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Russian foreign and neighbourhood policy

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Analysis on Russian foreign policy

Gergő Nagy – Wazir Ali Baber

Abstract: This analysis consists of brief review of the major aspects of Russian foreign policy. Starting with brief history of Russia in the world politics is followed by an analysis of Russian participation in different international political, economic and social institutes and organisations. Then focus is given to the Chinese-Russian relations and then different territories are also analysed regarding how Russia has been facing its disputes with the neighbouring countries. Special emphasis is given to Russian foreign policy under President Vladimir Putin to analyse in particular the challenges and opportunities under his role in Russia.

Keywords: foreign policy, neighbourhood policy, border dispute, Near Abroad

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Brief overview of the Russian foreign policy

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the replacing Russian Federation had a very important task: to find its place in the world's stage. The USA became the most powerful country all over the world and there was no rival nation. The Russian Federation is conceded in international law as successor state of the former Soviet Union. Russia continues to fulfil the international commitments of the USSR, and has assumed the USSR's permanent seat in the UN Security Council as well as membership in other international organisations, the rights and obligations under international treaties, besides properties and debts. Russia has a multifaceted foreign policy. Nowadays the country keeps diplomatic relations with 191 countries and has 144 embassies. The foreign policy is determined by the President (Vladimir

Putin) and implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (Sergey Lavrov). The geopolitical importance of Russia is not a question in the region, however commentators, politicians and world leaders are characterising it as a currently reinstating or potential superpower.

In addition to that, Russia is often criticised when it comes to human rights issues, democratic processes and its values. For instance, such organisations as the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch consider Russia to have not enough democratic attributes and to allow few political rights and civil liberties to its citizens. John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Director at Amnesty International stated on the killing of the one of the journalist in Russia that that “Reporting on injustice, human rights violations by members of security forces and corruption in the North Caucasus is a life threatening job.”¹

Furthermore, Hugh Williamson, Europe and Central Asia Division director at Human Rights Watch mentioned that “This outrageous move against the Movement for Human Rights is a part of the unprecedented crackdown by the Kremlin on its critics.”² The incident coincides with the peak of the “foreign agents” campaign, during which hundreds of nongovernmental organizations all over Russia have been subjected to intrusive inspections. At least 62 face sanctions or warnings for failure to register as “foreign agents” and other alleged compliance failures. Freedom House, an international organisation funded by the United States, ranks Russia as “not free”, citing “carefully engineered elections” and “absence” of debate. In addition to that Freedom House in a statement strongly condemned the conviction of Russian corruption fighter and opposition figure, Alexey Navalny, in a trial and prosecution clearly staged to derail his political career. Navalny, who became famous for investigations of government corruption on his blog, vocal criticism of the Russian government, and unconventional grassroots organizing activities, was sentenced today to five years in prison on charges of theft.³

¹ Amnesty International Country News. 2013. *Russia: Journalist killed after appearing in “assassination list”*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/russia-journalist-killed-after-appearing-assassination-list-2013-07-09>> [Accessed on 29 July 2013]

² Human Rights Watch Country News. 2013. *Russia: Investigate Violent Raid on Rights Groups*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/07/01/russia-investigate-violent-raid-rights-group>> [Accessed on 29 July 2013]

³ Freedom House Issue. 2013. *Conviction of Navalny: The Latest Human Rights Outrage Under Putin Regime*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.freedomhouse.org/article/conviction-navalny-latest-human-rights-outrage-under-putin-regime>> [Accessed on 29 July 2013]

Russian participation in international organisations

Russia has been a key player of international relations after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia plays a major role in maintaining international peace and security as it is one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. The country participates in the Quartet on the Middle East and the six-party talks with North Korea. Russia is a member of the G8 industrialized nations, the Council of Europe, OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation). Russia usually takes a leading role in regional organisations such as the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), EurAsEC (Eurasian Economic Community), CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organisation), and the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation)⁴.

President Vladimir Putin advocated a strategic partnership with close integration in various dimensions including establishment of EU-Russia Common Spaces. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia has developed a friendlier and better relationship with NATO. The 28 allies and Russia work together as equal partners in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which was established in 2002. The NRC provides a framework for the consultation on current security issue and practical cooperation in a wide range of areas of common interest. Its agenda builds on the basis for bilateral cooperation that was set out in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, which provided the formal basis for relations⁵. In the recent years, the country has sought to strengthen ties especially with the People's Republic of China by signing the Treaty of Friendship as well as building the Trans-Siberian oil pipeline geared toward growing Chinese energy needs. Russia participates strongly and actively at different international platforms and still considered one of the strongest lobbying partner when it comes to its interests.

Russia-China relations

Diplomatic relations between People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation radically improved after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the Russian Federation in 1991. The two countries share a long land-border which was demarcated in

⁴ CIA Fact book. (n.d.) *Russia*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html>> [Accessed on 29 July 2013]

⁵ NATO website (n.d.) *NATO's Relations with Russia*. [online] Available at: <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-DF942A66-CF6E376D/natolive/topics_50090.htm> [Accessed on 31 July 2013]

1991, and they signed a Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation in 2001 which are very important contributing to the life of this region. Nowadays, relations between Russia and China have reached unprecedented high levels, with the visitation by President Putin. Since Russia and China signed the Treaty on Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation in 2001, the two countries have witnessed many breakthroughs in the development of their relations. Since the leaders of the two countries decided to upgrade their relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination based on equality, mutual trust and support, common prosperity and lasting friendship, the countries have made concerted efforts to further their relations.

At the recent Russo-Chinese summit in Beijing, both governments again hailed their close ties, signed seventeen agreements on economic and other issues, and vowed to expand their joint military engagements. China pledged to invest more in the Russian Far East and buy more Russian nuclear energy technology. The two countries also declared their identity of views regarding Asia-Pacific security, Iran's nuclear program, Syria, and other global hot spots. It is hard to contest the regular assertions of Russian and Chinese leaders that relations between Beijing and Moscow are the best they have ever been⁶. Both countries have common core interests. They hold similar stances on the on-going profound changes in the world and similar approaches to new challenges. Russia and China support building a multi-polar world, establishing a more just and democratic global political and economic system, and enhancing the UN's central role in coordinating and resolving hot international issues, like the situation in Syria or the conflict between the South and North Korea. Cooperation is needed in order to keep stability and peace in the region.

Russian territorial disputes with neighbour countries

It is a very thought-provoking part of the Russian foreign policy, when analysing territorial disputes, due to Russia was taking part in many conflicts including territorial questions. Undeniably, Russia is the greatest country in the world in terms of territory, however there is always a good cause to fight for more. First, we could mention the Kuril Islands dispute, concerning the islands of Iturup, Kunashir, and Shikotan and the Khabomai group occupied by the Soviet Union in 1945, now administered by Russia, claimed by Japan. Interestingly the

⁶ Weitz, R., 2012. Superpower Symbiosis: The Russia-China Axis. *World Affairs Journal*. Nov/Dec Issue 2012.

recent development shows that Japan and Russia have agreed to hold talks to end the territorial dispute which has prevented them from signing a formal treaty to end World War II. The agreement came as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Russia for the two nations' first top-level talks in a decade. In a joint statement, he and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin said the lack of a treaty was "abnormal". Japan refers to the disputed islands as Northern Territories while Russia calls them the Southern Kurils and has controlled the islands since Soviet troops seized them from Japan at the end of World War II.⁷

There had been also territorial conflicts between Russia and China, nevertheless the disputes were finally resolved on 21 July 2008. On that day the Foreign Ministers of the two countries signed an agreement in Beijing. Under the agreement, Russia ceded approximately 174 km² of territory to China. The territory transferred comprised Tarabarov Island and approximately half of Bolshoy Ussuriysky Island. According to the intergovernmental agreement, Tarabarov Island became China's Yinlong, whereas Bolshoi Ussuriysky is split into two. Its western part now belongs to China and renamed to Heiziazi. The eastern part of the island will remain under Russia's jurisdiction. The total size of these territories reaches approximately 340 square kilometres.⁸ The settlement of their border dispute followed over 40 years of negotiations. The final settlement was the result of the Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation⁹ which was concluded on 2 June 2005 and signed by Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov. This followed by talks in Vladivostok. Currently there is no border dispute between Russia and China along their 4300 km border.

Border dispute settlement was reached also along the western borders of the country. Estonia's government recently approved a bill for a new border treaty with Russia, more than 20 years after the small Baltic nation gained independence from the Soviet Union. Estonia is the only country in the European Union that does not have a border treaty with Russia. The two countries signed one in 2005, but the Russian Parliament then failed to ratify it. Officials from Estonia and Russia have met three times since last fall to discuss a

⁷ BBC News Asia. 2013. *Japan and Russia agree to resolve island dispute*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-22334253>> [Accessed on 13 July 2013]

⁸ Pravda.ru report. 2008. *Russia gives away some of its islands to China, leaving Japan jealous*. [online] Available at: <http://english.pravda.ru/russia/politics/14-10-2008/106559-russia_china-0> [Accessed on 31 July 2013]

⁹ Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation Between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation. [online] Available at: <<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/2649/t15771.htm>> [Accessed on 31 July 2013]

new one, leading to the approval by Prime Minister Andrus Ansip's Cabinet. The next step is for foreign ministers of both countries to sign the treaty and then for both parliaments to ratify it¹⁰. There has been different other issue when it comes to territories with Russia some settled and some became subject to war such as in the case of Georgia.

Russian foreign policy under President Vladimir Putin

Someone would ask the question, how can a policy be attributed to a man? The answer is President Putin is one of the most influential politicians all over the world for so many years. It is generally believed that he is the person who cannot be bypassed, when we talk about foreign policies. After his election as president in 2000, Putin added to this agenda an overarching goal: the recovery of economic, political, and geostrategic assets lost by the Soviet state in 1991. Although he has never spelled it out formally, Putin has pursued this objective with such determination, coherence, and consistency that it merits being called the Putin Doctrine.¹¹

Vladimir Putin has often been publicly critical of the foreign policies of the United States and other Western countries. More precisely, he has recently stated his suspicion of the motives behind NATO expansion, objected to the planned US Missile Defence system, and engaged in both positive and bad dialogue with members of the European Union. Some commentators have linked this increase in hostility towards the West with the global rise in oil prices. Although President Putin has important "friends" such as, former US President George W. Bush, former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, former French President Jacques Chirac, and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi are reported to be personally friendly with him. Putin's relationship with Germany's Chancellor, Angela Merkel, is reported to be "cooler" and "more business-like" than his partnership with Gerhard Schröder.

Putin's policies towards the United States – since Russia represents a resurgence of Russian nationalism, prestige, and active influence in world affairs – frequently stoked fears of a second Cold War. However, relations between the two powers during Putin's presidency were marked by prickly-but-cordial relations, punctuated by both cooperation and disagreements. In addition to that, it has been underlined during one of the workshop on US-Russia relations

¹⁰ Kangsepp, L., 2013. Estonia Advances Border Treaty With Russia. *Wall Street Journal*. USA.

¹¹ Aron, L., 2013. The Putin Doctrine: Russia's Quest to Rebuild the Soviet State. *Foreign Affairs Magazine*. Council on Foreign Relations.

at Carnegie Endowment for Peace and it is reported that “Despite the ‘reset’ of US-Russian relations during the first Obama administration, tensions seem to be increasing between Moscow and Washington. International observers point to the US Magnitsky Act, new Russian regulations on child adoption by US citizens, or the Syria question as evidence of these tensions.”¹² Also experts stressed when it comes to security policy between the two countries, that lack of trust is a core problem, especially while discussing security issues. The United States and Russia should find a new platform to discuss these challenges.

