in the context of the Brandenburg-Prussia’s relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, marked Frederick William’s obvious political success.

The experience gained from the Oliva Treaty led to the “Great Elector’s” attempts to strengthen the state’s regular army, which in 1688 reached the level of 30,000 soldiers. The real military capabilities became “a symbol of power and prestige” in the Elector’s political calculations and the role of the military officials grew in Brandenburg-Prussia’s administration. The army helped Frederick William to strengthen his position against the Estates and introduce some forms of centralisation in the state’s domestic affairs, as well (Shennan, 2004, 28-30, 33-35; Dwyer, 2013, 2-5). The disputes with the Estates reached the level of open conflict in the Duchy of Prussia since the formal sovereignty of Frederick William over the Province was opposed by its towns (especially Königsberg) and its nobility. The latter claimed the liberties and rights the Polish nobility had been accorded – something that the Elector vigorously rejected (Shennan, 2004, 33-34; Friedrich, 2000, 155-157). After some tactical concessions, Frederick William responded with force. The escape of Christian von Kalckstein (one of the resistance’s leader) to Warsaw and his complaints to the Polish King failed since the King had no formal right to intervene, his political position was weak and the Ottoman Empire’s invasion in 1672 faced the Commonwealth with a new threat. The resistance in Ducal Prussia was suppressed, with Kalckstein’s kidnapping and execution for treason in 1672 (Shennan, 2003, 33-34, 39; Friedrich, 2000, 155-157).

In fact, the later period of the rule of Frederick William saw the strengthening of power of Brandenburg-Prussia, especially against the backdrop of a crisis of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and a gradual decline of the Polish-Lithuanian state in the hierarchy of power in the international system (Shennan, 2004, 31, 36-38; Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 104). In the European affairs, however, Brandenburg-Prussia was still a secondary political actor, especially in the context of the competing interests of the system’s leaders. The course of the Franco-Dutch War in the 1670’s proved that neither the “Great Elector’s” strategy of “cynical opportunism”, effective in relations with Poland-Lithuania, or a policy of *volte-faces* and switching alliances between France and the anti-French coalition guaranteed the political gains for Brandenburg-Prussia in the final placement among the great European powers (Shennan, 2004, 24-26; Clark, 2007, 73-74).

4. **The Kingdom of Prussia, Expansion and Geopolitical Significance of the Royal Prussia's Territory. The Hohenzollerns' Policy in the Realist Perspective**

The rule of Frederic William's son, the Elector Frederick III, became less vigorous in comparison to that of the "Great Elector" and marked those ambiguities typical of the previous Brandenburg-Prussia's foreign policy, especially in the context of great powers' competition during the Nine Years' War and the struggle for the Spanish succession. Yet, in the symbolic sense, Frederick III achieved his principal aim to receive the royal title and his coronation as Frederick I, the King of Prussia, in 1701 meant a symbolic rise of the House of the Hohenzollerns to the royal ranks.

Nevertheless, the expectations that the royal title would introduce the new Kingdom of Prussia into the camp of great European powers were premature (Shennan, 2004, 42-43). Besides, the new Prussian king's ambitions to play a more important role in the Holy Roman Empire were reduced as well once Augustus II of Saxony was elected King of Poland. Frustrated Frederick I responded by increasing the Prussian army to the level of 40,000 soldiers, yet it was still not decisive for the Prussian great power status (Shennan, 2004, 44-45; Dwyer, 2013, 1). Further, the course of the Great Northern War (1700-1721) affected both the policies of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Kingdom of Prussia. It devastated and further weakened the Polish-Lithuanian state, engaged in the conflict by its Saxon king, and in the case of Frederick I contributed to his political neutrality aimed at protecting the new Prussian kingdom from a similar devastation (Shennan, 2004, 44-45; Dwyer, 2013, 15). Yet, the rise of Russia and its victory over Sweden in 1709 changed the regional balance of power and marked a considerable shift in the hierarchy of power, at least in Eastern and Northern Europe. It introduced the Russian factor to both the Polish-Lithuanian and the Prussian foreign policy calculations (Shennan, 2004, 46; Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 107-109).

The rule of King Frederick William I (1713-1740) meant a more pro-active Prussian policy and a return to the previous principle of "maximum advantage" from the course of international affairs. The weakness of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth offered an opportunity for the Prussian territorial expansion and the obvious area of this expansion was Royal Prussia again. The control over this territory, which separated Brandenburg and former Ducal Prussia, became of the utmost importance for the new Kingdom of Prussia since it would resolve many of its geopolitical dilemmas. It would considerably strengthen the Kingdom's capabilities in political, demographic and economic terms, as well. Nevertheless, the new distribution of power in the international system, and especially the spectacular rise of Russia, worked against the

Prussian plans. Frederick William I did not risk a confrontation with the ambitious Peter I and accepted the role of the Russian Tsar as the warrantor of the “rights and liberties” of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility. In practice, it was the acceptance of Russia’s increasing control over the Commonwealth’s foreign and domestic affairs (Shennan, 2004, 47-48).

Thus, the military capabilities of the Kingdom of Prussia increased during the Frederick William I’s rule considerably and exceeded the military power of Poland-Lithuania by far. The army reached the level of about 80 000 men which, in light of the state’s limited demographic and economic resources, was a spectacular achievement. It was accompanied by a reform in the recruitment system, the incorporation of nobility into the officer class and the growing impact of the army on the state’s administrative structures (Dwyer, 2013, 12-13). The army consumed more than 70 per cent of the national revenue and, in line with Shennan, “military needs came to dictate the social structure of the country” (Shennan, 2004, 53-55, 59-60). Yet again, the military capabilities of the Kingdom of Prussia did not guarantee its promotion into the ranks of European great powers and Prussian ability to shape the course of international affairs remained limited (Dwyer, 2013, 2). The rivalry between the Holy Roman Emperor and France encouraged cautiousness and reduced Prussia’s chance for new territorial gains in the west while the rise of the Russian Empire and its factual protectorate over Poland-Lithuania encouraged Frederick William I to postpone his plans of the expansion in Royal (Polish) Prussia. Seen from the realist perspective, the constraints imposed by the international order during the reign of Frederick I and Frederick William I, imposed limits on both monarchs’ political calculations. They made the Prussian foreign policy cautious and conservative – even for Frederick William I – and, in line with Shennan, “It was a paradox in a king who possessed such an impressive army that he treated it as a deterrent, rather than a tool of war” (Shennan, 2004, 50-51; Dwyer, 2013, 15).

The political strategy of the next Prussian King Frederick II (1740-1786), departed from the ambiguities and cautiousness of his predecessors. All the Brandenburg-Prussian rulers and then the kings in Prussia remained “opportunists” looking for territorial gain and political benefits from the course of international affairs. Yet, they understood the limitations from their second tier position in the European hierarchy of power. Frederick II decided to exploit these opportunities more actively and, in line with Scott, acted like the ruler of a first-class power (Scott, 2013, 157-158). He was aware of the limited material resources, which the Kingdom of Prussia was able to mobilise but remained confident in his ability to rightly assess the course of international affairs and use the Prussian army at the right moments (Scott, 2013, 157-158). Hence, in the

realist perspective, the rule of Frederick II meant pursuit of power politics at higher risks but with more focus on Prussian interests. The state's policy was dictated by the Monarch's personal traits, his political ideas and his perception of power relations in Europe (Scott, 2013, 153, 158-159; Dwyer, 2013, 20-21).

In fact, foreign policy of Frederick II became more risky but potentially more beneficial for the Prussian interests. They led in 1740 to an unexpected Prussian invasion of Silesia, a wealthy Habsburg province, and a confrontation with the interests of the Holy Roman Emperor. Frederick II was determined to take advantage of the Habsburgs' weakness, to exploit the death of Emperor Charles VI and the resulting problems with succession for his daughter, Maria Teresa (Scott, 2013, 160). It was risky but it was a case of opportunities "to be seized" (Scott, 2013, 159-161; Dwyer, 2013, 15-16).

Further, Frederick II's policy became even more risky during the Seven Years' War and together with his decision to confront much wider coalitions of the Prussian opponents (Austria, France, Russia, Sweden and Saxony). The Kingdom of Prussia's ability to retain its territorial integrity and to resist the allied forces of the leading states in the international system was a spectacular success of Frederick II. It revealed the efficiency in combat of the Prussian army and the King's ability to exploit a lack of coordination in the enemies' camp (Scott, 2013, 170-173; Dwyer, 2013, 2). Nevertheless, the course of the War, including the Prussian defeat in the Battle of Kunersdorf (1759), illustrated that Prussia's power was not unlimited and even its spectacular military capabilities faced systemic constraints. Frederick II's policy of testing the systemic limitations of the Prussian foreign policy reflected his faith in the army and his personal skills, yet risked a painful punishment by the international system once his calculations failed. This meant that Prussia's military power was spectacular but the fate of the entire state could be decided by a single lost battle. Hence, despite Prussia's military capabilities, it was actually Russia's withdrawal from the anti-Prussian coalition in 1762 (the "Miracle of the House of Brandenburg") which saved the Prussian state from possible painful territorial losses (Scott, 2013, 175; Clark, 2007, 209).

Hence, the end of the Seven Years' War promoted the Kingdom of Prussia to the rank of a European leader turning it into "one of the five great powers, which individually and collectively dominated the European states-system" (Scott, 2013, 153-154, 175; Dwyer, 2013, 2). Yet, the precarious periods of territorial expansions intertwined in the Frederick II's policy with periods of retrenchment, moderation and domestic consolidation (Scott, 2013, 165; Dwyer, 2013, 17, 19-20). It was necessary since Prussia's great power status was still flawed and "rested upon insufficient demographic and economic resources to support the obligations of its enhanced political stature, while its widely scattered

territories made it more vulnerable than any other major state” (Scott, 2013, 176). Besides, the experiences of the Seven Year’s War suggested Frederick II’s respect for the growing power of the Russian Empire (Scott, 2013, 175-176).

Consequently, the plans of the expansion in Royal Prussia returned to the forefront in Frederick II’s foreign policy and became one of its principal aims. It could both strengthen the economic and demographic basis of the Prussian power and solve the clear geopolitical problem of the Prussian Kingdom separated by the Polish territory (Scott, 2013, 155; Dwyer, 2013, 4). Expansion into Royal Prussia was a major part of Frederick II’s political intentions from the beginning of his reign. Yet, he faced both Russia’s interest in the Polish affairs since the Great Northern War and the rise of Russia’s power after the Seven Year’s War that had promoted the Russian Empire to the ranks of the European leadership. This made Catherine II’s Russia a potential rival to any of Prussia’s political vantage points in Northern and Eastern Europe, including those regarding the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Scott, 2013, 154, 175-176; Scott, 2013a, 186,190-191). In fact, Frederick II was afraid of Russia and its westward expansion. He was impressed by potential capabilities of the Russian Empire to be able to support its foreign policy aims, as well as an “ability to win victories by accepting losses on a scale that no other army could tolerate” (Scott, 2013a, 190-191). Hence, the annexation of Royal Prussia became fundamental in Frederick II’s political ambitions, however, it was impossible without either Russia’s consent or a direct confrontation with the Russian interests (Scott, 2013a, 186,190-191).

The new war with the Russian Empire was not in Frederick II’s plans since it risked the forming of a new Russian-Austrian alliance thus threatening the very existence of the exhausted Prussian state (Scott, 2013a, 189). Yet the political opportunity emerged after the death of Augustus III, the King of Poland, with the upcoming election of the Polish-Lithuanian ruler. Frederick II exploited Catherine II’s interest in the election of her favourite, Stanislaw Poniatowski, supporting the Russian plans for Poniatowski’s coronation (Kordel, 2017, 233). The support led to Prussia’s defensive alliance with Russia signed in 1764, which, in the Prussian political calculations, neutralised potential Russian-Austrian rapprochement and allowed Frederick II to have at least some influence on the Russian foreign policy (Scott, 2013a, 191; Kordel, 2017, 233). Furthermore, Russia’s successful war with the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 1760s, Austria’s fears of Russian expansion in the Balkans and tensions among the leading powers in East and Central Europe encouraged Frederick II to suggest a partition of some of the Polish-Lithuanian territories. Formally to keep the balance of power, the partition by Russia, Prussia and Austria served mainly the Prussian interests. The proposal faced Russia’s reluctance, yet the

Bar Confederation in Poland-Lithuania plotted against Russia's "protectorate" and a growing Petersburg's dissatisfaction with King Poniatowski (as the guarantor of the Russian interests) persuaded the Russian Empire to accept the Prussian suggestions (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 116-120; Kordel, 2017, 238-239).

The first partition of Poland in 1772 marked significant territorial gains for the Kingdom of Prussia. The seizure of the Polish area of Royal Prussia allowed the unification of formerly separated parts of the Prussian state and, in line with Scott, created "a solid wedge of Prussian territory stretching across central and northeastern Germany" (Scott, 2013a, 191-192). It solved, after three centuries, the initial geopolitical dilemmas emerging with the fall of the Teutonic Order to the Kingdom of Prussia's benefit.

Thus, the rise of the Hohenzollerns' state (Ducal Prussia, Brandenburg-Prussia and finally, the Kingdom of Prussia), its foreign policies and its relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth became an interesting case from the realist perspective of international relations. It is inspiring because it combines structural realist considerations, focusing on the hierarchy of power and consequences of a state's place in the international system as well as some classical and neoclassical realist considerations, which paid more attention to the leaders' political decisions, their perception of power and their political calculations. The policy of the "Great Elector", Frederick William and especially King Frederick II, seemed to be the best illustration of how both structural and domestic determinants were able to shape the final form of a state's foreign policy.

The Hohenzollerns' attempts to secure their succession in Ducal Prussia and then, the foreign policy of Brandenburg-Prussia (including Hohenzollerns' final sovereignty in the Duchy of Prussia) were in fact a policy of a second tier unit in the international system and a state much less powerful than its Polish-Lithuanian neighbour. It was an opportunistic (if not cynical) and a relatively passive strategy aimed at securing "maximum advantage" from the international situation and the course of international affairs (Shennan, 2004, 18-20). In the realist perspective, it was the policy that respected the systemic constraints but intended to take as much political benefit as possible in the existing systemic frames. It was an opportunistic but relatively coherent and continuous policy defined in terms of the state's (dynastic) interests, including political and territorial gains (Dwyer, 2013, 15-19). Its aim was to take any advantages available to increase the state's power and its international position while not risking a confrontation with its more powerful neighbours.

Thus, in order to be effective, this policy must have been conscious of the state's place in the hierarchy of power and its actual power. It had to be aware

of material resources at the state's disposal, the scarcity of which reduced the Kingdom of Prussia's political and military capabilities even during the Frederick II's period. It had to be able to identify the state's principal interests and all instruments available to achieve them. For the subsequent kings of Prussia this could increasingly be the military force, (Dwyer, 2013, 13-15) yet for Brandenburg-Prussia it was often political manoeuvring inside the frames imposed by the policy of more powerful neighbours and system-based constraints in general. It was the policy of joining and leaving alliances, in line with deliberations of the state's interest, which often failed when confronted with the game of interests of the system's leaders (Shennan, 2004, 27-29; Clark, 2007, 73-74).

The rule of Frederick II had somewhat changed this perspective together with the Kingdom of Prussia's rise to the status of a great European power. But even for Frederick II, the Prussian power was limited by the state's scarce material resources. The King followed the risky policy, which constantly tested the limits imposed on it by the international system but, again, the periods of expansion intertwined during his rules with the periods of retrenchment (Scott, 2013, 165; Dwyer, 2013, 17, 19-20). Besides, the policy of Frederick II revealed his prudence and awareness of limitations imposed by the system. Hence, in many cases, as the partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1772 illustrates, it was still the initial Prussian strategy of taking as many opportunities available in the course of international affairs as possible. Yet, in line with the classical and neoclassical realist perspective, the example of Frederick II illustrated that some personal features of the rulers could affect the determination with which this general strategy was implemented (Dwyer, 2013, 20-21).

The opportunist policy of taking "maximum advantage" from the international situation became effective in the Brandenburg-Prussia's (the Kingdom of Prussia's) relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, including the succession and annexation of Ducal Prussia and Royal Prussia. Its effectiveness with regard to other powers in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe, however, is more disputable. Besides, the effectiveness of the Prussian opportunism provokes a question of the international environment. It seems that two specific "composite states" in the vicinity – the Habsburg monarchy and the Polish-Lithuania Commonwealth (Koyama, 2007, 138-141; Evans, 2001, 28) – made this environment more favourable for the Brandenburg-Prussia's political manoeuvres than any other area. The gradual weakening of the Polish-Lithuanian state, its overextension and engagement in a number of costly wars was obvious in this regard and reduced the Polish-Lithuanian interest in the problems of Ducal Prussia. Yet, even the frames of the Holy Roman Empire and the context of the Hohenzollerns' relations with the

Emperor introduced some sense of community and respect for the Empire's traditions. It was less important for Frederic II, who challenged the Emperor's interests directly, but it had played a role in the policy of his predecessors (Scott, 2013, 159-160). Yet, more importantly, it means that the Hohenzollerns' relations with the Habsburgs could often result in the Emperor's disregard for the former interests but they did not threaten the very existence of the Brandenburg-Prussian state.

Thus, a less favourable international environment could face Brandenburg-Prussia with serious challenges. More decisive, powerful and aggressive neighbours could threaten the state's interests, its territorial integrity and even its sovereign existence. The history of Central and Eastern Europe could have looked quite differently if for example, instead of the Emperor and Poland-Lithuania, Brandenburg-Prussia engaged French and Russian power much earlier and more directly. This counterfactual conclusion may be disputable but, in the realist perspective, it still seems that the favourable environment made structural constraints of the Prussian foreign policy less pressing and Prussian political opportunism more applicable.

5. Ducal Prussia and the Political Interests of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

The Treaty of Cracow and Albrecht of Hohenzollern's feudal homage to the King of Poland, Sigismund I in 1525 formally solved the problem of the secularised Teutonic Order in Prussia. In a geopolitical context, however, it was a halfway solution, which made the political status of Ducal Prussia returning in different and usually critical moments in the Polish-Lithuanian history. The "Prussian Homage" seemed to satisfy the Polish political elites and some postulates of annexation faced the counterarguments of excessive costs, which the prolonged warfare could cause (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 50). Besides, the King of Poland as the feudal superior, retained some instruments of interference in the Ducal Prussia's affairs, in the form of royal commissioners, exerting some control at the final stage of Albrecht of Hohenzollern's rule (Kąkolewski, 2009, 269, 276, 280). Yet, King Bathory's consent on George Frederick's regency reduced the effectiveness of the royal supervision. Finally, as Igor Kąkolewski indicates, the Polish elites were convinced of the George Frederick's political weakness and the *szlachta* believed that the Hohenzollerns' rules in the Duchy in Prussia could easily be disciplined by royal commissioners (Kąkolewski, 2009, 277-278, 281). In a sense, they relied more on feudal symbols and ceremonies than the calculation of power and interests.

Nevertheless, power competition had not for a long time been a principal problem of Poland-Lithuania's relations with the Duchy of Prussia or the Electorate of Brandenburg. The power preponderance of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth over the Hohenzollerns was undisputable in the late sixteenth century. In 1525, Sigismund I and the Polish-Lithuanian elites rejected the Ducal Prussia's annexation prospect and were afraid of excessive costs of further war with the Teutonic Order. But fifty years later, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth engaged in a more costly (geopolitical) confrontation with Muscovy over Livonia on the northeastern coast of the Baltic Sea (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 91; Bues 2001, 75). It became paradoxical that the subsequent Polish kings left the case of Ducal Prussia to be solved in a symbolic (but ineffective) way of feudal dependence and they engaged in a costly geopolitical competition with more powerful neighbours in the periphery of the Polish-Lithuania state (Livonia, Moldova). The distance between the lands of Livonia and the new Polish capital, Warsaw, reached a thousand kilometres while the Duchy of Prussia bordered the heartland of the Polish Kingdom and was only about a hundred kilometres away. Finally, Poland-Lithuania reached the peak of its power at the beginning of the seventeenth century together with the intervention in Muscovy during the "Time of Troubles". The latter resulted in the capture of Moscow's Kremlin and a short episode of King Sigismund III's son, Wladyslaw, as Tsar (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 92; Sturdy, 2002, 220-221). The intervention ultimately failed yet again, no restraints or arguments of excessive costs (similar to those regarding Ducal Prussia) prevented the Polish-Lithuanian state from another costly and risky campaign.

Thus, the real problem in the Polish-Lithuanian attitude towards the Duchy of Prussia (and the House of the Hohenzollerns) was a clear shift in the interests of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility, as well as different geopolitical calculations and political concepts of the subsequent (elective) kings (Kąkolewski, 2009, 278). The Union of Lublin in 1569, which replaced the previous personal union and created a single Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, opened a way for the nobles' economic expansion into the fertile lands in the southeastern part of the state (Rus' and Ukraine), far away from the coast of the Baltic Sea (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 91; Kowalska-Pietrzak, 2015, 78). This made the problems of Prussia marginal in the *szlachta's* interests and their perception of the state affairs (Kąkolewski, 2009, 278).

