SPRAWY MIĘDZYNARODOWE

2024, t. 77, nr 3/4
ISSN 0038-853X
e-ISSN 2720-0361
DOI 10.35757/SM.2024.77.3-4.06

Europe facing the need for change

MIŁOSZ J. CORDES (NÉ ZIELIŃSKI)
The Danish Foreign Policy Society,
DIS Study Abroad in Scandinavia
ORCID: 0000-0001-7666-5277
milosz.cordes@pm.me

Ultra-Russian, Ultra-Besieged

Kaliningrad Oblast, EU Enlargement and Memory Politics in Russia

Ultrarosyjski, ultraoblężony

Obwód kaliningradzki, rozszerzenie UE i polityka pamięci w Rosji

Keywords:
Russian Federation, Kaliningrad Oblast, memory politics, European Union, EU, enlargement

Słowa kluczowe:
Federacja Rosyjska, obwód kaliningradzki, polityka pamięci, Unia Europejska, UE, rozszerzenie

Ultra-Russian, Ultra-Besieged: Kaliningrad Oblast, EU Enlargement and Memory Politics in Russia

Memory politics in Russia has experienced substantial evolution since Vladimir Putin's comeback to presidential seat in 2012 and the so-called new conservative project. His campaign programme articles paved the way for redefining official understanding of Russianness, which particularly affected Kaliningrad Oblast with its pre-1945 past. The subsequent years witnessed an attempt to holistically redefine the existing narratives of the past in the semi-exclave and weave them into the concept of Russia as a unique civilisational centre and the Oblast as its frontier.

I seek to argue that the foundations of the mentioned process were laid already in the early to mid-2000s and were linked to the 2004 EU enlargement with neighbouring Poland and Lithuania joining and the emergence of EU's redefined Neighbourhood Policy. This paper seeks to look at these events to identify linkages between enlarging the EU and redefining part of its external policies and Russian memory politics in the particular case of Kaliningrad Oblast.

Ultrarosyjski, ultraoblężony. Obwód kaliningradzki, rozszerzenie UE i polityka pamięci w Rosji

Polityka pamięci w Rosji przeszła znaczną ewolucję od trzeciej kadencji prezydenckiej Władimira Putina i ogłoszenia tzw. nowego projektu konserwatywnego. Artykuły opublikowane podczas kampanii wyborczej utorowały drogę do redefinicji oficjalnego rozumienia rosyjskości, co było szczególnie widoczne w obwodzie kaliningradzkim z jego nierosyjską przeszłością przed 1945 r. W kolejnych latach władze na Kremlu podjęły próbę całościowego powiązania istniejących w półeksklawie narracji o przeszłości z koncepcją Rosji jako centrum cywilizacyjnego.

Staram się wykazać, że podwaliny wspomnianego procesu zostały położone już na początku lub w połowie pierwszej dekady XXI w. i były powiązane z rozszerzeniem UE w 2004 r. o sąsiednie Polskę i Litwę oraz pojawieniem się zredefiniowanej Polityki Sąsiedztwa UE. Artykuł ma na celu przyjrzenie się tym wydarzeniom w celu zidentyfikowania powiązań między rozszerzeniem UE i jej stosunkami z Rosją a ewolucją rosyjskiej polityki pamięci, w której ważną rolę odgrywa obwód kaliningradzki.

Introduction

Kaliningrad Oblast is Russian Federation's westernmost subject. It represents a small area of approximately 15,000 square kilometres and over one million inhabitants. It was created in 1945, initially as Königsberg Oblast, as a Soviet war trophy from the northern part of the German province of East Prussia in its 1939 borders. Approximately two thirds of the latter was given to Poland as part of compensation for the loss of eastern territories, incorporated into Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kaliningrad Oblast has been separated from the rest of Russia's territory by Lithuania, Latvia and Belarus. Since the Oblast has access to the Baltic Sea, its geopolitical status is that of a semi-exclave.

Although the role of Kaliningrad Oblast in post-Cold War international relations in Europe has been analysed and debated for over thirty years, it has mostly been so from the point of view of hard security and narrowly understood political relations between Russia and the European Union. Various descriptions of Russia's semi-exclave on the Baltic Sea, used in the last twenty years, envisage this state of play. It suffices to mention names such as *cooperation lab*,[1] *bridge*,[2] *new Promised Land*,[3] *Rootless Russia*,[4] *hostage*[5] and *geopolitical hostage*,[6] *Russia's island in Europe*,[7] *a chance* and

1 T. Palmowski, *Kaliningrad a proces integracji bałtyckiej*, "Geopolitical Studies" (Polish Academy of Sciences) 2003, vol. 10, p. 111–119.

2 Idem, *Kaliningrad – szansa czy zagrożenie dla Europy Bałtyckiej? Monografia społeczno-gospodarcza*, Bernardinum, Gdańsk–Pelplin 2013.

3 W. Filipowicz, *Kaliningrad – nowa Ziemia Obiecana?*, "Opcja na Prawo" [online], 3 VIII 2010 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <http://www.opcjanaprawo.pl/index.php/komentarze/item/2169-kaliningrad-nowa-ziemia-obiecana>.

4 R. Misiunas, *Rootless Russia: Kaliningrad – Status and Identity*, "Diplomacy and Statecraft" 2004, vol. 15, p. 385–411.

5 R. Lopata, *Anatomy of a Hostage. Kaliningrad Anniversary Case*, Baltic Defence College, Tartu 2006.

6 Idem, *Geopolitical Hostage: The Case of Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation*, [in:] *Contemporary Change in Kaliningrad. A Window to Europe?*, ed. E. Rindzeiviciute, Södertorns Högskola, Huddinge 2006, p. 35–54.

7 S. Sukhankin, *Kaliningrad: Russia's Island in Europe*, "New Eastern Europe" [online], 29 I 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://web.archive.org/web/20170715071448/http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1876-kaliningrad-russia-s-island-in-europe>.

a threat to Baltic Europe,[8] and *aircraft carrier*.[9] It was only after the Local Border Traffic Agreement between Poland and Russia had been signed in 2011 and entered into force in 2012 when elements of different nature were added to the academic analytical mix[10]. Overall, however, not much attention has been given to the growing significance of this minuscule subject of the Russian Federation in the federal memory policies and their broader consequences for international security. Due to its complex non-Russian pre-1945 past, the Oblast witnessed the emergence of many alternative narratives of history, often acting as coping strategies with the challenging post-1991 economic and social reality. They all gave a particular flavour to the elusive notion of Russianness during times of external geopolitical ruptures and Russia's internal instability in the 1990s.