During the Iraq crisis of 2003, Putin opposed Washington’s move to invade Iraq without the United Nations Security Council is authorizing the use of military force. After the official end of the war was announced, American president George W. Bush asked the United Nations to lift sanctions on Iraq. Putin supported lifting of the sanctions in due course, arguing that the UN commission first be given a chance to complete its work on the search for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq. Russia had always been critical towards the Iraq invasion and also stood strong on its position since the beginning at United Nations. It has also been reported that “Putin and the Russian leadership reacted to the preparations for war, and to the war itself, rather calmly – essentially saying, we are categorically opposed, your actions are unbelievably foolish, but in principle it is your business.”¹³

Russia has always got smooth relations with European Union. There have been series of treaties among different European Union member states and Russia and also they both share common values on the NATO platform. At a press conference following the 20th Russia-EU Summit in Portugal in 2007, Putin proposed creating a Russian-European Institute for Freedom and Democracy headquartered either in Brussels or in one of the European capitals, and added that “we are ready to supply funds for financing it, just as Europe covers the costs of projects in Russia.”¹⁴ Above all these things Russia and also President Putin knows that the European Union needs Russia’s help at almost any price because of its oil and gas reserves.

¹² Analysis of US-Russian Relations: Putin’s Foreign Policy Outlines the New Framework [online] available at: <<http://imrussia.org/en/politics/404-putins-foreign-policy-framework-outlines-a-new-course>> [Accessed on 1 August 2013]

¹³ Lukyanov, F., 2012. What Russia Learned from Iraq War. *Al Monitor* [online] Available at: <<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/03/russia-iraq-10-year-anniversary-putin-bush-syria.html>> [Accessed on 1 August 2013]

¹⁴ Press Statement and Answers to Questions following the 20th Russia-European Union Summit. *Speech Archives of President Vladimir Putin* [online] Available at: <http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/10/26/1918_type82914type82915_149706.shtml> [Accessed on 1 August 2013]

Once Europe suffered from lack of gas, and if Russia could not provide sufficient, it can be economically catastrophic for the whole continent.

Russia has also closer relations with former Soviet and Eastern Bloc republics, such as Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. Russia frequently has debates over gas with Ukraine; consequently the relationship between the two countries is occasionally not balanced. President Putin said that Russia is in favour of a democratic multipolar world and of strengthening the system of international law. The Russian President also has good understanding with Caspian countries which includes Iran, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. According to the President that it is their right to develop peaceful nuclear programmes without any restrictions with the countries like Iran and North Korea. Finally, we determine that Russia has not out of the world power stage. On the contrary, Russia's position is stable in the world politics as its role is rising due to its wide spectrum of foreign policies. It is also important for the United States and the European Union to cooperate with Russia and therefore contributing to stability. Nevertheless, it is still not clear if a multipolar system will keep up the formula of today's international relations or a hegemonic power will rise on the long run. However Russia – as it is a permanent member of United Nations Security Council – most probably will be able to determine and protect its interests globally in the future.

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Background

The borders of Russia are still uncertain

András Lőrincz

Russia – as the biggest state on Earth in terms of territory – has border disputes since the long gone days of the tsars. The Russian intentions in world politics and its presence in Europe and Asia are sometimes accompanied by grave incidents.

It has been two years, since Russia and China agreed on their common borders. They agreed on that the disputed territories on their 4,300 kilometers long common borderline will be divided equally between the two countries. However, this region still suffers from some unsettled issues. During the World War II, the Soviets occupied the previously Japanese Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan and Habomai Islands, that are now part of the Kuril Islands dispute.

Japan – even after six decades – refuses to revoke its claims from the islands; on the other hand, currently the islands are under Russian administration.

Besides China, the Russian leadership also agreed with Kazakhstan. In November 2005, a border agreement was signed, and the demarcation process is still taking place. A sign of good relations is, that one of the world's oldest and biggest space center – Baikonur in Kazakhstan – is being leased by Russia until 2050. In addition to that, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and the Russian leadership also agreed upon the equal partition of the Caspian Sea.

In the Caucasus, Russia's main disputant is Georgia. The disputed territories in Georgia and Abkhazia are being overseen by observers from the OSCE. In its relations with Ukraine, Russia's positions are somewhat better, as their land borders have already been marked precisely, but in such territories as the Strait of Kerch and the borderline running across the

Sea of Azov, the solution – acceptable for both sides – still remains elusive, in spite of the fact that there was a framework convention signed by both states four years ago.

In Eastern Europe, Russia's borders with the Baltic states are subjects to constant disputes between the states concerned. In 2005 Russia revoked its previously acquiescent statement on the marking process of the Estonian and Latvian borderlines. This was a reaction to the unilateral statements of the mentioned states, in which they referred to loss of territory as a result of the Soviet occupation. The region's only agreement was signed between Lithuania and Russia, concerning their naval borders, in 2003. In addition to that, Lithuania facilitated the transition of Russian citizens between the exclave of Kaliningrad and the main territories of Russia.

The situation with Finland is however, a little more undisputed. There are some groups in Finland, who would be glad to regain the territories lost to the Soviet Union – Karelia and other territories – after the Second World War, but the Finnish government has no official current territorial claims towards Russia.

Nearing the North Pole on the other hand, relations also become frosty again, this time with Norway. The concerned states are still not done with the demarcation of the borderlines over the Barents Sea. Another problem lies between them with the Russian fishing rights around the Svalbard Isles, which are part of Norway.

The most particular dispute however, is with the former Cold War opponent, the United States. Alaska, which was bought by the States in 1867 for 7 million dollars, with its 500,000 square kilometers territory and its rich sources of oil, gold and fish is still a matter of dispute between the two giant states. The inhabitants of Alaska celebrate Seward's Day every year, when they commemorate the date when the United States bought Alaska.

The only problem with that it is still unknown where the exact borderlines run. The only map, containing the exact borders of the transferred territory, was lost almost 150 years ago. The border dispute remained unattended for a long time after the map was gone, and the Cold War era made it impossible to settle this issue. Only recent years have brought a solution on this topic. The USSR-USA Maritime Boundary Agreement was signed by both sides; however the Russian Duma has not ratified it since its signature in 1990.

From the facts above, it is clearly visible, that the borders of Russia are far from being permanent. The country – with its once more rising role in world politics – demonstrates its

power in many places. This great power from the Pacific Ocean to the Baltic Sea would once more strengthen its influence, but in order to do that, it should make its borders clearly visible in the first place.

It is a relieving fact for Russia, that the demarcation of borderlines is a non-ending process. As long as history flows, borders will change, could change.

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Russian view on South Caucasus: a teetering policy of pragmatism

Annamária Kiss

Abstract: The paper seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the bilateral relations of Russia and the three South Caucasian states concerning intra-state security issues, trade relations and diplomatic ties in the post-Soviet period.

In this paper the author argues that in the last two decades Russian foreign policy principles towards the Transcaucasus have been formulated quite clearly and there are at least three core messages from the Kremlin. Relations differ based on pragmatic considerations. A strategic alliance of Yerevan and Moscow is linked in several aspects starting from security to economy, while Baku has no need to rely on Russia since its energy resource capacity is tremendous. Azeri-Russian relations are defined as strategic partnership, and this little distinction means a lot. Russia is trying to keep the balance between the two not choosing a side unequivocally, while the Nagorno-Karabakh issue is still the pivotal point in reconciliation initiatives. Partially recognised states are the main issue that harm the Georgian-Russian relations. Diplomatic ties have not been restored since the war in 2008, and both sides have lost a lot besides diplomatic aspects. It seems to be clear that Moscow is concerned about the European Union's enlargement towards its former republics and will not stand idly if its messages (such as its interests) will not be heard.

Keywords: Russia, Russian foreign and security policy, South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, frozen conflicts

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Introduction

Plagued by insecurities along with uncertainties made the post-Soviet South Caucasus one of the most precarious regions in the world. All the three republics – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – had territorial claims towards adjacent states flowed into bloody wars, while Georgia even had a civil war in 1993 besides open conflicts. Four out of eight armed conflicts and three out of four are so called “frozen conflicts”¹ of the post-Soviet space emerged in the Transcaucasus (as it was called in the Russian Empire and also in Soviet times) while its military potential and the proximity to the volatile North Caucasus also paved the way towards destabilization. Burgeoning hopes of Caucasian nations for a better life and brighter future was ephemeral; manifold challenges of currently shaping states brought to the surface medieval values as hierarchy, subordination, tradition and clans.² Amidst both external and internal chaos, fixing internal politics proved to be highly important for countries located in the Southern Caucasus. Moreover, conflicts were seen in the eyes of its presidents as “magic wands” to seize power and retain popularity. In this sense, endeavour of revenge and inexorable animosity was more important than social welfare, poor governance, democracy or human rights. This mutual mistrust, suspicion and maze of incomprehension caused intra-regional challenges are the main characteristics of the post-Soviet Southern Caucasus. In addition, the unique geographical location determined the region to be a ground for great power competition, what made even more difficult to solidify the political environment.

At the same time, Russia did not have any strict concept dealing with “just-gone republics” in the early 1990s because its internal situation was also tumultuous. While one can argue that there was a huge inconsistency in its foreign policy course in the early years of the Russian Federation, it would be just a half-truth. Moscow all the while has had two clearly defined interests: to be the leading power on the post-Soviet space and to dominate the energy transit.³ Noteworthy, also the idea of *Near Abroad* (*blizhneye zarubezhye*) invented in 1992 became a flag of Russian foreign policy towards the ex-Soviet countries as Moscow’s right to have

¹ These prolonged conflicts arose mostly in newly independent states after the breakup of the Soviet Union, in those countries where the directly involved parties were not satisfied by the status quo. The resolution is postponed for a “better timing”. The escalation of the conflict is limited; however there is a high probability of an open conflict and a renewed war.

² Markedonov, S., 2007. *Postsovetski Yuzhni Kavkaz: Tradicionalizm plus modernizatsia* (Post-Soviet South Caucasus: Traditionalism plus modernization) [online] Available at: <<http://caucasica.org/analytics/detail.php?ID=1194>>

³ Ryabov, A., 2011. *Rossiyskaia politika na Yuzhnom Kavkaze*. Speech on the “Regional Security Dynamics in the South Caucasus” International Conference, Yerevan, 17–18 November 2011. [pdf] Available at: <http://securecaucasus.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/andrey_ryabov.pdf>

special interests, not to say reserving prerogatives. However, that was not simply about the resurrection of Soviet Union even if it conjured up images of Russia's imperial past, but more about following security and economic interests, meanwhile squeezing out Turkish, American and Iranian influence.

Divergent strategic responses and Russian national interests

According to the fact that to date neither Georgia, nor Azerbaijan can be named fully sovereign states as approximately 20 percent of their territories are claimed to be occupied. Armenia – instead of being “the winner” in the battle for Nagorno-Karabakh – also has problems with legitimacy due to the fact that the economic blockade is still in place.⁴ Therefore, their threat perceptions and security concerns are immensely differing.⁵

Armenian policy is for a long time has been determined by Yerevan's struggle over Nagorno-Karabakh and hostility with Azerbaijan and Turkey. In addition to being a landlocked country, it also suffers from shortcomings in the economy since its borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan have remained closed. In order to meet its security needs, Armenia – of its vision that it could be attacked in any moment – subordinated almost all its economic and political interests to security and has no alternative but to rely on Russia. Moscow is the main guarantor of its security and Yerevan has a strong pro-Russian attitude which has been deepened in the recent years, even if it seems to have a desire to approach the European Union.

As regards to **Azerbaijan**, its post-Soviet policy was also driven from one hand by Nagorno-Karabakh issue, and by its energy resource capacity from the other. In contrast with Yerevan, Baku has tremendous income from oil reserves what allows to increase its military spending year in, year out without any need of great power penetration. It is also used to be a lever of clout towards Western countries seeking to decrease their dependence on Russian energy transit, Azerbaijan is holding all the right cards to play a multi-vectored game.

⁴ Markedonov (2007).