At the same time, the case of Ducal Prussia and relations with the Hohenzollerns became secondary in the subsequent kings' political considerations. The Prussian issue returned in the policy of the Polish-Lithuanian rulers several times but it was usually a case of an *ad hoc* bargaining reflecting on much broader and more serious problems (Kąkolewski, 2009, 278-281). Besides,

the political concepts or personal and dynastic ambitions of different kings elected by the *szlachta* to the Polish throne differed and did not provide for a consistent direction of the state's foreign policy (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 93). They strengthened the *ad hoc* bargaining nature of the Polish-Lithuanian interests against Ducal Prussia. Hence, Sigismund Augustus II's engagement in the competition with Muscovy over Livonia (Bues, 2001, 61, 64), and the growing costs of the campaign, resulted in the King's more favourable approach to the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns' succession in Ducal Prussia and some initial promises in this regard. King Stephen Bathory's preparation to the new and costly campaign in Livonia several years later, and the empty royal treasure, made his attitude to the Hohenzollerns (and their offer of a financial support) even more favourable. It resulted in Bathory's consent on George Frederick's of Ansbach regency in Ducal Prussia (Kąkolewski, 2009, 280; Bues, 2001, 75). Finally, King Sigismund III's engagement in war with Moscow and ambitious plans of the tsardom for his son made the Duchy of Prussia a case of an *ad hoc* bargaining again and, in line with Lukowski and Zawadzki

the Vasas followed Bathory in making concessions to the Hohenzollerns over Ducal Prussia, until in 1618 Sigismundus III assigned the Duchy's reversion to the collateral Brandenburg line (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 93).

Nevertheless, the middle of the seventeenth century marked an obvious over-expansion in Polish-Lithuania foreign policy and a deep internal crisis of the state. In the realist perspective, the rise of the Polish-Lithuanian power faced a clear limitation. The state faced symptoms of overextension together with a number of wars waged with different enemies simultaneously as well as shortages of financial resources to cover political ambitions of the subsequent kings (Sturdy, 2002, 241-245; Butterwick, 2001, 16-17). The expansion into Moldova and Wallachia, formally fiefs of the Ottoman Empire, resulted in a significant defeat of the Polish-Lithuanian forces in the Battle of Cecora in 1620 and a Turkish invasion in 1621. The latter was finally repelled in the Battle of Chocim (1621), yet reduced the Polish-Lithuanian political initiative in this region. Besides, the southeastern provinces of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth faced regular and devastating raids of the Crimean Tatars, which proved the limited ability of the Polish-Lithuanian state to cope with this problem (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 92-93).

The Polish-Lithuanian expansion into the lands of Livonia put the state up against Muscovy but at the same time got exposed to the growing power of Sweden with its ambitions in the Baltic region. The policy of Sigismund III

and his pretensions to the Swedish throne made the confrontation of the Polish and Swedish interests inevitable and engaged the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the costly competition for the domination over the Baltic Sea region (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 93; Frost, 2001, 152, 160). It translated into a series of wars in the first half of the seventeenth century, which devastated the northern and northeastern part of the Commonwealth and brought about a loss of control over some Polish-Lithuanian territories (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 93). The Polish-Lithuanian engagement in the geopolitical struggle in the Baltic region was a response to the rising power of Sweden, yet it was still a bit confusing since the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had never actually developed a consistent maritime policy of its own nor did it establish a merchant fleet to promote its trade interests.

Furthermore, the Polish-Lithuanian state faced a domestic crisis. The model of the parliamentary rule of nobility, established in the late fifteenth century, became dysfunctional in the middle of the seventeenth century and could provide neither for effective administration nor resources for further military campaigns (Evans, 2001, 25, 31; Butterwick, 2001, 16-17). A series of privileges for the *szlachta* weakened the royal power and increased the political role of the nobles in the Parliament (*Sejm*). It introduced a number of formal checks on the King's power to protect the *szlachta* against the royal absolutism (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 84-85; Butterwick, 2001, 1-4, 7). Unfortunately, it did not provide for effective mechanisms of taxation, treasury keeping and a permanent military force. In line with Lukowski, Zawadzki, the nobles developed an extensive system of local diets and institutions which dealt with public affairs. Yet the *szlachta* were less interested "in building up the elaborate, centralised bureaucracies developing elsewhere in Europe" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 85). Finally, in line with Butterwick, "Fearing *absolutum dominium* the *szlachta* deprived the monarch of the ability to defend the Commonwealth, but only intermittently did it assume the responsibility itself" (Butterwick, 2001, 16).

In the same vein, the Parliament could serve the state's political interests, yet "The primary role of the *Sejm* was not necessarily to pass laws at all. It was to protect noble freedoms and to restore them where they had been infringed" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 90). This made any changes in the taxation or increase in the number of armed forces dependent on the *Sejm*'s random decisions and left the state with a small regular army paid from the treasury. The main military power of Poland-Lithuania in the periods of crisis remained the feudal levy of the nobility, which were mobilised at the king's call (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 85; Butterwick, 2001, 16-17). Further, the system was able to work more effectively at the beginning of the sixteenth century to protect the rights and interests of lower and middle nobles. Yet a century later, it was

dominated by the competing interests of magnates, the wealthiest nobles and the great landowners who benefited from the expansion into the fertile lands on the south-eastern borders of the state. Finally, the emergence of *liberum veto*, the right of an individual noble “to break the parliamentary session” (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 90), marked a growing paralysis of the *Sejm*’s proceedings and a demise of its political role in the state.

As a result, in the middle of the seventeenth century, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth faced three considerable and simultaneous threats. They decisively undermined the state’s power, revealed its domestic and international weakness and confirmed the status of the Duchy of Prussia, as well. It was the Cossacks’ uprising, under the command of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, which broke out in 1648 that added to the peril. The Cossacks were the troops established to counter the Tatar raids, yet a permanent lack of resources made it difficult for Poland-Lithuania to control this formation and “register” Cossacks as regular soldiers. This provoked tensions and frustration of those excluded from the paid service (Butterwick, 2001, 11; Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 94). Moreover, the magnates’ exploitation of the lands on the south-eastern borders of the state contributed to tensions with the local orthodox population and resulted in the Cossacks’ rebellions. The Khmelnytsky’s uprising was the largest among them. It revealed a deep weakness of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its institutions, devastated the south-eastern provinces of the Commonwealth and deprived the state of control over a part of its territory (Sturdy 2002, 237, 242-243).

Further, the intervention of the Tsardom of Russia supported the Khmelnytsky’s uprising, introducing Moscow as overlord over the rebellious territories. The advances of Muscovy army, which captured the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, brought about massive territorial and material losses (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 95-98; Sturdy, 2002, 214-216). Finally, “The Russian advance precipitated an invasion by Charles X of Sweden” (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 98) and faced Poland-Lithuania with the war with three powerful enemies simultaneously. It resulted in the fall of Warsaw and King John II’s escape to Silesia. The Swedish “Deluge” and the Russian invasion threatened the existence of the Polish-Lithuanian state and marked the first plans of the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 96; Sturdy, 2002, 214-216). Yet the brutal intervention of the Swedish and Muscovy forces provoked a massive national resistance. The fortune of Charles X reversed along with growing costs of the war in Poland-Lithuania and the emergence of an anti-Swedish coalition, including Denmark and the Emperor. The Polish-Lithuanian state survived and the Treaty of Oliva in 1660 confirmed the *status quo ante bellum* (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 98-99;

Shennan, 2004, 18-22). Yet, the period of 1648-1660 was devastating and disastrous for the Polish-Lithuanian state and the number of casualties and damages weakened its previous power considerably.

Thus, the problem of the Duchy of Prussia returned during the Swedish "Deluge" but in quite different circumstances. It was less the previous pattern of an *ad hoc* bargaining and generous concessions of the powerful Polish kings, the feudal superiors, to their Prussian fiefs. This time, the weakness of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth offered Frederick William a much better bargaining position, which the Elector used for his own political interests. Hence, in the realist perspective, the Polish King's abandonment of his feudal suzerainty over Ducal Prussia became an obvious price to pay for the Elector's change of political sides and joining the anti-Swedish coalition (Makiła, 2017, 106-108; Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 98). This was a harsh reality of the considerable drop in the Polish-Lithuanian power, its previous overextension and its lack of domestic reforms.

In consequence, in line with Bues, the feudal relationship of the Duchy of Prussia with the King of Poland "did not bring any increase of political power for the monarchy" (Bues, 2001, 67). The Treaty of Wehlau in 1657 and the Oliva Treaty three years later, dissolved and symbolically closed the period of the Ducal Prussia's feudal dependence and the Polish kings' undisputable power preponderance over their Hohenzollern fiefs (Makiła, 2017, 102-104). From the realist perspective, the loss of formal control over Ducal Prussia could be temporary and reversible if accompanied by successful retrenchment, reforms and the Commonwealth return to more active and consistent foreign policy. This, however, was not the Polish-Lithuanian case. John II Casimir Vasa's attempts to strengthen royal power in the Commonwealth and reform the state's political system failed, brought about the *szlachta's* resistance and a brutal civil war in 1666. The defeat of the royal army in the battle of Mątwy (1666) meant the collapse of his plans to strengthen the state's power against the "noble freedoms and liberties" and resulted in John II Casimir's abdication in 1668 (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 100-101; Frost, 2001, 150-151, 164).

The last accord of the independent Polish policy in regard to the Duchy of Prussia was John III Sobieski's reluctance to accept the Hohenzollerns' sovereignty in the former Prussian fiefdom and the King's attempts to receive political support of France for his plans to restore Polish control there. Further, Sobieski thought of establishing Ducal Prussia as a hereditary possession for his own family and dynastic plans (Bues, 2001, 67). Yet, considering the power relations in the region in the late seventeenth century, the concepts were hardly (if in any way) achievable. Besides, the King's plans met domestic opposition,

the *szlachta*'s general resistance to any dynastic concepts, and disrespect for Sobieski himself – as the “crowned magnate”, the king out of the royal family and one of the *szlachta*'s fellows “elevated above the rest” (Butterwick, 2001, 8; Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 84).

The beginning of the eighteenth century, the personal union with Saxony and Augustus II on the Polish throne marked the fall of the Commonwealth to the rank of a secondary regional actor dependent on the will of its more powerful neighbours. The Polish-Lithuanian participation in the Great Northern War, forced by the King's risky policy, resulted in the new invasion of the Swedish army and the devastation of the Commonwealth's territory. Further, the change in the regional balance of power and the rise of Russia after its victory over Sweden in the Battle of Poltava (1709) marked growing ambitions of Peter I “[...] to impose his protectorate over Poland, which was to remain a liberty addicted, unreformed Commonwealth, a massive security buffer along Russia's western border” (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 107). Finally, in line with Kordel, Augustus II's attempts at “emancipating himself” from the influence of the Russian emperor failed and translated to the Russian Emperor and the King of Prussia declaring to protect the nobility's “freedoms and privileges” in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Kordel, 2017, 211-214)

Consequently, the rise of the Kingdom of Prussia in the middle of the eighteenth century completely changed the previous geopolitical considerations and power calculations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's relations with the Hohenzollerns. It was now Royal Prussia, the Polish province, which separated two parts of the Prussian Kingdom, which became an obvious objective of the Prussian expansion (Kordel, 2017, 213-214). The Russians protecting the “freedoms and privileges” of the Polish nobility and the role of the Commonwealth as the geopolitical “buffer” for the Russian Empire moderated Frederick II's foreign policy and delayed the Kingdom of Prussia's annexation of the Polish coast of the Baltic Sea (Scott, 2013a, 186, 190-191). The way international relations played out at the end of the 1760s, however, helped Frederick II to implement his plans. The Polish-Lithuanian State, which had lost its power a century earlier, remained a passive observer and had no credible capabilities to prevent the loss of their Royal Prussia.

Thus, seen from the realist perspective, the example of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its relations with the Duchy of Prussia is an interesting case of a state which retained (for a long time) a clear preponderance of power but remained unable to develop a coherent attitude to its Prussian fiefdom. It is the case of an *ad hoc* and inconsistent policy of subsequent Polish kings and the lack of a more general strategy for the State's presence on the Baltic

coast. It is the *szlachta's* misperception of power, faith in feudal symbols and limited understanding of consequences of the gradual emancipation of the Hohenzollerns in Ducal Prussia that accounted for the failure.

Further, the case of Poland-Lithuania is an interesting example of the powerful international actors dynamically losing their power but remaining unable to implement the effective strategy to stop this decrease. It is the case of the obvious Polish-Lithuanian overextension and a growing ineffectiveness of its political system, which made an effective revision of the State's foreign policy difficult. Finally, it is an illustration of the consequences, which the State's fall in the hierarchy of power in the international system could eventually bring about. The gradual emancipation of the Duchy of Prussia ruled by the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns was obvious in this regard and the final reversion of the power relations between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Kingdom of Prussia, symbolised by the latter's annexation of the Polish coast on the Baltic Sea (Royal Prussia), illustrated the scale of the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian power.

6. Conclusion: the Duchy of Prussia – a Geopolitical Mistake in the Policy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth?

The conflict of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Teutonic Order became a fundamental political question for both states in the late fourteenth century and was a serious argument for their personal union. Yet, despite a spectacular victory over the Order's army in the Battle of Grunwald (1410), it was, in line with Lukowski and Zawadzki again, won "but never truly resolved" (Lukowski, Zawadzki, 2006, 45). The inconclusive war a century later, the impact of the Reformation and the ultimate secularisation of the Teutonic Order in 1525 meant a practical annexation of a part of its territory (Polish Prussia) and the emergence of the Duchy of Prussia as the fiefdom of the Polish kings. The latter remained in the hands of the Order's last Grand Master, Albrecht of Hohenzollern, but this became acceptable for the Polish *szlachta* interested in political and economic expansion into the eastern and south-eastern areas of the Polish-Lithuanian State.

Yet, if seen from the realist perspective, the Prussian case was solved halfway. The *ad hoc* and inconsistent attitude of the subsequent Polish kings towards their Prussian fiefdom made the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns' attempts to take control over Ducal Prussia unavoidable. Their political strategy of opportunism and taking "maximum advantage" of the course of international affairs (Shennan, 2004, 3-5, 18-20) was not surprising, either. The preponderance of

the Polish power over the Prussian fiefs had been obvious for more than a century and the fate of the Duchy of Prussia was in the Polish kings' hands. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, however, was unable to develop a clear policy towards the Duchy of Prussia and the Hohenzollerns' opportunism in general (Kąkolewski, 2009, 277). The Prussian case became secondary in the Polish-Lithuanian political concepts. The Polish *szlachta* believed in the power of feudal symbols, misunderstood the potential consequences of Prussian emancipation and overlooked the changing power relations in East-Central Europe. This, in the realist perspective, was a clear political mistake. The obvious overextension of the Polish-Lithuanian State in the middle of the seventeenth century made the Prussian case returning in much worse political and international circumstances while the dynamic rise of the Kingdom of Prussia's power a century later, changed the power relations in the region considerably and resulted ultimately in Poland-Lithuania's fall.

Hence, even if it is difficult to avoid a "hindsight bias" when considering the historical processes, the lack of consequent and consistent policy towards Ducal Prussia, limited interest and a general misunderstanding of the Prussian problems became obvious political mistakes in the Polish-Lithuanian policy. It proves the general realist conclusion that a state unable to define its fundamental interests and adjust its policy to changes in the international system accordingly risks a loss of its power and control over problems considered initially as secondary and marginal.

Further, the mistakes in the Polish-Lithuanian policy in regard to Ducal Prussia had some obvious geopolitical consequences. The case of the Duchy of Prussia had become secondary and peripheral in the political considerations of the *szlachta*. It was accompanied by random and inconsistent (if not lacking) maritime policy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Yet, for Brandenburg-Prussia the problem of its territory separated by the Polish lands (Royal Prussia) became fundamental. This made the Hohenzollerns' expansion into Polish Royal Prussia inevitable, irrespective of the actual role played by the Baltic Sea coast in the Polish foreign policy. The expansion was limited as long as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth retained its power preponderance over the Brandenburg-Prussian neighbour. Yet, again, the rise of the Kingdom of Prussia in the middle of the eighteenth century made the seizure of Royal Prussia its obvious political aim and left the weakened Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth unable to prevent it. It proves that some regions may be considered by a state's elite as secondary and peripheral, yet it is not the elites' perception, which decides about the region's actual geopolitical significance. Finally, it confirms that a powerful state, which loses its power and is unable to offer a concise strategy of retrenchment makes its fall even more painful.

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Historical Background and Specificity of the Kaliningrad Region in Europe – a Local Perspective Outlook

Benon Gaziński

Abstract

The initial assumption of this Chapter was an insight into the relations of the Kaliningrad Region and the European Union from a local perspective focused on former East Prussian territory, currently being part of Poland, Russia and Lithuania. The author is convinced that the historical legacy of these lands is an important factor of understanding contemporary political, economic and social realities of the Region.

In the first part, some aspects of the past civilization of native Prussians are discussed – those affecting the formation of the identity of contemporary residents. Long-term resistance to the conquests by the Teutonic Knights facilitated the formation of statehood structures in the areas of the present Baltic Republics.

In the second part, covering the periods of the Teutonic Knights and German Prussia, attention is paid to the European significance of Königsberg as a centre of Lutheran thought and later in the rise of Imperial Germany.

The last two parts cover the period of the Second World War and the post-war period – the destructions as a result of the war and the first post-war years are highlighted as well as the complexity of internal and international relations of the contemporary Kaliningrad Region.

The author's personal thoughts and opinions have been formulated as "Concluding remarks".

Keywords: Kaliningrad Region, Warmia and Mazury Region, European Neighbourhood Policy

1. Introduction

The author was invited to write this chapter on mutual relations between the European Union and the Kaliningrad Region. In the draft content, it is placed

at the very end of the intended book, before its last section about a cooperation in science and education. Each of the author's work on the part was commissioned to them separately, so the content of individual chapters of the book – while working on this part – is not yet known. Most of the authors of this publication have been dealing with the Kaliningrad issues for many years. Moreover, they are known nationwide as experts on these matters. The situation of this chapter's author is different. As far as it can be accepted that the issues of the European Union (EU) are quite well known to him, because he has been dealing with them for about 20 years, he has not yet dealt with either the political problems of Russia or the Kaliningrad Region itself. However, he is not a newcomer to the realities of contemporary Russia, as he has participated several times in international conferences at three different Russian universities as well as travelled around Russia, including the Altai Krai in Siberia, and visited Kaliningrad several times.

The circumstances discussed here as well as the thematic scope of the book being underway – authors taking up an extensive spectrum of issues – influenced the concept of this contribution. It has the form of a subjective synthesis whose vital element is – according to the sentence *'historia magistra vitae est'* – a historical perspective that goes back to the distant past, because it largely exerts its influence on the shaping of the present. Opinions and conclusions constitute an important section of this work, presented in its final part. It should be emphasized that they express the views of the author and for their content the editors of the volume and its publisher assume no responsibilities. They provide, the author hopes, an incentive to make a deep insight into the present day and the future of the Kaliningrad Region – Russian Federation – EU relationship, a reflection in which there is room for the clash of various opinions, including polemical ones.

2. A Turbulent Story of the Land and its People. Native Prussians

The Kaliningrad Region belongs to one of 89 administrative units of the Russian Federation. It is the most north-western part of this country, which covers less than 1 per cent of its area and below 0.7 per cent of the total population. Therefore, this area can be compared with a Polish province, the one just over the border, Warmia and Mazury (Table 15.1). Besides, it is an area that has played a disproportionately significant role in the political history of Europe. It continues to play such a role owing to the fact that it is surrounded by the territories of Poland and Lithuania, EU and NATO Member States – the distance to the neighbouring capitals: Warsaw, Vilnius and Riga is shorter than to

Russia's mainland (close to 600 km) not referring to Moscow, around 1200 km (Palmowski, 2013, 27-28). The stormy and tragic history of this land of concern can be roughly divided into three separate periods:

- Prussian times¹ (pre-Teutonic) – until the thirteenth century;
- nearly 700 years of the Teutonic-Prussian-German presence;
- post-Second World War division of Prussia between the territories of Poland the USSR/Russia and Lithuania.

The collapse of the 'thousand-year-old' Third Reich, after only a dozen or so years of its existence, meant a dramatic break in the cultural continuity of the German presence in this part of Europe. No other land belonging to Germany had experienced such a dramatic fate as the total destruction of East Prussia.

The history of Prussians, one of the Baltic peoples, is lost in the depths of history, because they did not leave a written legacy. Therefore, the 'second-hand', quite scanty accounts do not necessarily impress with impartiality.

The first known records, in which the Balts are mentioned, are the '*Germanica*' put down by the Roman historian Tacitus – they were described as hardworking and peace-loving people. This account corresponds to an entry written a few centuries later (eleventh century) by Adam of Bremen, describing them as a 'human tribe' (*homines humanissimi*) rescuing sailors from pirate oppression and from wrecked ships.

The very origin of the name 'Prussia' has never been explained sufficiently – the text written in the ninth century includes the words: Brus, Borussi, Brutheni, which are the source of today's Borussia. The Prussians did not create statehood structures; their highest authority was a tribal rally.

