

## Final Report

Name and citizenship of grant holder: **Serguei Matiounine, Belarus**  
 Affiliation: **Institute of East-Central Europe, Lublin, Poland**

Title of the project: **Geopolitical Analysis of the Former Soviet and Current Russian Strategic Conceptions**

Reporting time: August 1996 - June 1998

---

### 1. An account of research activities:

#### *a) Conferences, seminars, meetings*

Conference „The Future of East-Central Europe”, Lublin 1996, paper presented: „The Russian Historical and Political Thought Towards the Conception of the East-Central Europe”.

Conference „The European Iconographies” organised by Commission of Political Geography of the French National Committee of Geography and Commission of the World Political Map of the International Geographical Union, Sorbonne, Paris, October 1996. Paper presented: „The New State Flags as the Iconographic Symbols of the Post Soviet Space”.

Annual conference of the AAASS in Seattle, USA. The paper presented: „Eastern Trans-Border Euro-Regions of Poland as a Part of Integration and Disintegration in East-Central Europe and Former Soviet Union”.

Second International Geo-Political Research Colloquium on Euro-Atlantic Security, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, 6-10 may 1998, Garmisch, Germany. Paper presented: „The Invisible Borders of East-Central Europe”.

Conference „Global Challenges. New Types of Security Risks”. Hungary, 24-27 June 1998. Paper presented: „East-Central Europe and Russian Security Conceptions”.

I have an agreement with prof. W. Rozkowski, director of the Institute of Political Studies in Warsaw about the paper on the traditional Institute annual meeting in Fall 1998. The paper title will be the same as the project title: Geopolitical Analysis of the Former Soviet and Current Russian Strategic Conceptions.

I got an invitation from the Professor Antony Z. Kruszewski from the University of Texas in El Paso to visit the USA with the presentations at the American Universities. The title of presentation will be „Geopolitical issues of modern Russia”. The trip will include participation at the Annual Conference of the AAASS at Boca Raton, Florida 24-27 September 1998; 28-29 September presentation at the Florida State University in Tallahassee; 30 September - 01 October 1998, University of New Orleans; 2-3 October 1998, Rice University in Houston, 4-5 October, North Texas State University, in Dallas; 6-8 October University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso; 9-10 October University of California and Los Angeles, Los Angeles; 11-13 October

1998, Chicago; 14-15 October, Yale University; 16-17 City College of New York, and Rutgers University.

*b) Study trips*

**Abroad**

February 21 - March 1, 1997 - Sankt-Peterburg, Russia

a) Visits to the state institutions and research centres, dealing with the strategic problems of the modern Russian society. In the field of the project Sankt-Petersburg is important first of all as a center of various fundamental researches in the field of economy, demography, political and military geography. Getting substantial material from the state administration of the Peterburg. Establishing further contacts with the researchers in the field of strategic and political studies. These interviews also led to my much better understanding of the structure and the decision making process in the field of the strategy of future state development. The interview with prof. S.Lavrov, member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1989-1991, and later the deputy of Russian Duma, Chairman of the Committee of National Relations. Interview with M.Amosov, member of the Sankt-Peterburg administration, engaged into the strategic problems of the northern part of Russia. Interview with N.Miezhewich, who is the Chairman of the Peterburg State Committee on Migration, and Russian representative in the Estonian-Russian boundary negotiations.

b) Interview with the representatives of the Peterburg research centers working in the field of strategic studies (prof. O.P. Litowka, director of the Institute of the Social and Economic Problems, Dr V.Lavrukhin, a specialist in the field of political geography at the State University of Sankt-Peterburg, prof. N.Kaledin from the same department of the University, prof. V.Suchorukov, a specialist in the field of political geography at the Petersburg High Military School of the Air Force).

c) Work at the Saltykov-Shedrin State Library, at the Library of the Russian Academy of Science, at the Library of the State University. The main task of my work was to gather all the possible materials about the general geopolitical conceptions of future development of Russia. At the same time I was interested in renewing my knowledge about general tendencies of the former Soviet Union.