⁵ Sammut, D. and Paul, A., 2011. *Addressing the Security Challenges in the South Caucasus: The Case for Comprehensive, Multilateral and Inclusive Approach*. Brussels, March 2011. European Policy Center Policy Brief [pdf] Available at: <http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_1249_addressing_the_security_challenges_in_the_south_caucasus.pdf>

Since the Soviet breakup **Georgia** was determined by “gathering Georgian lands”, more precisely by uniting Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Adjara under the Georgian flag. After the Rose Revolution in 2003, the Saakashvili government unequivocally turned its face to the West and started intensively to build strong ties with the US and NATO. Tbilisi’s aspirations have fomented its tense relations with Moscow, peaking in August 2008 when a five-day war emanated from years of mutual accusations and harassment. After the war, Russian influence diminished, there is huge expectations stick with the upcoming presidential elections as a wind of change in Russo-Georgian tough relations.

For **Russia** the Caucasus always counted and after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 it still has many interests, ranging from economic, (geo)political to security, what is not surprising.⁶ Enough to look at the map to understand why Russian foreign policy was focused on great power-rivalry to bag that region as a significantly important crossroad and buffer zone in the 19th century. Thus, it has had a considerable impact on security consideration. Although as long as for the Russian Empire the security was perceived as hindering Southern empires (Iran, Ottoman Empire) adjacent to Caucasus in their efforts to occupy territories, today it is more about fighting against the spread of radical Islam and international criminal networks, alongside with the strive to hamstring any military-political organisation such as NATO to acquire new allies in the region. Furthermore, the “Big Caucasus” term means that anything that happens in the South has its impact on the North part and *vice versa*, the North and the South Caucasus are inseparably interlinked.⁷ Even though Moscow has achieved a degree of pacification in the Chechen Republic especially under the rule of its head, Ramzan Kadyrov, but the stability in the North Caucasus is only an illusion when armed resistance forces successfully control many parts of the northern republics.⁸ In the 1990s economic interests transformed into a quite new form, the challenge was to keep the energy transit routes under control on the territories of its former republics what is now sovereign states. Noteworthy, large infrastructural projects had never been on Moscow’s “to-do list”.⁹ In case of political orientation of these countries, besides the obvious pro-Russian course the predictability is also

⁶ Kocaman, Ö., 2007. *Russia’s relations with Georgia within the context of the Russian national interests towards the South Caucasus in the post-Soviet era: 1992-2005*. Ankara: International Strategic Research Organization [pdf] Available at: <<http://www.usak.org.tr/dosyalar/dergi/FQsCUEJ6UD7b9DcYX3NNQy50mPQXXX.pdf>>

⁷ Mankoff, J., 2012. *The Big Caucasus: Between Fragmentation and Integration*. March 2012. Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies [pdf] Available at: <http://csis.org/files/publication/120326_Mankoff_BigCaucasus_Web.pdf>

⁸ Trenin, D., 2009. Russia and the Caucasus: Reversing the Tide. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*. Spring/Summer – 2009, Vol. XV, Issue II.

⁹ Ryabov (2011).

favourable for the Kremlin since obscure internal policy in the tumultuous Caucasus can only mean something ominous. In fact, all the above mentioned interests are closely related with each other, just to keep in mind how conflicts can jeopardize economic and political relations as it was the case in the worsening relations of Moscow and Tbilisi after August 2008 and even years earlier.

Russia and the three South Caucasian states: different countries, different approaches

Russian influence in the Transcaucasus vastly varies from commercial calculations to political influence. Needless to say, it is hardly measurable where it is a legitimate interest and where an insatiable hunger for leverage.¹⁰ Russia from the very beginning of the 2000s has applied a pragmatic approach dealing with CIS countries.¹¹ Hence it supports the *de facto* states and recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia, while have easily withdrawn from the Azeri Gabala radar station and revived its Armavir station in Krasnodar region.

Armenia – no real alternative, but Moscow. A strategic alliance

Following the Soviet breakup Armenia has become the only military-political ally of Moscow. In addition to its landlocked location, the room for economic development was also little because the blockade by Azerbaijan and Turkey is still in place. The dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh region stems from events of the first half of the 20th century, nonetheless since the ceasefire agreement was signed in 1994 there was no real shift from the stalemate and the fickle “neither war, nor peace” situation can easily tilt to date. The prolonged conflict hitherto determines the political discourse of both Yerevan and Baku. In recent years conflicts intensified and alongside this both Azerbaijan and Georgia sharply increased their military spending. Georgian military spending exceed 1,000 million USD in 2006 while Azeri reached 2,700 million in 2012.¹² Armenia finds threatening the defence spending of Baku, especially because it is not only the highest in the region, but also because it is several times higher than the Armenian national budget.

¹⁰ Nixey, J., 2012. *The Long Goodbye: Waning Russian Influence in the South Caucasus and Central Asia*. London: Chatham House. June 2012 [online] Available at: <<http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/184065>>

¹¹ Shaffer, B., 2009. The Geopolitics of the Caucasus. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*. Spring/Summer – 2009, Vol. XV, Issue II.

¹² SIPRI Military Expenditure Database.

First and foremost security considerations led Armenia to build up close relations with Russia then it spilled over to other fields as well. It is the only South Caucasian member in CSTO, also has a common border force with Russia and among others, observer in the Eurasian Economic Community. The only Russian military base in the Caucasus is in Gyumri, Western Armenia, where their presence in the 102nd military base was renewed in August 2010 until 2044. Obviously, in this context Russia's image as an honest broker is undermined however, it is the ultimate guarantor of Armenian security.

The Russian share in Armenian economy is impressive and encompasses almost its entire sphere. Even if Armenia's main export partner is not Russia, but the EU27 and the same applies to the import, Moscow has no reason to worry because of its tremendous share in almost all fields of the Armenian economy. Armavia airlines (Armenian airline company), Armenian Saving Banks, Armenian Railways are all majority-owned by Russian companies. Russia's state-owned Inter RAO-EUS is the ultimate supplier through Armenian Electric Networks, Gazprom has an 85 percent share in ArmRosGazprom. Besides that, Moscow is not only the main creditor of Yerevan as the amount of the Russian FDI is also the highest, but also the first in terms of the origin of remittances (with its 83 percent in 2012). Individual money transfers have a notable share in Armenian GDP (12.6 percent) and all above mentioned figures – with no claim to be exhaustive – demonstrates well enough the intertwine relations of Armenia and Russia.¹³

The events of recent weeks, such as the Russian 1 billion dollar arm export deal with Azerbaijan, the increasing of gas prices for Yerevan and the “case of Arutunian” (Grachia Arutunian, a 46-year-old truck driver in July 2013 crashed a truck into a bus killing eighteen people in Podolsk, near Moscow) led to the estrangement in Russo-Armenian relations. Although not at the top level, but Armenian press impeached the Kremlin's allegiance to Yerevan blaming Russia for militarizing its unconcealed foe, Baku. Unpleasant events test the relationship between Yerevan and Moscow while at the same time Moscow intention to keep the balance between its long-time ally and the other country on the coasts of the Caspian Sea with huge oil and gas resources.¹⁴ Aforementioned pragmatic approach of the Russian foreign policy means in one hand that it is among Russian interests to have good-neighbour relations

¹³ Kiss, A., 2013. Russia and the South Caucasus: Managing contradictions. In: *Zs. Ludvig, ed. 2013. Eurasian challenges. Partnerships with Russia and other issues of the post-Soviet area. Budapest: Research Centre for Economic and Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of World Economics, pp.30-72. (East European Studies; 4.) [pdf] Available at: <http://fakproject.hu/docs/EE-4-kotet_ch2.pdf>*

¹⁴ Markedonov, S., 2013. *Hrupkiy balans prodalzhayet sohraniatsa*. 10 September 2013 [online] Available at: <<http://www.ekhovkaza.com/content/article/25025291.html>>

with Baku. However, the “strategic alliance” of Moscow and Yerevan is more than market interests; an alliance that cannot be cloven so sharply, even if Russia does not like that Armenia is glancing towards the West for a long time.¹⁵ In sum, Armenia will face two major issues to deal with: to maintain reconciliation with Turkey (and Azerbaijan) and to keep the balance of its engagement with the EU and pro-Russian policy orientation.¹⁶

Russian-Azeri relations: a strategic partnership

Likewise in the case of Armenia, security issues in Russo-Azerbaijani relations can be traced back to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which territory Baku claims to be occupied. When contracts on military equipment reveal – or there are high-level official visits to Yerevan or Baku – it always causes emotional outburst in the other country, not to say jealousy. Furthermore, as it was mentioned earlier, relations with Russia vary and the Baku-Moscow relationship is defined as a strategic partnership, based on commercial, market interests. There is no Russian military base on the Azeri lands, it is not a member in CSTO and not even planned to be engaged in any of Russian regional organisations (whereas Armenia does), but counter to Armenia it shares a common border with Russia (Dagestan) that should not be underestimated in terms of security.

Regarding economy, Russia has no such influence in Azerbaijan – in contrast with the Soviet times – as in Armenia due to Baku’s high hydrocarbon reserves. After the BTC pipeline was opened in mid-2006 the Caspian country has become an oil exporter and also a gas exporter after the start-up of the Shah Deniz in 2007. Thus, it had the largest FDI inflow in the 1990s among the South Caucasian countries, but the fact that it mostly went to the oil sector foreshadows future sectorial problems. The country successfully avoided budget deficit and even was in surplus after the 2008 recession. Russia is third among its trade partners, what as a matter of fact can be accounted for energy import. Although securing energy routes were one of the major issues in the early years of the post-Soviet Russia, there was no official visit to Baku in the Yeltsin era. Since Putin came to power there have been several visits, the bilateral relations saw ups and downs, but the key strategic position of Azerbaijan has never changed. From the security perspective the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict cannot be solved in

¹⁵ Markedonov, S., 2013. *Nikomu ne vigodnoye ohlazhdeniye*. 10 September 2013 [online] Available at: <<http://www.ekhokavkaza.com/content/article/25052310.html>>

¹⁶ Oskanian, K., 2013. *Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan: Between Russia and the West*. The Foreign Policy Center. April 2013 [online] Available: <<http://fpc.org.uk/articles/607>>

short or medium term, maintaining the status quo is the only scenario for Russia and Western stakeholders as well in order to avoid an open and long-lasting war.¹⁷

Neither Russia wants to take a side in this conflict, nor Azerbaijan wants to choose between unequivocal engagement with the West – what tries to decrease its energy dependence from the Kremlin by deepening relations with Baku – or Russia, one of the key powers in the region. The upcoming presidential elections in Azerbaijan have meaningful purport. Since Russia has security concerns towards the Middle East, a predictable president (Ilham Aliyev) means a lot, rather than the unpredictable (opposition). It seems that the Baku–Moscow–Yerevan triangle is a so to say “political roller-coaster” where tension depends on the degree of Russian engagement with one or with the other side. The forthcoming EaP-EU Vilnius Summit will be a milestone in Russo-Armenian relations and the finalising of the Association Agreement with Armenia (if there would be any) can prompt Russia to deepen its (first and foremost) business relations with Baku. One should not forget that Yerevan signed a memorandum on cooperation with the Russia-led Customs Union in April this year.

Russia-Georgia: agree on disagreement?

The five day war: “a kiss with a fist”

The war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 broke many rules and changes led to the collapse of the South Caucasian security, established new rules for a new reality.¹⁸ For the first time the Kremlin has chosen to redraw border lines on the post-Soviet space by recognising Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The international community badly performed as the OSCE failed to prevent the conflict, the European Union did not have a clear strategy and was hesitant and even the US was unwilling (more than unable) to assist Georgia after the war broke out.¹⁹ The lever of influence of the main international stakeholders as the OSCE, the

¹⁷ Markedonov, S., 2013. *Moskva-Baku. Otsherednoye potepleniye*. 15 August 2013 [online] Available at: <<http://www.novopol.ru/-moskva-i-baku-ocherednoe-poteplenie-text149254.html>>

¹⁸ Markedonov, S., 2008. Caucasus conflict breaks old rules of the game. *Russian Analytical Digest*. 4 September 2008 [pdf] Available at: <<http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/pdfs/RAD-45.pdf>>

¹⁹ Boonstra, J. and Melvin, N., 2011. *Challenging the South Caucasus security deficit*. April 2011, FRIDE Working Paper № 108 [pdf] Available at: <http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe_derivate_00005138/FRIDE_WP108_South_Caucasus_Eng.pdf>

UN or NATO is now in doubt, whereas Russia demonstrated that it would defend its national interests instead of standing idly.²⁰

The game of provocations in years before the war generated tensions, the open conflict meant losses for Georgia and Russia as well. Georgia not only lost Abkhazia and South Ossetia for a long time, but also its international reputation was destroyed, the perspective of NATO membership was removed from the agenda and it damaged Georgia's image of "beacon of democracy".²¹ Moreover, the problem of hundred thousands of IDPs cause headache for Tbilisi to date, just as the harsh relationship with breakaway republics.