The beginning of the end of the Prussian civilization was the formation of state structures in neighbouring Poland. The failed mission and death of Saint Adalbert occupies a significant place in the Christian tradition. It is worth noting that he had initially been received as a guest. His killing was caused by a lack of respect and a violation of the religious traditions of the people among whom he stayed. In the cultural context of those years, this is not surprising for they remind us of the severe punishments for breaking the rules of fasting set by Polish kings. Even today, in Islamic circles, those departing from faith in Mohammed can be punished with death. This event contributed to the creation and consolidation of the 'black legend' about the barbarism of the Prussians, very useful as an excuse for ruthless fighting with them, until their extermination (Morys-Twardowski, 2018). During the period of the breakup of

1 In Polish, there is a clear distinction between native inhabitants of these lands (Prusowie) and newcomers who settled after them (Prusacy). There is no such distinction in English (only one term is used: the Prussians).

the regions, the Polish prince Konrad Mazowiecki brought the Teutonic Order (1226) to Poland as a support against struggles on the border between the lands under his rule. There was a long period of fights as Teutonic knights consistently built the foundations of their state in the conquered lands. As a result, monastic Prussia arose then with their capital in Malbork (Marienburg).

Refugees from Prussia found shelter in neighbouring Poland, the contemporary trace being family names 'Prus' and its derivatives. The Prussian language, as is assumed, got extinct in the seventeenth century. However, many of its traces are preserved in geographical names, including sites in Warmia and Mazury. An example of one of the few relics of their material culture is the stone named 'Baba', a sculpture in the courtyard of the Olsztyn Castle. The word 'Borussia' is an excellent example of the fact that modicums of Prussian tradition connect Poles and Germans together. It is the name of the Association of Cultural Community in Olsztyn and a well-known football club from Dortmund, far away from this city.

The tragic history of the extinction of Prussia can be an excellent indication of the importance of integration against opposing external threats. Maintaining their separation turned out to be impossible in a collision with a better organized and technologically dominating civilization. Other Baltic peoples avoided this fate, however. The little-known aspect of the brave and long-term resistance of Prussians to the Teutonic Knights is that the other Balts gained the necessary time, enabling the emergence of the later Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which – as a result of Christianization and a political union – became part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This is the lasting impact of a lost civilization on the history of today's Europe.

3. Teutonic – Prussian – German Times

The Teutonic Knights founded a number of cities and castles, among them: Chełmno (Culm, Kulm), Toruń (Thorn), Braniewo (Braunsberg, originally Brunsberg), Lidzbark Warmiński (Heilsberg), Frombork (Frauenburg), Działdowo (Soldau) and Olsztyn (Allenstein) (today's Poland), Klaipėda (Memel) (today's Lithuania) and Königsberg (today's Kaliningrad of the Russian Federation). The development of the Teutonic State, although disturbed by the defeat at the Battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg (1410) and the subsequent capture of Malbork (Marienburg), led to the transfer of the capital to Königsberg in 1457 and remained as such until the end of the Order and its transformation into a secular state.

The history of this town dates back to 1255, when a small castle was built there. Several years later, this settlement obtained city rights. The name of the city, Königsberg, does not come, as one might suppose, from German colonizers, but it was probably named in honour of the Czech King Otokar II (Jasiński, 1994, 12). The great development of the city and the increase of its importance began in 1525, when Grand Master Albrecht Hohenzollern, the last chief of the Teutonic State, became the ruler of the secularised state, Ducal Prussia.

The Polish-Prussian mutual relations were regulated by a treaty concluded on 8th April 1525 and in force until 1657. According to its provisions, in the event of the extinction of the Hohenzollerns, Prussia was to fall to the Polish Crown. Only a few weeks later, the transition to Lutheranism was a clear violation of the terms of that treaty. There were many such departures. So, King Jan Kazimierz (John Casimir) – for the support in his efforts for the throne of Poland – resigned, among others from the powers of an appeal instance in the case of Prussian complaints. The final breaking of the bonds of dependence on Poland was the result of the Welawa – Bydgoszcz treaties (1657), which recognized the sovereignty of the Prussian Duchy. Albrecht's tribute paid to the King on the Cracow market on 10th April 1525 commemorated in the painting 'Prussian Homage' by Jan Matejko, makes it an important period in the Polish historical tradition.

Only less than two months after this event, the Duke ordered to hang posters on the doors of churches about the order to preach the 'pure words of God' or else the Lutheran belief. Thus, Ducal Prussia became the first Lutheran state in the history of Europe, and its capital – a shelter for religious refugees. The founding of the 'Albertina' University in Königsberg in 1544 was an event on a European scale. It was the second oldest university in Polish territories after the Jagiellonian University of Cracow. The university became an outstanding centre of Lutheran thought throughout Europe, and its most prominent professor was Immanuel Kant, whose name has been given to the University in Kaliningrad (Małek, 2009, 59-60, 231-234).

Since the fourteenth century, Königsberg had been a significant centre of the Polish population. The manifestations of this are the creation of the Polish parish of St. Nicolaus a few years after the transition to a new religion and establishment of the Polish seminary at the Faculty of Theology of the University, aimed at educating clergy to work in Masuria. It is also worth mentioning that Königsberg became an important Polish language publishing centre (Jasiński, 1994, 56-80).

The solemn coronation of Frederick I for the King of Prussia was the event that opened a new chapter in its history. One of his successors, Frederick II,

called the Great, laid the foundations for the construction of a military, highly centralized state, which can be described as enlightened absolutism. The importance of Prussia was strengthened by social reforms: the introduction of public education principles, the abolition of peasant serfdom, and concern for the development of science and culture. Its strength was also demonstrated by a strong, well-trained army (the 'Prussian drill'). Hence, Prussia performed a large role in the unification of Germany. In 1871, after the victory in the Franco-Prussian war, the German Empire was proclaimed. King of Prussia, then Wilhelm I, was also the Emperor of Germany. Berlin was chosen for the capital of the new state. In the context of the twentieth century changes, it is worth noting that in 1900 the three largest cities of the Empire were: Berlin, Wrocław (Breslau) and Cologne. The seventh place was occupied by Königsberg, the sixteenth by Gdańsk (Danzig), and the nineteenth by Poznań (Posen).

The German Empire collapsed in the autumn of 1918 – Wilhelm II abdicated and, in February 1919, the Weimar Republic was proclaimed. Despite the loss of significant parts of the territory for Poland and Lithuania, Prussia retained a wide range of internal independence, with its own government, and maintained a dominant position in the Reich. Konrad Adenauer, the mayor of Cologne in those years, felt it as a threat. It is worth adding that as the President of the Prussian State Council (*Preußischer Staatsrat*) in 1920-1933, he had two chances of becoming German chancellor, which he was not too interested in (Gaziński, 2018, 50).

The issue of the future of East Prussia was one of the items on the agenda of the Paris Peace Conference. Representing Poland's interests at this conference, Roman Dmowski opted for Warmia and Mazury to fall to Poland, and the Königsberg region was to be, like the later Free City of Gdańsk, an international protectorate (Gaziński, 2019, 301-313). However, the provisions of the Versailles Treaty were different, which less than twenty years later became one of the reasons for the outbreak of another world war. Poland was granted the district of Działdowo, while in Warmia, Mazury and Powiśle (July 1920) a plebiscite took place (a choice: Poland or Prussia), as a result of which several communes fell to Poland. Owing to an uprising, supported by a regular army, the Klaipėda District controlled by the League of Nations joined Lithuania in 1923.

After Hitler had taken power, Prussia lost its previous separateness and became one of the provinces (*Land*) of the Third Reich. Full power in East Prussia was exercised by Gauleiter Erich Koch – sentenced after the war to death and died in prison in Barczewo (Wartenburg) in 1986 (Sakson, 2011, 42-65). Already in December 1933, the construction of the highway between Königsberg and Elbląg (Elbing) was inaugurated. The first of its lanes was put to use in 1938; the first undertaking of its kind in the Third Reich, in one of the

poorest provinces in all of Germany. The undertaken activities, referred to as the 'Koch Plan' reduced unemployment and led to an improvement in living conditions.

After the outbreak of the war, the Ciechanów District (including Działdowo) and the Suwałki region were incorporated into East Prussia, and later the Białystok region was subjected to the supervision. The rank of the province was also strengthened by the fact that Gauleiter Koch held office of the Plenipotentiary of the Third Reich for Belarus. Labour shortages, resulting from military conscripts, were alleviated by the work of approximately 240,000 forced labourers. But it is impossible to foresee the possible further development of East Prussia, as the Second World War put an end to its existence.

4. New Territorial Divisions and the Soviet Kaliningrad Region

At the beginning of the talks of the 'Big Three' coalition, the post-war division of Prussia favourable to Poland was considered. However, under Stalin's pressure, it was abandoned and new arrangements were agreed upon, less favourable for Poland. The territorial division between Poland and the USSR took place as a result of the handover protocol which, however, did not specify exactly the boundary line. This circumstance undoubtedly facilitated the Soviet arbitrary violations of the border, including in particular taking over of the two county (powiat) towns: Pruska Hława (today: Bagrationovsk) and Gierdawa (Zheleznodorozhny). Polish postulates were ostentatiously ignored. The final agreement on the border was adopted only in 1958 (Wojnowski, 2006, 7-14).

In similarly dramatic circumstances the eastern borders of Prussia were shaped: "either the Klaipėda Land, by agreement, will voluntarily join Germany or the development of the situation will lead to armed action against Lithuania" – reads an ultimatum issued by the Germans to Lithuania. Lithuanian soldiers were withdrawn on 22nd March 1939. One day later, German troops marched into Klaipėda and – on board the battleship 'Deutschland' – Adolf Hitler arrived from Königsberg. Western powers, formally guaranteeing the '*status quo*', did not react.

The East Prussian operation of the Third Front of the Belarusian Red Army began in January 1945. Fierce assault on Königsberg began on 6th April and after a few days it was captured.

The German defeat began a completely new chapter in the history of the city. At first, its future seemed to be unclear. This episode is little known – several thousand local Poles, mainly former forced labourers, in the hope that the city would fall to Poland, already in April organized the Citizens' Guard and

the City Council. Not much later they began to leave for new Poland (Jasiński, 1994, 262-265). Such expectations were not groundless. The issue of the post-war future of East Prussia was repeatedly raised by the London-based Polish Government in Exile, consistently opting for their inclusion into Poland, together with Königsberg, which would mean the final liquidation of the 'corridor' separating the two parts of Prussia and causing sparkling conflicts (Wrzesiński, 1994, 338-372). The Klaipėda Region – significantly enlarged as compared to that before the war – returned to Lithuania. In March 1946, the Soviet authorities offered hand over the Königsberg area to the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, but in Vilnius this opportunity was not taken.

In April 1946, a new district was created, initially called Königsberg Region, but in July that year it was changed into the Kaliningrad Region; along with the city name alteration.

In 1945, the authorities of socialist Poland used the name 'East Prussia', skilfully playing a card of anti-German sentiments – the destruction of proofs of German legacy enjoyed the support of the population on both sides of the border of former East Prussia. A change in the attitude of the societies, both in Warmia and Mazury as well as in the Kaliningrad Region, was brought only by the events of the 1990s (Sakson, 2011, 762-763).

Breaking the borders of East Prussia, Soviet troops entered the Third Reich territory – those lands were therefore treated as a war loot (трофейное) and a place of retaliation for war crimes committed by the Germans. The first weeks were a period of particularly acute rapes and robberies. These were experiences of both Königsberg and, although on a milder scale, Olsztyn. The Königsberg castle could be a symbol of methodical removal of traces of the German past. Despite the opposition of some of the local elite, including the chief city architect, Vladimir Chodakovskij, it was decided in Moscow in 1965 that its remains would be demolished. Today, a kind of 'monument of Communism'² haunts the city centre – the unfinished edifice of the House of Soviets whose construction on top of the castle ruins took over 15 years (Sakson, 2011, 313-318).

The local population of East Prussia shared the fate of the lost homeland. The approaching military front caused organised departures and spontaneous escapes to the West, with many thousands of victims, drowning in the breaking

2 This was the term used by an accidentally met person, enquired by the Author during his first stay in Kaliningrad. An interesting fact is the existence of the architectural trace in Olsztyn, referring to the non-existent castle. This is the tower of the church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, surpassing those of St. Mary's Church in Cracow. The opening of the church was graced by the celebration of the five hundred fiftieth anniversary of Olsztyn in 1903, and its design is considered the most outstanding work of the architect from Königsberg, Friedrich Heitmann.

ice of the Vistula Spit and the depths of the Baltic on board ships sent to the bottom by submarines³. Particularly tragic was the plight of German civilians in the conquered Königsberg, forced to slave work with hunger food rations; there are testimonies of acts of cannibalism (Sakson, 2011, 169-170).

Even in Olsztyn, where such drastic situations did not occur, the local authorities relocated the remnants of the German population to inferior flats or a separate part of the city, and issued an order to wear a white armband with the letter 'N' (in Polish '*Niemiec*' meaning German) on the left shoulder which, however, never entered into force, probably for fear that it would be like a reminder of the German recent occupation.

Both in the Kaliningrad and Olsztyn Regions in the first post-war years, there were deportations of local people to Germany and voluntary outflows; also in the later years. Almost depopulated areas were occupied by new settlers – a forced replacement of population on an unprecedented scale throughout Europe⁴.

The first settlers of the later Kaliningrad Region were the military, both of the land army and navy as the first administration was constituted by the organs of martial and military authority. The demilitarized soldiers also settled here because the authorities offered a number of privileges to encourage them. Another quite extensive category of new inhabitants were international former prisoners of Nazi camps, the POWs and forced labourers, often with nowhere to return.

In the period from May 1945 to August 1946, around 40-50 thousand various specialists, party officers and security services, together with their families, came here, delegated or directed by administrative orders of various institutions, to take over and secure properties and launch basic public structures, such as educational and health care facilities or border protection. The population mosaic was complete with groups of prisoners enjoying amnesty and deportees of penal colonies (such centres were established in the Bagrationovsk and Sovetsk zones).

3 The best known is the sinking of the 'Wilhelm Gustloff' – about 9343 victims, the highest number in the history of world's navigation. As many as 10,274 people travelled on their last journey on board of two other ships 'Goya' and 'Steuben' (Sasin, 2011, 111-112). In the novel by the Nobel Prize Winner from Gdańsk (Danzig), one can find a literary picture of the '*Wilhelm Gustloff*' tragedy (Grass, 2002).

4 The share of German population in the Kaliningrad Region 1989 was estimated at 0.2 per cent (Sakson, 2011, 301) and in Warmia and Mazury (in 2011) – at only 0.15 per cent (*Ludność w województwie ...* 2013, 86).

For several reasons, the Kaliningrad Region was a convenient area for the implementation of a social engineering project aimed at creating a new type of man, the 'Soviet Man', which was a utopian aspiration of those years:

- negation of the existing heritage and its destruction ('clearing the foreground');
- replacement of population to weaken earlier social bonds (but not behavioural control by the state apparatus);
- a large share of younger generation among settlers, more susceptible to ideological 'suffocation';
- relatively low level of education of newcomers, often coming from rural areas.

The state was an exclusive donor of material goods, hence the inhabitants were more dependent on it than anywhere else. This was confirmed by the press at that time: "From the very beginning, Soviet people in the Kaliningrad Oblast were free from the bonds of private property and means of production" (according to the German-language *'Neue Zeit'* from 1948, number 29, cited after Sakson, 2011, 293). It is not surprising that in the District the ratio of the Communist Party membership belonged to the highest in the entire Soviet Union.

The policy of total atheisation in the Region was conducted with aggressiveness not common even by Soviet standards – it was one of the few regions in which no Orthodox Church was active.

New settlers encountered a level of material culture that they had often never met before. The devastation of former German property and its frequent removal to the interior of the USSR and the failures of imposed forced collectivization were among the basic factors causing the economic degradation of the Oblast. Its isolation from other parts of the country had also unfavourable impact (Sakson, 2011, 294-295).

The individual nature of the Kaliningrad Region, in particular its geographical location and population specificity, predestined it naturally to perform strategic defence functions and as a tool for achieving geo-political objectives – a kind of continuation of the role that the region had already played in Prussian times. Its population was surrounded by other nations – from the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Lithuania; the inhabitants of the latter, for reasons historically understandable, were not fond of the Russians.

As early as July 1946, the Region was closed – entry (and exit) was allowed only with special passes. Despite the propaganda declared friendship, for the Polish community on the other side of the tightly guarded state border, it was something foreign, if not sinister. Until 1955, there was no border crossing point.

The local border cooperation was initiated in 1956, when 200 persons took part in the inter-exchange. The first cross-border cooperation plan was approved a year later. By 1961, nearly 700 people had participated in such official meetings. In the following years, more sophisticated forms were undertaken: visits of journalists, people of culture, sports and science, including the first stay at the Kaliningrad University of scientists from the University of Agriculture in Olsztyn, the predecessor of the current University of Warmia and Mazury – scientific cooperation was initiated between both centres.

Trade cooperation was similarly modest. The goals of those contacts were dominated by ideological considerations and propaganda. In fact, there was an additional effect, unintended by the officials. Met by the Russian kindness and friendly reception, the Poles got rid of earlier prejudices. On the other hand, the Russians were impressed by the scope of liberties on the other side of the border (*“Запад уже здесь – the West is already here”*). And that is how the beginnings of further good neighbourly relations arose, which could be continued in completely different and more favourable political conditions.

5. The Russian Federation and New Perspectives

The borders of the Kaliningrad Region were shaped by the historical events as outlined in this work. Despite their artificial course, especially in the Polish part, the encompassed land is exceptionally supplied by nature with rich natural resources. In such a small space, amounting to only 62 per cent of the Warmia and Mazury Region (Voivodeship) area, about 90 per cent of the world's amber resources are hidden. Crude oil, rock salt, peat, brown coal and mineral waters are also of economic importance (Dudo, 1995, 66-82). The Region has several other development advantages – vicinity of Western and Eastern European markets, favourable climatic conditions, valuable natural areas⁵, and proximity to European communication routes (Sawicki, 2013, 26-33).

Despite these favourable predispositions, the Region gives way to the level of social and economic development of the Russian average. This persistent distance is even larger compared to its closest neighbours, taking even no account of other, more prosperous countries of the Baltic Sea. This is a factor – more or less intense, depending on other changing conditions – influencing the situation inside the Region, its relationships with the decision-making centre in Moscow and European relations.

5 The Curonian Spit in 2000 was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The considerations undertaken in this work lead to the conclusion that the basic reason for these difficulties are inefficiencies of socio-economic solutions and, moreover, their frequent changes and inconsistencies. A sinister shadow marks also the past – improper use, even destruction, of post-German properties and the failure to adapt new residents to live in conditions different from those previously known to them. The period of the ‘closed fortress’, lasting until the collapse of the Soviet Union, was also not conducive to using the Region’s potential.

The bold reforms undertaken by Mikhail Gorbachev and largely continued by Boris Yeltsin did not bring, unfortunately, similar achievements as in Poland. Social frustrations, caused by worsening living conditions, brought Vladimir Putin to power. Like for his two predecessors, the idea of a ‘shared European home’ was not initially alien to him. It would remain a matter of an open question, whether it was only a skilful game of appearances, or his efforts were misunderstood and rejected by Western politicians⁶.

The course of events frightened Western leaders. Lack of trust, understood after decades of hostility, appeared on both sides. In 1991, the European Council turned to the Commission to prepare a framework of a draft agreement with Russia and countries emerging from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The negotiations lasted for 1.5 years. In June 1994, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement was concluded for ten years, with an option of extension. It became effective only 3.5 years later as the first irritations in mutual relations arose, caused by the war in Chechnya⁷.

As a result of the concluded agreements, Russia was at first covered by the General System of Preferences (GSP) trade facilitation, and then by the TACIS (Technical Assistance for the Community of Independent States) programme.

6 In the book under the eloquent title ‘About Russia in a different way’, its author explicitly states: “Western politicians and analysts could not believe in the extent of their success that behind the fall of the USSR at the end of 1991 there was no other bottom [...] that the Soviet Union hid something, pretended something, and is in fact preparing for retaliation”. And he concludes: “The USSR was not defeated, but withdrew from the war in the name of ‘new political thinking’, which was to open the era of constructive international cooperation [...] the great mistake of American policy was to treat this vision as naive or deliberately fraudulent”. It is worth adding that the same accusation of misunderstanding Russia at the time and distrust is extended by this author to Polish authorities” (Walicki, 2019, 34, 42, 265).

7 Both Russia and the Union are parties involved in international crises, but in a different way. Russia is able to play them skilfully to strengthen its influence. It usually does not support EU efforts – the tactical interests of the parties are different. Despite these, the low effectiveness of the Union on the international arena is not due to Moscow’s counteraction, but because the Union has not yet pursued a coherent foreign policy, and its economic potential does not translate into political results (Kaczmarek, 2009, 71-107).

For such a cooperation, regional initiatives became very important (Bodio, 2005, 30-37, 116-133).

Finland's Northern Dimension initiative must be seen in the broader context of Baltic Europe, including regions outside the European Union. A number of institutions are involved in the integration processes, the most important of which are: the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Organization of Baltic Ports (BPO), the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC), the Baltic Association of Regional Development Institutions (BARDI), the Conference on Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSC) and the Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea Programme (VASAB). The Kaliningrad Region has increasingly been involved in these projects (Palmowski, 2013, 24-272).

6. The European Union's Attitude Towards the Kaliningrad Region

So far, the European Union has not worked out mechanisms to reach a unified stand on international issues as too many differences of positions and interests are maintained between Member States. These discrepancies are skilfully scored by the Kremlin. The tactical approach of Russian authorities, which quite often brings the assumed results, is to work out arrangements outside the EU structures (for example, negotiating with major states such as Germany or France).