March 1 - 8, 1997, Moscow, Russia

a) Meeting with researchers working in the field of strategic studies. The most important of these meetings was one with prof. Aleksander A. Konovalov, director of the Center for Military Policy and System Analyses. That meeting gave me an opportunity to get some substantial materials. A meeting with prof. N.Petrov, who is the leader of a group of researchers working in the field of ethnic conflicts at the Moscow State University. I was able to discuss the modern strategic conceptions of the post-Soviet space with prof. G.Starowojtowa, who is a member of the Russian Parliament and the leader of the Democratic Party Fraction in the parliament. Especially useful to me was the possibility to look on the problem of the future Russian development from the point of view of the parliament opposition.

b) Very useful were also visits to the Russia's Institute for Strategic Studies. I discussed some aspects of my project with prof. Marina E.Kuczynska. She had a quite different point of view on the problem, but this discussion gave me additional information on the many of already existing strategic conceptions. Especially useful were my contacts with Dmitri V.Trenin program Associate at the Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace from the Carnegie Moscow Center. Prof. Trenin is a retired officer of the Soviet Army, closely linked with decision making circles, engaged into preparing a military reform in Russia.

b) Research in the State Library of Russia mainly based on the current press to get an additional information about the new emerging strategic conceptions, research in the Library of the Institute of the Social Sciences.

March 8-13, 1997 - Minsk, Belarus

a) Visit to the Institute of Strategic Studies in Minsk

My project concerns the strategic conceptions of Russia, but it was interesting for me to get some information about how do the Belorussian specialists in the field of strategic studies appreciate the Russian strategic conceptions. I got a lot of materials about Russian geostrategical aims on Belorus territory.

b) Visit to the Laboratory of Ethnic and Religious Geography at the State Pedagogical University in Minsk. Interview with Alyaxandr M. Bilyk, the chief expert in national minorities problems in the Belarus Council of Ministers about the ethnic tensions in the republic, with Mikhail A. Slemnev, former Member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Republic, Chairman of the Commission on National Policy and Relations Between Nations, now the council of Belarus Republic in Białystok (Poland) about the Polish-Belorussian modern ethnic relations and generally about the understanding of a role of Russia in that part of Europe. These interviews also led to my better understanding of the structure and the decision making process in Belarus in the field of international relations with the neighbours.

c) A lot of the meetings with the people working in the state administration and from the parliament opposition which helped me to understand perspectives of development of the Russia-Belorus Union. Gathering materials concerning the strategic interests of both sides in this union, strategic aims of the Russian-Belorussian military cooperation.

d) Researches in the National Library, in the Library of the Academy of Sciences

May 5-10, 1998 - Garmisch, Germany

a) Research work at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. I discussed my research project with many of the researchers, especially with Prof. Detlef E. Herold, who is a GeoPolitical Analyst at the Marshall Center. At the same time I had possibility to work a couple of days at the library of the Marshall Center in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, to look through the materials of the Conferencies which were held by the Marshall Center in the field of GeoPolitics and Euro-Atlantic Security.

## **In Poland**

September 04-05, 1996 - Warsaw

\*research in the National Library in Warsaw, collecting and copying text on the perspective plans of development of the former Soviet Union and modern Russian strategic conceptions

\*visit to the Center of Eastern Studies, using their computer data base especially in the field of a map presentation of modern Russian strategies.

\*interviews with prof. Henry Huttenbach, prof. Michael Rywkin and dr Jan Brenner from the American Association for the Study of National Problems of the Former Soviet Uni

\*visit to the Eastern Summer School of the Center of the Researches of the Eastern Europe and the Middle Asia at Warsaw University.

November 21 , 1996 - Warsaw

\* interview with Prof Wojciech Roszkowski, director of the Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences.

\* interview with prof. Antony Z. Kruszewski, Professor and Director of Cross-Cultural Southwest Ethnic Study Center, Department of Political Science at the University of Texas at El Paso.

\*research in the Library in Warsaw University, collecting and copying texts on the perspectives of the Russian political situation development.