Albeit Russia was the winner of this war, losses were notable; Moscow lost its substantial amount of influence on Georgia. A full-scale armed response in the eyes of Russian leadership was the right way to teach Saakashvili (and the US) a lesson. Notwithstanding, Moscow's reputation has been also damaged and from then on Russia will never again be seen as an honest broker. The recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia was a completely new phenomenon in Russian post-Soviet foreign policy, but that was an exception rather than a rule. The most important reason behind the decision was pragmatic. According to the Russian Constitution the recognition was the only way for Russian troops to stay.²² Russian influence on Abkhazia and South Ossetia is – one would simply say – total, although it is not clear what the future holds for them.²³

The Russian-Georgian economic relations were affected by political hostility between the Kremlin and president Saakashvili. Ban on Georgian wine and Borjomi in 2006 was a clear political message and the business started to recover only in the last couple of months and was back in Russian stores. As regards the export-import rate, Russia is not among Georgia's top partners or FDI flow sources. Contrary to that, investments and the share of RAO UES in Georgian energy sphere – namely electricity system – are notable; remittances sent from Russia to Georgia also have been influencing the Georgian economy.

²⁰ Lukyanov, F., 2012. Russia and Georgia: Going their separate ways. *Caucasus Analytical Digest*. No. 41, 17 September 2012 [pdf] Available at: <<http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/pdfs/CAD-41.pdf>>

²¹ Boonstra, J., 2008. *Georgia and Russia: a short war with a long aftermath*. August 2008, FRIDE Comment.

²² Trenin, D. (2009).

²³ In case of Abkhazia, it became clear that Sukhum wants to be independent both from Georgia and Russia. Tskhinvali at times want to reunite South with North Ossetia, but that would be a different story. The answer of a question if the partially recognized states can live without a continuous help of Russia and handle Tbilisi's aspirations of reuniting the country is rather no.

Upcoming presidential elections in October could change the wroth relations, but today the Kremlin prefers a “wait and see” policy in order to make sure what policy orientation the new government would choose and the choice should be made.²⁴ Among the internal problems, Tbilisi should have to deal with *de facto* states to find a strategy not to threaten Sukhum or Tskhinval with the aim of restoring Georgian sovereignty. The Special Representative for Relations with Russia, Zurab Abashidze argues, that restoring relations is desirable because they are mutually beneficial and because there are issues such as trade, cargo transportation, visa facilitation, restoration of regular flights or cultural ties (attending Sochi Winter Olympic games) where the two countries could work on well. Even though, Abashidze highlighted that the main course towards Russia remains the same. “...the restoration of trade ties does not at all mean that we are rejecting our principles or that we will alleviate our criticism towards Russia concerning those red lines [territorial integrity of Georgia and free choice in foreign affairs – K. A.]...”²⁵ So, it seems to be clear that there is no illusion on both sides concerning positive developments and it is still unclear how economic incentives would or at least can in theory overcome confrontation.

Conclusion

Russian foreign policy principles towards the Transcaucasus have been formulated quite clear in the last two decades and there are three core messages from the Kremlin. First, Moscow is for the maintaining of the *status quo* in the region. The recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia was an exception under the rule and rather a necessary strategic step than a carefully planned concept. Based on its rich experience on the Southern borders of the Caucasus Russia knows well the price of instability. Redefining the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh is a double-edged sword and would lead to unforeseen consequences; the wrath and scorn on both sides hinder Moscow to choose a side. To date and in the foreseeable future there seems to be no draft or deal that both Baku and Yerevan would be satisfied with. Second, mind Russia’s interests. That was also the message of the August 2008 war and years earlier, since President Putin came to power and the country became stronger in economic terms and more confident in political. One of the biggest faults of the G. W. Bush administration was the ignorance of

²⁴ Jarosiewicz, A., 2013. The Southern Caucasus is turning into Russian playground. *OSW EastWeek*. 22 May 2013 [online] Available at: <<http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/eastweek/2013-05-22/southern-caucasus-turning-a-russian-playground>>

²⁵ Interview with Zurab Abashidze. 9 April 2013 [online] Available at: <<http://www.tabula.ge/en/story/70814-zurab-abashidze-we-must-not-create-the-impression-that-we-have-sorted-everything-out>>

the Russian will. Third principle concerns responsible stakeholders; the security of the South Caucasus first of all should be the business of adjacent states as Russia, Turkey, Iran and in lesser extent the European Union, but not the United States.²⁶

In Armenia, the fear of breaking the fragile internal and external security diverts the public attention to conflict issues with Azerbaijan, while bilateral relations are also formed in that basis. Armenian relations with Russia formulated on a strict look on Russian-Azeri relations...

Moscow is teetering on the tightrope of the Yerevan-Baku-Tbilisi triangle lead by its (pragmatic) interests as it post-Soviet club (CIS) does not function well and the new Russian integration projects do not have clear concepts to date.

Armenia is in between of Russian offer and the EU's DCFTA while Azerbaijan is building close ties with Moscow and interested in good ties with the West also. Georgia has a firmly pro-Western orientation even if the Ivanishvili administration works hard on normalizing its ties with the Kremlin. Even if the above mentioned "choices" exist at all, there is no willingness in the (almost whole) post-Soviet region to make an unequivocal step neither towards the West nor towards a full dependency on Russian will. However, developing economic relations cannot restore and guarantee the security of the South Caucasus if there is no clear government-backed, irreversible decision what holds lot of uncertainties that are not so remunerative for the responsible stakeholders in the region, especially for Russia.

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*Story**Cumbersome heritage
of the forbidden territories*

András Lőrincz

The lives of millions are endangered by the massive level of environmental contamination in Russia.

The US-based Blacksmith Institute periodically delivers reports about the most polluted territories in the world. According to this, out of the ten most contaminated cities five are situated within the territory of the former USSR, and out of these five cities three can be found in today's Russia. The settlements indicated in the report were previously closed cities.

The notion of “closed city”, with Russian acronym called ZATO, means closed administrative territory. During the existence of the Soviet Union, centres where significant activities of military or nuclear industry were carried out, border regions and cities enclosed for security reasons were referred to as “closed cities”. In the late ‘80s approximately fifty of such settlements or establishments existed. Russians wanted to keep the cities in secret to such an extent that they even attempted to rename them (for instance the city of Molodyozhny in the territory of Moscow became Naro-Fominsk-5.) In several cases in this way entire cities disappeared from the newly printed maps. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many of these vanished territories “could be detected” again on the maps.

In October 2001 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov in a declaration marked out six further territories as “closed cities”. One of the most famous ones is Norilsk – situated over the Arctic Circle – where some one hundred and thirty thousand people are affected by the contamination deployed from the dangerous materials. In the air strontium-90, caesium-137,

sulphur dioxide as well as non-ferrous - and heavy metals: nickel, copper, cobalt, lead and selenium can be found. In Norilsk the average life expectancy is less than the national average with 10 years. The air usually smells like sulphate and black snowfall is also a common phenomenon.

Dalnegorsk and Rudnaya Pristan are situated in the derelict far-eastern corner of Russia. These cities earned their ambiguous reputation for the extreme lead-content of their soil, which is said to be the highest in the world. The local furnace emits eighty-five tons of heavy metal to the atmosphere on a yearly scale. The water used up in the furnaces in which a hundred kilograms of lead and twenty kilograms of arson are dissolved further contaminates the environment every day.

Though, the greatest threat is coming from the chemical centre of Dzerzhinsk. According to some estimation, one and a half million people are endangered by such harmful materials as arson trioxide, mustard-gas, hydrocyanic acid, lead and mercury. In the biggest Soviet chemical-weapon production centre of the Cold War in the last seventy years nearly two hundred types of chemicals were dissolved in subsurface waters. Thus, here toxin level is seventeen million times higher than the safety limit. In the city no official data is released concerning the average life expectancy. Nevertheless, according to unofficial sources this number is 42 in case of men while in case of women it is 47. The number of patients with cancer is the highest in this territory within Russia. The local hospital has a separate department, which deals solely with illnesses connected to the workplace of people. In the cemetery of the city considerable number of tombs can be seen which belong to people who passed away under the age of forty. The previously mentioned report of the Blacksmith Institute enlists further twenty-five settlements including five Russian cities, where some three million people are endangered because of the pollutant materials deployed from various chemical and nuclear substances. Two decades ago even Soviet citizens were allowed to enter these “closed cities” only with a special permission. Nowadays, mainly foreigner visitors are not permitted to enter the ZATO cities.

Accordingly, the question is rightful: why do myriads of workers chose to live closed lives? Why do those who worked in such cities until now prefer staying there and why do not these territories become desolate? The answer is simple: in Russia, where economy has been in recession in the last decade, the industrial companies of the “closed cities” offer attractive

opportunity to those who are looking forward to making a steady living standard. These people are willing to pay with their lives in exchange for relative wellbeing.

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Kaliningrad: a special area in Central-Eastern Europe

Kitti Mária Tádics

Abstract: The main objective of this work is to analyse in detail Kaliningrad territory, focusing on the current political situation, separation tendencies and features of the national identity. The content of the work is divided into separate parts. The ambition of the first part is to define basic facts that make this area specific in the Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of the second part is to identify significant milestones in the history of Kaliningrad that substantially shaped Kaliningrad's contemporary political picture, particularly Kaliningrad after the Russian regime change. The thesis also emphasizes the inclination of Kaliningrad to the West and the EU instead of Russian Federation and attempts to define causes that led to this particular tendency. The author of the work also would like to concentrate on the considerable alteration of Kaliningrad since the first presidency of Vladimir Putin. The intention of the last part is to resolve Kaliningrad-EU-Moscow relations. The author concluded that most profitable policy for Kaliningrad would be to help balance these two seemingly antagonistic positions and attempt to urge Russia and the EU to adopt measures most convenient for Kaliningrad.

Keywords: Kaliningrad, Russia, sovereignty, European Union, regional policy

Introduction

In this essay I would like to summarize the current political situation, the separation tendencies and the features of the national identity in Kaliningrad oblast. First I would like to lay out some **basic statements regarding to the area:**

1. Kaliningrad oblast is a small Russian *enclave* which is inhabited by 1 million people and bordered by Lithuania and Poland at the coast of the Baltic Sea. Although this

area is under Russian sovereignty, it is separated from the rest of Russia not only physically but mentally too. By the occasion of the Lithuanian and Polish connection to the EU and to the NATO, this separation led to disputes between Russia and the West, as the transport of people and goods became more difficult for Russians within their homeland in the legal consequences of eastern enlargement of the European Union's borders. These administrative difficulties could weaken the relations between the oblast and the rest of Russia.