In the context of these considerations, the great prerogatives of the President of Russia are worth underlying. As compared, despite the new solutions introduced in the Treaty of Lisbon, such as the permanent President of the European Council or the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Union still suffers from a lack of institutional tools allowing for an efficient and quick response to the ongoing events, both in the world scale and in Russia.

In the common practice of governments, the international relations of regions are shaped at the central level. In the case of Russia, despite the federal character of the state, this regularity is further strengthened by the drift to centralization during the Putin era and the Kremlin's distrust of the actions of local authorities in Kaliningrad.

Therefore, the European Union behaves with great restraint in the separate treatment of the Kaliningrad Region, solving the issues of bilateral relations through the Kremlin, an attitude welcomed by the Russian authorities. Local authorities, both in Kaliningrad and the Baltic region, have been striving to explore the existing spaces of freedom to develop grassroot cooperation. The first enlargement of the Union in 1995 became such an impulse. As

a result, the border of Russia with Finland, extending over a distance of 1300 km, had emerged. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that an initiative of the 'Northern Dimension' was launched by Finland. The following enlargement of 2004 occurred in a much more complicated international situation and the Kaliningrad Region has become an enclave surrounded by the EU territory. For this reason, difficult issues such as visas and transit arose and a new prospect of the cooperation as well.

Spatial isolation from Russia is conducive to greater openness of the population – after all, the Region is much closer to Gdańsk or Berlin than to Moscow. In this Region, the impact of agencies and institutions operating in the Baltic area as well as international ones can also be noticed more clearly. One of the difficulties in pursuing EU policy is to distinguish which Moscow's declarations are true, and which are a game of appearances, a curtain to conceal real goals. In its policy, Moscow uses skilful manoeuvres and cunning play of the 'American card'. In order to understand the twists and turns of Russian policy, internal factors such as power changes in the Kremlin and Kaliningrad, inner crises and international issues (such as the terrorist attack on 11th September 2001) must also be taken into account. In a long-run perspective, one can observe a permanent divergence – the local authorities in Kaliningrad strive for closer integration, which raises resistance and abstinence in the Kremlin.

In understanding the peculiarities of the Region, it is necessary to take into consideration the distinctness of the historical legacy – a trend of ever deeper search of the roots, also the German past, and the awareness of living in the lands occupied before by native Prussian tribes; the ongoing process of shaping the new identity of the Region's society.

In order to predict the behaviour of the Russians based on the logic that would guide European partners in a similar situation, EU officials seem to be applying the European standards to Russian policy, which is a misleading approach. In understanding relations with Russia, the specificity of the Russian mentality has to be taken into consideration. Viktor Yerofeyev (after Żurawski, 2008, 481), author of the *Encyklopedia duszy rosyjskiej* ('Encyclopaedia of the Russian Soul') defines it as follows: "The biggest mistake of Europeans is making Russia's assessments based on Western criteria. And they don't fit here. We're not a part of the European home. We're different – better or worse – but completely different."

Due to the neighbourhood, similarity of languages and (sometimes imposed upon) historical ties, Poles understand better the peculiarities of Russian reality than EU citizens from far away countries. The aforementioned Żurawski (2008, 577) quotes the statement of Diego de Ojeda, spokesman of the Commission for Foreign Affairs, instructing that the attitude towards

Russian investors should be determined by the market – therefore, they should be treated like any others, ignoring political considerations. If his statement were to be taken literally, then “he is not aware of the fact that large Russian companies investing abroad are not a free market game player like any other, and the control of the Russian Government over them allows them to be used as an instrument of the Kremlin’s policy”. The existence of such connections can be evidenced by the unclear motives of the then deputy Prime Minister of Poland signing in February 2013 a long-term agreement for the supply of Russian gas to Poland, which led to the breaking of an earlier contract of the Jerzy Buzek cabinet with Norway (Żurawski, 2008, 532-533). “The failures suffered by Poland before 2004 in protecting its energy security – concludes and expressly warns Żurawski (2008, 577) – clearly point to the need of profound reforms of the state structures responsible for the fight against corruption, as a joint between politics and oil/gas business in the former satellite countries of the USSR is very vulnerable”. In this chapter, due to the lack of space, economic issues are discussed very briefly. Nevertheless, energy policy matters require some more attention. The reason for this is the EU’s dependence on Russian gas supplies. In the initial period (1991-2004), the EU reiterated that Russia in its former sphere of influence would not go to ‘dirty methods’ such as blackmail of closed gas pipes. Instead of bringing the positions closer together, the dialogue between the parties only revealed the fundamental contradiction of mutual interests. In practice, commercially operating private companies usually run in accordance with the guidelines outlined by the Kremlin. And consequently, Brussels’ intentions to make secure supplies and harmonize energy policy are recognized in Moscow as contrary to Russia’s interests.

Previously dependent on the Soviet Union, former socialist states show some reserve, sometimes distrust to the Russian neighbourhood. It is an open question whether such a caution is justified by historical experience, or simply ‘Rusophobia’. Of the closest neighbours of the Kaliningrad Region, Poland has better relations than Lithuania, which can be explained by the fact that for decades it used to be part of the USSR and more pronounced differences, including language.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, both the Polish state and local authorities in Olsztyn made efforts to establish and maintain good neighbour’s ties with the Kaliningrad Region. This attitude continued despite multiple changes of governments, both in Warsaw and Olsztyn.

Polish regions are interested in a cooperation within international and EU framework, in particular the Warmia and Mazury Region as the only Voivodeship in Poland bordering the Kaliningrad Region (the Pomorskie/Pomeranian Region has a border with this Region over the distance of 0.8 km) and historically shaped ties dating back to the distant past.

Table 15.1 Comparison of the Kaliningrad and Warmia and Mazury Regions
(selected indicators)

	Kaliningrad Region	Warmia and Mazury Region
Population	1 0002 187	1 428 983
Share in total country population (per cent)	0.68 (c)	3.7
Life expectancy i) men (years)	67.9	72.5
Life expectancy ii) women (years)	77.5	81.6
Birth rate (population balance)	- 1879	- 1286
Total area (thousand sq. km)	151.3	241.7
Share in total country area (per cent)	0.088 (b)	7.7 (a)
Selected indicators of development:		
a) GDP (EUR/per capita in 2016)	5302	8098
b) Number of beds (tourist accommodation)	16340	40813
c) Water pipes (km/100 sq.km)	19.3	68.0
d) tap water consumption (sq.m/per capita)	52.2	32.1
e) flat or home area (sq.m/per capita)	28.2	25.0

Source: Morze and Plukhin, eds. 2019. (a) *Rocznik Statystyczny* [...] 2019, 26. (b) Palmowski 2013, 28; (c) *Russian Statistical* [...] 2018, 52.

The deteriorating political climate, a clear symptom of what brought the conflict in Georgia in 2008, did not prevent the Agreement on Local Border Traffic from being concluded a few years later. Relations with the Kaliningrad Region began to decline after the change of the Government in Warsaw in 2015. It was very clearly marked by the unilateral suspension of the Local Border Traffic in July 2016 due to security measures in connection with NATO Summit in Warsaw and the Catholic World Youth Days in Poland. It has not been restored so far. The Warsaw authorities' approach to developing regional cooperation with Kaliningrad has begun to be reluctant. And the same can be said about local leaders of the governing party. Together with the deteriorating bilateral relations between the Union and Russia, this is one of the obstacles to expanding bilateral contacts in the region.

Until the change of power in 2015, Poland had been an important and respected partner of the European Union and the Baltic region in the dialogue with the Kaliningrad Region. Scepticism about the Union and a state of persistent conflict over compliance with the rule of law in Poland, including the system of justice rooted in the Communist times, as well as worsening

relationships with neighbours leads to squandering this capital accumulated over the years and increasing isolation of Poland.

The concept of the 'Three Seas' promoted by the power circles (it must be noted that incidentally, the Kaliningrad Region is outside this space) makes sense in the case of local cooperation in the Region of concern. Treating it in a concealed way as a kind of 'counterbalance' to EU structures is an illusion and diverts the minds from Poland's deteriorating international position.

Attempts by the Polish side to reduce direct contacts are not very effective, as those interested can easily obtain a Russian visa or a Schengen one respectively and not necessarily through the Polish Consulate. It is worth noting that in the Summer of 2019, the Russian side introduced significant facilitation in issuing short-term visas to the Kaliningrad Region and St. Petersburg, free of charge and via the website.

7. Concluding Remarks

Comparing the skills and efficiency of the diplomatic efforts of the two main players, 'the first award' should be given to Russia. There are two main reasons for this: well-established traditions of effective play dating back to Tsarist times and the existence of a centralized point to run the policy – Moscow. In this context, the Union is a bundle of loosely connected states, because – contrary to agriculture or trade – such a common policy hardly exists.

Conflicts and tensions of the recent years between the EU and Russia caused by the ever-burning spark of clash in Ukraine are the reason for difficulties in forecasting further relations with the Kaliningrad Region. Hence, in the short and long term, it is difficult to predict the future. However, hope still remains that as soon as political tensions begin to subside, the local authorities and communities on both sides of the EU border will take advantage of the opportunities to intensify the cooperation. Past experience and bottom-up confidence are of intrinsic value. It is in the interest of all, also on a global scale, that these opportunities will not be wasted.

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The Kaliningrad Region: an Exclave with Internal and External Problems

Ingmar Oldberg

Abstract

The Kaliningrad Region is a Russian exclave wedged between Poland and Lithuania, so the transit across them is a problem for both sides. The population calls for special regard for its situation but bows to Moscow's imposition of strict federal control. The small size and lacking resources of the exclave initially make it dependent on trade with its neighbours, but in recent years it has become totally reliant on federal support. Under the impact of the growing tension between Russia and the West following the war in Ukraine since 2014, Russia has strengthened its military forces in Kaliningrad and created a defence zone, which is seen as a threat in the surrounding Baltic Sea states. It has become a military bastion like in Soviet days.

Keywords: Kaliningrad, Russia, exclave, transit, politics, economy, military forces

1. Short Historical Background

Today's Kaliningrad Region had mainly been inhabited by Germans since the thirteenth century and was an integral eastern part of Prussia and the German Reich until 1945. As a result of the First World War and the resurrection of Poland in 1918, East Prussia became an exclave cut off from the rest of Germany, and Hitler's demand for a corridor across Poland unleashed the Second World War in 1939. After the Soviet conquest of East Prussia in April 1945 and the Potsdam peace conference, the central part of the region around Königsberg was transformed into the Kaliningrad Region (Oblast) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). The southern half was handed over to Poland, resurrected under communist control, and the northern slice around Klaipeda (formerly Memel) was allotted to Lithuania, which had become one of Soviet Republics. Paraphrasing a saying about NATO as serving to keep Germans down, the Americans in and the Russians out, this division served

to weaken Germany, involve Poland and further isolate the Baltic states from Western influence.

After the war, all German inhabitants in the Kaliningrad Region (henceforth called Kaliningrad), who had not fled or been sent to Soviet camps, were deported to Germany and were replaced by a Soviet mix of people, mostly Russians. The region was militarized and isolated from foreign contacts. When the Soviet Union in 1991 unexpectedly fell apart and the three Baltic states regained independence, Kaliningrad again became an exclave, separated from the rest of Russia by Lithuania/Latvia or Poland/Belarus. It is the biggest exclave in Europe.¹ Speculation started on whether Poland, Lithuania or Germany would claim the region as radical groups wanted, but their Governments resisted for a number of good reasons (Oldberg, 1998, 16-24). In 1997 Russia and Lithuania agreed on the demarcation of the common border, and the border on Poland remained as in Soviet times.

2. Exclave and Transit Problems

Since the Kaliningrad Region was small and not self-sufficient, while Russia in the 1990s was engulfed in economic and political crisis, the liberal Russian governments, which strove for cooperation and integration with the West and professed adherence to democratic values, chose to open it up to trade with the neighbouring countries. The Region became first a Free, in 1996 a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Western trade and investment began, and the Region was involved in various forms of cooperation with foreign regions. In Russia's medium-term strategy for relations with the EU of 1999, Kaliningrad was proclaimed a 'pilot region' of cooperation, which could be extended to Northwest Russia, if successful. In the 1990s, Russia, Poland and the Baltic states also agreed on rather liberal visa regimes. Foreign consulates were opened in Kaliningrad city (Oldberg, 2001, 25-50). As a result of this, many more Kaliningraders (60 per cent) acquired international passports unlike other Russians and they travelled more frequently abroad than to Russia proper (Rogoża 2014).

As most Kaliningraders (of about one million) nowadays were born in the Region, they have also come to form a special, regional identity with an interest in the German past of the region. The few German buildings that were not destroyed during the war, have been restored, albeit partly as a means to attract

¹ Strictly speaking the region is a semi-exclave, because it has connections with Russia across the Baltic Sea, compare with Alaska-USA. On exclaves, see: Joenniemi, 1998, 261-265; Oldberg, 2019, 94-97

tourists, and proposals are made to replace Soviet names with old German ones (Holtom, 2006, 81-102; Ruin, 2014, 51-55). The idea of creating a fourth Baltic state appeared in the 1990s and, according to polls in the early 2000s, received about 10 per cent of supporters (Klemeshev, Mau, 2011, 25). On the whole, living in the westernmost region of Russia as they are, the Kaliningraders are the most europeanized Russians with a high degree of social activism, for example in the use of internet (Rogoża, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wiśniewska, 2012, 29-30). In early 2010, uniquely large demonstrations against new transport taxes induced the incumbent President Dmitry Medvedev to replace a governor appointed by Moscow with one from the Region (Mäkinen, 2018, 43).

When Poland and the Baltic states prepared to join the EU and the Schengen visa zone in 2002, Russia first demanded a corridor through Lithuania on the model of West Berlin after the Second World War, or more specifically: an air corridor across Lithuania, cargo transport across Lithuania, Latvia and Poland by rail and road without inspections, and the right to build oil and gas pipelines and electricity cables through these states. Russia's principle of access to its own region stood against Lithuania's territorial integrity. Since these proposals were rejected by the EU side, not least for their ominous historical connotations, Russia finally accepted a compromise allowing for visa-free train travel for Russian citizens across Lithuania (through Vilnius) with a so-called Facilitated Rail Transit Document, an arrangement which is still in force (Grönberg, 2018, 43).

Admonished by the regional authorities, Russia further repeatedly called on the EU to liberalize the Schengen visa regime with regard to Kaliningrad's exclave location. In 2011, an agreement was reached with Poland on Local Border Traffic without visas for inhabitants of Kaliningrad and adjacent Polish regions including Gdansk. For travels farther into Poland Schengen visas were still necessary. The number of border crossings rose from 1.4 million to 6.5 in 2013, most of them Poles who went to Kaliningrad (often several times a day) to buy excise goods like cigarettes, alcohol and gasoline (Żęgota, 2018, 4; Batyk, Semenova, 2014, 56). True, Moscow was reluctant to give special favours to the Kaliningrad Region over other regions, but it probably accepted the agreement with Poland as a means to pave the way for visa freedom for the whole of Russia with the EU. Lithuania rejected the idea of creating a similar zone, because it would cover almost the whole country.

At the same time Moscow attempted to improve transport connections with Kaliningrad. Kaliningrad-Russia-Kaliningrad air travel was subsidized (Rogoża et al., 2012, 53, 65). In the first decade of the 2000s there existed a car-and-passenger ferry from St. Petersburg to the coastal naval port of Baltiysk, and since 2006 there has been a ferry line with two ships carrying cargo, trains and

passengers from Ust-Luga in the Gulf of Finland to Baltiysk. In 2017, a decision was taken to build three new ferries, and one was to have been built by 2020, but the Region wanted six ferries to satisfy its needs. However, the traffic was irregular and came to a standstill in 2019, when one ferry went on repair and the other could not leave Ust-Luga because of unpaid debts. The line proved non-profitable after Lithuania had reduced tariffs on transit trains, and the Kaliningrad authorities were unwilling to subsidize the ferry (*New Kaliningrad* (henceforth NK) July 19, 2017, May 21 2018, May 14, 2019).

3. Moscow's Political Control and Foreign Relations

However, since Vladimir Putin became president, he has centralized power over the Russian regions and suppressed all political opposition. In recent years Russia has become more nationalistic, asserting its role as a world power increasingly hostile to the West and its political and moral values. When Russia, as a response to the so-called colour revolution in Ukraine in February 2014, illegally incorporated Crimea and started to give military support to pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine, this severely disturbed Russia's relations with its western neighbours who belong to the strongest supporters of Ukraine. Along with the imposition of sanctions, the EU broke off negotiations on visa facilitation with Russia.

The population of Kaliningrad, which nowadays is over 80 per cent ethnic Russian, became part and parcel of all this by generally supporting Putin's policy, including the aggressive actions against Ukraine. Like all over Russia, many thousand Kaliningraders rallied in mid-March 2014 to hail the conquest of Crimea (*Voice of Russia* 2014, March 18). When Ukrainian refugees arrived in the Kaliningrad Region, the governor accused young men among them of being activists sent out by Western secret services to create a new *Maidan* in Russia (*Russland-Aktuell* 2014). Still, according to local sources, the support for the annexation of Crimea was much lower in Kaliningrad than elsewhere in Russia (Rogoża, 2014, 43). One may observe that Russia's historical claim to Crimea in principle opens the door for Germany to lay claim to its former East Prussia (Baltic Times 2014, April 28).

Moscow also increased political control of the Region. In 2016, Governor Tsukanov, who stemmed from the Region, was first replaced by Yevgeny Zinichev, a local FSB chief, and soon after by Anton Alikhanov, then a 30-year old technocrat from Moscow, who was soon elected governor with a 29 per cent turnout (Wiśniewska, 2017, May 24). His main task in 2018 was to secure in the Region Putin's re-election as president. When demonstrations for boycotting

the election were held in connection with a visit by opposition leader Alexei Navalny, a propaganda site cautioned against a “victorious *Maidan*” and that some “ersatz patriots” could become collaborators (NK 2018, Jan. 28). An alarmist commentator in Moscow warned that Kaliningrad could be seen in the West as a “natural compensation for European territorial losses” such as Crimea, and that Kaliningrad authorities should not be trusted to play at foreign policy (Westerlund, 2017, 2). A campaign started against an alleged fifth column in cooperation with German organisations interested in the Region’s history. Moscow patriarch Kirill dismissed the German cultural legacy as a number of “old stones”, which should not get predominance over the Russian legacy. In January 2017, the German-Russian House in Kaliningrad city was labelled “foreign agent” and forced to close down. People who wanted to restore the original name of Königsberg were threatened with criminal charges of separatism (Sukhankin, 2016, Jan. 25).

Right before the presidential election Putin himself honoured the Region with a visit (*President of Russia* 2018, March 2). The election resulted in a turnout of 62.3 per cent, 3 per cent higher than in 2012 but 5 per cent lower than the Russian average. Putin won 76 per cent of the votes as against 52.5 per cent in 2012 (*Kaliningrad.ru* 2018, March 19). One may conclude that even if most people are loyal to Moscow, many are dissatisfied or apathetic. For military and political reasons, Kaliningrad is probably a region under the strictest federal control in Russia.

Russia’s impaired relations with the West naturally had an impact on its neighbours. Local propagandists supported by authorities in Moscow claimed that Kaliningrad ran the risk of being annexed by Lithuania (!) with approval from the United States. Lithuania decided to build a fence along the Kaliningrad frontier, just like Estonia and Latvia at their eastern borders. The Kaliningrad governor did not object and defiantly offered to deliver bricks (Sukhankin, 2016, Jan. 25).

Relations with Poland also soured. The new nationalist and anti-Communist Polish Government suspended the Local Border Traffic Agreement in July 2016 (Kotowicz, 2016, 93-104). As a result of this and the devaluation of the Russian Rouble, the number of Russians crossing the border dropped significantly, from 300,000 in July 2016 to 199,000 a year later (Żęgota, 2018, 32; NK 2019, March 1). In April 2019, Poland declared that it would not renew the Agreement referring to the militarization of Kaliningrad and the high number of foreign agents there (NK 2019, April 24; *Wyborcza.pl*. 2019, April 24). Further, Russian trucks often experienced enormous queues at the border because of Polish strikes (NK 2018, November 8). On the Russian side, the railway company which, in connection with the football World Cup matches to be held in Kaliningrad city,

in 2018 wanted to organize a line to Berlin, gave up the plans. In line with the Russian food sanctions on EU states (below), a food stuff association wanted to further limit the amount of goods for private consumption permitted to bring home to Kaliningrad (*NK*, November 28, 2018, April 29, 2019).

Further, since the Russian Navy reserves the right to close the strait at Baltiysk, which of course has restricted civilian traffic and the development of the Polish ports on the Vistula Lagoon, Poland in 2019 decided to dig a canal across its part of the Vistula spit, in spite of protests concerning the costs in relation to the potential gains (Rogoża et al., 2012, 12, 45-46; *NK* 2018, Oct. 16).

As for the visas, a change for the better may occur. After a 72-hour visa-free regime at the Kaliningrad airport had been scrapped in January 2017, citing lack of demand, Putin decided in 2019 to introduce electronic Russian visas valid for seven days for a number of countries, which would take away the need to visit a consulate, be free of charge and allow entry at several check points in Kaliningrad. This could replace the Local Border Traffic Agreement with Poland for the Poles (*NK* 2019, May 17, *GW* 2019, April 24). Time will show whether the EU will reciprocate by facilitating visits for Russians. It should be added that Kaliningrad had very scarce connections by sea for foreign tourists and only one foreign airline (Polish LOT company) in place in 2019.

