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"The Kaliningrad issue" in relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union: perspective of foreign researchers 1992-2015

In the Russian-European relations, the Kaliningrad issue, perhaps, has always remained the subject of close attention. From the Russian perspective, the Kaliningrad problem was traditionally been seen from the point of view of the capital: for Moscow, the isolation of the Kaliningrad region was the reason for visa disputes with the Baltic countries, transport and energy transit on the one hand, and cultural and economic distances on the other hand. For Brussels and the national capitals, Kaliningrad was often perceived as a negative center of influence, made its way into the heart of Central Europe. Here they talk about the excessive militarization of the region, the cultural and political influence of the Russian exclave. Positive opportunities in the development of Kaliningrad are usually noted by both sides of discourse. So they say about the special role of the region in economic relations. Semi-Russian and slightly European Kaliningrad can be an object of mutual investment, a logistical hub and a center of technological competence, a kind of transitional Hong Kong in the Baltic, but only with the express desire of Moscow to realize such a future for a distant and slightly detached from central Russia.

In the period after the collapse of the USSR, Kaliningrad retains a special relationship. Various authors, predominantly Lithuanian and Polish (Braithwaite R., Fairlie L., Kober S., Godzimirski J., Oldber I., Joenniemi P.), write that the new Kaliningrad retained the features of Soviet Kaliningrad: it remains the most cosmopolitan, its customs and economy tend to the most liberal standards, and the regional administration has seen all the opportunities for the survival and successful development of the region in cooperation with its neighbors: Warsaw, Vilnius and Berlin throughout the 1990s. It should be noted that it was this cooperation that gave its results and, as a consequence, the region's economy more successfully than other regions of Russia recovered by the beginning of V.Putin's presidency. This will form the basis of excessive regionalization of Russia's policy, for which later foreign authors will reproach Russia.

Toward the end of the 1990s, with the expansion of NATO, the prospects for the EU enlargement, the arrival of the Schengen values, the topic of finding a solution for continuing cooperation with the inevitable abolition of visa-free transit appears in the discussion of foreign authors. In a number of papers we find references to the possibilities of the Northern Dimension as a resource for overcoming barriers to the continuation of interaction. At the same time, in the late 1990s a number of authors (Knudsen O., Forsberg R., Bailes A., Sakwa R.) began to talk again about the potential inconveniences associated with excessive militarization of the region. Including in this regard Kaliningrad as a "captive island" is spoken by Rogoża J., Weirzbowska-Miazga A., Wisniewska I. However, in the 2000s the Russian Federation was changing its internal policy and the development of Kaliningrad was beginning to be more coordinated with the federal center . A departure from the actively recognized integration model of future development and the involvement of Kaliningrad in the economy, but primarily in politics, the rest of Russia provokes many authors to criticize the Russian approach. For them, from the European periphery, Kaliningrad grows into the periphery of Russia, whose problems Moscow pushes into the background. As a result, in the middle of 2000 we find some polemical materials in the foreign literature about the problem of drug trafficking and the problem of trafficking in people through the

Kaliningrad region (Stone J., Stone A., Jonsson A., Gutauskas A.). The term "hell-hole" describes this region of Archer C. and Etzold T., implying that the region after the Kremlin's intervention is a place full of crime, disease and unemployment that could only "infect" neighbors.

Petterman S., Matagne G., Smith D., Vittanik B., Usakas V. find cooperation in the humanitarian and cultural spheres in the 2000s, the ideas of the cultural and educational potential and achieved leadership of Kaliningrad for the cities of the region and neighboring states are heard here.

Finally, the reform of Russia's domestic policy, the involvement of the federal center in the work of the region and, as a consequence, the reduction of Kaliningrad's participation as an independent actor in the affairs of the Baltic region, is reflected in the whole cycle of works by researchers of the year 2000. And here there are positive assessments of this participation of Moscow - Huisman S., Gromadzki G., A. Wilk, Gourova S., Dolan A., and negative and neutral Dewar S., Gowan D., Baxendale J., Hall B. The authors point out that the Northern Dimension projects on the one hand brought Kaliningrad closer to the EU, but, on the other hand, alienated it from Russia, which provoked Moscow's zealous attitude and the designation of the region as "a Russian exclave and a European enclave". Of the main problems identified in this period, the authors especially note four main aspects - visa, transit, energy supply and fisheries.

The foreign researchers evaluate the modernity of Kaliningrad through the prism of economic and political upheavals. On the one hand, Kronenfeld T., Oldberg I. indicate the complexity of Kaliningrad after Russia's accession to the WTO; on the other hand, Russia's sanctions policy will most likely hit Kaliningrad, as a region dependent on imports from the EU countries, and precisely because of the proximity of German roots (Gänzle S., Müntel G.) or the proximity of relations with Poland (Palmowski T., Rogoża J.) it is possible to rely on a return to investment from Germany and Poland, respectively. The resources of the European integration projects, incl. The Northern Dimension is largely at an end amid the deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia on the one hand and due to the failure to meet the requirements for co-financing projects on the other (Rogoża J., Wierzbowska-Miazga A., Wiśniewska I.).

Finally, today's attitude towards the militarization of the region is found in Oldber I., Archer C., Etzold T. In their studies, there is clearly a concern about the deployment of Iskander missile systems, the strengthening of the naval base and other elements of strengthening the military presence in the region.

Many authors simply do not see an obvious solution for the situation, noting that the situation should be given time on the one hand and development of cooperation on neutral issues (ecology, fighting technogenic accidents, etc.) at the regional level. Exotic concepts are reduced to the fact that the preservation of the situation can lead to the creation of an entirely new identity in Kaliningrad, which can not be attributed to either Russian or European.