2. The *regional policy of the Russian Federation is based on centralization*. The federal government of Russia would not like to give broader autonomy to the regional authorities in the decision making regarding to foreign affairs, economic and social issues, despite of its special position. The reason of that is the paramount intention to maintain the territorial integrity. Every important decision is made by the central government at federal level without the involvement of the regional elites. In many cases ensuring the peace in the oblast and strengthening the relations between Kaliningrad and other parts of the country cost a lot of money for the central budget. For example the state should provide subventions for the Kaliningrad citizens in travelling expenses inside Russia or make unprofitable investments by the state-owned companies.
3. Kaliningraders are absolutely opened to the cooperation with the countries of the EU and would like to improve economic and civil relations with them. Although the EU is also interested in common projects, it could not handle Kaliningrad as an autonomous partner for that and look at the oblast *as one factor of the EU-Russia relations*.
4. Kaliningrad used to be a strategic base of Russia; the *military potential is very high* in the region. Most units of the Russian fleet are deployed here, as the only ice-free port of the country could be found in this area.
5. Finally I should mention the *periodically reviving protest tendencies* in Kaliningrad, which have two reasons. First the residents are fed up with Moscow's regional policy and second they are aware of the living standards in the neighbouring EU member states. Results of comparing the economic and social situation in Kaliningrad to the EU level make them disappointed. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

The history of Kaliningrad

The city of Kaliningrad was mentioned before the end of the World War II as Königsberg and belonged to Germany. In 1945 the Soviet Union occupied and annexed the city and the surrounding territory which covered the one third of the former East Prussia. According to Stalin's commandment the German population was resettled and the area was renamed after a Soviet politician, Mikhail Kalinin. The main goal of the Soviet government was to create a new, Soviet profile for the region through the destruction of the traces of the German heritage and to build the Soviet socialistic society based on "Soviet people" in Kaliningrad. Theoretically it did not seem to be unreachable, as on the one part they filled the area with Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians who had no connections to the territory before, on the other part the city of Kaliningrad was almost fully demolished, thus the new administration had the opportunity to rebuild the whole town. As a result of that most of the German architectural monuments were exploded and people, who were responsible for constructing a new, Soviet city, must be engaged to social realism. I think that the destruction of an approximately 600 years old castle, where the first Prussian emperor was enthroned, was a symbolic point of this process. Old statues of Prussian intelligence, artists and politicians, German names of roads and squares were changed for Soviet ones. (Regions and territories, 2011; Karpenko, 2006)

They transformed not only the cityscape, but also the history of the region. The Soviet historiographical publications contained that Kaliningrad was formerly inhabited by the Baltic Slavs, thus the Soviet Union laid legitimate claim to the territory after the collapse of the Fascist Germany. (Martin, 2011)

Behind the annexation of the territory there were strong military interests, which are obvious in regard to the fact, that Kaliningrad became the top strategic base of the Russian Baltic Fleet because of its ice-free ports. During the Cold War the army was the most important employee in the region and the concentration of armed forces in the local society was one of the highest there inside Russia. To make it evident and endurable for the inhabitants the central government tried to emphasize the dignity of war heroism and the significance of preparing for the 3rd world war in the ideological propaganda. (Karpenko, 2006) The military profile of the oblast came to stay after the regime change too.

Kaliningrad after the Russian regime change

In the early 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Empire the Soviet Union transformed into Russian Federation, which meant a constitutional, political and economic transformation and contributed to the appearance and reinforcement of decentralization in Russia. As a sign of that Kaliningrad became one of the 83 federal subjects, which could have own, self-elected regional government. Although the electoral competition has been mostly dominated by the regional sections of the representative federal political parties and the winner of the elections used to be the United Russia almost everywhere in the Russian Federation, all sorts of regional political movements and parties, which had been grounded by Kaliningraders could also function in Kaliningrad due to the more permissive political climate at the end of the 20th century. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012) It meant that such organizations as the Baltic Republican Party (BRP) got the chance to take part in the political life of the region. The BRP has targeted to gain autonomy for Kaliningrad and has promoted the thought of getting closer to the EU without getting under German sovereignty. Although they respect the German past of the territory and make attempts to restore the region's original name, Königsberg, they would not like to be the part of Germany. (Strom, 2012) These points of their program have been quite popular in the local society, especially at the beginning of 1990s, but not very much at federal level. The central government is still interested in weakening of the connections between Kaliningrad and the EU, strengthening Kaliningrader's loyalty to Russia and becoming the absolute reference point for the inhabitants of the region. In 2006 the central government declared a state-financed program called „We Russians” within country trips, camps and special faculties about patriotic studies are organized for young Kaliningraders. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012) It seems to be absolutely necessary if we pay attention for an analyse of the BBC from 2002 which stated that young people rather look to Europe than to Russia as only 15% of them have been to other parts of their motherland while 80% of young Kaliningraders have already travelled to Europe. Although the culture is kind of Russian there, the proximity to Europe makes a gap between people living in the rest of Russia and the second generation inhabitants of Kaliningrad who were born in the region and have no family members in other parts of the motherland. (Wayatt, 2002) Kaliningrad does not have a well-developed economy or large tackles of row materials (gas, oil, etc.); only the amber production is notable in the region. Kaliningrad's import significantly exceeds the export of the region year by year. So the mentioned Russian intention to maintain strong relation with this territory could be only

explained with considerations referring to Russia's security policy. Kaliningrad is a strategic naval base which has a great importance as Russia is surrounded with hostile NATO allies. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Parallel with the demolition of the USSR a severe economic crisis began to evolve in whole Russia because of its underdeveloped, post-Soviet economic structure, which implied the permanent increase of the unemployment rate. In this situation the physical separation of Kaliningrad from the rest of Russia, which stemmed from the decolonization of the Baltic states, urged the government of Kaliningrad to establish economic relations with the neighbouring post-soviet and the Western European countries. President Yeltsin ensured duty-free trade and favourable tax system referring to the interests of the region. They hoped that the conditions of the potential birth of the imagined "Baltic Hong Kong" (Martin, 2011, p.53) had been created with these measures, but at first Kaliningrad's products and services were not competitive in the Western markets, and second, none of the contractors would like to invest money in Kaliningrad because of many reasons (mentioned below). This process led to Russia's central role in Kaliningrad's economy, even though the transport of people and goods between Kaliningrad and the rest of Russia became more expensive. (It would become more complicated after Lithuania's and Poland's connection to the EU and to the Schengen system.) The economic set-back resulted in the increase of the extent of criminality, prostitution and the numbers of drug addicts. Kaliningrad could be mentioned as a disadvantaged region not only from economic but also from social aspect. This region belongs to the poorest regions inside Russia. Despite of the fact that the price of the public services is among the highest there, the average wage is among the lowest. The huge proportion of the HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis diseases as a consequence of the insufficient and too expensive healthcare service, the low extent of the public security, the gruesome scale of air pollution are also among the largest social deficiencies. (Regions and territories, 2011; Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012; Martin, 2011)

Therefore the *compensation* framed the Kaliningrad-Russia relations since the regime change. This conception could be discovered in the Special Economic Zone (SEZ), formally adopted in 1996, which provided customs benefits for the region of Kaliningrad and helped the survival and improvement of the well-developed small and medium sized business sector in the region. Within the confine of the SEZ the Russian Federation ensured the duty-free import of all goods into Kaliningrad. They imported mostly semi-finished products which were

assembled in Kaliningrad and exported to other parts of Russia. Although the SEZ was beneficial for the local citizens, it was detrimental for the central budget, because international business circles used Kaliningrad to avoid the customs at the Russian borders. As a result of that the SEZ was transformed by Vladimir Putin in 2006, whose aim was to construct a production- and export-oriented economic structure in Kaliningrad and support large foreign investors, but it was not successful. This region could not attract the huge investments because of the variability of the legal environment of business, existing of restricted military areas inside Kaliningrad region, corruption and the isolation from the rest of Russia, which has severe financial consequences and could not be compensated by the offered tax- and custom privileges. Eventually Kaliningrad's economy comes to stay depended upon the Russian economy, as Russia is the main investor in Kaliningrad (due to infrastructural investments (building of highways, power plants, ports) by the state-owned companies) and the most important customer of the goods and services, which are produced in the region. Last but not least this dependence could be also originated in the lack of raw materials, a well-developed agriculture, and big businesses, industries. The income from the amber producing is not enough to a strong regional economy. Moscow tried to urge the economic prosperity by the development of tourism but the limited amount of attractions, which are in some case in the restricted areas, the poorly improved services and the complicated procedure of getting visa to Kaliningrad hinder the region to make profit this way. Business circles are really interested in the elimination of the enumerated problems and in getting new privileges from the federal government. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisnievska, 2012)

It is clear now that the mentioned consequences of the regime change, the social, political and ecological features of the territory and the willingness of the Russian Federation to maintain the Russian sovereignty in Kaliningrad could give a reason to the policy of compensation, but there is one more fact notwithstanding which contributed to the appearance of these attempts. At the beginning of the 1990s the idea of Kaliningrad's separation from the Russian Federation got into focus. The first appointed governor of Kaliningrad – Yuri Matochkin – intended to hold a referendum about this question and hoped to turn into the “fourth Baltic republic”, but this desire was smashed by the central government. (Lewis, 2010) Why could the issue of secession appear in Kaliningrad after the collapse of the USSR? Why are the compensation mechanisms and other instruments necessary to integrate a group of Russians to Russia? These questions could be answered if we take into account the specialities of the national identity in Kaliningrad.

Feel like other type of Russians

Many factors could be mentioned which blocked the evolution of the “Soviet person” in Kaliningrad. The Kaliningraders was well informed about the Western life-style during the period of socialism, as the military officers and seamen always brought consumer goods from the West to Kaliningrad when they took a journey there, so people in Kaliningrad could keep in touch with the citizens of the neighbouring countries (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) which were “less-sovietised”. These facts caused the failure of the Soviet identity building and contributed to the appearance of a feeling that they are only to a certain extent Soviet citizens. After the regime change it turned into insisting of assertion that they are another type of Russians, Western or more Europeanised Russians. (Karpenko, 2006) Although they are Russians, their connections to their homeland are much weaker than their connections to Europe. They used to travel as tourists to the member states of the EU (especially to Germany, Lithuania or Poland) more often than to Russia, although they share in subventions for the price of the ferry and the airplane tickets from the central government to visit other parts of the Russian Federation. The main cause of going for a Russian trip among Kaliningraders is to look up relatives there. On the other hand the short-term trips to the neighbouring EU countries are really popular in Kaliningrad. They used to go for shopping weekends in Poland or Lithuania or travel as tourists to somewhere in Western-Europe as despite of state subventions the airplane tickets are mostly more priceless to Russia than to Germany. The large number of medical tourists is also not surprising regarding to the low quality but high prices of the health care service in Kaliningrad. (I have to add that it does not work mutually, as the number of European tourists in Kaliningrad is irrelevant.) It means that the neighbouring members of the EU are the reference point for the region instead of other parts of Russia. The citizens of Kaliningrad used to compare their living standards to the existing living conditions in Poland, Lithuania and Germany. As a result of that they are much more dissatisfied with the achievements and measures of the central government and they express higher social claims than people in other Russian regions. Therefore the actors of the civil society are more active comparing to the Russian average. There are 3.6 non-governmental organizations per 1,000 capita in Kaliningrad compared to the Russian average (2.6 NGOs per 1,000 capita). It follows that the willingness for the separation from Russia could appear in Kaliningrad oblast which provoked the policy of compensation. The separation movements (for example the mentioned BRP, which was constituted in 1993 by Sergey Pasko) could operate in Kaliningrad and could present their program in the local

media. After a couple of years these intentions were frozen by the new regional policy of President Vladimir Putin (detailed below). (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