4. Economic Relations

While a coastal and enclave/exclave location may have an advantage among free economies, the Kaliningrad Region has had a more mixed experience. When it became an exclave in 1991, it had virtually no economic links with other countries, and was totally dependent on federal support. In order to promote trade and investments, Kaliningrad, as noted, was proclaimed a special economic zone (SEZ) which meant customs-free import to and export from the Region and tax-breaks for foreign investors. This boosted trade with the neighbouring states and disfavoured local production. However, since the Region is a small market, most of the trade except consumer goods went on to Great Russia, where businessmen used the Region as a loophole for exports to the West, and foreign investments remained well below the Russian average (Rogoża et al., 2012, 23-24).

In 2006, new rules in line with a Federal Target Programme were introduced, which limited the list of duty-free import goods and the number of foreign investors, most of whom are small or medium-size, decreased fourfold, while large, often state-owned Russian investors in energy and infrastructure

projects were favoured. Foreign investors were also deterred by the rampant Russian bureaucracy and corruption (Ruin 2014, 53). The regional budget in 2011 received about 60 per cent of its income from the federal budget, but when calculated *per capita*, the Region was among the ten regions with the least federal support. True, the economy grew and the living standard rose in the 2000s as elsewhere in Russia, mainly thanks to rising energy export prices (Rogoża et al., 2012, 10, 17-20). However, like the rest of Russia also Kaliningrad was affected by the world financial crisis in 2008.

After this came the Russian interventions in Ukraine in 2014, which caused the EU and other western states to impose sanctions on Russia in the financial, energy and military technology sectors and to blacklist dozens of decision-makers and companies. This together with sinking world market prices on oil, on which the Russian economy is totally dependent, led to serious depreciation of the Rouble (by about half its value in 2014), higher inflation and interest rates, capital flight, no more Western investment and negative GDP growth. This also affected the Kaliningrad Region, which as noted depends on federal support and import from abroad (Sergunin, 2018, 52-54).

In response to the western sanctions Russia imposed sanctions on imports of foodstuff from the western states. This hit Kaliningrad especially hard, since it had become very dependent on such imports. EU states covered 34 per cent of its total food imports, including 90 per cent of the meat consumption and its agricultural sector had been neglected since Soviet times. Consequently, Kaliningrad's foreign trade diminished and turned away from its neighbours to countries overseas like China, South Korea and Brazil (*Kaliningrad.ru* 2014, Aug. 19; Cohen 2014, Dec. 16; *NK* 2018, May 8).

Foreign tourist visits also decreased, partly as an effect of the Polish suspension of the Local Border Traffic Agreement in mid-2016. About half the foreign visitors were German "nostalgic tourists" and one third were business-related. On the occasion of the Football World Cup in 2018 a huge stadium was built with much ado, and special rules applied for foreign visitors. The tourism sector also hoped to attract Chinese tourists interested in buying amber (Wiśniewska, 2017, 35; Kostiuk, 2017, Nov. 2).

The general Russian way of avoiding shortages was to rely on and expand domestic production; in other words import substitution. Another solution for Kaliningrad and the rest of Russia was to import more foodstuffs from countries outside the black list such as Belarus, Serbia, Turkey and South America. Belarus became a loophole since it has a customs-free union with Russia. Norwegian salmon was for example relabelled "made in Belarus". However, switching to domestic agricultural production in Russia takes time

and requires investments, for instance in transport and storage, and the new suppliers unlike EU states demanded full prepayment (*Russland-Aktuell*, 2014, Dec. 9; Vylegzhanina, 2014, Sept. 4).

Furthermore, since Russia had joined the World Trade Organisation, in mid-2016 it was obliged to scrap the SEZ with its foreign trade favours and prepare new laws (Sukhankin, 2016, March 31). In order to avert economic breakdown, which the Kaliningrad business community feared, the governor and the regional government called on Moscow to make the region the “most competitive” Russian region and create an international finance centre by reducing taxes and red tape (*NK* 2016, July 14; Sukhankin, 2018, Jan. 10). As a consequence, Moscow decided to increase transfers to the Region and compensate its firms for losses by tax breaks. The share of federal transfers in the regional income budget rose from 30 to 70 per cent in 2015-2016. 90 per cent went to a car assembly factory affiliated with South Korean Kia (Wiśniewska, 2017, 35; *NK* 2018, Jan. 12). As a result, the economic situation stabilized (Sergunin, 2018, 52-55).

5. Energy Issues

The Kaliningrad Region also faces specific problems in the energy sector, which otherwise is Russia's greatest asset. It has very few energy resources save for a small oil field off the coast, which has been exploited since 2004. However, there is no refinery in the Region, so the crude oil is exported and the demand for petroleum products must be satisfied by imports from abroad or the rest of Russia, which raises the costs. As for natural gas, which is mainly used for heating, this has mainly been imported from Russia by a pipeline through Lithuania and Belarus.

Since 1991 Kaliningrad has received 80 per cent of its electricity via the networks of the Baltic states from nuclear plants in Russia proper (Rogoza et al., 2012, 18-20). Two gas-fuelled heat- and power plants (CHPPs) were built, making the Region self-sufficient with electricity and even able to export some to Lithuania. However, in 2013 the big CHPP-2 was struck by a lightning causing a blackout in most of the Region, so Russia had to ask Lithuania for help (Usanov, 2016, Oct. 31). More importantly, since Lithuania has decided to decouple from the Soviet electric power network and join the European system (ENTSO-E), and connecting lines with Poland and Sweden are under construction, this threatens to make Kaliningrad an energy island.

Instead of extending the gas pipeline through Lithuania, which would be the cheapest option, Russia therefore resolved to build four new power plants

in Kaliningrad and to increase storage facilities. During his visit in March 2018, President Putin inaugurated two power plants. Three plants were to be fed by a floating LNG plant to be ready by the end of the year and the one on coal will be opened in 2020 (*President of Russia* 2018, March 2, 1-3; *NK* 2018, Febr. 26; 2019, March 6).

Further, in 2009 Russia decided to build a Baltic nuclear power plant (NPP) and groundwork started at Sovetsk near the Lithuanian border. Curiously, the Kaliningrad elite initially opposed the project, because the decision had been taken suddenly and without consultations in the Region (except the unpopular governor). A public poll in the Region in 2009 showed more resistance than support to the project, and an environmental movement emerged to oppose it and to call for a referendum. Moscow's plan was to sell electricity to Lithuania, where the Ignalina NPP had been closed down at the EU's request in 2008, to Germany, whose government in 2012 had decided to decommission all its reactors in ten years, as well as to Poland and other countries. However, Germany showed no interest in providing loans and importing from that kind of source, and Poland, Belarus and Lithuania embarked on building their own NPPs. For these reasons Putin stopped the project in 2013 (Rogoża et al., 2012, 40-41; Menkiszak, 2013, 1-4). Thus, also with regard to energy, Kaliningrad has become totally dependent on assistance from Moscow and increasingly isolated from its neighbours.

6. Military Forces

The reason why the Soviet Union in 1945 wanted to take over Kaliningrad was primarily of a military nature. Thus, after the war Kaliningrad became one of its most militarized regions with well over 100,000 troops and was totally closed for Western visitors. The headquarters of the Baltic Sea Fleet was moved from Leningrad to Kaliningrad city in 1956, and Baltiysk (Pillau) on the sea coast became the major forward naval base, posing a threat to the Baltic Straits in case of a war with NATO.

With the independence of the Baltic states Russia lost all its bases there, and Kaliningrad remained as an exclave soon to be surrounded by NATO states. To remedy this Russia, as noted above, demanded a corridor across Lithuania or Poland (later known in the West as the Suwalki gap, in Polish "*Przesmyk Suwalski*" or "*Korytarz Suwalski*"), and Russian radicals later repeated the idea, the realization of which would practically cut off the Baltic states from the rest of NATO. Needless to say, Lithuania and Poland rejected this idea (Goble 2014, 1-2). Instead of a corridor, Russia in 1993 had to be content with a military

transit agreement with Lithuania, according to which all military transports on land had to go by rail, Russia had to ask for permission every time, submit to inspections and pay high fees. On Lithuanian insistence the agreement had to be renewed every year. Often, when problems arise with Russia, Lithuanian politicians call for more restrictions which cause angry Russian protests. For instance, after the Georgian war in 2008, a Lithuanian opposition leader called for stopping all military transit which was seen as a major security threat to the country (*RT* 2013, 1-2).

As a consequence of the economic and political crises in the 1990s, the military forces in the Kaliningrad Region were considerably reduced after the withdrawal of Russian troops from Central Europe via Kaliningrad had been accomplished. The military personnel was reduced by three quarters, the number of tanks by half, the airborne brigade disbanded, the number of combat aircraft reduced from 155 to 28 (in 2004), submarines from 42 to 2 and surface ships from 450 to 190 (Frühling, Lasconjarias, 2016, 104). Many military industries were laid off or converted to civilian use, including the huge shipyard “Yantar”, and garrisons and land were transferred to civilian authorities. Few military exercises were held, maintenance and repair were neglected, salaries lagged behind and many militaries left for the private sector. Still, the Baltic states and Poland continued to perceive Kaliningrad as a threat and called for its demilitarization, which Russia of course rejected. During this period of détente with NATO, the Baltic Sea Fleet started to participate in exercises with NATO and to receive foreign naval visits to Baltiysk (Oldberg, 2001, 13-14). However, considering its small size and population, the Region could still be characterized as militarized. One third of the area still had restricted access, including a five-kilometre zone along the borders and most of the coastline, which hampered business, traffic and tourism.

After 2000, when Russia’s economy started to grow and its nationalism and hostility to the West intensified, its military expenditures steadily rose and more than doubled from 2005 to 2015, while most NATO countries continued to reduce their military spending (Oxenstierna, 2016, 138). In 2007, Russia suspended the CFE Treaty of 1990, which had restricted the number of conventional forces in Europe and provided for controls and inspection of exercises. It opposed US plans for a missile defence system in Europe with bases for example in Poland, which was seen as a threat to Russia. At the same time Russian society was more and more militarized, for instance with military training in schools and frequent military parades. Military victories, especially during the Second World War, became an important source of state and regime legitimacy.

This naturally included Kaliningrad. Even if the numbers of forces stabilized at the level of about 2010, they have since been modernized, reorganized, refitted and fully manned. The ground forces consist of the 11. Army corps with three manoeuvre brigades and fire support units, which probably are fully combat-ready by Russian standards and capable of combined-arms warfare and offensive operation (Westerlund, 2017, 1). The number of soldiers has been estimated at about 15 000 men but rises to 25 000 if other security personnel is included (Rogoża et al., 13). Though the force may be seen as small and mainly intended for defence, the number is higher than the regular armed forces of the three Baltic states, which have had to build up their forces from scratch. Even if Russia's military forces are smaller than those of all NATO, its forces near the Baltic Sea Region clearly outnumber those of NATO, regarding battle tanks with 5.9:1. (*The Economist* 2018, 26). As for the militarization in Kaliningrad, special territorial defence units were established in Kaliningrad in 2017 and the Region was one of the first Russian regions to host the military-patriotic youth formation "Yunarmia" (Sukhankin, 2016, 3).

Besides the army, the Baltic Sea Fleet has been modernized with Baltiysk as its main naval base, where most of the warships are anchored.² In January 2019, a corvette with stealth capacity held exercises with Uran cruise missiles, allegedly reaching 260 km, against naval targets (*RG* 2019, Jan. 31, May 15). Two big landing crafts (Gren, Petr Morgunov) capable of carrying 100 men, 13 tanks and two helicopters, have recently been produced at the Yantar shipyard, and two more are planned (*Rossiiskaya gazeta* (*RG*) 2019, April 6, May 12). The naval air force in Kaliningrad has been reinforced with a regiment/flotilla equipped with Su-27 fighters (*Interfaks* 2019, February 2).

Further, there is an Air Force base with bombers in the Region. Two airfields have been modernized and an airfield for hydroplanes on the Baltic Spit has been revived. In December 2011, a new strategic missile defence radar station was made operational. The presence of landing craft, naval infantry and bombers does not look very defensive. All these forces in Kaliningrad should also be considered in conjunction with those in the rest of Russia (and Belarus), since reinforcements can easily be flown in. The Region also has storage facilities for tactical nuclear weapons at Baltiysk, which means that such weapons can

2 The whole Baltic Sea Fleet (including the base in St. Petersburg) has two tactical diesel submarines, two destroyers, six frigates, 25 (23 in 2017) patrol and coastal combatants, of which six are attack corvettes, 12 mine warfare ships and 13 amphibious landing craft, of which four are heavy. The naval air force has one squadron of fighters and one with strike aircraft as well as a naval infantry brigade (*The Military Balance* 2018, 204; *Ibidem* 2017, p. 217; Dalsjö et al. 2019, 42).

easily be deployed there – if they are not there already (Rogoża et al., 2012, 13; Global Security 2014, 1-2).

More important than these assets is the fact that they – supported by electronic and space systems – have been equipped with modern long-range and high-precision missile systems, capable of delivering weapons and creating what in the West is called an Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) bastion or “bubble” in Kaliningrad, intended to keep NATO out of the Baltic Sea area and prevent its movements in it (Frühling, Lasconjarias, 2017, 97-99; Dalsjö et al. 2019; Śliwa 2018, 29-32). The Kaliningrad bastion is a forward part of the Russian air defence system against NATO now stretching from the Kola Peninsula to St. Petersburg and Crimea (Frühling, Lasconjarias, 2017, 100-106). This build-up in Kaliningrad was partly made in response to NATO’s decision – after Russia’s aggression in Ukraine began – to create new collective forces, to place small forces on a rotational basis, forces in Poland and the Baltic states as a tripwire against Russian attack, and to hold more exercises on their territories.

Since 2012 there has been a heavy but mobile anti-air Triumf system (in the West known as S-400) intended against both aircraft and missiles (Dalsjö et al., 2019, 27-32; *Rossiiskaya gazeta* 2019, February 2, March 4). If effective, it could reach much of Poland and the Baltic Sea including Gotland Island. In 2016, Russia also deployed the heavy coastal anti-ship system Bastion-P in the Region.

Most concern among the Baltic Sea neighbours has been caused by the basing of the mobile land-attack Iskander (SS-26) system in both a ballistic and cruise version, capable of carrying both nuclear and conventional weapons. It was long used as a bargaining chip against the US/NATO Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) plans, but in vain. Then it was used in exercises in the Region, and now it has been there permanently since 2016. Finally, there is the ground- or sea-launched Kalibr-M cruise missile system, the 3M14 version with a range of more than 1650 km, thus covering land targets all over Northern Europe. During Russia’s intervention in Syria, this system was used to hit Syrian opposition targets from a ship in the Caspian Sea, which evoked worldwide attention (McDermott, 2019, March 20; Śliwa, 2018, 29-32).

Kaliningrad is also a forward intelligence and reconnaissance collection point, covering Poland, the Baltic states and NATO activity in the Baltic Sea area (Śliwa, 2018, 24). Lately, the Russian press has claimed that the newest radio electronic systems, installed on ships in Kaliningrad and elsewhere, are able “completely to paralyze NATO’s guidance systems” (*NK* 2018, Oct. 31). The above systems should also be seen as a combination with mutually reinforcing effect in a relatively small area. As for decision-making, in contrast to NATO, Russia has the advantage of one single military command and a centralized political leadership (Dalsjö et al., 2019, 43).

Indeed, for all these reasons, Western experts have in recent years come to consider Kaliningrad a military bastion and a threat to the West. Even Russian officials including Patriarch Kirill call it a military stronghold or a “fort outpost” against the West (Sukhankin, 2016, April 25, 2018, February 23). This has also been backed up by Putin. In his speech to the Federal Assembly in February 2018 he boasted of having five new invincible strategic weapons which, he hoped, would encourage “our partners to hold talks” (*President of Russia* 2018, March 1). In the next speech to the nation in 2019, he again highlighted the advances in Russia’s hypersonic missile systems, which could overcome any air- or ballistic defence systems (*President of Russia* 2019, Febr. 20, 28-30).

However, the Russian build-up in Kaliningrad and elsewhere has also come with some costs. Since Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty of 1987 between the United States and the Soviet Union forbids the basing of medium-range missiles with a 500-1550 km range in Europe, the US in 2018 accused Russia of long having violated the Treaty, for example with the Iskander system, and in 2019 abrogated it (McDermott 2019, Febr. 26). Russia rejected the accusation and also left the Treaty. The strategic nuclear arms treaty New START of 2011 is also bound to expire in 2019. Thus, even if Russian leaders insist that they do not want an arms race with the United States, this is now more likely than ever. The Russian boasting and sabre-rattling clearly provokes the stronger opposite side to take counter-measures.

Further, even if Russia may have more effective chains of military command, it had problems with the naval leadership. In July 2016, a large part of the Baltic Fleet officer corps were dismissed and top-rank commanders replaced, and in May 2019 the Navy commander and two fleet commanders were replaced (Westerlund, 2017, 2; *RIA Novosti* 2019, May 8).

A key limitation is that the Russian economy only is the size of Canada or Spain, and its defence budget a fifteenth of NATO’s. The US economy keeps growing and the Trump administration has increased its military spending, while the Russian economy since 2014 has stagnated. The Russian defence share of the GDP sank from its peak of 4.4 per cent in 2014 to 3.1 per cent in 2017. According to the preliminary three-year federal budget the defence share will fall to 2.5 per cent in 2020. Still, this decrease is neither reflected in changes of defence strategies or actual foreign policy. Only time will show whether Russia can maintain its current posture (Oxenstierna 2019, 87 and 102).

Furthermore, the Russian claims on the range and performance of the new missile systems as threats to the Baltic Sea Region should not be overrated. For example, the Triumf (S-400) anti-air system with a missile reaching 400 km has experienced problems in development and testing, and depends on radar connection. The Iskander-M ballistic missile may pose a menace to fixed

ground targets, but the number of missiles in Kaliningrad is still small in relation to the high number of potential targets, and its power pales in comparison with cruise missiles, as the INF treaty is now dead (Dalsjö et al. 2019, 10-11). A special problem with Russia's strike systems is whether they have stealth capacity (McDermott 2019, February 26). Russia is probably also still behind NATO with regard to the development and use of military drones.

Moreover, NATO's potential for countermeasures must not be underestimated. It can take passive direct measures of defence such as camouflaging and fortification and active ones such as using decoys, electronic jamming, hacking or strikes against the missiles, the firing units, radar stations and support vehicles. It can take indirect countermeasures like prepositioning forces to the surrounding countries and sending reinforcements to them on routes beyond the reach of the Russian missiles, for example through Sweden, for which agreements have been made. Finally, NATO can hold the Region itself at risk (Dalsjö et al. 2019, 10-11).

Along with all Russian boasting about its forces, as repeatedly noted above, the political and military leadership is very much aware of the vulnerability of its small Kaliningrad exclave, situated as it is between NATO countries, and the difficulties of supplying it in times of crisis. The "Suwalki Gap" is as much of a headache for Russia as for NATO (Westerlund 2017, 2). Russia therefore closely monitors NATO's military presence in the surrounding states and in the Baltic Sea concerning force deployment, air patrolling and naval exercises such as the regular Baltops exercises (*RG* 2018 Aug. 18; *NK* 2019, February 10; *Kommersant* 2019, April 2).

7. Military Activities

Due to its location and forces Kaliningrad obviously plays an important role in Russian military activities in the Baltic Sea Region. Especially after NATO increased its presence in Poland and the Baltics as a response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, Russia has intensified its number of large-scale exercises in this Region, including snap exercises, without Western observers since the CFE treaty is defunct. The regular Zapad-2013 exercise with about 70,000 men included amphibious landing operations and nuclear war scenarios (Järvenpää, 2014, 9). The Zapad-2017 exercise, partly held in Kaliningrad, appeared to train precisely A2/AD capabilities, but also a sea blockade (Sukhankin, 2017, 2018, Sept. 18). Repeatedly, Russia has barred zones in the international waters of the Baltic Sea for military exercises, sometimes without holding them, which disturbs traffic.

After 2014 several air incidents have taken place between Russian fighters and Swedish and American reconnaissance planes over international waters, for example in January 2019, which led to an official Swedish protest (*NK* 2019, Febr. 24). Mock air attacks against Swedish and Danish territory took place in June 2014, and a violation of Swedish airspace in September resulted in another protest. Also the airspace of the three Baltic states and Finland have often been violated. Russian military planes have frequently turned off their transponders over the Baltic Sea, thus risking collision with civilian aircraft. Thereafter has Russia offered negotiations over this in exchange for concessions (Frear, Kulesa, Kearns, 2014; Dagens 2014, 8). Undoubtedly, Russian forces and bases in Kaliningrad were employed in many of these incidents and now play a prominent role in the military threat that the other Baltic Sea states perceive as emanating from Russia.