Initially spontaneous and unorganised, by the mid-2000s, a considerable part of the region's public discourse had been rich in grassroots movements engaged in incorporating the surviving elements of the pre-war (East Prussian, German) material and spiritual legacy. Its critical point was the 2011–2013 discussion about changing the name *Kaliningrad*.[11] The discussion coincided with Vladimir Putin coming back to presidential seat and launching the so-called neo-conservative project. Presented during the electoral campaign as one of the key points in Putin's agenda, it gradually took a quasi-ideological shape of Russia being a civilisational entity based

8 T. Palmowski, *Kaliningrad – szansa…*

9 A. Sakson, *Obwód Kaliningradzki a bezpieczeństwo Polski*, „Przegląd Strategiczny" 2014, nr 7, p. 109–121.

10 M. Zieliński, *Cross-Border Co-operation between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Poland in the Context of Polish-Russian Relations in 2004–2011*, "Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review" 2012, No. 28, p. 11–42; M. Sochańska-Kawiecka et al., *Efekty wejścia w życie umowy o zasadach małego ruchu granicznego między Rządem Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej a Rządem Federacji Rosyjskiej „Mały ruch graniczny. Raporty z badania opinii publicznej wśród mieszkańców powiatów objętych Małym Ruchem Granicznym w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i mieszkańców Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego"*, Konsorcjum Laboratorium: Badań Społecznych, MANDS Badania Rynku i Opinii, Warszawa 2013; M. Zieliński, *National and Regional Identity in Kaliningrad Oblast from the Cross-Border Perspective*, "Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review" 2015, No. 34, p. 109–134.

11 M. Zieliński, *Z Kaliningradu na Кёнигсберг – zapotrzebowanie społeczne czy marzenie nielicznych? Społeczna inicjatywa zmiany nazwy miasta*, "Sprawy Narodowościowe" 2013, nr 43, p. 131–141.

on moral values superior than the West.[12] These notions gained on intensity when Russia annexed Crimea and began the war in Donbas, having led to the emergence of a civilisational discourse in the Huntingtonian understanding of the term.[13]

In this paper, I make an argument that the changing memory policies of Russian authorities have been influenced by the enlargement of the European Union and other related events in the last twenty years more than one is inclined to believe. These, in turn, have had a considerable direct and indirect influence over the developments in Kaliningrad Oblast in corresponding spheres for legal, political and other reasons going beyond the Russian semi-exclave itself.

In the process of joining the European Union, Lithuania and Poland adopted the bulk of the Communities' *acquis communautaire* and as such needed to introduce visa requirements for Russian citizens. It further impaired the freedom of movement both the inhabitants of Kaliningrad Oblast and their compatriots from mainland Russia. Additional restrictions encompassed also tighter customs control, especially that both nations strived to enter the Schengen Zone as with no delay. At the same time, the biggest EU enlargement to date contributed to a wave of civil unrest in a number of post-Soviet countries. The Revolution of Roses brought down Soviet apparatchik Eduard Shevardnadze already in 2003. At the turn of 2004 and 2005, Ukraine's Orange Revolution triggered the first systemic approach to shake off the post-Soviet legacy of oligarchy and institutionalised corruption. Especially in the latter case, politicians from the new EU member states expressed strong support for anti-Yanukovych and, for that matter, anti-Kuchma protests.[14] By coming to Kyiv and talking about alternative development paths, they both sought to bring hope and to discount their nations' geopolitical success. For Russia, on the other hand, such developments were a proof that the West

12 W. Rodkiewicz, J. Rogoża, *Potemkin Conservatism. An Ideological Tool of the Kremlin*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw 2015.

13 S. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Schuster, London 2011.

14 T. Petrova, *Polish Democracy Promotion in Ukraine*, "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace" [online], 16 X 2014 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2014/10/polish-democracy-promotion-in-ukraine?lang=en>.

was pursuing aggressive expansionism in what the Kremlin still considered Russia's canonical zone of influence.

This paper is divided into four parts, excluding introduction. The first part provides broader context of the European Union-Russia relations, together with the role of Kaliningrad Oblast in them, as well as their influence on the latter. Here, I put emphasis on the parallel process of the EU enlargement and forging EU's new eastern neighbourhood policy on the one hand and growing assertiveness and aggressiveness of Russia's foreign policy. The second part focuses on the changes in official Russian memory politics which occurred after Vladimir Putin came back to presidential seat in 2012. Its core element is the Huntingtonian notion of the clash of civilisations and its incorporation into the policies of Russian political and economic elite, which coincided with their increasingly anti-Western stance, exemplified by the annexation of Crimea and the invasion of Ukraine. The third part presents the specific context of Kaliningrad Oblast as a relatively new Russian region, for seven centuries belonging to the Western (Latin, Roman) civilisational circle. In this chapter, I seek to identify the interconnectedness between federal memory policies and its regional, Kaliningrad Oblast-specific angle. The fourth part summarises the mentioned phenomena and processes, seeking to weave them a coherent fabric of interrelation between the advancement of European integration and the growing instrumentalisation of Kaliningrad Oblast's location and weaponisation of its history by Russia's federal authorities over the last twenty years.

Sources used in the article are of two basic proveniences. The first ones are primary sources in the form of official documents and statements: communications, agreements, press articles authored by officials (such as Vladimir Putin), pointing to concrete policies and policy proposals, predominantly accessible online. The second group are secondary sources. Russian course books and documentaries represent a specific narrative on past events. As such, they often reflect interest of various stakeholders, such as the Russian political elite. Academic articles and books, as well as analytical pieces published by think tanks provide relevant context of the EU-Russia, the West-Russia and Poland-Russia or Lithuania-Russia relations. They also provide information related to the history of East Prussia and Kaliningrad Oblast and the contemporariness of the latter.

Sources used in this paper were analysed mostly through qualitative content analysis, based on the phenomenon of contested narratives, an approach present in research pertaining to many areas around the world. More specifically, I employ the competition of memories concept, put forward by Karolina Ćwiek-Rogalska while researching territories in Central Europe that belonged to Germany or Prussia before 1945.[15] I argue that Kaliningrad Oblast, due to its non-Russian pre-1945 history, has been a particularly fertile ground for refining and practicing new narratives about Russia's and Soviet Union's past for contemporary Russian authorities. While doing that, the country's incumbent elite has not only tightened control over the semi-exclave but it has also used it to set the tone for history-related activities across the rest of Russia. From this perspective, Kaliningrad Oblast represents an important case study of EU-Russia relations and their evolution due to the changing dynamics of official Russian memory policies since Putin's coming to power signalled the gradual petrification of power structures that emerged in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although largely focussed on hard power, such as control over security apparatus and access to material resources, these policies gradually included soft power elements, such as history, to exercise tighter and more effective control over the society, especially that the institutionalised oligarchic kleptocracy quickly showed signs of exhausting ways of economic growth and improving living standards for ordinary Russians. It thus needed new tools which were partly provided by revising the narratives about the past and enforcing them countrywide through media, school curricula and other forms social engineering.