The feeling of being closer to Europe was manifested in the excessive emphasizing of the German past of the territory at the beginning of the 1990s. Despite of the Soviet government's attempts to erase the German past of Kaliningrad, people found out and preserved myths and legends about a demolished town called Königsberg. Kaliningrad is a perfect example for the fact that a culture could not be disappeared without a trace. The Prussian history ceased to be a taboo in the region thus people began to use the former name of the city of Kaliningrad or use a mixed version of the Russian and German name ("Kenig"). (Strom, 2012) Photographs, memoirs and other studies and papers referring to the World War II and the German times before were published and witnessed the story of a destroyed town, Königsberg. The schools in Kaliningrad started to hold extracurricular classes in which children could get relevant information about the history of Kaliningrad. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Although Russians constitute the *biggest* ethnic group in Kaliningrad, they could *not* be seen as the *main* ethnic group there. How could it be possible? First of all the egalitarianism and the internationalism played a central role in the social system and in the demanded social behaviour during the Soviet period. In the second place, all of the ethnic groups which were settled into Kaliningrad had made no roots in this area before thus none of them could be mentioned as a dominant ethnic group in the region. There has been a consensus among the Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians and other minorities referring to this question. So Kaliningraders used to live in a multicultural environment, although all of the biggest ethnic groups are Slav ethnic groups and the nearness between their culture and habits is uncontroversial. At the end of the 1980s there were more than 110 ethnic groups registered in Kaliningrad who lived together without ethnic tensions. There is also a large number of migrants which emanate from the effects of the resettlement program, which encourages the citizens of the CIS countries (former citizens of the Soviet Union) to move to Kaliningrad. (Karpenko, 2006; Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Religious confrontations are also diminished in the oblast. Between 1945 and the middle of the 1980s building of a church was prohibited by the Soviet authorities, so Kaliningrad was secularized. The foundation of the first orthodox congregation was allowed by the central

government in 1985. From the beginning of the 1990s other religious communities have been recognized step by step. Although there are more than 40 registered denominations the Russian Orthodox Church has the visible majority of believers. But the almost 40 years of socialism could not disappear without a trace. It is clearly demonstrated by the results of public opinion polls, that the number of people who believe in the existence of God is much more less than the number of people who say that they belong to an institutionalized church. The phenomena of the so called “Orthodox non-believers” (Karpenko, 2006, p.285) could be explained by the fact that Kaliningraders bind their religious identity to their ethnicity and their cultural identity. The religion is only one factor through which they can express where they ethnically belong to. Since the religion became an important instrument to attach the region identically to the rest of Russia, the central government is really active in the reinforcement of the Orthodox Church’s position in Kaliningrad. The temple of the first Orthodox congregation was earlier in the property of an Evangelical congregation. Parallel with the increase of the number of Orthodox communities the regional authorities provided the ownership of many tarnished building for them, which had been formerly used by catholic or evangelistic believers. These transactions had been in progress just before the federal act about the churches’ restitution for the takeover of their property was accepted. (Karpenko, 2006; Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Kaliningrad since the first presidency of Vladimir Putin

After his inauguration in 2000 Vladimir Putin as the new president of the Russian Federation introduced some reforms which were based on the policy of centralization and reduced the autonomy of the regions by degrees through the created administrative and direct impediments.

The *first step* towards the completion of this policy was the *financial reform* in 2001. This targeted to deprive the regional budget of some important incomes such as the VAT, the social insurance and the road fund. The whole revenue from the VAT is flowing to the central budget. Instead of economic autonomy the regions are thrown back on federal state subsidies what make the regions more dependent from the federal level and create unpredictable fiscal situation year by year because only a minimalized part of the extent of subventions is granted in federal acts, and a greater part is awarded to the regions by casual decisions of individuals

(members of the government and administration). (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Secondly Putin obligated the regional elites to *harmonize the regional legal system with the federal one* thus some of them made provisions which were about sovereignty or special autonomy and was inconsistent with the federal law. This arrangement excludes the thought of a special independent area regarding to Kaliningrad and neglect the features of the territory in the legal regulation. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

The construction of federal districts could be mentioned as an *administrative impediment* of the regional autonomy. Putin aimed to merge the regions into self-determined federal districts which are going to be led by presidential deputies who are formally authorized to give advises for the region's governments and monitor their activities but in fact they are „omnipotent” envoys of the president. Kaliningrad belongs to the North-Western Federal District which is managed from Saint Petersburg. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

The next stop of the process was to *ban the functioning of the region-based political parties* or movements, such as aforesaid Baltic Republican Party. As I mentioned before the dominating party is the United Russia, but it has legal alternatives: the Communist Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Just Russia, the Yabloko and the Patriots of Russia. These parties are relevant in federal level and their regional sections are operating in Kaliningrad, but this is not typical for whole Russia. The variability of political forces is almost the highest in Kaliningrad compared to the rest of Russia and the United Russia is not omnipotent there, it is more controlled by the opposition than anywhere in the Russian Federation. The structure of political parties explains the specific patterns of their political behaviour as in many cases the directives which had been expected by the centrum of the parties to implement on regional level are vetoed by regional elites considering the local interests. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Despite of the legal prohibition the BRP is *still active* in Kaliningrad but operating under the name of *Respublica* since 2005. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012) On the party's own blog side – where members use the original name of the movement, so I will mention them as BRP – the supporters of the movement are able to order a piece of East Prussian soil, stone or even buy a T-shirt wherewith they can make the BRP's attempt for independence from Moscow more wide-known. Old Konigsbergs cognac and East Prussian vodka are also available for people who want to clink glasses for autonomy. According to an

interview with the current head of the BRP, Rustam Vasiliev, he was born in Tatarstan, now he lives in Kaliningrad and despite of he cannot speak German, only a few word, or has Russian, Ukrainian, Tatar and Bashkir roots he identifies himself as Prussian as he loves people there and Prussian history. How could it be possible? Is it not an obvious experiment to make political capital of the Prussian tradition? Since generally the common language is one of the main components of ethnical identity it could come up that we should face the well-known “ethno-business”. They used to organize such events as the P-Russian parade which was officially banned by regional authorities, the Königsberg bicycle tours and other spectacular demonstrations in which they can wave Prussian flags, play Prussian music and express their political aims. They intend to cooperate with the popular blog side, the Amberkant which is founded by young Kaliningraders and gave place for political debates between the residents and the elites. The Amberkant invited Mr. Vasiliev for a discussion with the current governor, Nikolay Tsukanov about the future of the region which was received by Mr. Vasiliev. The chairman of the BRP also travelled to the East Prussians’ meeting in Germany as a representative of the party and residents of Kaliningrad. Since December 2012 the BRP initiated a petition to restore the former name of the region, Königsberg, but it is supported only by 400 people which can raise question about the legitimacy of the group in the case of autonomy. They look at the renaming as the first step towards getting more independence. The BRP is really serious in this question thus its members obsess the FIFA to withdraw Russia’s right to organize the football World Cup in Kaliningrad in 2018, in a city which got its name after a person who had perpetrated crimes against humanity. It sounds an admirable symbolic initiation but the region’s economic interests dictate the opposite of this approach. The issue of renaming determines the BRP’s communication regarding to another political forces, labelling all of them communists. The party’s view is based on the dichotomy of „friend or foe” so it convicts the program of all the parliamentary parties and tries to affect emotions through creating stereotypical answers why they do not agree with the political aims of the BRP. (Baltic Republican Party blog, 2013) I asserted that the BRP does not represent the majority of the society in Kaliningrad as the number of their supporters does not exceed 1,000 people. (Storm, 2012) The sociological statistics in the question of independence which are regularly referred by politicians witness only about the support of 5% of Kaliningraders. (Baltic Republican Party blog, 2013) But it is not clear that should we believe in this or can we speak about latent non-supporters if we take into account the demonstrations against Moscow’s regional policy in 2009-2010 which

were assisted by thousands of people in Kaliningrad? Should we think that the non-visible supporters do not find the BRP an attractive alternative? Maybe. At first I need to look through the happenings of 2009–2010 to answer.

At the end of 2009 a few inhabitants, mostly dockworkers and sailors protested week by week against reducing the number of hospitals and the financial restrictions in the health care service but it was neglected by the local government. As a consequence of Putin's decision wherewith he increased the tariff of importing used cars from abroad and the politics of Georgiy Boos, the former governor of Kaliningrad, who raised the rate of transport tax and the utility prices many times during his period, the residents of Kaliningrad crowded the streets to protest against the measures that deprived them of financial resources during the term of the serious global financial crisis. The disparate scale of living standards compared to the EU member states and to other parts of Russia contributed to the eruption of social tensions. In December 2009 the number of protesters came up to 5 thousands. (Lewis, 2010) The social and economic claims turned into political demands in a short time as people began to demonstrate for the resignation of Mr. Putin and Mr. Boos. Georgiy Boos was appointed as the governor of Kaliningrad oblast by Vladimir Putin in 2005 pursuant to the *last element of Putin's reform package*, which is about the *ignoring of the results of the regional elections by the setting of the governor in the region* and making it dependent only from the willingness of the state president. Mr. Boos was really loyalty to Moscow's interest as he had no connections to Kaliningrad and obviously because he was appointed, not elected by the inhabitants so his legitimacy had come from the federal elites and not from the citizens. Mr. Boos tried to withdraw his mentioned unpopular measure but it had not been enough to impede the organizing of another demonstrations. Due to the huge distance between the region and the rest of Russia it used to be more complicated for the police and security service to keep under control the demonstrations what are in progress in Kaliningrad. The main organizers of the spoken-of protest were Konstantin Doroshok (the head of the region-based Justice movement, whose used car business went smash after Putin's protectionist arrangement), Michail Chesalin from the Patriots of Russia and Solomon Ginzburg, an independent representative. This protest was attended by political movements (Solidarity group, the Other Russia, the prohibited National Bolshevik Party) and every parliamentarian party – except the United Russia – in coalition, which was named "Our Kaliningrad". It revealed to a widespread social consensus which is beyond the hostility of the two radical poles (communists and hard nationalists) of the political arena. This opposite cooperation was succeed to attract 10-12

thousands people – including the businessmen and members of the middle class with no radical political views – under its flags on 30 January 2010 despite of the extremist weather. It could be mentioned as the largest Russian protest after the demonstration against the takeover of the NTV by the Gazprom in recent years. People demanded the restoration of regional election of governors, the departure of the regional government and Vladimir Putin who served as Prime Minister on federal level that time. Closed to Europe Kaliningrader's attitude to the government or simply to the authority shows different patterns as they are braver to express their political interests, imaginations even if these views are contrary to the establishment's point. (It is coincident with my aforesaid ascertainment that the civil activism is also outstanding in the region compared to another parts of the country.) I should add the fact that many of the protesters wore facemask as they were afraid of being identified by police cameras and getting into prison. This gesture does not seem to reflect a democratic area and can be seen an instrument wherewith they drew attention for the lack of freedom of speech in Russia. (Strom, 2012; Martin, 2011; Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012) That is connected to my first question about the “latent non-supporters”. Large part of Kaliningraders has not been involved to these initiations probably because of fear, although it could be possible that they had supported the collective actions. One of the organizers reported that the region could be similar to the example of the Polish Gdansk, where the Solidarity movement began to function in hope of realising the regime change in Poland one time. He said: „There is a wind blowing from Gdansk.” (W. Lewis, 2010) But at the same time the central government succeeded in demobilizing the frustrated mass and resolving the frictions in a short time through such measures what did not lead to the correction of the system, only made a symptomatic treatment in Kaliningrad. The Kremlin's most important priority is to ensure the reconciliation and the territorial integrity so the central government

- replaced the hated head of the regional ministry of healthcare, labour and social affairs
- obligated the regional leaders to establish a political consultation committee with the participation of the opposition
- delayed the lifting of tax tariffs
- countermanded Mr. Boos in August 2010 and appointed Nikolai Tsukanov who was born in Kaliningrad oblast and has been emotionally bonded to the territory.