November 27, 1996 - Warsaw

\* interviews with prof. Piotr Eberhardt, a well known specialist in the field of eastern studies, and prof Jan. Malicki, editor-in-chief of the Eastern Review Magazine.

\*research in the National Library in Warsaw, collecting and copying texts on the militar politics on the territory of the former Soviet Uni

December 18 , 1996 - Warsaw

\*research in the Parliamentary Library in Warsaw, collecting and copying texts on the geopolitical problems of the former Soviet Union

January 28, 1997 - Warsaw

\*research in the Parliamentary Library in Warsaw, collecting and copying texts on the geopolitical problems of the former Soviet Union

February 02, 1997 - Warsaw

\*research in the Parliamentary Library in Warsaw, collecting and copying texts on the geopolitical problems of the former Soviet Union

April 10, 1997 - Warsaw

\*meeting with a group of Moldavian researchers in the field of social sciences and discussion with them the problem of the role of Moscow in the Moldova-Transdnestrian Republic' and the Moldova-Gagauz and Moldova-Bulgarian conflicts.

\*visit to the State Committee on the cooperation with Poles Abroad. Interview with Mr. J. Bazydło about the political and social situation of Poles in Russia, perspectives of Russian society development and changes in the geopolitical situation of Poland in the light of Polish-Russian relations.

\*research in the Parliamentary Library in Warsaw, collecting and copying text on the geopolitical problems of the former Soviet Union

May 20-23, 1997 - Warsaw

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin.

Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

June 16-17, 1997

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin. Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

August 4-5, 1997

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin. Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

September 03, 1997 and 16 September 1997

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin. Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

October 22-23, 1997

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin. Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

November 12-13, 1997

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin. Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

January 12, 1998

\* research in the National Library of Poland in Warsaw, where there is a good collection of the modern Russian and former Soviet literature on the political and geopolitical issues. I had a possibility to read some of the Russian newspaper, which are not available in Lublin. Visits to the two existing in Warsaw book shops with Russian books, where I had a possibility to buy some books, necessary for the realisation of the project.

### ***c) Field research and their activities***

\*organising the monitoring over the former Soviet and modern Russian actual discussed strategic conceptions, over the changes in the geopolitical situation of Russia on the basis of the current press in the former USSR ( analyse of the articles

about the geopolitical problems from more than 70 post-Soviet newspapers and magazines).

\* study trips to Russia (Peterburg and Moscow), Belarus Republic and German as well as in Poland during which interviews with government officials, decision-makers, military officials and academic researchers were conducted

\* research at the Russian State Archives (State Archives of the Red Army, and the State Archives of the National Economy) in the field of Soviet Military strategy and its geopolitical aspects

\* collecting texts of articles and other materials and pieces of informations about the geopolitical problems of modern Russia and strategic conceptions of the state;

\* collecting texts of the government documents in the field of strategic studies

\* preparing a broad bibliography divided into two parts: theoretical aspects of the strategic conceptions and their geopolitical aspects (definition, general way of their development, the main features, difference between strategic conceptions and short-time plans, etc.) and informatory bibliography with the sources of concrete information of the available strategic conceptions;

\* preparing an academic course on geopolitical problems of the modern Russia in comparison with the former Soviet Union at the Marie Curie-Skłodowska University, Department of Political Science;

#### ***d) Publications :***

„The New State Flags as the Iconographic Symbols of the Post-Soviet Space”, to be published by the Sorbonne University in 1997 (in English).

„Do Russian want war?!” (soviet and russian military doctrines), to be published in 1997 by Eastern Review, Warsaw (in Polish).

„The Russian Historical and Political Thought Towards the Conception of the East-Central Europe”, published by Marie Curie-Skłodowska University in 1996 (in English).

„The Invisible Borders of East-Central Europe”, to be published by the Marshall Center in Garmisch, Germany during 1998.

„East-Central Europe and Russian Security Conceptions”, to be published by the Institute of Civil-Military Relations in Budapest in 1998.