Broader geopolitical context

The early to mid-2000s represented the last years of untainted enthusiasm about the inevitability of the West's institutional expansions. Finalisation of accession negotiations resulted in the biggest enlargement to this date. Eight out of ten new member states had been dominated by communist forces until late 1980s – early 1990s and had to overcome a number

15 K. Ćwiek-Rogalska, *The Competition of Memories: The Commemorative Landscape of Polish Central Pomerania after 1945*, "East European Politics and Societies and Cultures" 2020, vol. 35, issue 1, p. 26–49.

of initial obstacles related to both political and economic transformation. Two of them, Poland and Lithuania, have been Kaliningrad Oblast's neighbours. The strong Euro-Atlantic vector of their foreign policies quickly became the cause of tensions between both countries and Russia, a part of which revolved around the latter's semi-exclave. Initially, Kaliningrad Oblast became a transit point for Soviet/Russian troops withdrawing from Germany and Poland. Later on, the Oblast's land accessibility became a bargaining chip in negotiations with Russia, the non-enlarged European Union, the two aspiring states and Russia. The Kremlin argued that the enlargement would impair the ability to travel to and from Kaliningrad Oblast due to the introduction of visas, which were part of Lithuania's and Poland's adoption of *acquis communautaire* and which came into effect in 2003. These concerns were recognised by the EU, although they did not lead to change the overall visa policy.[16]

The solution to this challenge, agreed upon at the 10th European Union-Russia Summit in late 2002, included the introduction of Facilitated Transit Document for cars and buses and the Facilitated Railway Transit Document for those travelling across Lithuania.[17] Nevertheless, both Lithuania and Poland for the next few years remained the grit on Moscow's lens as merely fifteen years earlier they had been either part of the Soviet Union or under its influence. In changed geopolitical circumstances, however, the Russian authorities needed to involve in what they unofficially considered humiliating negotiations with their former vassals. This approach was visible in the negotiating tactics and style, unusual for the Kremlin. It prioritised talking to Brussels over Kaliningrad Oblast's neighbours' heads, undermining their agency and sovereignty in this matter. This stance was envisaged in the 2005 celebrations of founding Königsberg by the Teutonic Knights. The Kremlin use this opportunity to differentiate between the old and the new EU member states by inviting the president of France and the chancellor of Germany and ignoring

16 *EU-Russia Partnership on Kaliningrad*, European Commission, Moscow, 12 VII 2002 (MEMO/02/16): <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/memo_02_169> [accessed: 17 XI 2024].

17 E. Vinokurov, *Kaliningrad Transit and Visa Issues Revisited*, Centre for European Policy Studies, July 2006 (CEPS Commentaries).

the presidents of Lithuania and Poland – the two states with close cultural and political ties with former East Prussia.[18]

As the economic situation of Russia improved thanks to overcoming the post-collapse shock and growing oil prices on the global markets, assertiveness in foreign policy turned into aggressive military action, first under the veil of proxies in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008 and Donbas in 2014. These operations coincided with intensive work on the new EU Neighbourhood Policy which aim was to reshape the enlarged Union's relations with closest partners, both as a tool of political leverage and a way of gradually introducing the EU know-how in order to initiate or boost democratisation processes. These efforts resulted in the re-launching the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and bringing to life the EU Eastern Partnership in 2009, effectively creating an approach in which the immediate geographical vicinity of the Union, with the exception of the Western Balkans and EFTA countries, was divided into the South and the East.[19] Although the latter quickly became a grouping of countries with contradicting interests when it came to cooperation with the EU, the instruments introduced within it contributed to raising the attractiveness of the political, economic and social development model promoted by the European Union. It encompassed deep structural reforms, aligning the legal system of the countries involved with that of the Union. In case of Ukraine, the societal determination to pursue this path resulted in a second wave of mass protests in 2013/2014 after Viktor Yanukovych rejected signing the Association Agreement, pressured by the Kremlin to adopt the competing Eurasian Economic Union model, derived in a way that made it incompatible with its Western counterpart, mostly due to the former not being a genuine economic integration project, but a tool of Moscow's influence.[20]

18 *Press Conference Following the Meeting with Federal Chancellor of Germany Gerhard Schroeder and President of France Jacques Chirac*, "President of Russia" [online], 3 VII 2005 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23075>.

19 P. Perchoc, *The European Neighbourhood Policy*, European Parliamentary Research Service, Brussels 2016.

20 D. Allan et. al., *Myths and Misconceptions in the Debate on Russia. How They Affect Western Policy, and What Can Be Done*, Chatham House 2021 (Russia and Eurasia Programme).

The protests, often referred to as Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity, led to a chain of events: Yanukovych fleeing the country, Russia launching the operation to seize control of Crimea and annex, as well as initiating a war in Donbas. It was a major crisis of European post-1945 and post-1991 security architecture due to the violation of a number of obligations the Russian Federation took on itself both as a sovereign state and the legal successor of the Soviet Union. The West's response involved sanctions, introduced already in March 2014, including sanctions against individuals and entities, as well as economic sanctions. After an eight-year-long hiatus, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine led to the biggest crisis of European security architecture after the end of the Second World War and in a series of confrontational steps taken by Russian authorities towards its Western neighbours.[21] Some of them were experimented with in Kaliningrad Oblast first.

Post-2012 Russian politics of memory

Vladimir Putin's comeback to the presidential seat marked the most substantial change in official Russian memory policies since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In seven programme articles, published during the electoral campaign, Putin outlined his understanding of challenges and tasks lying in front of the country. Three of them are particularly relevant for this paper. Putin largely drew from the Huntingtonian clash of civilisations theory, describing Russia as one of the world's main civilisational centres. From the point of view of this article, the main traits of such a centre, as outlined by Putin, were the traditional values he associated with Eastern Orthodoxy and the moral superiority that followed.

This neoconservative discourse served as a basis for the creation of the first refined narrative on Russia's past since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the bankruptcy of communism as state ideology. Putin drew

21 В. Путин, *Россия: национальный вопрос*, "Независимая газета" [online], 23 I 2012 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.ng.ru/politics/2012-01-23/1_national.html>; idem, *Россия и меняющийся мир*, "Московские новости" [online], 27 II 2012 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://web.archive.org/web/20120310083705/http://www.mn.ru/politics/20120227/312306749.html>; idem, *Россия сосредотачивается – вызовы, на которые мы должны ответить*, "Известия" [online], 16 I 2012 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://iz.ru/news/511884>.

a landscape that fitted the trajectory that had occurred since 1991: from political, economic and societal shock through the establishment of new power structures based on oligarchy to institutionalising corruption in favourable economic conditions and legitimising the new, self-proclaimed elites. The authorities needed to forge a narrative that would both help them explain the *status quo* and create a favourable ground for finalising the processes initiated during Putin's first two terms in office, followed by a brief interlude by Dmitry Medvedev. The Russian Federation is thus a political entity continuing the over thousand-year-old traditions of medieval Kyivan-Novgorod Rus', the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, the Romanov's Russia and the Soviet Union. What binds them together, despite the differences embodied by numerous violent political turns, is the spiritual heritage, the glorious military victories across the centuries and the territorial-cultural expansion of ethnic Russians (*russkiye*) connected with ceaseless defending of the arbitrarily defined Russian (*rossiyskiy*) canonical territory.