Although the protests helped the citizens to reach their main goal to dismiss the Moscow-oriented governor, Mr. Boos, such movement as the Polish Solidarity had not emerged in the

region and mainly not organized across the whole nation. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012) Notwithstanding the promise of a consultation forum came to public on 12th March there was another nation-wide demonstration on 20th March which was focused on demanding the resign of Georgiy Boos, as his resign was not sure that time. The attendants smashed tangerines (tangerine was the nickname of Mr. Boos) whereby they would have liked citing the memories of the orange revolution in Ukraine. The real political content of citizens' disappointment was the fact that their opinion, expressed in votes, had been disregarded by the forming of government, but the elections were restored only in 2012. Opposition leaders tried to use the revolutionary moods to realize other political aims regarding to the question of autonomy but as I mentioned it had not got such strong social background than the basic claim of Boos's disposal. People were satisfied with the denounce of Boos and the protest waves had been slowly smoothed down. Although the March protest was a nation-wide action with the attendance of 20,000 people in 50 towns across all Russia, it attracted just 2,000 people in Kaliningrad (despite of the restraint of authority). According to a Polish study citizens in Kaliningrad, who share separatist views, became more moderate in their imaginations and attempt to reach the lower level of autonomy regarding to Kaliningrad. It could be the answer for my second question. Though the fear can balk activism, people are mostly not as radical as the BRP is. The majority of Kaliningraders defines the concept of separatism on one hand as the efforts to convince the federal government of changing its regional policy through the reducing of centralization process and the calculating on regional interests by decision making. (The most radicals are lobbying for becoming a detached federal district.) Despite of that, the state-owned NTV, which is the communication platform of United Russia, presented a film in November 2012 on the basis of that they accused Sergei Udaltsov (one of Putin's main opposites) and Givi Targamadze (member of Georgian Parliament) of planning the secession of Kaliningrad. There is a running investigation in this case although these two men's connection to Kaliningrad has not been cleared. Independently from results the randomize charging of these people by the NTV could raise doubts regarding to the grounding of this inquiry. On the other hand Kaliningraders' main will is to get green light from Moscow for strengthening the relations with the EU. (Martin, 2011; Voloshin, 2012; Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Kaliningrad-EU-Moscow. A magic triangle

Moscow's top priority is to dominate Kaliningrad's foreign relations, set back the dialogue and connections between Kaliningrad and the EU and generally use the region to exert a pressure on the European Union. Before Lithuania and Poland joined the European Union they imposed visa restrictions which were harmful not only for the citizens of the region but also for Russia. Kaliningraders' life seemed to become corresponding to prisoners' as they did not have the chance to travel to other parts of their homeland or abroad just on strict conditions. Shortly after this decision Moscow began to lobby for the weakening of visa rules by the two Baltic countries which led to the receiver of special bilateral contracts in this topic. Polish and Lithuanian intentions to become a part of the Schengen zone refreshed these problems a couple of years ago. The citizens placed pickets around the consulates of Schengen countries in Kaliningrad and around the European Parliament and the European Commission in Brussels to draw attention for the case of Kaliningrad. The present governor of Kaliningrad oblast – considering the views of the Russian Federation and mainly the will of Kaliningraders – suggested recognizing Kaliningrad as a “pilot region”. The substance of this approach to allow the visa-free travel to the EU for the inhabitants of the region in first step but in second this agreement would have been expanded to whole Russia. The Kremlin refused to think of this recommendation and started to negotiate with Poland and Lithuania about the construction of a local border traffic system pursuant to that Kaliningraders could have been enabled to pass the Schengen borders on mutually regulated conditions but could have travelled only into these two countries. The provisions of Schengen treaty grant permission for border crossing on both sides only in the frontier area, which legally takes 30, maximum 50 kilometres from the state borders. Russia tried to convince Poland and Lithuania to spread out the effect of the agreement for the whole Kaliningrad region, which was rejected by the Lithuanians but was welcomed by the Polish partner. So Russia and Poland signed the agreement in December 2011 after they had got the contribution of Brussels and it was come into effect last year. What was the motivation of Russia to work out such a document? Perhaps Moscow intended to use these visa facilitations for getting other privileges from the EU which could be verified if we take into account that during the negotiating period Vladimir Putin raised doubts about the proclaiming of the agreement in Kaliningrad as he found it inadmissible to ensure visa facilities for only one region of the Russian Federation and now we can realize the fact that the implementing of the agreement is being protracted. The central government has already caused serious delays in many EU projects which would

have affected Kaliningrad. One example is the Cross Border Cooperation project about the development of civic relations and the infrastructure of the frontier regions between the participant actors – Poland, Lithuania and Kaliningrad. Moscow had only an observer status in the meetings which were about the cooperation's content, but once the Kremlin offered financial support in return for the right to intervene into the decision-making and budgetary questions. After it was accepted by the EU, Russia bonded the promised allocation to the fulfilment of its assertion to define the kinds and the order of programs – which would be financed from the contribution – by the participants. As the mentioned themes have not been disputed in the frame of the CBC since 2010, the project is near to going smash without any results. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

The EU does not look at Kaliningrad as an independent actor of the international relations, only as an opportunity to intensify its relations with the Russian Federation as a whole. Although the EU would not like to hurt the territorial integrity of Russia, it should keep in contact with an entity which is embedded among two EU member states. Brussels used to provide financial support to Kaliningrad from the common budget to avoid the existing of a slums inside the EU's territory which could have been the resource of organized crime and spreader of epidemics or deathly diseases. Therefore the most important aim is to help the bringing up of the region's living standards onto the European level. Some of the EU member states do like preserving the ecosystem of the Baltic sea regarding not only to the green values but also to the economic benefits of the fishing – in the area of profit making and employment. So Sweden is the most enthusiastic supporter of ecological investments in Kaliningrad region. In the economic sphere the region could be interesting for the EU only from the aspect of export incomes as Kaliningrad is the main receiver of the EU's Russian export. Depending on the composition of Kaliningrad's government the region itself maintain more or less strong relations with the neighbouring EU member states. Georgiy Boos never took an official visit in Lithuania or Poland as the governor of Kaliningrad so the region's relations had become cold with these two countries. It has been significantly changed by the inauguration of Nikolay Tsukanov. Germany attempts to take care of the close contact with Kaliningrad because of its German roots. There are lots of German foundations for the financing of the restoration of historical buildings in the region and civic associations to help the former inhabitants of Kaliningrad to keep in touch with their relatives. (Rogoza, Wierzbowska-Miazga, Wisniewska, 2012)

Kaliningrad could have an in-between position in this situation. First of all the region is interested to enjoy the economic benefits of Moscow's subsidies and investments, but is also interested in getting closer to Europe. I think the most profitable politics in the case of Kaliningrad – which should be favoured by the regional elites – is to help balancing these two seemingly antagonistic points of view and urge the parts (Russia and the EU) to do what is the best for Kaliningrad as it is a common interest.

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Russian influence on contemporary international law: frozen conflicts in Eastern Europe

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Abstract: The effects of the Cold War division of Europe had a powerful impact on diverse foreign policies vis à vis ethnic minority rights and conceptions of international law. European integration in the Western part of the continent has been providing an environment in which distinct kin-state policies emerged. No such practice existed behind the Iron Curtain. This paper suggests that realistic approach in international relations and international recognition of self-proclaimed entities could have an impact on the future prospects of international law.

Keywords: kin-state, host country, frozen conflicts, uti possidetis, international law

The so-called frozen conflicts are still-present legacies of Europe which had been divided during the Cold War.¹ After the dissolution of the Soviet Union – in a transformed international security situation – the former administrative entities of the empire partly became independent republics while the others hoped for reformed political status recognised by the international community which respects self-determination. Nevertheless the power vacuum in the peripheral regions of the former Soviet Union has opened the way to ethnic conflicts in Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan in the beginning of the 1990s which have not reached a standstill since then.

¹ “Frozen conflict” is the most commonly used term besides “post-Soviet conflict” in the academic literature.

This paper primarily aims at finding an answer whether the international community's attitude towards the separatist regions² in the aforementioned countries and the *de facto* independent states³ can initiate a tendency which later indicates changes in the international law as well. Another major focus of this paper is the adaptation of those *kin-state* and *host country* relations in the interstate relations in East Europe which have been developed over several decades in the western part of the continent. In this context, the paper analyses whether the application of these political solutions can bring any change regarding frozen conflicts.

Introduction

The division of Europe in the bipolar system brought dissonant political culture, legal, economic and social environment during the Cold War. These differences seemed to be balancing out after the disintegration of the Socialist Bloc and the spread of Western values, legal, economic and societal models in Eastern Europe twenty years following the political transitions. This process was, however, influenced by a few specificities which exclusively occur in this region. These factors are: the “lateness” in society development compared to the European “centre”, the slow dynamics of this process and the ways of formation of ethnic minority groups. In Eastern Europe and the Balkans new ethnic regions emerged due to the international legal customs regarding the status of new entities after the dissolution of empires. This principle is the *uti possidetis*, according to which the administrative boundaries of a former empire became the borders of newly established states. Those countries which situated on the western side of the Iron Curtain only faced this problem indirectly or during the decolonisation. Nevertheless, a political system was forming in the West, in which human rights, minority rights as well as the success of democratic and economic development extend to all citizens. Such political environment could not emerge in socialist countries because the right for self-determination and de-emphasise of the identity of diverse ethnic groups by the communist authorities meant discrimination and exclusion in practice. As a result, small ethnic groups which are supported by a *kin-state* having efficient *kin-state policy* and living in

² The term “separatist” follows the viewpoint of the states became independent in 1999. The term “entity” and synonymous expressions are referring to the *de facto* states which became independent from the former Soviet republics.

³ Their official names declared by the governments of the entities are: Republic of Abkhazia (*Aphsny Axwynthqarra*), Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic (often referred as Transnistria, *Republica Moldovenească Nistreană*), Republic of South Ossetia (*Respublikæ Xussar Iryston*) and Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (*Lernayin Gharabaghi Hanrapetut'yun*).

the former Soviet Union had the aim of emigration rather than integration.⁴ (Wolff, 2009) Soon after new states emerged in an unstable security situation the larger and more organised ethnic groups became actors of clashes in which old conflicts were replaced by new realities.

Kin-state and host country policies

Most of the post-Soviet countries are multi-ethnic states having numerous ethnic regions due to their artificially created borders. These newly independent states broke with Soviet minority policy approaches soon after the transition and initiated long-time developed European liberal methods of minority protection. That change of philosophy also matched in the unifying process of international law in the field of minority protection. Kin-state policies in Europe had longer history regarding legislation and law enforcement and the neighbouring states could show more results in mutually recognising minority groups.

The international system based on the primacy of human rights and liberal principles is generally powered by those international organisations (UN, EU, OSCE, CoE) which unconditionally support post-communist countries in forming the legal frameworks of Western-style minority protection. According to the approaches of these organisations, the interstate conflicts are the results of unresolved intra-state conflicts. That is why it is necessary to make new regulations concerning the forms of autonomy because of the territorial changes in the 1990s, the change in the notion of nation state, the development of democracy and international law as well as the dichotomy of indivisibility of states and the principles of identity.

Those kin-state policies which are in accordance with the aims of minorities living abroad generally have three levels. Firstly, the policies made by the international organisations and mechanisms are realised through multilateral actions.⁵ Secondly, another segment of cross-border minority protection is the bilateral actions.⁶ The third level is the domestic regulations concerning kin minorities living abroad.⁷ (Kardos, 2006) All the relevant international documents and agreements emphasise the limits of extraterritorial law enforcement, the

⁴ Such ethnic groups were the Germans and Jews. It was also an official foreign policy priority of Germany to facilitate the return of Germans from the former Soviet Union to their homeland. (WOLFF, 2009)

⁵ In multilateral actions kin-states allow the international organisation system to enforce human rights. In some cases these states can achieve some foreign policy aims through the above mentioned actions. It proves to be an efficient tool because international organisations react and to channel problems at the same time.

⁶ These are co-operations with host countries and foreign policy actions.

⁷ These unilateral actions can be realised through constitutional actions (generally initiated by the government) or political manifestations (with the backing of a wider parliamentary support).

primacy of the host country's role, sovereignty and the prohibition of violating territorial integrity. Thus, they overall indicate new solutions which can be acceptable for all member states. Therefore a bigger political space can be formed based on a mutually recognised system of standards.