„The West-Northern Region of Russia in the modern Geopolitical Conceptions” together with Dr. Christer Pursiainen from the Finnish Institute of International Affairs in Helsinki and Dr. Nikolaj Mezhevich from the Nevski Institute in Sankt-Petersburg (Russia), brochure which have to be published by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs in the end of 1998.

A book „Geopolitics of modern Russia”, which have to be published by the „Clio Publishers Ltd.” (Lublin) at the beginning of 1999.

**FINAL REPORT**

## CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	8- 13
PART I. GEOGRAPHY. TERRITORY. BOUNDARIES.	13-20
PART II. ETHNO-DEMOGRAPHY	20-32
PART III.ECONOMIC CONCEPTIONS	32-34
PART IV. CULTURE AND RELIGION	34-47
PART V. POLITICAL AND MILITARY CONCEPTIONS	47-75
CONCLUSION	75-79
NOTES	79-82
ANNEX	83-91

## INTRODUCTION

Only about ten years ago, at the end of the nineteen-eighties and beginning of the nineteen-nineties, the Soviet Union - a communist state based on totalitarian power structures - found itself facing a very difficult choice. At that time in the whole society - not only among the decision-makers, but also among the educated strata of society - it became clear that the communist ideology with a strong military state as its main element became the main obstacle block for the further development of the country. In other words, at the end of the eighties it became clear that the Soviet Union was no longer able to keep the high level of the arms race in its competition with the West. It became clear that if the USSR didn't give up withdrawal from the extremely high financing of the army it would lead to a complete economic collapse of the state. In front of such perspective the USSR had to make a very important and hard choice.

The Soviet power and partly the Soviet society itself was ready and even willing to pay a high price for inevitable changes. The first step on this way was giving up the „outer empire”, i.e. the ideological and sometimes military control over the states of East-Central Europe and allies in the Third World. It is clear now that the freedom for the states of East-Central Europe was brought from Poland by the powerful wave of

resistance against the Soviet slavery, but it has to be remembered that if it were not for a silent permission from the Kremlin, East-Central Europe would still be remaining in an unwelcome hostile political system, as it was in the cases of the earlier uprisings of Hungarians, Czechs and Poles.

When it became clear that the desintegration of the Soviet outer empire had in no way improved the falling economics of the USSR, and the wave of the aspirations for freedom had begun to rise in many republics of the Soviet Union, at the end of 1991 the Kremlin decided to dissolve the Soviet Union itself. The Russian Federal Republic was created as an independent state, other former Soviet republics also became independent states.

In 1989 and 1991, very few realised real difficulties of the transition from the communist economy and system of the post-Soviet states into the democratic and free market forms.

Seven years have passed since the collapse of the USSR. Today, the more distant the long-awaited steady economic growth seems, the wider disillusionment is spread, and more often it is asked whether the reformists too hurriedly abandoned traditional geopolitical doctrines which proved their viability for centuries. In this case it very important to compare geopolitical and geostrategical conceptions of the USSR and of modern Russia which are in the most common way described as „old traditional geopolitics” and „new geopolitics”.

x

x

x

Since the very beginning of the existence of the modern Russian state, Europe, then the whole world, has been interested to find an answer to the question: where is

Russia leading? The complicated history of the XXth century have confirmed the idea that events in Russia have a very important meaning to the fate almost of the whole world. That fact, through the centuries and decades of existence of the Russian State and later the USSR, stamped the mentality of Soviet politicians with imperial honour and a feeling of their own strength, which to the rest of the world has been an endless source of fears and hopes. Modern Russia is the main successor of the former Soviet empire. „You do not have to be frightened by Russia, you have to understand it” - said somebody in the past, suggesting that only known and understood Russia can be predictable. But how can we understand Russia when the Russians themselves have problems with that? How can we foresee the political development on the Russia's enormous territories?