The broader political significance of this approach was often downplayed until 2022. The presidential campaign coincided with the last big wave of protests against election irregularities in autumn of 2011 and spring of 2012 which overshadowed other events at that time. This approach began to shift due to the developments in Ukraine in the winter of 2013–2014. It was only when Russia that expressed its objection to the anti-Yanukovych protests and the desire of a large part of the Ukrainian society to pursue closer relations with the European Union that the so-called Putin's programme articles started to make sense in analysing changes in memory and identity politics that had been initiated in 2012. With the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas, Russian authorities went on an unprecedented campaign of justifying territorial claims by reverting to the formative period of the Russian Empire, namely the 18th century. Crimea was meant to be more Russian than Ukrainian because it had been conquered by Catherine the Great and only gifted to the Ukrainian SSR by Nikita Khrushchev in 1954.

As Western sanctions started exerting influence on the Russian economy and overall intensity of Russia's political dynamics with the Euro-Atlantic community shifting from limited partnership to tensions over a growing number of issues, official Russian memory policies took an even more imperialistic and chauvinistic tone. A growing number of media outlets, commentators and historians embarked on reinterpreting especially the events of the last hundred years to create a new narrative

of the dramatic changes that the Russian state had been through since the outbreak of the February Revolution. The goal was to create a strong sense of continuity between arbitrarily selected elements of the imperial and Soviet pasts. Despite their belonging to two opposing systems, they were meant to form an illusion of compatibility and a sense of long-term belonging for those identifying with the Russian ethnic and political nations. For this purpose, elements present already in the 2000s were utilised, such as the nebulous idea of *Russkiy mir* or the Programme for the Return of Compatriots to Russia, introduced to allow ethnic Russians to relocate to the Russian Federation from former Soviet republics.[22]

Perhaps an even more substantial reason to look at the change in memory policies in Russia was provided by Putin's article *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians* which was published in July 2021. In it, Putin argues that Ukraine is an artificial concept and owes its existence to the Soviet period, while essentially being part of the greater Russian nations, consisting of Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians (*triyediniy russkiy narod*).[23] The arguments put forward in the article became subject to intense analyses after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022. At the same time, the 2021 article crowned the decade-long process of refining the official Russian narrative of its own history and the history of the neighbouring nations, glorifying the former and undermining the latter's importance.

Specificity of Kaliningrad Oblast

Post-1991 political, economic and social reality of Kaliningrad Oblast has always included a strong notion of separation or detachment from the so-called mainland Russia. It can be understood on different levels. The most objective one is geography – the lack of land connection between the Oblast and other Russian

22 М. Федорова, *В МИД РФ заявили, что программой переселения в РФ воспользовались 1,1 миллиона человек*, "Парламентская газета" [online], 28 XII 2023 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.pnp.ru/social/v-mid-rf-zayavili-chto-programmoy-pereseleniya-v-rf-vospolzovalis-11-mln-chelovek.html>.

23 V. Putin, *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians*, "President of Russia" [online], 12 VII 2021 [accessed: 4 I 2025]: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>.

regions, which can only partially be compensated by maritime and aerial connection. It also creates the challenge of transit across Lithuania and Latvia or Lithuania and Belarus. The other level, more subjective in its essence, is of geopolitical nature. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to most neighbouring nations shaking off their dependence on Moscow and quickly choosing to pursue Euro-Atlantic integration. It increased the perceived feeling of isolation among the Kaliningraders. Although the port of Kaliningrad was open to foreign vessels already in May 1991, the federal authorities did not seem ready to grant the region a high degree of freedom in shaping its economic and cross-border cooperation agenda. Ideas such as the free economic (trading, customs) zone remained largely on paper. The introduced solutions stimulated smuggling goods to other Russian regions rather than created conditions for overcoming post-collapse shock despite efforts made by regional politicians.[24]

Another, perhaps most overlooked, dimension of Kaliningrad Oblast's subjective isolation has been the broader historical context. The political transition of 1989–1991 in Central and Eastern Europe can in this regard be compared to the changes that occurred after the defeat of Germany in the First World War. At that time, the German province of East Prussia, part of which constitutes today's Kaliningrad Oblast, and remnants of West Prussia were separated from mainland Germany by the newly established Second Polish Republic. The feeling of separation played an important role in German political life throughout the whole interwar period, largely because it fuelled the myth of the invincible *Deutsches Heer.* East Prussia was the only part of Germany which experienced military actions during the war due to the intrusion of the Russian forces in its initial phase in 1914–1915. Troops led by Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff repelled the invaders, though it came at the cost of severe damage to dozens of villages and cities. These events contributed to *Dolchstoßlegende* (the stab-in-the-back legend), undermining the legitimacy of the Weimar Republic elite and, ultimately, contributed to Adolf Hitler coming to power.[25]

24 Ю. Маточкин, *На изломе: социально-политический очерк*, Аксиос, Калининград 2017.

25 R. Traba, *Wschodniopruskość. Tożsamość regionalna i narodowa w kulturze politycznej Niemiec*, Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, Poznań 2005; N. Eaton, *German Blood, Slavic Soil: How Nazi Königsberg Became Soviet Kaliningrad*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 2017.

The political Germanness of East Prussia and the eastern remnants of West Prussia that were not incorporated into Polish Pomerania was reinforced by the pro-German outcome of the July 1920 plebiscite. The years between the plebiscite and the outbreak of the Second World War witnessed the mythologisation of East Prussia as an ancient German land, the beacon of civilisation in the East and the bulwark of Germanness. Appeals were made to the inhabitants of mainland Germany to visit the cities of Gdańsk (German: Danzig) and Königsberg. The Teutonic Knights castle in Marienburg (today's Malbork in Poland), the material testimony of the conquest of pagan Prussians, rose to the symbol of German strength and orderliness in the sea of Slavic and Baltic chaos.[26]

The above notions were taken up and used in reverse by the Soviet political leadership as the Red Army was nearing the 1937 borders of Germany. East Prussia was the first province that it entered. For this reason, the Soviet soldiers were encouraged to take their revenge and leave no stone unturned. In wartime and immediate post-war publications, East Prussia was presented as the lair of the fascist beast, the bastion of Prussian militarism, the stronghold of Dog Knights (i.e. Teutonic Knights) and backward Junkers. This approach dominated in the first years of the Soviet rule over the Northern part of East Prussia. After the pre-war population either fled or was resettled until the turn of the 1950s, the Soviet newcomers lived in the atmosphere of fear before the ominous Prussianness, used as a synonym for Nazism and fascism, as well as allegedly ubiquitous Western spies.[27] This authorities-imposed phobia only began to lose its edge when the new generation was coming of age. Those people born in Kaliningrad Oblast who did not remember the war treated the local architectural landscape as their own, which largely helped them embark on individual and spontaneous exploration activities such as digging up *bric-à-brac* and other remains of the pre-war time.[28] The last decade of the Soviet Union only made it all

26 R. Traba, *Wschodniopruskość…*

27 Ю. Костяшов, *Заселение Калининградской области после Второй мировой войны*, [in:] *Гуманитарная наука в России. Соросовские лауреаты*, т. 2, ред. А. Р. Вяткин, Международный научный фонд, Москва 1996, p. 82–88; idem, *Секретная история Калининградской области*, Терра Балтика, Калининград 2009.