8. Concluding Reflections

The core problem for Kaliningrad (and other Russian regions) is that Moscow's priority has been control and security rather than welfare and development. It may even be claimed that Moscow's grip on Kaliningrad is tighter than on any other region due to its exclave location and the principle of territorial integrity for Russia (a principle not seen as valid for neighbouring ex-Soviet republics Georgia and Ukraine). Moscow apparently fears that a prosperous and Europe-integrated Kaliningrad will drift away from Russia proper. Further, Moscow is returning Kaliningrad to its position as a militarized stronghold like in Soviet times, posing a threat to its neighbours and spurring military countermeasures from NATO. The hopes of many Kaliningraders in the 1990s of becoming a Russian Hong Kong on the Baltic with open borders and free trade or a pilot region for Russia-EU cooperation in the 2000s have become extremely dim, if they ever were realistic. Both civilian and military transit to and from the rest of Russia remain a problem and vulnerable to political provocations. Economically, the Region is again totally dependent on federal support and in that sense a liability.

The current tension between Russia and the democratic West has thus exacerbated the difficult plight of the Kaliningrad Region surrounded as it is by NATO and EU states. The militarization of the Region negatively affects the security of the closest neighbours and the whole Baltic Sea area. A vicious circle of military build-up is at hand. The Kaliningrad Region emerges as the single most serious security problem on the Baltic Sea.

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The Significance of the Kaliningrad Region in the International Politics in the Baltic Sea Region After 1989

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Abstract

The international bipolar system was replaced by a multipolar system with new centres of power after the disintegration of the USSR. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Baltic Sea Region has been occupying an important place in the foreign policy of the Baltic Sea countries. One of the most important challenges for Russian diplomacy after 1991 was the development of economic and political relationships with the Baltic states and Baltic organizations and institutions. After the Eastern Bloc had been dismantled, the Kaliningrad Region became an area open to cooperation with other countries, both on the regional and local levels. Attempts to create the Russian “Hong Kong on the Baltic Sea” in the Kaliningrad Region have not yielded results so far. But on the other hand, the Russian exclave is no longer seen solely through the prism of military factors. Poland and other countries in the region do not question the current political or legal status of the Kaliningrad Region.

Keywords: Kaliningrad Region, geopolitics, Baltic Sea Region, cross-border cooperation

During the period of the bipolar order, the cooperation between the countries in the Baltic Sea Region was significantly limited by the fierce cold-war rivalry. The border between two opposite political-military blocks ran through the Baltic region at that time: NATO (Norway, Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany) and the Warsaw Pact (the USSR, Poland and the German Democratic Republic). This directly determined the conditions and the scope of the sub-regional cooperation of the Baltic states. It could concern only these common endeavours whose completion would not breach the vast international political obligations of its participants. It also concerned the neutral states of Finland and Sweden (Jaworski, 1991, 79). The most important initiatives, in which the opposite blocks member states participated as well as the neutral ones, were the Gdańsk Convention of 1973 and the Helsinki Convention

of 1974 (Jaworski, 1992, 107-131). Neither of these initiatives could declare tight political or economic cooperation due to the conditions mentioned above. They concerned the issues connected with environmental protection and sea resources. Also the Baltic areas of the Soviet Union took part in this cooperation (Jaworski, 1992, 91).

The Russian Baltic Sea Region were not included in the sub-regional cooperation network until the Yalta-Potsdam Treaty, when international circumstances changed in Europe.

In the beginning of the twenty first century, the Russian Federation stood in opposition to the new model of political order on the global and European scale based on the American domination. Even at the end of the twentieth century the Russian Federation authorities were trying to push for the strategy aiming at keeping the bi-polar line-up based on partnership and Russian-American cooperation. However, the fact that the American administration preferred the unilateral model of international politics made Russia change its concept. Russian policy-makers spread the need to reconstruct the multipolar structure of international political order; it would slow down the United States' domination and in the area of safety it would be based on a universal organisation, for example OSCE. At the same time, they would not resign from the partnership with western states and institutions and specify the position of Russia in the system of international relations among them, but only as a separate strong player.

In the area of strategic safety, Russia takes into consideration a possible use of nuclear weapons in the potential conflict, considered to be the final tool, however, necessary. The Russian position in this matter is the result of lowering the level of using nuclear weapons by other states.

The international position of Russia is conditioned by two factors. On one hand Moscow is perceived as a world superpower having a nuclear arsenal, the status of a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and regularly taking part in all the diplomatic summits where the leaders of the most powerful and influential states meet. On the other hand, the condition of Russian economy does not allow for significant modernisation and development of the armed forces which results in it limiting the global political influences. The idea of realistic approach as a paradigm in international relations is dominant in Russian politics (it is also called pragmatism or centralism). Its basic assumption is to keep the dominant role of the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet area and at the same time to continue non-confrontational and pragmatic politics with the West.

From the perspective of the European order stabilisation, it is important to analyse the Russian Federation politics against the states and international organisations of the Baltic Sea Region. It is also significant from the point of view of Polish foreign policy; one must take into consideration the matters of separating one of the two Russian Baltic Sea regions, i.e. the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast) from Russia proper. Polish involvement in the problems of the Kaliningrad Region should, in a longer perspective, favour the elimination of civilisational and economical differences between northeastern Poland and the Russian enclave. It would be a mistake to focus only on the preventive measures concerning fighting organised crime or illegal immigration.

International cooperation in the region of the Baltic Sea is an important part of the European politics of the Russian Federation. The very cooperation of the Kaliningrad Region and the then Leningrad Region with foreign partners would definitely be one of the factors which, after 1989, contributed to the breaking of historical, social and political barriers in the Baltic area.

After the collapse of the USSR, the Kaliningrad Region as a Russian exclave has been the subject of interest for Poland and other Baltic Sea states (Kotowicz, 2019, 110-142). In the 1990s, the Kaliningrad issue, however, was not the priority problem in the relations of these countries with the Russian Federation, but it played the most significant role in the Lithuanian-Russian relations. This was due to the following factors: military potential gathered in the Kaliningrad Region, Russian transit through the territory of Lithuania or the issue of the so-called "Lithuania Minor". German policy towards the Kaliningrad Region in the early 1990s was characterized by caution. The position of the German authorities on the issue of Kaliningrad was consistent with the policy of the European Union. Germany supported the activities enhancing the socio-economic development of the exclave, among others through the EU aid projects in the framework of TACIS programme. Officially, Germany declaring restraint on the policy towards the Kaliningrad Region conducted at the same time quite extensive cooperation with this entity of the Russian Federation. It pointed particularly to the German commitment to cooperate in the sphere of economy and trade. Next to Poland and Lithuania, Germany was the most important trading partner of the Kaliningrad Region. In the case of the Nordic countries it must be emphasized that Sweden and Denmark were the most active in cooperation with the exclave; Finland and Norway showed less activity in turn. The Nordic countries perceived the Kaliningrad Region primarily through the prism of cooperation in the field of environmental protection, health, civil society development and local democracy. The Kaliningrad Region

became the subject of interest also for non-state actors, primarily the EU and NATO. The Baltic sub-regional organisations, for example the Council of the Baltic Sea States played, in turn, the role of a forum where interested parties put forward their demands on the Russian exclave (Żukowski, Chełminiak, 2015, 180-188).

After the collapse of the USSR, in the context of the Russian considerations of the geopolitical role of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, there were two concepts opposing each other. One group of politicians and experts can be called realists who perceived the matter of the enclave through the Baltic rivalry between Russia and the West; the rivalry reaching out of the military area and the Yalta-Potsdam order into the field of economy. Noticing a certain role of the economic potential, they also criticised the concept of the Free Economic Zone in the Region. In their view, the zone served exclusively the purpose of weakening Russian economic interest and corrupting their officials. At the same time they criticised the EU policy concerning the enclave. They treated the Union as a tool for implementing German geopolitical ambitions, such as returning the former East Prussia territories to the Federal Republic of Germany (Sergounin, 2003, 160-161). The realists suggested tightening ties with Moscow and increasing direct control over the Region by the Kremlin. The reply to expanding NATO into the East was to continue to keep military forces in the enclave at a significant level as well as tightening political and military cooperation with Belarus (Sergounin, 2003, 160-161).

In opposition to the realists stood the supporters of the pro-Western option, so called Euro-Atlantic supporters. They saw the Baltic region in the context of cooperation with the western states and institutions; in their opinion this cooperation should be the priority of Russian foreign policy. In early 1990s, the representatives of this trend (among others Boris Yeltsin, Andrei Kozyrev, Yegor Gaidar) postulated decreasing military forces in the Baltic Sea area as well as stronger cooperation with regional and sub-regional structures (for instance as part of the Council of the Baltic Sea States). In their view, international cooperation and non-military tools of international politics started to play a significantly bigger role after the collapse of the Yalta-Potsdam order and became important parts guaranteeing security and supporting Russian Federation interests in the area (Sergounin, 2003, 255-256).

The representatives of the Euro-Atlantic option, just as the realists, connected the matter of pulling back the Russian army from the Baltic Sea republics with the issue of protecting the rights of the Russian-speaking residents of these areas. At the United Nations Security Council meeting in January 1992, referring to these issues, B. Yeltsin stressed that Russia had to have a special position as the guardian and guarantor of safety and stability in the area of

the former USSR states. Similar was the tone of A. Kozyrev at the UN General Assembly in 1993 (Zhuryari, 1994, 80).

In the discourse concerning the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, the supporters of this option were usually called Liberals or “the Atlantists”. It was possible to find them among the representatives of political and economic elites as well as in the scientists’ circles. They claimed that, along with the end of the cold-war rivalry, the military significance of the Region diminished. They expected that due to its unique geopolitical location, the Russian enclave had a chance to play the role of a “pioneer” Russian Federation region in terms of regional and sub-regional cooperation, especially in fields like trade, transport, and environment or health protection issues. In the opinion of the Liberals, an important role in tightening the cooperation between the Region and the member states of the expanded EU could be played by the EU Northern Dimension (Sergounin, 2003, 160-161). The Governor of the Region, Yury Matochkin, was undoubtedly the politician who supported this option and one of the main initiators of starting the Free Economic Zone “Yantar”, the advocate of economic independence of the enclave as well as cooperation with the West. In 1993, together with S. Siemienov, the Regional Duma President of the day suggested a referendum which would change the status of the enclave and transform it into a republic as part of the Russian Federation (Oldberg, 2000, 275). Y. Matochkin was of the opinion that the Region should become a kind of Liechtenstein or Luxembourg in terms of status; a small area offering such advantages as geographical location, simplified conditions for foreign banks registration, tax exemptions and investments in new technologies. He also claimed that the Kaliningrad enclave was deemed to keep its political independence from Moscow; and thus tightening economic links with the EU was inevitable. In his opinion closer economical ties with the West was an irreversible process.

Also the leader of a liberal movement of the Union of Right Forces, Boris Nemtsov, demanded bigger independence for the enclave. In February 2001, he postulated increasing the degree of economical and administrative independence of the Kaliningrad Region (Baxendale, 2001, 462). Similar theses in the academic circles were also put forward by Vyacheslav Dashichev of Moscow. According to him, under conditions of shaping a new European order and Russia resigning from the superpower ambitions, the Kaliningrad enclave – as a free economic zone – should be the supporting factor for the good neighbourly relationship of the Russian Federation with the Baltic Sea states, and at the same time increase Russia’s security. According to V. Dashichev (Polish transcription Daszicziew), the role of the Kaliningrad Region to a high degree depended on

[...] whether Russian foreign policy is carried out by those understanding the importance of European unity and creating Europe-wide political, economic and legal space for Russian national interests (Daszyczew, 1993, 22).

Yuri M. Zverev (in Polish transcription Jurij M. Zwieriew) and Konstantin Gimbitsky (in Polish transcription Konstanty Gimbicki) had similar opinions of the position of the Russian enclave in geopolitics. In their opinion, the target should be to develop a concept allowing the Region play the role of a bridge between the Russian Federation and the EU under the conditions of expanding the Union eastwards. They also pointed out that this strategy for the Region must include optimally its autonomy by

[...] keeping it in the political and economic space of the Russian Federation, reasonable balance between the state regulation of territorial development and the free self-organisation of the society (Zverev, Gimbicki, 1994, 280).

When analysing the role of the Region in the Russian geopolitics, Alexander Sergounin additionally identifies an extremely liberal type of the liberal trend – the globalist one. The supporters of this option assume that the globalisation and regionalisation processes concerne the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation directly. On one hand it is the subject of discussion between two global players: EU and the Russian Federation, on the other hand, however, there is a tendency to create a new international region in the Baltic Sea area, where the Russian enclave could play a significant role. In the opinion of the globalists, bigger autonomy and more independence of the Region from Moscow would be the first step to transforming the enclave into an associate member of the EU and including it in the European Free Trade Association (Sergounin, 2003, 163).

The politics of the Federal Government in relation to the border areas of Russia might be accused of lack of consistency and continuity. There are certain indications, however, which prove growing interest in improving the economic and social situation in these areas of the Russian Federation. For example, in July 2001 the meeting of the Russian Federation Security Council under the leadership of Vladimir Putin was called; the meeting was devoted to the future of the Kaliningrad Region. It was the first ever meeting of the Council concerning only a single region of the Russian Federation. When discussing the future of Kaliningrad, the participants pointed out the necessity of improving the economy in the Region, especially in the context of EU expansion. The

Security Council wanted to increase the influence of the central power on the situation in the enclave and so they established the authority of the deputy to the accredited representative of the President in this north-west Region; the deputy's task was to control and coordinate the activities of the federal organs directly in Kaliningrad.

Another step of the federal administration constituted government-prepared federal projects and programmes of development of some of the border areas of the Russian Federation. They mainly aimed at lessening the gap between their economic development and their neighbour states. The tools used for implementing these ideas are mainly:

- development of transport infrastructure;
- external investment increase;
- improvement and development of the power networks.

Ambitious plans of the Russian administration might be shattered due to lack of funds for their implementation, given the fact that nearly a quarter of the funds should come from foreign investors.

From the standpoint of the European political order, the sub-regional structures of the Baltic cooperation do not play the main role. It is difficult to compare their significance to the role that such organisations as NATO or EU play. It is, however, necessary to stress that the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Union of the Baltic Cities have from the very start been open to the membership of the Russian Baltic regions. The participation of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation in these organisations is significant mainly in the context of further processes of the cooperation development in the regional as well as in the cross-border fields. Further cooperation of the maritime regions of Russia with other states of the Baltic Sea area also depends on the level of intensity of further works on building the cross-state transport corridors around the Baltic Sea and, above all, the Via Hanseatica Route, which is supposed to run across the Russian enclave (Parteka, Szydrowski, 2003, 11-36).

The geopolitical role of the Kaliningrad Region as a bridge in relations between Russia and the European Union was also reflected in the preparation by the Russian, Polish and EU sides and the subsequent implementation of the concept of introducing the Local Border Traffic on the Polish-Russian border. Earlier, the implementation of a similar idea on the Lithuanian-Russian border did not succeed, moreover, the Lithuanian party also had objections regarding the Polish-Russian agreement.

The Lithuanian authorities were concerned that once the Local Border Traffic is introduced in the entire district, it would become increasingly difficult to monitor Russian citizens staying in the Schengen zone. They argued that while individuals crossing the Lithuanian-Russian border were subject to

the visa requirement, simplified rules would apply for travellers by rail from the Kaliningrad Region to other parts of Russia requiring only permits that are easily obtainable. Lithuania's objection was prompted by the general state of the country's relations with Russia (*The Polish Institute of International Affairs Bulletin* 2010, 360). Lithuania depends on Russia for energy, in particular following the decommissioning of the Ignalina nuclear power station in December 2009. Russian plans to build a power station in Kaliningrad have put a spoke in the wheel of Lithuania's Ignalina II Project, for which strategic investors are currently sought. As a result of the crisis according to the Kaliningrad Region, transit through Lithuania – in particular the level of transit rates set by the Lithuanian railway – has become a contentious issue in relations between Lithuania and Russia, as has the competition between the Klaipeda and Kaliningrad ports (*The Polish Institute of International Affairs Bulletin* 2010, 361).

The Local Border Traffic Agreement between Poland and Russia concluded in 2011 has become one of the most important developments in the relations between the EU and Russia in recent years. The Agreement was also one of the main highlights of the Polish Presidency in the EU Council in the second half of 2011. Factors affecting the development of multilateral relations with the Kaliningrad Region are described in most documents related to the objectives of the Polish Presidency (Żęgota, 2014, 97). The Local Border Traffic operating in the years 2012-2014 was undoubtedly part of the implementation of geopolitical postulates concerning the treatment of the Kaliningrad Region in terms of the cooperation region between Russia and the EU with the use of specific legal solutions. In the context of difficult relations between Russia and the EU, and Poland in particular, it is difficult to overestimate the positive role that the Local Border Traffic played in these relations. The borderland with the Local Border Traffic could potentially become a “model region of cross-border cooperation” or a “laboratory of social changes” between Russia and the EU countries; an objective proposed by some experts in the early 2000s could have had a chance to be implemented (Sagan et al., 2018, 110). Changing geopolitical conditions in the relations between the West and Russia, especially after the events in Ukraine, however, made it impossible to return to this project.

The participation of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation in organisations and institutions of the sub-regional cooperation had a positive influence on stabilising this Region. By taking part in those initiatives, the Council of the Baltic Sea States or the Union of the Baltic Cities continued the relations with the Baltic Sea states, and facilitated their participation in international projects in the fields of economy, environment or human rights protection.

Some experts point out that the Council of the Baltic Sea States, placing bigger pressure on the full integration of the Baltic Sea terrain of Russia with the Baltic Sea area, disregarded at the same time the integration of the Russian State as a whole into this process. This, however, is the result of the special nature of the sub-regional cooperation within the Baltic Sea organisations; it does not have to include the areas of the whole states. Another charge concerns the policy-based lack of interest in the security matters which, in the case of the Russian enclave, play an important role. It must, however, be remembered that the sub-regional movements created certain bonds where, apart from the information exchange, leading political consultations and appearances against broader European structures, also the cooperation sector was started for the sake of security in the soft security category. The matters of hard security were solved in bilateral relations of the Russian Federation with the Baltic Sea states, as well as in the NATO and OSCE forums. The Council of the Baltic Sea States played a positive role in expanding the EU eastward (also in the context of the problems connected with the Region) but above all, as a forum for informal contacts for the interested parties. Its secondary significance in the direct negotiations with the enclave-neighbouring states and the most important organs of the EU, especially the European Commission, must be emphasized. The important thing is that the Russian side – despite many matters of concern – treated the Council of the Baltic Sea States as an organisation favouring efforts to build up multilateral trust and security in the area of the Baltic Sea.

After the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and destabilization of the eastern regions of Ukraine in 2014, the relations between Moscow and the European Union, as well as between Moscow and NATO, deteriorated. The sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation and the strengthening of NATO's eastern flank also influenced another change in the role of the Kaliningrad Region in Russian geopolitics, the dimension of security policy including.

The strategic location of the Kaliningrad Oblast in the Baltic Sea Region and the presence of a contingent of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation affect the activity of institutions responsible for security, also in the aspect of intelligence. The structures of the Federal Security Service (FSB) and the Federal Protection Service (FSO), responsible for counterintelligence activities, play a special role. The increased activity of military forces stationed in this Region causes an increase in the activity of the FSB military counterintelligence services. The Oblast remains a base for intelligence tasks carried out in Lithuania and Poland (*'Fortress Kaliningrad'*, 2019, 66). It is no accident that in 2017-2018, the modernisation and development of military potential in the Kaliningrad Oblast was intensified, contributing to a visible increase in the

offensive capabilities of the Russian Federation armed forces grouped there. This is demonstrated by the following actions of the Russian authorities:

- in the years 2017-2018, among others, new facilities for Iskander, Bal and Bastion systems;
- upgrade of the existing infrastructure of military units and support as well as logistic security facilities (adaptation of the warehouses for storing ammunition, including the nuclear);
- expansion of the airport infrastructure, where in October 2018 the Chkalovsky airport was commissioned, which is currently one of the largest military airports in Russia, capable of accepting virtually all categories of aircraft, including heavy transport machines;
- in 2018, after years of reduction and then stagnation, the expansion of air-ground units began, with an emphasis on the formation of offensive units. Two combat aviation regiments and a tank regiment were reactivated (*'Fortress Kaliningrad'* 2019, 71-72).

The change in Russia-West relations and the return to the Cold War-like rhetoric have caused Moscow to pay close attention to regular military exercises in the Baltic Sea Region. For years, the armed forces in the Kaliningrad Region have been among the most active in terms of involvement in various training activities, including strategic exercises codenamed Zapad 2017. Training activity has visibly increased. Manoeuvres take place regardless of the season of the year in the territory of the Oblast and in the Baltic Sea. Observation of these exercises shows that the grouping in the Kaliningrad Region is being prepared for an armed clash as part of an operation connected with the NATO air-ground-sea grouping.

The NATO decisions taken at the 2016 Warsaw Summit also led to the establishment of International Battalion Battle Groups in the Baltic States and Poland. Each Group consists of approximately one thousand soldiers from various countries. The Polish combat group is stationed in Orzysz, in the immediate vicinity of the Polish-Lithuanian border. This dislocation strengthens the potential of the Polish Army in this region. In addition, elements of the US Army Division have been deployed in western Poland, which is a clear signal of greater commitment and transfer of the burden of possible defence from Germany to Poland. The process of strengthening NATO's presence, and especially the USA in Poland, is ongoing. Military equipment storage bases are being prepared. This will allow Americans to only transfer personnel in an emergency, which is much faster and cheaper (Kowalczewski, 2018, 110).