Realist foreign policies

Those countries which do not or just partially included in the activities of the above mentioned international organisations have realist approaches towards ethnic and national minorities, therefore they apply such policies which resembles to the relations of strong and weak countries in international political affairs. Russia can be described as such country for which *realpolitik* can overwrite the margins of its international commitments because of its role in world politics⁸ and the foreign policy which reflects to the role that Russia plays globally. At this point a question arises as in what extent Russia could realise the above mentioned policies which have also been applied by its western neighbours. Furthermore, in this context, what factors determine the relations of the traditional Russian foreign policy and Moscow's kin-state policy? The answer is given by the political practice which perpetuates the tsarist imperial and Soviet foreign policy traditions as well as the Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation created in 2008.⁹ The latter document contained three principles regarding the frameworks of Russian diaspora policy and foreign policy strategy. These prevail within the framework of international law: good faith (*bona fide*) based on the primacy of international law, mutual and balanced cooperation¹⁰, and protection of interests.¹¹ The aims of the Concept have dual purpose regarding "Russian communities and countries where Russian compatriots reside": preserving the identity and traditions of the Russian people on the one hand, and ensuring close relations with Russia in the field of culture, education, communication and other humanitarian areas. The definition of Russian

⁸ Politically stable and strong economic powers usually influencing international relations by taking account of the norms of international law while so-called failed states generally positions themselves outside of this system.

⁹ Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation. 11 July 2008. [online] Available at: <<http://www.mid.ru/bdcomp/ns-osndoc.nsf/osndd%21OpenView&Start=1&Count=30&Expand=2#2>> (in Russian, English, French and German).

¹⁰ Establishment of good neighbour relations and cooperation with other states and international organisations.

¹¹ Protecting the rights of the Russian citizens permanently living abroad and supporting the rights (in the fields of culture, language, education and communication) of Russian-speaking communities living in foreign states.

compatriots was clarified¹² in 2011; consequently nowadays those people can be included in this category, which live outside Russia and declare their emotional and cultural ties with Russia freely. This determination has replaced the previous broader concept.¹³ Therefore, the declarations of the 1990s lost their meanings and the belonging to Russian compatriots is now based on self-identification instead of the adherence to the principles of state-centred political geography. Those who want to be or remain Russian nowadays have to make commitment of being related to Russia. (Gémesi, 2011)

The principle of cooperation which appears in the foreign policy Concept is manifested in the subsidies for promoting linguistic and cultural identity as well as in the “reciprocity”: the active support from the diaspora communities towards the kin-state. Russia is “protecting rights and legitimate interests of compatriots living abroad on the basis of international law and treaties concluded by the Russian Federation.” (Concept, 2008) According to these Moscow declared to choose cooperative policies rather than conflicts in the practice of minority rights enforcement. However it does not mean that Russia would give up the representation of the interests of Russians living abroad. As Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated¹⁴ “no violation of law will be overlooked by Moscow” and his government will assist Russians living abroad to protect their rights using wide range of diplomatic tools.

This implies that codification regarding kin-state policy – in theoretical sphere – follows the European trends presented here. The foreign policy Concept and diaspora policies are, however, linked. The reason of that in particular is the mass passport issue which had played a major role in three out of four frozen conflicts. (Roudik, 2008) As a result, 90% of the population of Abkhazia and South Ossetia owns Russian passport, that is, the most basic guarantee of the link with Russia and the Russian culture. (Popescu, 2006) In Transnistria 30% of the population has this type of document. (BakuToday, 2011)

¹² Executive order of the President of the Russian Federation on establishing a foundation for supporting and protecting the rights of compatriots living abroad (25 May 2011) and Federal Target Programme “Russian Language” in 2011–2015 (published on 20 June 2011).

¹³ The Russian Federal Assembly adopted the Act on the state policy on compatriots abroad in 1999. The Act was amended in 9 July 2010 by the State Duma. It was confirmed by the Federation Council on 14 July 2010 and proclaimed by the President on 23 July.

¹⁴ Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* in the issue of 30 October 2008.

Besides the actions applied in international practice (e.g. dual citizenship)¹⁵ Russia has taken many foreign policy steps which undermined the authority of the *ius cogens* rules of the international law. First it manifested through the financial, political and diplomatic assistance for the separatist regions resulting Russia became the most influential supporter of these entities. Subsequently an institutional outsourcing began in the quasi-states, primarily integrating the management of defence and security sector into Russian governmental bodies. Beyond this point the government of the Russian Federation was not able to recognise the territorial integrity of its neighbours, thus it could not comply the customs universally accepted by the international community. As a result Russia – at the same time – became an actor and a shaper of a one-way process, which have necessarily stretched the framework of the existing system. In this sense the Russian recognition of the separatist entities was only a reasonable step during the process.¹⁶ However accepting the legitimacy of this practice will question the general viewpoint according to which Russia's interest is to maintain the *status quo* regarding the frozen conflicts in the Black Sea region. In summary, the recognition by Russia promoted a series of events which is likely to result unconventional legal resolution of the conflicts on the long term.

Political pressure by Soviet successor countries and cooperation of quasi-states

The migration of Russian nationals to Russia from most of the former Soviet republics has basically ended in the 2000s resulting more homogeneous ethnic composition in the successor states. (Simon, 2011) Parallel to the depletion of diaspora migration, Russian influence has decreased within the Community of Independent States. Moscow also could less and less rely on Russian identity through the interventions in post-Soviet conflicts. The looser ties between Moscow's government and the successor states as well as the creation of democratic institutional systems would enable to adapt Western-style minority protection policies by peaceful means. The main obstacle was that the entities – which declared their independence unilaterally – made impossible any cooperation based on autonomous partnership because of

¹⁵ Russia accepts dual citizenship only in the case of those countries which formerly Moscow agreed with beforehand. The simplified Russian citizenship act in 2002 and the legislation of the separatist republics made mass passport issues possible without the consent of the host countries.

¹⁶ Russia recognised the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia as sovereign states on 26 August 2008.

creating sovereign institutions.¹⁷ Parallel to this, international cooperation based on economic ties gained more ground in the successor states' foreign policies than traditional geopolitical concepts based on bilateral agreements. (Kagan, 2008) As a result of these, democratic solutions of minority protection have failed in the new states. Furthermore, the political concept described above is not in line with Russian foreign policy pursuits which only recognise government involvement.

As the Russian political and financial support to the seceding entities was considerable while Western type of democratic institutions were not efficient enough and the dynamics of international integration has slowed down, the kin-states recognised that they cannot assert their interests solely. That is why those countries saw the alternative of strategic liberalism in some form of international cooperation. They established an international organisation for this purpose under the name of Organization for Democracy and Economic Development,¹⁸ (Russian: *Организация за демократию и экономическое развитие, GUAM*) however it could not display any outcome except for the manifestation of shared interests. A proposal by Ukraine – also backed by Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan – for resolving the frozen conflicts was refused by Russia in 2006. This step by Moscow and its allies promoted the institutionalisation of existing international peacekeeping practices as well as negotiation terms and conditions regarding secessionist regions. (Socor, 2006) The seceding entities are influenced by Moscow; therefore the international cooperation initiated by the successor states cannot reach its goal if the intentions of Russia and the quasi-states prevail. The Russian pursuit is effective: a Russian supported international organisation came into view that has opposite aims to GUAM. The secessionist regions of the Black Sea region – similarly to the states they seceded from – have also established their own international organisation. The foundation of a new organisation does not mean that less significant subjects of international relations can influence and formulate international law. However, despite the fact of being quasi-states, their cooperation, the support of a regional power and the inability of any other states to face the phenomenon indicates that they be also determinants in international relations. The Community for Democracy and Rights of Nations (Russian:

¹⁷ The intention of the Moldovan government was indicated by the autonomy granted to Gagauz people. Although South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Karabakh still could have opted for the former level of autonomy if they had made their secession null and void.

¹⁸ Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova made a joint statement declaring their willingness to establish a union based on shared interests. The member states aimed at making active and independent foreign policy; following Western/Atlanticist orientations and values as well as expressing their opinion together in order to contribute to preserve European stability and security. (Simó, 2009)

Сообщество за демократию и права народов) was established in 2001.¹⁹ It aims at expressing the interests of unrecognised states, resolving of conflicts by peaceful means and gaining international guarantees for final political resolution of the conflict.

The political constellation could emerge because of the common ground of the four entities' cooperation. The most important among these criteria is that all regions declared their independence during a war after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. These quasi-states all share the Soviet political legacy and bear the regional influence of Moscow (or Armenia in the case of Karabakh). However the indirectly supported separatist movements are found in the intersection of various regional and international interests. (Morar, 2010) In addition, the apparent ethnic diversity fosters such actions which indicate political thought based on nationalist rhetoric and civilizational sense of mission. Due to these characteristics the foremost common aim of the four *de facto* states was to reach some level of international recognition. Thus, in order to become recognised entities of international relations in any form, they agreed on – with the exception of Karabakh – the abolition of the visa regime among the members of their alliance in 2009. Nonetheless in order to act as sovereign in the international political system it is necessary to have the capacity to freely engage in foreign relations, which is considered to be one of the criteria of statehood.²⁰ To achieve this, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh mutually recognised each other's sovereignty on 17 November 2006. Factual and legally relevant recognition can be achieved, however, by having the consent of the member states of the United Nations. In the case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia the first such declaration was the executive order of the President of the Russian Federation on 26 August 2008. It was followed by a recognition by Nicaragua on 5 September. In the end of the year Venezuela and Nauru have also established official diplomatic relations with the governments of the two entities seceded from Georgia. During 2011 two further Pacific microstates – Vanuatu and Tuvalu – recognised them as

¹⁹ The members of the Community for Democracy and Rights of Nations are Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh. All of the member quasi-states have limited recognition from the international community.

²⁰ According to the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, (26 December 1933) – which is generally regarded as reflective of customary international law – four separate criteria have to be satisfied before the recognition of an entity as an independent sovereign state can be considered: (1) the entity must exercise effective and independent governmental control; (2) the entity must possess a defined territory over which it exercises such control; (3) the entity must have the capacity to freely engage in foreign relations, and (4) there must be effective and independent governmental control over a permanent population.

independent. Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria is only recognised *de facto* by Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Those regions which opt for political secession will hope for wider international recognition in the future. Hence the secessionist regions and the states they seceded will communicate all opinion and point of views concerning state recognition – towards both domestic and international public – in a way that meets its own interests.

Conclusion

The Republic of Abkhazia declared its independence in August 1990 after Georgia annulled its laws and international treaties signed in the Soviet era. The Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic also seceded from the Soviet Union in September 1990. The Republic of South Ossetia declared its independence in November 1991, while Nagorno-Karabakh Republic became sovereign in January 1992 seceding from Azerbaijan. The unilateral declarations and the reactions of the central governments led to long-lasting armed conflicts in each case, which Russia could not avoid to be part of due to its relation with Russian cross-border ethnic communities and its foreign policy traditions.

Moscow could enforce its policy in Russian spheres of influence by military presence. However, Russian influence is now challenged by new international actors within the so-called Russian near abroad.²¹ After the dissolution of the Soviet empire the legal successor Russia lost its military and economic power (*hard power*) significantly. While the country's cultural and ideological attraction (*soft power*) was not considerable for those non-Russian ethnic groups living in the frontiers even before the break-up of the Soviet Union. In such international environment the United States could become a dominant actor of world politics which was able to largely extend the impact of its political culture in the region alone or along with its European allies. Russia recognised that – parallel to a strengthening economy and international reputation – *hard power* can make its ideology or *soft power* successful and feasible, however Russia also need to reconsider its foreign policy concept. Besides that Russia experienced the changing nature of international reality, an internal transition and transformed perception about its role in international relations. These all resulted in a more dynamic and active engagement which ultimately affected the existing international legal system through international relations.

²¹ Russian: ближнее зарубежье, *blizhneye zarubezhye*.

Besides the effects of Russian engagement in international relations, the second important finding of this study is that the conflicts in the Black Sea region cannot be resolved by the previously used means in the future. Neither Western type of minority protection, nor the tools of international pressure were efficient. As a consequence, such conditions emerged in which new states will be capable to act as determinants of international relations. This phenomenon could have an effect on interstate relations, hence – indirectly – the changes in international law as well. As the politico-geographic changes in Eastern Europe made their affect through forming international political reality, an objective observation of the long-term changes of general principles can be done by taking into account the real dynamics of international relations.

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