28 O. Sezneva, *"We Have Never Been German." The Economy of Digging in Russian Kaliningrad*, [in:] *Practicing Culture*, ed. C. Calhoun, R. Sennett, Routledge, London–New York 2007.

gain in strength, providing critical mass of a region-wide surge of interest in reinterpreting the pre-war past under heavily altered geopolitical circumstances, especially that the atmosphere of *perestroika* allowed for critical approach towards the first post-war, formative years of the Oblast.[29]

The first two decades of the post-Soviet period were marked with an unprecedented level of freedom to discuss the relationship between the East Prussian, German and West European legacy on the one hand and 45 years of the Soviet rule together with belonging to broader Russian cultural circle. The deep economic crisis that the Russian Federation suffered from by the end of the 1990s only fuelled these discussions as they provided a sense of escape to an alternative reality. For many inhabitants of Kaliningrad Oblast, East Prussia became an unknown paradise lost and a remedy for all the shortcomings of *likhye devyanostye* ('the reckless/poor/bad 1990s'): poverty, organised crime, unemployment and a feeling of separation from the rest of the country with limited possibilities to overcome challenges stemming from it.

This longing, intensified by sentimental tourism of Germans who were allowed to travel to the Soviet part of the former East Prussia for the first time since they or their ancestors had fled or had been resettled, resulted in a genuine grassroots interest in the pre-war past. As such, it contributed to laying the foundations of a new regional and local identity in Kaliningrad Oblast. Although it did not seem to pose a genuine challenge to the national one, it was always perceived by the federal authorities with a considerable level of suspicion. One of the first signs of the willingness to oppose the East Prussian carnival was strengthening the presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the semi-exclave. It took the form of constructing new *khrams*, converting old Protestant and Catholic churches into *khrams*, as well as leasing the old Teutonic castle to the Orthodox Church authorities. Although in theory, this decision was supposed to rescue the buildings concerned from falling into decay, it turned out to be a way of underlining the Orthodox spiritual and cultural presence in the region. By a similar token, the construction of the Christ the Saviour Cathedral was completed in Kaliningrad in 2006, after over a decade of obstacles related to insufficient financing. It occupies the city's

29 Ю. Костяшов, *Заселение...*

Central Victory Square (formerly Hansa Square and Adolf Hitler Square) and is one of the largest sacral buildings in the whole of Russia. Located opposite the Second World War Victory Memorial, its lower temple is dedicated to the memory of the Russian soldiers who died in conflicts which have taken place on the territory of contemporary Kaliningrad Oblast since the mid-18th century: the Seven Years' War, the Napoleonic Wars and the two world wars.

A shift in memory policies began earlier in Kaliningrad Oblast than in Russia as a whole for region-specific reasons. They later blended with federal-level policies or, depending on the perspective heavily influenced the way the Kremlin perceived the potential for protests in the region. In late 2009 – early 2010, Kaliningraders protested against increasing the customs on imported cars as most of the vehicles in the region came from other European countries due to geographical proximity. The deeper reasons were, of course, more manifold and stemmed from years-long negligence of the Oblast by the federal authorities.[30] The third in a series of gatherings was attended by at least 10,000 people which was a figure unseen in Russia across the whole decade. Although afterwards the protests were not that strong in terms of numbers of participants, they led to the establishment of an anti-governor coalition in the regional Duma and flash mobs with people carrying, hinting at the Orange Revolution in Ukraine six years earlier. The 2011 agreement between Poland and Russia, establishing local border traffic zone, significantly going beyond the 30-kilometre custom, was a way of letting some steam off.

The 2009–2010 events awoke the old fears of separatism in Kaliningrad Oblast at the Kremlin. Although they had primarily economic grounds, there were also other motivations. Some protesters mentioned a significantly better way the neighbouring countries' authorities handled the global economic crisis. The scale of popular mobilisation over the slogans of a more active use of the region's prerogatives intertwined with the emerging feeling of regional identity. This itself was perceived as a threat and as such was deemed unacceptable in Moscow. For this reason, when the discussion emerged about changing the name *Kaliningrad*

30 *Общество и граждане в 2008–2010 гг.*, ред. М. Липман, Н. Петров, Московский центр Карнеги, Москва 2010.

to stop glorifying the nominal head of the Soviet state Mikhail Kalinin, responsible for signing death sentences of hundreds of thousands of people during the Stalinist period, it was a cause for alarm at the Kremlin.[31] It coincided with the change of memory policies at the federal level which required a stronger regional angle. This was being forged up until 2014/2015 when the annexation of Crimea brought a new impetus for reinterpreting the history of Kaliningrad Oblast to fit the new imperial narrative of Russia across the centuries. The most immediate dimension of parallels between the two areas was their semi-exclave status and a shared sense of threat from the outside. The former was only alleviated in the case of Crimea with the opening of the Kerch Strait Bridge for passenger trains in December 2019 or freight trains in June 2020. The latter became a cause for solidifying the narrative about Western forces plotting to separate Kaliningrad from the rest of Russia.

The following years were marked by a media campaign touching such notions as Königsbergisation and Germanisation of Kaliningrad Oblast and opposing *plakal'shchiki po Kenigsbergu* ('the mourners over Königsberg'). Commentators and academics, such as Andrey Vypolzov and Vladimir Shul'gin, were clear about bridging the public discourse on the pre-1945 history of the region with contemporary international politics. They made accusations of an unhealthy interest in stressing the East Prussian legacy of the region at the expense of the Soviet one and doing it to pursue the interests of foreign powers, most notably the United States and the European Union.[32] Such voices, initially polemic and theoretical, quickly transformed into concrete steps taken against the organisations and individuals that fell into the narrative. One of the first organisations to fall victim of this shift was the German-Russian House in Kaliningrad. With the application of the so-called law on foreign agents, the House was deemed

31 M. Zieliński, *Z Kaliningradu...*

32 В. Шульгин, *Плакальщики по Кёнигсбергу*, "Переформат" [online], 8 I 2014 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <http://pereformat.ru/2014/01/plakalshiki-po-koenigsbergu/>; А. Выползов, *Вашингтон дал старт: теперь у России будут отнимать Калининград*, "Regnum" [online], 26 III 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://regnum.ru/news/2102024.html>; idem, *За "Кёнигсбергизацией" Калининграда стоят США*, "Regnum" [online], 25 VII 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/2160463.html>.