Up to now, both parties to the confrontation have definitely sent each other "costly signals" in material terms. Russia has constantly observed NATO's attempts to enlarge. NATO has started some initiatives such as the

establishment of the Baltic Air Policing mission in 2004 to guard the airspace over Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, as well as joint exercises, investment into BALNET (Baltic Air Surveillance Network and Control System) and military exchanges. In response, Russian armed forces conducted large-scale snap exercises, violated airspace and conducted navy manoeuvres close to their exclusive economic zones to show how considerable capabilities they have to face NATO, for example military exercises Zapad 2009, Zapad 2013 and Zapad 2017 in the western military district of Russia which were basically interpreted as a political manifesto against the presence of NATO in Eastern Europe (Veebel, Sliwa, 2019, 115-116).

The end of the Cold War and the formation of the new order in Europe contributed fundamentally to the change of the geopolitical significance of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. During the Cold War it fulfilled only the role of a military base for the Soviet Baltic Fleet. After the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the Russian exclave became a region open to cooperation with other countries, both on the regional and local levels. Attempts to create in the Kaliningrad Region the Russian “Hong Kong on the Baltic Sea” have not yielded results so far. But on the other hand, the Russian exclave is no longer seen solely through the prism of military factors. Poland and other countries in the region do not question the current political and legal status of the Kaliningrad Region. They have increasingly been looking at it in terms of cooperation in the Baltic area rather than as a source of danger. Krzysztof Żęgota wants to emphasize that although the role of the Region in the security of Eastern and Central Europe is obviously the outcome of various factors in international relations and security in Europe, those alternatives can be presented as four scenarios:

1. *Status quo* – the Kaliningrad Region as an important region of Russia, from the geopolitical perspective, with some elements of independence, especially in contacts with partners from Central and Eastern European states;
2. The Kaliningrad Region as a laboratory and a specific testing ground in relations between Russia and the West. In this scenario, the Region would play the role of a stabilising factor for the situation in Central and Eastern Europe and the mechanism of political cooperation between Russia and the West;
3. “Deep” independence of the Kaliningrad Region likely to become the fourth Baltic republic which, however, seems an unrealistic scenario under current conditions of political and military consolidation of the Russian Federation. If break-away tendencies emerge, the Region would become a source of conflict in Central and Eastern Europe;

4. The Kaliningrad Region as a tool in the hands of the federal authorities, used in order to “hold in check” member states of the EU and NATO in the South Baltic Region (Żęgota, 2017, 47-48).

The opinion of Andrzej Sakson is worth emphasizing: he believes that the Russian-Ukrainian conflict over Crimea and Eastern Ukraine may turn out to be a turning point in the history of post-war Europe which Russia will use to create a new balance of power and determine influences in Central and Eastern Europe. The Kaliningrad Region can play an important role in this geostrategic game (Sakson, 2015, 50). Changes in relations between NATO, the EU and the Russian Federation could affect not only the shape of future European order, but also change the role of the Kaliningrad Region in the Polish-Russian relations (see: Żukowski, Chełminiak, 2015, 180-188).

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PART IV

Research Perspectives

Scientific Activity of the Institute of Political Science of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn on the Kaliningrad Region

*Arkadiusz Żukowski, Marcin Chełmiński, Wojciech Kotowicz,
Krzysztof Żęgota*

A large part of the international scientific activity of the Institute of Political Science at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn is concerned with the internal and external issues of the Kaliningrad Region (Kaliningrad Oblast) of the Russian Federation.

The Institute belongs to one of the few centres in Poland and Europe which conduct political science research concerning mainly the socio-political reality of the Kaliningrad Region and the contacts of this part of the Russian Federation with the Baltic states and European organisations and institutions; especially the cross-border cooperation is being taken into account¹.

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In 2001, the Institute began to create a research team dealing with the Kaliningrad issues. The incentive to this was a scientific grant from the State Committee for Scientific Research (*Komitet Badań Naukowych* in Polish) entitled “Poland towards the Kaliningrad Region in terms of European political order changes”². The research enabled by the project was conducted from 1st March 2002 to 31st January 2004. The scientific goal of the project was a multi-aspect analysis of the place and role of the Kaliningrad Region in Polish foreign

* In the paper only partners from the Kaliningrad Region are taken into consideration.

- 1 Part of the papers presented during the conferences and symposiums as well as scientific publications of the staff of the Institute of Political Science are on the Institute's website: <<http://www.uwm.edu.pl/inp/index.php/badania-wspolpraca>> (February 2, 2020). For full list of publications of the Institute on the Kaliningrad issues see the article: “List of Scientific Publications on the Kaliningrad Region Prepared by the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn” at the end of the book.
- 2 Number of the research project 2 H02E 041 22 and the Polish title “*Polska wobec obwodu kaliningradzkiego w warunkach przemian europejskiego ładu politycznego*”. It was the first research grant implemented by the Institute on the topic.

policy against the background of European processes of globalisation and regionalisation, including economic and cultural issues. Another goal of the project was to investigate the practice of the cross-border cooperation on the example of the contacts between the Warmia and Mazury and the Kaliningrad Regions and to answer the question about the role of the Kaliningrad Region in the transformation of European political order, especially in the context of the eastward enlargement of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The results of the research had important implications on decision-making in Polish foreign policy. During the studies, the theories of foreign policy which emphasize the concepts of international roles and recognize them as central categories of research were used. The findings have been presented at conferences as well as in scientific publications.

The most important for the Institute was the research grant from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education entitled "The Level of Local Democracy in the Polish-Russian Borderland and its Implications for Trans-Border Cooperation" (completed 2009-2011). The purpose of the project was to investigate the state of the local democracy in the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region.

Another research grant awarded by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was entitled "Eastern Policy of Poland and International Cooperation of Warmia and Mazury Region". The grant functioned in the framework of the support mechanism of civil and local dimension of foreign policy instrument "Small Projects of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Local Government" (completed 2011-2012).

In cooperation with scientists from the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad, members of the Institute took part in a research project entitled "EU 4 YOU" which was in line with the EU Centre at the said university. The culmination of the cooperation in this project was the participation in the international scientific conference "Common spaces of Russia and the EU. Current problems and possible solutions" which was held in Great Novgorod on 25th-26th May 2012.

The Institute was honoured by being awarded the European Union grant entitled "Close Neighbours in the Twenty First Century – New Communication and Perception" in the framework of the Lithuania-Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 (completed 2012-2014) together with a partner from Kaliningrad – the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University³. The general overall objective of the project was to develop and improve social contacts

3 For more information see: <<http://web.archive.org/web/20140924044712/http://uwm.edu.pl:80/inp/index.php/sasiedzi>> (December 16, 2019).

and cross-border cooperation especially in the field of science and education between the border area of the Warmia and Mazury Region of Poland and the Russian Kaliningrad Region through the analysis of trends and challenges of the bilateral cooperation intensification process between both Regions and the promotion of joint projects in the field of research and education. The project also dealt with issues of migration, national and ethnic minorities and development policy as well as with activities to increase the level of knowledge about local governments and political, social and cultural conditions in the Polish-Russian borderland. Also, the intensification of joint ventures in the field of education in order to increase the knowledge about local governments, political, social and cultural conditions in the Polish-Russian borderland among students and representatives of local authorities was on the agenda.

The target groups included academic staff, students, doctoral students, local government activists. The final beneficiaries were the borderland communities of the two Regions: Warmia and Mazury and Kaliningrad. The project assumed as its result a raise in the level of knowledge on the Polish – Russian borderland among 200 students from Poland and Russia; increase in number of scientists who conduct researches on the Polish – Russian borderland; overcoming mutual distrust and negative stereotypes that exist between scientists and students in the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region; creation of pro-state and civil society attitudes among people who were directly and indirectly covered by the project.

There were many scholarly and educational activities in the framework of the project. A team of researchers, qualified in various areas of political science and social sciences, was established from the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn and Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad. The team prepared scientific questionnaires for students, local governments and researchers in the cross-border areas; the interview questionnaire were conducted on both sides of the border and they provided material for a comparative analysis of the state of consciousness, expectations and perceptions of the cross-border cooperation between the Poles and Russians. Among others, the team prepared and conducted seminars for bachelor, master degree and postgraduate students on the problems tackled in the project conducted by researchers from both universities, specializing in various aspects of the Polish-Russian border issues. An exchange of students and academic staff took place and lectures presenting the results of researches were conducted.

Among the achievements of the project, Summer School arranged in Olsztyn for 50 participants (students and scholars from the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad) must be mentioned. The main aim of the Summer School was to deepen the knowledge of students on political,

social, cultural aspects of the Polish – Russian borderland⁴. What is more, the project was concluded by an international academic conference for scholars, representatives of local governments and students from Poland and Russia; expert opinions and the preparation of scientific books and a joint scientific journal on Polish-Russian border issues followed.

The Institute tries to investigate current and difficult issues, among them the completion of such research projects as “Monument Policy in Poland Towards Post-Soviet Memorial Sites – Polish and Russian Point of View” (2014) and “The Local Border Traffic in the Crisis Conditions in Polish-Russian Relations” (2015) – grants received from the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding.

Other research topics of the Institute are related to the Polish-Russian Local Border Traffic, the preparation of the international grants entitled “The Mechanism of the Local Border Traffic on the Polish-Russian Border. Theoretical Determinants – International Conditions – Regional and Local Implications” and “Perception and Implications of the Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Russia. Theoretical Determinants and Experience of the Researches” to name but a few.

The latest research initiative regarding the Russian and Kaliningrad issues was the implementation of a research project and a scientific conference “25 years of the Polish-Russian Treaty of Friendly and Neighbourly Cooperation – an attempt to overview a quarter century of the Polish-Russian relations”. Regional and local approaches to the Polish-Russian relations were analysed as part of the project and the conference.

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The interest in the Kaliningrad Region has resulted in doctoral theses by the staff of the Institute. It seems worth mentioning that the Institute is one of the first places in Poland to come up with such scientific works. The author of the first doctoral thesis was Wojciech T. Modzelewski who focused on the “Political Conditions of the Cooperation in the Borderland of Poland and Russia”⁵ (supervisor: Arkadiusz Żukowski). The thesis was approved by the Gdańsk University in 2005. In the thesis, the political conditions of the cooperation in the Polish- Russian borderland were analysed. The connections between the situation in the area and Polish foreign policy were highlighted. The thesis also

4 For the programme of the Summer School see: <http://www.uwm.edu.pl/inp/docs/letnia_program.pdf> (December 15, 2019).

5 The Polish title “*Polityczne uwarunkowania współpracy na pograniczu polsko-rosyjskim*”.

included reflections on the points of contention between the countries in connection with the Region of Kaliningrad, the importance of this Region for the geopolitics and the perspectives for the cross-border relations between Poland and Russia⁶.

Another doctoral thesis was written by Marcin Chełminiak. It was approved by the University of Warsaw in 2005. The title was: "The Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation Against the Changes of the European Political Order"⁷ (supervisor: A. Żukowski). The author analysed the history of the Kaliningrad Region formation and its role in the Cold War. But the main analysis was focused on the Russian military interests of the Kaliningrad Region. The author also dealt with the geopolitical role of the Region of Kaliningrad in connection with the interests of the Russian Federation in the Baltic Sea area. The thesis also contains an analysis of the relationships of the Kaliningrad Region with international organisations and institutions, especially those which play an important role in the region of the Baltic Sea such as NATO, the European Union and other sub-regional organisations⁸.

The next thesis which was approved by the Gdańsk University in 2009 was written by Wojciech Kotowicz entitled "The Political Life of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation: Endo- and Exogenous Stimulus"⁹ (supervisor: A. Żukowski). The thesis consisted not only of the analysis of the political life in the Kaliningrad Region, i.e. its essence, dimension or main characteristics but also the conditions influencing the political life of the Region. The fundamental objective of the research boiled down to finding an answer about the role of internal and external factors in determining the political life of the Kaliningrad Region¹⁰.

The fourth PhD thesis was written by Krzysztof Żęgota and defended at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn in 2011. The thesis was entitled "The Contemporary Picture of Polish Diaspora in the Kaliningrad Region of

6 Description of the thesis in Polish see: <<https://nauka-polska.pl/#/profile/research?id=104016&k=34bd3h>> (January 11, 2020). The thesis was published in an altered and extended form, see: W.T. Modzelewski (2006).

7 Polish title "*Obwód Kaliningradzki Federacji Rosyjskiej w warunkach przemian europejskiego ładu politycznego*".

8 Description of the thesis in Polish see: <<https://nauka-polska.pl/#/profile/research?id=52273&k=70koev>> (January 11, 2020). The thesis was published in an altered and extended form, see: M. Chełminiak (2009).

9 Polish title "*Życie polityczne Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego Federacji Rosyjskiej*".

10 Description of the thesis in Polish see: <<https://nauka-polska.pl/#/profile/research?id=232287&k=5fcwvyn>> (January 12, 2020). The thesis was published in an altered and extended form, see: W. Kotowicz (2012).

the Russian Federation”¹¹ (supervisor: A. Żukowski). The aim of the research was to show a complete picture of the Polish Diaspora as a national/ethnic community, its origin, determinants of functioning, and different aspects of its activity, especially social and cultural ones. In the thesis, social position of members of the Diaspora and the relationship between the Polish Diaspora and the rest of the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Region as well as contacts with Poland were examined. Also, the problem of the professional activity of the Polish Diaspora members in the community of the Kaliningrad Region and the potential role of the Diaspora in the development of Polish-Russian relations at the regional and local levels were analysed¹².

Studies for postdoctoral academic degrees (Habilitation) on the Kaliningrad issues qualifying for the position of assistant professor are currently underway. In 2014, M. Chełminiak was awarded such a degree by the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań for a series of scientific articles entitled “The Place of the Kaliningrad Region in Russian Foreign Policy and the Polish-Russian Inter-Governmental and Cross-Border Cooperation after 2004”¹³. Moreover, in 2017 W.T. Modzelewski acquired postdoctoral degree (Habilitation) at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań for scientific achievements and monography entitled “Paradiplomacy of Regions. Case Study of Eastern Poland” (Modzelewski, 2016).

The research on the Kaliningrad issues resulted in Bachelor and Master theses in the Faculty of Political Science¹⁴. Recently, Bachelor theses as well as

11 Polish title “*Współczesny obraz diaspory polskiej w Obwodzie Kaliningradzkim Federacji Rosyjskiej*”.

12 Description of the thesis in Polish see: <<https://nauka-polska.pl/#/profile/research?id=253591&k=ofgzro>> [January 12, 2020]. The thesis was published in an altered and extended form, see: K. Żęgota (2014).

13 Description of the series of scientific publications in Polish see: <http://nauka-polska.pl/dhtml/raporty/praceBadawcze?type=opis&lang=pl&objectId=289686> [January 11, 2020].

14 Examples of the Master theses: Jan Bogdan (2000), *Wolna Strefa Ekonomiczna “Jantar” i jej kontynuacja. Samodzielna strefa ekonomiczna*, Supervisor Prof. Bohdan Kozięło-Poklewski; Anna Bogdan (2000), *Formy współpracy transgranicznej w regionie północno-wschodnim Polski*, Supervisor Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski; Aneta Szydlik (2001), *Obwód Kaliningradzki w polskiej polityce zagranicznej*, Supervisor Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski; Anna Gojło (2002), *Status polityczno-prawny współczesnych enklaw na przykładzie Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Supervisor Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski; Katarzyna Karpiszen (2002), *Przemiany społeczne i narodowościowe w Obwodzie Kaliningradzkim w latach 1991-1996*, Supervisor Prof. Bohdan Kozięło-Poklewski; Artur Jaśmin (2004), *Zjawisko przemytu granicznego we współczesnej Polsce ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem granicy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Federacją Rosyjską*, Supervisor Prof. Selim Chazbijewicz; Krystian B. Dzirba (2005), *Specyfika narodowościowo-etniczna w Obwodzie Kaliningradzkim*

Master theses on the Kaliningrad issues have been pursued at the Faculty of National Security of the Institute¹⁵.

Furthermore, the Institute monitors and investigates the research on the Kaliningrad issues conducted in Poland which has resulted in unique and comprehensive surveys on the topic (Żukowski, 2004; Kotowicz, Żukowski, 2004; Kotowicz, Żukowski, 2008; Żukowski, 2009; Kotowicz, Żukowski, 2011; Żukowski, 2014; Żukowski et al., 2016). The Institute is the first and only one which has compiled a full list of scientific publications on Kaliningrad issues in the Polish language since 1991 (*Polska wobec Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego Federacji Rosyjskiej* 2004, 139-176; Chełminiak, Kotowicz, Modzelewski, Żukowski, 2008, 56-106) as well as in Polish web resources (Chełminiak, Modzelewski, 2003, 363-368). Furthermore, the Institute prepared a precious schedule of contacts between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region in the years 1991-2003 (*Polska wobec Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego Federacji Rosyjskiej* 2004, 107-138, 133-152), in the years 1991-2006 (Chełminiak, Kotowicz, Modzelewski, Żukowski, 2008, 269-307) and until 2015 (Kaliningrad 2016, 195-220).

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- Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Supervisor Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski; Kamila E. Rostkowska-Różacka (2005), *Obwód Kaliningradzki Federacji Rosyjskiej na łamach "Gazety Wyborczej" w latach 1991-2004*, Supervisor Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski; Krystyna Stefańska (2005), *Obwód Kaliningradzki Federacji Rosyjskiej na łamach "Rzeczypospolitej" w latach 1991-2004*, Supervisor Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski; Katarzyna Rochmińska (2006), *Obwód kaliningradzki wobec współczesnych wyzwań międzynarodowych*, Supervisor Dr. Degefe Kebede Gemechu; Piotr Cichurski (2006), *Szanse i ograniczenia współpracy przygranicznej na przykładzie Bartoszyce i Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Supervisor Dr. Zdzisław Kunicki; Adam Samsel (2009), *Znaczenie geopolityczne Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Supervisor Dr. Adam Hołub. An example of the Bachelor thesis: Kamil Jaśkowski (2013), *Współpraca Polski z Obwodem Kaliningradzkim Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Supervisor Prof. Olga Wasiuta.
- 15 Examples of the Bachelor theses: Franciszek Czyżyński (2013), *Zabezpieczenie granic z obwodem kaliningradzkim po wejściu do strefy Schengen*, Supervisor Prof. Marek Jabłonowski; Milena Czarniak (2016), *Ewolucja roli i znaczenia Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego w polityce bezpieczeństwa Federacji Rosyjskiej w kontekście rozszerzenia NATO i Unii Europejskiej na Wschód*, Supervisor Dr. Ewa Czarkowska; Piotr Skrodzki (2016), *Zadania i obowiązki Służby Celnej w małym ruchu granicznym z Obwodem Kaliningradzkim*, Supervisor Prof. Waldemar Żebrowski; Mateusz Jezuit (2017), *Straż Graniczna jako system ochrony RP ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem obwodu kaliningradzkiego*, Supervisor Prof. Degefe Kebede Gemechu; Jakub Tereszkiwicz (2017), *Współpraca Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Obwodem Kaliningradzkim Federacji Rosyjskiej – dylematy współpracy transgranicznej*, Supervisor Prof. Selim Chazbijewicz; Damian Kowalczyk (2019), *Rola i znaczenie straży granicznej na granicy z Obwodem Kaliningradzkim*, Supervisor Dr. Maciej Hartliński. An examples of the Masters's thesis: Adrian Stasiński (2015), *Wpływ na bezpieczeństwo Polski instalacji rakiet ISKANDER w Obwodzie Kaliningradzkim*, Supervisor Prof. Marek Jabłonowski; Mateusz Ropiak (2015), *Bezpieczeństwo związane z przestępczością zorganizowaną w kontekście granicy polsko-rosyjskiej województwa warmińsko-mazurskiego i Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Supervisor Prof. Selim Chazbijewicz.

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The cooperation of the Institute in science and education on the Kaliningrad issues is performed primarily through contacts with the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad. Initially, this cooperation was not formalized and not very intense due mainly to the scarcity of financial resources, despite numerous attempts to obtain scientific grants, both domestic and international. In the end, the Institute succeeded in receiving different grants. Most of them were implemented together with the partner from Kaliningrad. Cooperation with the Kaliningrad based university revolves around the exchange of experiences of research, scientific queries, joint conferences and symposia, exchange of staff and students (scholarships, internships, cultural events) and preparation of joint research projects. In addition, other activities aimed at the development of scientific cooperation with the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University have been introduced, especially in the area of exchange of didactic experience. In the academic year 2018/2019, Prof. Ilya Tarasov from the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University worked in the Institute of Political Science as a visiting professor and conducted lectures on Polish-Russian cross-border cooperation and international relations in Central and Eastern Europe. In spring 2019, researchers from the Institute of Political Science, Prof. Waldemar Tomaszewski and Wojciech Kotowicz PhD, enjoyed a three-month research internship at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad.

On the scientific and educational ground, the Institute collaborates with other partners from Kaliningrad. Since 2011, such activity has been conducted with the Western Branch of the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation (*Российская академия народного хозяйства и государственной службы при Президенте Российской Федерации. Западный филиал* in Russian). The activity includes joint publications, guest lectures, conferences. The Academy member, Viktor Romanovskiy PhD leads classes on the topic of Euroregions and cross-border cooperation as a visiting professor at the Institute every year. Owing to an initiative of the Institute, a cooperation agreement between the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn and the Kaliningrad Branch of the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation was concluded in 2012 for five years¹⁶.