a foreign agent and accused of anti-Russian activities based on a statement of a German diplomat who expressed his view on the annexation of Crimea and due to its promotion of the work of Agnes Miegel, a pre-war poet and a proponent of Adolf Hitler.[33]

Apart from the negative agenda, the federal authorities launched an ambitious construction project on the October Island. This swampy terrain was partly meliorated in relation to the 2018 Football World Cup. Kaliningrad was one of the host cities of this event and as such it needed a stadium. Along with this venture, it was announced that the surrounding area would become a Russian cultural centre with theatres, museums and other institutions tying Kaliningrad Oblast together with the rest of the country, such as the Bol'shoy Theatre and the State Tretyakov Gallery. In numerous statements made by public officials, including Vladimir Putin and his Plenipotentiary in the Northwestern Federal District, the centre is meant to strengthen the Russianness of the Oblast. In hindsight, one could argue it has been a response to the ideas surrounding changing the name *Kaliningrad*, including the reconstruction of the historical downtown of the city, which had been almost completely destroyed, first during two British air raids in August 1944 and then by the Soviet siege in February–April 1945.

A case that well illustrates the shifting of the approach even to the established figures in the cultural life of Kaliningrad Oblast, binding the pre-war and post-war past together, is Immanuel Kant. His tomb survived the 1944–1945 destruction of Königsberg and was spared by the communist authorities due to the philosopher's works' influence over Georg Hegel and, subsequently, Karl Marx. After 1991, Kant became the Oblast's main trademark, contributing to the sense of pride in the European roots of its inhabitants. As such, it was accepted even by the authorities to such an extent that Kant became the patron of the local university in 2005 when Putin was visiting the region. A decade later, a small scandal erupted around the house outside of Chernyakhovsk where Kant had lived for three years. It was falling into decay and vandalised, however the author-

33 D. Armstrong. *Kaliningrad Court Declares German-Russian House a "Foreign Agent"*, "Moscow Times" [online], 24 IV 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/04/27/kaliningrad-court-declares-german-russian-house-a-foreign-agent-a52705>.

ities were making no efforts to prevent its destruction.[34] This was all happening at a time when tensions between Russia, the European Union and other Western states were already high. In the following years, in a popular vote on the name for the Kaliningrad Khrabrovo Airport Kant lost against Empress Elizaveta although the philosopher was leading almost until the end. While the vote was still underway, Igor Mukhametshin, the vice-admiral of the Baltic Fleet, called Kant a traitor and described his works as difficult to understand by anyone.[35]

A holistic example of the scope of change in memory policies that has occurred in Kaliningrad Oblast since 2012 is a documentary titled 'Russian Prussia' (*Russkaya Prussiya*). Screened for the first time in late 2019, it was advertised as a comprehensive approach to the history of the Oblast, underlining its thousand-year-long ties with Russia and its declared predecessors. In reality, however, the movie focuses on the presence of the Russian and the Soviet army in former East Prussia, starting from the Seven Years' War. It underlines the skills of the Russian commanders, the role of Russia in saving the Hohenzollerns in the mid-18th century and Europe as a whole from Napoleon in the 1800s, as well as France in 1914 by launching an invasion of East Prussia to force the German army to regroup some troops from the western front. When talking about the Second World War, the conquest of East Prussia by the Soviet Union was presented as an act of historical justice. The only way the mentioned thousand-year-old linkages between East Prussia and Russia were only mentioned in the last three minutes of the movie through some archaeological findings which point at trade relations between the old Prussians and Novgorod merchants.[36]

34 M. Zieliński, *Kant's Future: Debates about the Identity of Kaliningrad Oblast*, "Slavic Review" 2019, vol. 77, No. 4, p. 937–956.

35 *"Писал какие-то непонятные книги": вице-адмирал Балтфлота рассказал морякам о Канте*, "Новый Калининград" [online], 3 XII 2018 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.newkaliningrad.ru/news/briefs/community/21287161-pisal-kakie-to-neponyatnye-knigi-vitse-admiral-baltflota-rasskazal-moryakam-o-kante-video.html>.

36 *Русская Пруссия. Фильм Алексея Денисова (2019)*, "You Tube. History Lab" [online], 29 XI 2019 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obTMEQYC6PQ>.

When the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began, the Kaliningrad Oblast participated in it not only in strictly military terms. After Russian occupational forces organised referenda in parts of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson Oblasts, the regional government of Kaliningrad Oblast was tasked with curating the latter. Officials such as the then-governor Anton Alikhanov visited Kherson and expressed ironclad support for the Russianness of the Kherson Oblast alongside leaders of the Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) and military commanders[37]. It is yet another example of a creative and reversed reuse precedents from the First World War. Once the Russian forces had been repelled the German government organised a system of partnerships (*Patenschaft*) between the towns that had suffered from military actions and cities in other parts of both Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Although the East Prussian programme was brought to life as a consequence of a defensive war, the *Patenschaft* between the Kaliningrad Oblast and the occupied Kherson Oblast bore a resemblance to it in the sense that it completes the new narrative of Russia as a civilisational centre defending itself from the morally decaying West, understood both as a culture and a political grouping. Kaliningrad Oblast is meant to be a region which since its creation has been at the frontline of real or imagined confrontation between the Soviet Union and, later on, Russia and its western neighbours. It was built as a beacon of Russian culture nearly from scratch despite non-Russian pre-1945 reality. Separated from the rest of the country, it also has considerable experience in withstanding external pressure and influence, such as NATO and the European Union enlargement. The Kremlin was utilising the rhetoric of Kaliningrad Oblast being besieged and surrounded, sometimes even symbolically invaded by the West, understood as an opponent proclaimed by Moscow itself. As such, the semi-exclave could now build on the amassed number of signs of existential confrontation and put them to good use in Russia's struggle to recreate the lost empire. It was amalgamated by the artificial feeling of dismemberment of Russia's ever-growing body which includes both the lands that had been gained by the Romanovs and the Soviet Union. In this aggressive narrative,

37 А. Малышева, *Алиханов рассказал, зачем поехал с делегацией в Херсон*, „Клопс" [online], 18 VIII 2022 [dostęp: 16 II 2024]: <https://klops.ru/news/2022-08-18/256861-alihanov-rasskazal-zachem-poehal-s-delegatsiey-v-herson-foto>.

Kaliningrad Oblast is meant to transmit its experience of seclusion stemming from NATO's and the European Union enlargement and the intrusion of Western standards into Ukraine, still viewed as Russia's canonical territory. This optic was visible in both the regional and the federal narrative about Crimea, especially after its annexation in 2014 as the Russian authorities presented both territories as sharing a similar fate.

The strong presence of the European Union in the discussion within and about Kaliningrad Oblast made its mark especially in the month following the launch of full-scale invasion of Ukraine. When Lithuania temporarily suspended the transit of goods to and from Kaliningrad, arguing that a significant part of them is not included in relevant agreements, local media launched an unprecedentedly aggressive campaign against Vilnius. Although already before the Lithuanian authorities had been accused of being fully dependent on countries such as the United States, this time the rage became almost systemic. In this context, it is no coincidence that a few months later the regional authorities decided to erect a statue of Mikhail Muravyov, a tsarist general who became known for brutally quenching the 1863 anti-Russian uprising in parts of today's Belarus, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine. The monument was uncovered in October 2023 in the presence of senior regional officials, including Governor Anton Alikhanov. This event continues the process of transforming Kaliningrad Oblast's cultural landscape not only in a rhetorical but also in a physical and spatial sense.[38]

Conclusions

The twenty years of Lithuania's and Poland's membership in the European Union have coincided with the deep changes in the way that federal Russian authorities view Kaliningrad Oblast. It is not only a *par excellence* hard security territory, used to strengthen Russia's military presence on the EU and NATO borders and in the Baltic Sea Region. Gradually, it has also become an important provider of notions useful to refine the official understanding of Russianness in times of unprecedented political

38 О. И. Веднина, А. А. Гриценко, *От нарративов к монументам: символическая трансформация культурного ландшафта Калининградской области*, "Журнал фронтирных исследований" 2024, т. 9, № 2, p. 134–171.

tensions between the Russian Federation and the West. There is a clear correlation between Russia's growing assertiveness and aggressiveness in its foreign policy, dwindling of the country's economic resources caused by corruption, lack of innovation and the imperialist, chauvinist tone related to the history of Russia, the Soviet Union, their predecessors and the neighbouring nation-states and peoples.

In this process, the Kaliningrad Oblast has so far played a visible role, exceeding its hitherto significance in the turns that Soviet and Russian memory policies took. Due to the intense and overarching pressure of the state authorities, the Oblast's non-Russian, pre-war past has been reduced to a narrow selection of events, bound only by the myth of Russian military prowess throughout centuries. As such, it serves the purpose of creating a strong argumentative linkage between Putin's Russia and the heyday of both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. It is a story of glory lost by Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin which is being regained by Vladimir Putin. Kaliningrad Oblast fits into it for it represents a special kind of territorial gain – the only one made at the expense of Germany in the Second World War and thus a symbol of the moral victory of the Soviet Union over Nazism, regardless of other consequences of the war. It is the sole part of Europe under Russia's control that prior to 1945 for seven centuries had been associated exclusively with Western political entities. With the territorial advancement of the European integration project in the 2000s, it was almost predestined to become one of the key points in the official Russian narrative about history.

The initially experimental nature of this approach was visible throughout 2000s, with the 2005 Königsberg celebrations and the 2012 discussion on changing the city's name as its peak points. However, already when the latter was taking place, the refinement process had been initiated. Putin's comeback to presidential seat was the turning point in this regard. Although Kaliningrad remained an instrument in declarative and localised rapprochement towards the European Union due to the Local Border Traffic Agreement, it was in parallel becoming subject to mounting pressure on the alternative regional discourses on the value of the pre-war past and its relation to the Soviet cultural legacy. With the federal Russian authorities reverting to glorifying all imperial elements in the history of Moscow, tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, the sole allowed interpretation of East Prussia's history needed to revolve around the ulti-

mate defeat of the reversed myths about the province, created in the times of the German Empire, the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich.

The narrative about the pre-1945 history, which has been created in and around Kaliningrad Oblast, is that of confrontation. As such, it exceeds the boundaries of competition of memories. Peculiar reinterpretations of both the pre- and post-1945 times get weaponised to contribute to securitisation of a growing number of areas of public life in Russia. In a reality of the worsening economic conditions and rapid dwindling of any factors of growth the relatively recently established the imperial rhetoric serves as one of the few remaining tools that the incumbent Russian elite still has at its disposal. For this reason, all narratives on the past that have not been sanctioned by the authorities are either contested *ab initio* or at risk of becoming contested, should such a move be viewed as politically beneficial.

Under these circumstances, one should keep in mind that an important element of the memory matrix in Kaliningrad Oblast has been the proximity of the European Union. The Union's enlargement, while extending the zone of security and increasing chances for more harmonious development for Central and Eastern European nations, has put growing pressure on the Russian authorities, forcing them to find new ways to petrify the political system based on corruption and tightening control over an increasing number of areas of social life. One of such ways was found in the complex past of the Kaliningrad Oblast. It has influenced the Russian federal memory policies more than one could expect at first sight, especially given the Oblast's insignificant size and population.

Bibliography

Allan D., Bohr A., Boulègue M., Giles K., Gould-Davies N., Hanson Ph., Lough J., Lutsevych O., Mallinson K., Marin A., Nixey J., Noble B., Petrov N., Schulmann E., Sherr J., Wolczuk K., Wood A., *Myths and Misconceptions in the Debate on Russia. How They Affect Western Policy, and What Can Be Done*, Chatham House 2021 (Russia and Eurasia Programme).

Armstrong D.. *Kaliningrad Court Declares German-Russian House a "Foreign Agent"*, "Moscow Times" [online], 24 IV 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/04/27/kaliningrad-court-declares-german-russian-house-a-foreign-agent-a52705>.

Contemporary Change in Kaliningrad. A Window to Europe?, ed. E. Rindzeiviciute, Södertorns Högskola, Huddinge 2006.

Ćwiek-Rogalska K., *The Competition of Memories: The Commemorative Landscape of Polish Central Pomerania after 1945*, "East European Politics and Societies and Cultures" 2020, vol. 35, issue 1.

Eaton N., *German Blood, Slavic Soil: How Nazi Königsberg Became Soviet Kaliningrad*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 2017.

EU-Russia Partnership on Kaliningrad, European Commission, Moscow, 12 VII 2002 (MEMO/02/16): <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/memo_02_169> [accessed: 17 XI 2024].

Fedorova M., *V MID RF zaâvili, čto programmoj pereseleniâ v RF vospol'zovalis' 1,1 milliona čelovek*, "Parlamentskaâ gazeta" [online], 28 XII 2023 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.pnp.ru/social/v-mid-rf-zayavili-chto-programmoy-pereseleniya-v-rf-vospolzovalis-11-mln-chelovek.html>.

Filipowicz W., *Kaliningrad – nowa Ziemia Obiecana?*, „Opcja na Prawo" [online], 3 VIII 2010 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <http://www.opcjanaprawo.pl/index.php/komentarze/item/2169-kaliningrad-nowa-ziemia-obiecana>.

Gumanitarnaâ nauka v Rossii. Sorosovskie laureaty, t. 2, red. A. R. Vâtkin, Meždunarodnyj naučnyj fond, Moskva 1996.

Huntington S. P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Schuster, London 2011.