16 See: http://www.uwm.edu.pl/bwz/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Tabela_Umowy-17.5.2016.pdf (February 2, 2020).

Representatives of the Institute participated in several scientific conferences, organised by the Western Branch of the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation. Two latest conferences were held in July 2016 and November 2019.

The Election Commission of the Kaliningrad Region (*Избирательная комиссия Калининградской области* in Russian) used to be quite a special partner of the Institute. The co-operation concerned electoral education of the younger generation. The Institute together with the Commission submitted a joint EU grant entitled “Electoral Education in Civil Society: Challenges and Perspectives of Cooperation in the Polish-Russian Borderland”, also in vain. Similarly, owing to an initiative of the Institute a cooperation agreement between the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn and the Election Commission of the Kaliningrad Region was signed in 2011, also for five years¹⁷. Unfortunately, the cooperation discontinued a few years ago.

Another scientific partner of the Institute located in Kaliningrad, was the Kaliningrad State Technical University. In November 2019, Prof. Arkadiusz Żukowski and Prof. Marcin Chelminiak participated in the international conference organised by the Kaliningrad State Technical University as part of the project “Kant – Prussia – Europe”, implemented in partnership with the Nordost-Institut in Lüneburg and the Institute of Political Sciences of the University of Warsaw. In the framework of the said conference, members of the Institute of Political Sciences held a number of working meetings with representatives of all scientific institutions involved in the preparation and implementation of the project “Kant – Prussia – Europe”. The issue of an international grant application to be submitted in the near future in Germany was also discussed.

The Institute has also undertaken scientific cooperation with the Kaliningrad NGO Centre for European Partnership (*Центр европейского партнерства* in Russian). The initial step of this cooperation was a joint research project entitled “Factors of Development of Local Democracy in the Warmia and Mazury Region and the Kaliningrad Region” launched in July 2006 whose aim was to examine the functioning of local governments on both sides of the borderland, in particular in the authority-citizen relations. The project was prepared under the INTERREG IIIA/TACIS Lithuania, Poland and Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation Programme.

17 See: http://www.uwm.edu.pl/bwz/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Tabela_Umowy-17.5.2016.pdf (February 2, 2020).

Since 2001, the Institute has actively been cooperating with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland situated in Kaliningrad, especially with the consuls general. The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad has been one of the partners in several initiatives undertaken by the Institute of Political Science of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, including participation in conferences and projects as well as acting as advisory.

A number of other initiatives aimed at developing scientific cooperation with the Kaliningrad Oblast have been undertaken. Researchers from the Institute of Political Science of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn prepared and submitted to the Polish National Science Centre and Polish Ministry of Science seven research projects concerning Polish-Russian relations and Polish-Russian cross-border cooperation. Most of them were prepared in partnership with institutions from the Kaliningrad Region. The grant project entitled "Strategy of Using Cultural Heritage for the Development of Tourism – Recommendations for Warmia and Mazury Voivodeship and the Kaliningrad Oblast of Russian Federation" was submitted also to the Polish-Russian Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020. There were other grant projects prepared by the Institute of Political Science: in 2012, the project "Perception and Implications of the Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Russia. Theoretical Determinants and Experience of Researches" was delivered in response to "Harmony" call for proposals of the Polish National Science Centre (NCN). Other research project applications were submitted to the NCN in subsequent years: "The Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Russia. Theoretical Indicators – International Conditions – Regional and Local Implications" (2013), "The Local Border Traffic Mechanism at the Polish-Russian Border. Theoretical Indicators – International Conditions – Regional and Local Implications" (2015), "The Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation and International Security in Central and Eastern Europe: Theoretical and Practical Dimension in View of Basic geopolitical Paradigms" (2016), "International Security of Central and Eastern Europe in the Context of the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation. Case Study of Poland and Lithuania" (2017). In the years 2016-2017, researchers of the Institute of Political Science also prepared and submitted projects based on the idea of a profound study of the Polish cultural heritage in former East Prussia. Projects have been submitted to the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education within the National Programme of Humanities Development. Research cooperation with scientific entities in the Kaliningrad Region will be continued in future, especially focusing on joint scientific projects.

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The Institute not only continues the existing forms of cooperation with partners from Kaliningrad Region, but formulates targets for strategic cooperation over a longer period of time as well. The intention of the Institute is to conduct research with the partners from Kaliningrad in a broader context – the Baltic Sea Region and Euro-Asia. This is confirmed by the fact that the staff of the Institute take part in the activities of the Baltic Sea Region University Network (BSRUN) of which the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn is a member¹⁸.

In the era of intensifying and deepening globalisation and regionalisation processes, undertaking joint cross-border projects, also in the sphere of research and education, is particularly important and well grounded. Only through mutual understanding and the development of contacts, it is possible to overcome various barriers resulting from the existence of the border. It is of particular significance to overcome mutual distrust and negative stereotypes and to build confidence by enhancing social integration of the Polish-Russian borderland and the Baltic Sea Region in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and sustainability. Apart from strictly scientific and educational goals, the activities of the Institute strive to enter into these processes. The similarity of problems and research interests resulting from living in the trans-border region have additionally been motivating to take up this neighbourly cooperation.

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International Activity and Cooperation of Universities – the European Union from the Kaliningrad Point of View

Anna Barsukova, Igor I. Zhukovskiy

Abstract

International activity and cooperation of universities has become a norm. The evolution from intermittent contacts of researchers to intensive collaboration programmes based on common values and tangible political mission – besides aiming at the attraction of human recourses at external markets – has taken not very much time from a historical perspective. Why do European universities cooperate? What are the goals of cooperation with third countries? How has the vector of cooperation between the Russian and the European Union university systems been developing?

Keywords: internationalisation of higher education, academic mobility, universities in global politics, the European Union, Kaliningrad

The contemporary role of universities is not limited to just teaching. It is not only conducting scientific research and its propagation. One of the significant challenges of the modern academic world is also initiating and developing discussions on the directions of changes in the contemporary world as well as the development of international cooperation. The international connections between universities and the possibility of conducting international scientific research are nowadays a significant requirement for researchers and indicator of quality. Universities today represent a complex system of interrelations between Academia and the condition, in which Universities are functioning. The European Union (EU) still characterized by not yet stable domestic and internal political systems and not clearly understandable priorities for supranational development remains one of the best examples of the development of international cooperation in the field of education and science both within and outside the EU.

Observing the principles and rationales of international cooperation between universities in such sophisticated systems as the EU where institutional decisions (not only in the field of higher education) of the EU member

states preserve their significance and rest on various traditions of professional corporations, it is extremely important to understand common and specific goals and practices of international cooperation both within the EU and with “non-partner countries”.

Large-scale international cooperation between the EU key countries started almost simultaneously with the development of integration projects in the western part of the Continent. These projects were aimed at the coordination of economic policies of keynote players at principal markets (such as the European Coal and Steel Community). Besides their economic goals, these projects had clear political dimension: developing conditions for overcoming distrust between large European countries.

Undoubtedly, from the very moment of their establishment, universities have become an integral part of the political world not only being an element of national pride but an instrument of fulfilling the foreign policy goals connected with expansion of research and education representation in keynote regions (from the geopolitical interests of the country perspective) and increasing export of education services into the countries being in the scope of strategic interests zone.

The history of establishing the first university on the territory of modern Russia, that is the University of Königsberg (in German: *Albertus-Universität Königsberg*) (former Königsberg and now Russian exclave in the EU) is a good example of understanding both political and geopolitical significance of this university. After a formal opening ceremony held by Duke Albrecht von Hohenzollern on 17th August 1544, the word of the newly opened university was officially spread among all neighbouring countries (Denmark, Sweden, Poland and German Hanseatic cities). The university’s mission involved the dissemination of humanistic ideas as well as German culture and Protestantism in the colonised Baltic territories. This fact preconditioned the process of inviting both lecturers and students from the bordering states. Does this interpretation of the university mission not render modern ideas about possibilities and desirability of using higher education institutions as a source of “soft power”?

Serving the goals of good neighbouring atmosphere development, the integration projects in the field of cultural and academic exchange have been boosted. ‘Academia’ was rightly interpreted as a bearer of collective memory being the factor for the national idea consolidation as well as representing the structure providing the greatest potential of intellectual influence on vast social layers.

In 1950, the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*, DAAD) re-started its activities which had been interrupted by the Second World War. The German Academic Exchange Service is a

self-governing consortium of German Universities¹. Initiated by a group of rectors in 1925, DAAD – as an instrument facilitating academic exchange – started to associate itself with a tool for research, educational and cultural presence of New Germany in a new (post-war) world. Looking at the biggest players of the post-war European politics since the beginning of the 1960s, DAAD started to play the role of the catalyser of international contacts including the countries on another side of the geopolitical fault line. Since 1958, the German Academic Exchange Service has launched programmes in the field of research and educational cooperation for Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. DAAD has contributed significantly to overcoming historically caused distrust towards neighbours by fostering the development of German-French and German-Polish academic cooperation. At the same time, one more fact that boosted international cooperation within western boundaries of the European continent was mass establishment of specialized centres for regional studies (*Landeskunde*) in West German universities at the beginning of the 1970s. They were created following the form and methodological pattern of American area studies centres. The introduction of international agenda as a research field caused it to become a catalyser for large-scale student, academic, and staff exchange mainly on the European continent. Preserving German as the main language of instruction, with English as *lingua franca*, is a regular teaching method in German universities. They represent a perfect example of active integration of a national university system into international academic cooperation processes.

Nowadays these tendencies can perfectly be illustrated by two university projects supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One of them is Andrassy University Budapest (AUB)² – an international German Language University located not on the German territory. The other one is a modern issue of a European educational institution, i.e. Viadrina European University (in German: *Europa-Universität Viadrina*) in Frankfurt (Oder) being a trans-border University focused on Polish students in educational context and on Polish issues in terms of research.

Using the German case as an example, significant reasons for university international cooperation can be detected. They are solving political goals of good neighbourhood relations development and training staff for international cooperation and in applied relevance preparation of analytical materials for national and global consumers.

1 More information about DAAD – see the official website: <http://www.daad.de>.

2 See the official website: <http://www.andrassyuni.eu>.

A good example of successful interrelation between foreign interests of university based factors and networking cooperation is the Baltic Sea Region that is one of the key political macro-regions on the European continent and the region of cooperation between Russia and the EU. The Baltic Sea Region states keenly make use of university network cooperation to implement and support their foreign policy interests. Due to a geopolitical shift at the end of the twentieth century, new ambitious players appeared in this region. They actively consolidate their positions by means of all available instruments including university networking opportunities.

An interesting example is a French model that preserves national language as an absolute priority in an academic environment, focuses on French-speaking countries (*La Francophonie*) and is one of the most desirable academic mobility destinations.

Export of education services, attraction of students from target regions (not only French-speaking countries) is one of the most successful vectors of French policy. Notwithstanding the fact that only a few French universities are represented in the prestigious international rankings (in a QS Ranking in 2012 only 4 French universities were among the first 200)³, the model of the French education services export is one of the most efficient among all other EU countries. According to the data of the survey conducted in 2011, international students distinguished the following reasons for their choice in favour of the French education: quality of education and command of the French language (*Enquête exclusive Campus France*).

The main principles of organisation and administration of the higher education system in France are regulated by the Savary Law dated 26th January 1984 (*Loi n°84-52 du 26 janvier 1984 sur l'enseignement supérieur*), which was later supplemented by some new acts (one of the latest was about innovations and researches) and aimed at preserving the main principles: autonomy and involvement. It is the French Government that exerts its influence on the university HR policy. It is reflected in such instances as the possibility to invite leading foreign specialists, be independent in choosing regional and country priorities in the process of foreign students selection. The *Campus France* government education centres conduct selection of international students.

3 More information: (Oui, 2012). Only one French university in Top-500 in the Shanghai Ranking – Université Paris-Sud. See: (*Classement*, 2010). The only exception is the Paris School of Economics (PSE). See: <http://www.parisschoolofeconomics.eu/en/>, that was established in 2006 following the model of the London School of Economics and Political Science, occupying high positions in professional ratings.

The French system of higher education is often considered as a closed one. First and foremost, it is predetermined by the existence of not only classical universities but also well-known *grandes écoles* or “great schools” that are regarded as a “real French cultural exception” (*Le site*) and are seen as a competitive advantage on the rapidly globalising higher education market. Higher education quality and the indisputable authority of a diploma, both inland and abroad, were the factors that contributed to such schools becoming a place of elite formation not only within France itself (almost all its presidents graduated from at least one “great school”, whereas some of them, including Valéry Giscard d’Éstaing, obtained diplomas of two schools), but also in its foreign partner countries (for example Colombian-French politician – Ingrid Betancourt, President of Cameroon – Paul Biya, US diplomat – Paul Bremer and many others).

The French experience thrusts into the spotlight a number of goals set for the international cooperation between universities. They include personnel training for overseas partners as well as popularisation of the national education model and national language in the global context.

Intensification of the integration processes within European communities in the 1990s, and later within the EU, led to the necessity of elaborating common organisation principles for academic and research international cooperation both inside the EU and in collaboration with third countries.

It should be noted that the last decade of the twentieth century, characterized by dramatic geopolitical reconstruction, was a period of escalating competition for the best researchers, teachers and students from the former USSR republics and the so-called Eastern Bloc. The competitors were the biggest players on the academic and research recruitment market, including Asian universities and R&D centres. The majority of the EEC countries, later the EU, launched programmes aimed at attracting the most qualified research and teaching staff from third countries; mainly from former socialist countries.

The perception of national necessity in the recruitment of overseas personnel served as an accelerator of specialised exchange programmes prepared to absorb the EU students, teachers and researchers for university jobs. Aggravation of competition for human resources demanded a more open and active recruitment policy aimed at external markets. Seven years after the signing of the Bologna declaration, Andreas Schleicher, an OECD analyst, gave a good account of such a policy saying “if Europe wants to retain its competitive edge at the top of the global value-added chain (primarily compared with Asian universities – AB), the education system must be made more flexible, more effective and more easily accessible to a wider range of people” (Schleicher, 2006).

Active university cooperation in the context of the personnel issues resolution can be illustrated by the example of academic cooperation between Russian and EU universities that started in the 1990s as a collaboration of the unequal: Russian universities served as beneficiaries of financial and methodological assistance, implementing common European practices into the educational and research aspects of their university life. For the majority of Russian students and researchers the participation in European programmes provided the emigration opportunities and a means of individual integration into the EU academic context – including even leaving Russia for the EU countries for a regular place of work.

In accordance with the agreement between the European Commission and Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in 2002, the Centre for European Documentation (CED) was created which became the coordinating structure for a number of research units of the university. On 2nd October 2008, the Centre for European Documentation was renamed to the Information Centre of the European Union under the agreement concluded between the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University and the Delegation of the European Commission to Russia. The purpose of the Centre is to disseminate information on current events in the field of interaction between the European Union and the Russian Federation. The Centre issued the bulletin “European Union-Russia-Kaliningrad”, which presented a number of significant articles pertaining to the EU-Russia relations (Klemeshev and Fedorov, 2009, 84).

Initially, the main cooperation agenda targeting the local authorities and large regional universities was the TACIS programme (Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States). It provided technical assistance to reforms in the CIS countries. The programme was launched in 1991; the EU spent EUR 4.2 billion during the first 8 years of its operation and EUR 3.1 billion in 2000-2006 (EU-Russia Cooperation Programme). The programme terminated in 2006 giving way to a new programme launched within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument in 2007. The financing scheme changed (joint financing is expected) and the selection of projects in accordance with common strategic interests alike. Priority cooperation actors are the north-western regions of Russia, the Kaliningrad Region and, in particular, leading universities focused on international research and having a high potential in promoting cooperation between Russia and the EU. Directions and aims of joint project activities of these actors go beyond the four common areas and include also public health, social welfare as well as environmental and cross-border cooperation issues. In the years 1997-1998 the project PROMETHEE II “The Global Plan of the Development of the Kaliningrad Region” in the framework of the TACIS programme was

implemented. The project made an important contribution to the elaboration of the regional development strategy. This project was carried out by the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University jointly with the University of Pierre Mendes (Grenoble, France) and the Institute of Economy in Transition (Moscow, Russia), involving experts from other research centres of Moscow and Sankt-Petersburg, as well as scholars from France, Britain, Germany and Finland (Klemeshev and Fedorov, 2009, 83-84). Currently, the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University is the participant of the following projects within the framework of Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020: "Two Ships – Common Sea. Soldek and Vityaz: Maritime Heritage of Poland and Russia", "Common Heritage of the Curonian Lagoon: from Extraordinary to Familiar – CROSS-HERITAGE" and "Baltic Odyssey – Creating a Common Historical and Cultural Space" (*Projects*).

In 1990, another instrument of European financing appeared in the post-Soviet space – the Tempus programme which emerged in Russia in 1994 (National TEMPUS Office) – actively used by Russian universities. The programme had a significant influence on Russian regional higher education institutions because owing to the programme possibilities and resources offered by it, first workable networks uniting the Russian and European universities emerged. Most of the networks appeared to be fairly sustainable. In the years 2013-2014 eleven projects operated in Russia; the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University (IKBFU) was involved in one of them – "Promoting Sustainable Excellence in Testing and Assessment of English" (PROSET) (European projects of IKBF).

The Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window programme launched in 2004 is one of the main instruments ensuring academic mobility within the consortia of universities. It is a programme of cooperation and mobility within higher education area. The programme is aimed at improving the quality of the European education as well as promoting dialogue and mutual understanding between people and cultures through cooperation with third countries. Erasmus Mundus contributes to the development of human resources and boosting of international cooperation in the field of higher education in third countries through promotion of the academic exchange between the EU and its members (*Education*). The programme provides individual grants for undergraduates, PhD students, post-doctorates and staff members of the universities united by the programme consortium. IKBFU was a member of the Triple I: Integration, Interaction, Institutions consortium (<http://www.utu.fi/iii>). Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 continues and extends the activity sphere of consortia launched in 2004 and provides mobility opportunities for students, researchers and university staff members. Currently the Immanuel

Kant Baltic Federal University conducts International Master's Programme in "Management" and "BRIDGE" International Business Tripartite Programme as part of Erasmus+ Programme. The Programme is implemented by three universities from Russia, France and Taiwan: IKBFU European Business School, Russia; ESTICE International Business School, France and the Institute of International Business, Wenzao University, Taiwan (*Projects*).

One of the global priority projects aimed at promoting cross-university cooperation was the initiative to establish specialized EU Centres at the leading universities, selected in terms of the perspective of current state and regional policies.

The programme resulted in the opening of thirty seven centres all over the world. Following the establishment of such venues in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, six centres were opened in Russia. In June 2012, two more centres appeared in Hong Kong and Macau (European Union: External Action).

In Russia, such centres were established within the programme 'Support for the Establishment of the EU Centres in the Russian Federation'. In 2010 three centres were opened in Saint Petersburg, Kaliningrad and Tomsk, in 2011 three more were established in Kazan, Rostov and Petrozavodsk.

The Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University is undertaking a number of activities aimed at international cooperation. The University's Baltic Research Centre carries out the following international studies: research on the economic security of Russia's border regions, socio-economic development of exclaves and cross-border cooperation (Social Sciences and the Humanities). In addition, the university participated in the preparation and implementation of a number of projects under cross-border cooperation programmes co-financed by the European Union and the Government of the Russian Federation, including Lithuania-Poland-Russia cross-border cooperation programmes. Since the beginning of the twenty first century the University has become more actively involved as a partner (or as a lead partner) in international projects, the INTERREG coordinated "The Baltic Sea Region" and the "Neighbourhood: Lithuania, Poland, the Kaliningrad Region of Russia" programmes. Scientists from the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University implement these projects in partnership with scientists and experts from all over the Baltic Sea basin. In 2008, the University was a participant of seven research projects with a total budget of EUR 427 thousand in the framework of the Neighbourhood Programme "Lithuania, Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation" and the "Neighbourhood Programme" of the Baltic Sea Region (Klemeshev and Fedorov, 2009, 86).

The EU experience shows additional reasons for international cooperation between universities: mobilisation of internal resources in the competitive environment, improvement in education and research quality as well as attraction of best specialists and best students.

Summarizing the experience of our European partners, and the EU as a whole, the following reasons, motivating universities to cooperate with external partners, can be traced:

- resolution of political tasks aimed at formation of neighbourly relations;
- training of personnel for the aims and objectives of the international cooperation as well as preparation of analytical materials for national and global consumers;
- training of personnel for overseas partners;
- propagation of the national education model and the national language in the global context;
- mobilisation of internal resources in the competitive environment;
- improvement in education and research quality;
- enticement of top specialists and best students.

A modern successful university is an international university actively represented on the global market not only as the actor guided by national interests, but also as a force able to generate the global agenda in order to develop the very “spirit of academic cooperation and competition”. The measure of the scientific quality of research is the possibility of international popularisation and the application of their research results in various countries and socio-economic contexts. The possibilities of establishing and developing international scientific cooperation also contributes to the university development potential. The Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University of Kaliningrad is an example of a university open to international cooperation. The factors of this potential are not only the historical and cultural heritage of the Kaliningrad Oblast but also the possibilities of international cooperation resulting from the geographical location of Kaliningrad. Another important factor is the quality and significance of research carried out at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University of Kaliningrad as well as the quantity of initiatives undertaken in partnership with foreign universities and research teams.

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