Kostâšov Û., *Sekretnaâ istoriâ Kaliningradskoj oblasti*, Terra Baltika, Kaliningrad 2009.

Kostâšov Û., *Zaselenie Kaliningradskoj oblasti posle Vtoroj mirovoj vojny*, [in:] *Gumanitarnaâ nauka v Rossii. Sorosovskie laureaty*, t. 2, red. A. R. Vâtkin, Meždunarodnyj naučnyj fond, Moskva 1996.

Lopata R., *Anatomy of a Hostage. Kaliningrad Anniversary Case*, Baltic Defence College, Tartu 2006.

Lopata R., *Geopolitical Hostage: The Case of Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation*, [in:] *Contemporary Change in Kaliningrad. A Window to Europe?*, ed. E. Rindzeiviciute, Södertorns Högskola, Huddinge 2006.

Malyševa A., *Alihanov rasskazal, začem poehal s delegaciej v Herson*, „Klops" [online], 18 VIII 2022 [dostęp: 16 II 2024]: <https://klops.ru/news/2022-08-18/256861-alihanov-rasskazal-zachem-poehal-s-delegatsiey-v-herson-foto>.

Matočkin Û., *Na izlome: social'no-političeskij očerk*, Aksios, Kaliningrad 2017.

Misiunas R., *Rootless Russia: Kaliningrad – Status and Identity*, "Diplomacy and Statecraft" 2004, vol. 15.

Obŝestvo i graždane v 2008–2010 gg., red. M. Lipman, N. Petrov, Moskovskij centr Karnegi, Moskva 2010.

Palmowski T., *Kaliningrad a proces integracji bałtyckiej*, „Geopolitical Studies" (Polish Academy of Sciences) 2003, vol. 10.

Palmowski T., *Kaliningrad – szansa czy zagrożenie dla Europy Bałtyckiej? Monografia społeczno-gospodarcza*, Bernardinum, Gdańsk–Pelplin 2013.

Perchoc P., *The European Neighbourhood Policy*, European Parliamentary Research Service, Brussels 2016.

Petrova T., *Polish Democracy Promotion in Ukraine*, "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace" [online], 16 X 2014 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2014/10/polish-democracy-promotion-in-ukraine?lang=en>.

"Pisal kakie-to neponâtnye knigi": vice-admiral Baltflota rasskazal morâkam o Kante, "Novyj Kaliningrad" [online], 3 XII 2018 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.newkaliningrad.ru/news/briefs/community/21287161-pisal-kakie-to-neponyatnye-knigi-vitse-admiral-baltflota-rasskazal-moryakam-o-kante-video.html>.

Practicing Culture, ed. C. Calhoun, R. Sennett, Routledge, London–New York 2007.

Press Conference Following the Meeting with Federal Chancellor of Germany Gerhard Schroeder and President of France Jacques Chirac, "President of Russia" [online], 3 VII 2005 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23075>.

Putin V., *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians*, "President of Russia" [online], 12 VII 2021 [accessed: 4 I 2025]: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>.

Putin V., *Rossiâ i menâûŝijsâ mir*, "Moskovskie novosti" [online], 27 II 2012 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://web.archive.org/web/20120310083705/http://www.mn.ru/politics/20120227/312306749.html>.

Putin V., *Rossiâ: nacional'nyj vopros*, "Nezavisimaâ gazeta" [online], 23 I 2012 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.ng.ru/politics/2012-01-23/1_national.html>.

Putin V., *Rossiâ sosredotačivaetsâ – vyzovy, na kotorye my dolžny otvetit'*, "Izvestiâ" [online], 16 I 2012 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://iz.ru/news/511884>.

Rodkiewicz W., Rogoża J., *Potemkin Conservatism. An Ideological Tool of the Kremlin*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw 2015.

Russkaâ Prussiâ. Fil'm Alekseâ Denisova (2019), "You Tube. History Lab" [online], 29 XI 2019 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obTMEQYC6PQ>.

Sakson A., *Obwód Kaliningradzki a bezpieczeństwo Polski*, „Przegląd Strategiczny" 2014, nr 7.

Sezneva O., *"We Have Never Been German." The Economy of Digging in Russian Kaliningrad*, [in:] *Practicing Culture*, ed. C. Calhoun, R. Sennett, Routledge, London–New York 2007.

Sochańska-Kawiecka M., Morysińska A., Makowska-Belta E., Kołakowska Z., Bojakowska I., *Efekty wejścia w życie umowy o zasadach małego ruchu granicznego między Rządem Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej a Rządem Federacji Rosyjskiej „Mały ruch graniczny. Raporty z badania opinii publicznej wśród mieszkańców powiatów objętych Małym Ruchem Granicznym w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i mieszkańców Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego"*, Konsorcjum Laboratorium: Badań Społecznych, MANDS Badania Rynku i Opinii, Warszawa 2013.

Sukhankin S., *Kaliningrad: Russia's Island in Europe*, "New Eastern Europe" [online], 29 I 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://web.archive.org/web/20170715071448/http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1876-kaliningrad-russia-s-island-in-europe>.

Šul'gin V., *Plakal'šiki po Kënigsbergu*, "Pereformat" [online], 8 I 2014 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <http://pereformat.ru/2014/01/plakalshiki-po-koenigsbergu/>.

Traba R., *Wschodniopruskość. Tożsamość regionalna i narodowa w kulturze politycznej Niemiec*, Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, Poznań 2005.

Vednina O. I., Gricenko A. A., *Ot narrativov k monumentam: simvoličeskaâ transformaciâ kul'turnogo landšafta Kaliningradskoj oblasti*, "Žurnal frontirnyh issledovanij" 2024, t. 9, № 2.

Vinokurov E., *Kaliningrad Transit and Visa Issues Revisited*, Centre for European Policy Studies, July 2006 (CEPS Commentaries).

Vypolzov A., *Vašington dal start: teper' u Rossii budut otnimat' Kaliningrad*, "Regnum" [online], 26 III 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://regnum.ru/news/2102024.html>.

Vypolzov A., *Za "Kënigsbergizaciej" Kaliningrada stoât SŠA*, "Regnum" [online], 25 VII 2016 [accessed: 17 XI 2024]: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/2160463.html>.

Zieliński M., *Cross-Border Co-operation between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Poland in the Context of Polish-Russian Relations in 2004–2011*, "Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review" 2012, No. 28.

Zieliński M., *Kant's Future: Debates about the Identity of Kaliningrad Oblast*, "Slavic Review" 2019, vol. 77, No. 4.

Zieliński M., *National and Regional Identity in Kaliningrad Oblast from the Cross-Border Perspective*, „Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review" 2015, No. 34.

Zieliński M., *Z Kaliningradu na Kënigsberg – zapotrzebowanie społeczne czy marzenie nielicznych? Społeczna inicjatywa zmiany nazwy miasta*, "Sprawy Narodowościowe" 2013, nr 43.