The main aim of the proposed project, generally, is to answer the above question. These questions are not easy even for me - Russian by origin, grown up and educated in Russia. So, it can't be expected that the answers will be explicit and prophetic - they will be such as sources available today, the scientific research methods and my knowledge of the Russian mental, social and political realities permit *Historia magistra vita est* - as an old Latin proverb says - is a leading thought of the following project, which can be translated into the language of the modern scientific researches as a comparative analysis of the strategic conceptions of the former USSR and modern Russia, understood as an element of the long historical processes.<sup>1</sup>

An object of the geopolitical researches, when we understand geopolitics as a science about the relations and mutual dependences between the geographical situation of the state and its politics, is a social and political situation of a concrete state seen from the point of view of the geographical and temporal aspects and looking for the best possible ways of a state development, making prognoses of a

political strategy of space changes. Geopolitical analysis<sup>2</sup> and also the comparative analysis of the Soviet and Russian strategic conceptions, which is the subject of the presented research project, have to include the following factors: **geographical fact** (space localisation, natural resources); **political factor** (type of statehood, power structure, social structure, level of the civic society existence, freedom of information exchange, relations with the neighbour states, character of the state borders and the way of their functioning); **economic fact** (level of life of a society, level of industry and agriculture, transport, communication and infrastructure development mobilisation possibilities, strategic resources, economic relations with other states); **military factor** (level of development, readiness and efficiency of the strategic military forces, development of the military infrastructure, level of the military skills, level of high military education, level of skills and knowledges of officers and reserve soldiers, international agreement about limiting and reduction of weapons and international military cooperations, moratorias on testing some kinds of weapons and using new weapons and military technics, the proportion of the state economy militarisation etc.); **ecologic fact** (demographical pressure on limited natural resources, amount of the natural resources, level of pollution, situation of flora and fauna, usage of the radioactive, explosive technologies, natural catastrophies); **demographical factor** (density and structure of population, tempo of the demographical development); **cultural, religious and ethnic factors** (religious and ethnic structure of population, ethnic problems and problems of ethnic minorities, cultural traditions, interests of the ethnic representatives in the other countries, level of education, medicine, urbanisation, criminal situation, cultural and scientific contact with other states).

In the history of the Soviet science, geopolitics - in the western sense of the word, - never existed, because the Soviet authorities considered geopolitics as a collection of bourgeois doctrines and inventions of the West, used to motivate the territorial claims. The strategic conceptions of the USSR were described in the pseudoscientific works, on the main aims of the communist society going into the direction of a „bright future” for all the peoples living in that „paradise”, and widespreading the revolution to all other parts of the world.<sup>3</sup> Since the post-Soviet science is still in arrears in the field of geopolitics after the decades of the communist rule, it can be said that there are no reliable published geopolitical synthetic works, but during the last years it is impossible to say that there is a deficit of the geopolitical literature. It is even possible to speak about a specific Russian „geopolitical fashion”, with almost every known newspaper having a column entitled „geopolitics”. The leading Russian politicians publish books, which in their title usually contain some geopolitical notions.<sup>4</sup> It has to be underlined, though, that almost in all modern Russian publications the understanding of the term „geopolitics” is not clear, not concrete, and even controversial. Almost every author puts in this term everything that suits him; in the case when the authors are active politicians the term „geopolitics” must comprise anything that promotes the author’s political ideas. The term „geopolitics” in the modern Russian sense of the word describes, most of all, the Russian national interests and the place of Russia in the international politics. In Russian publications concerning geopolitics the thesis about „old” and „new” geopolitics is omnipresent. The „old geopolitics” - although such a term was not used previously - according to the Russian authors, was using the ideas of the communist superpower and its interests in the two-polar world. Sometimes the „old geopolitics” refers to the geopolitical constructions of the tsarist Russia. The „new Russian

geopolitics”, according to the opinion of the same authors, appeared after 1991 and is trying to speak in terms of the ideas of the modern non-empirical Russia and of the interests of the new post-Soviet states. The modern Russian authors underline that if the „old” geopolitics focused on such arguments as the territory etc. - the so-called material issues (population, land, natural resources etc.), the „new” Russian geopolitics pays more attention to non-material issues.

The western sources, which are very well known to the NATO experts anyway, have not been widely used in this work. Hence, the research for this project is based mostly on Soviet and Russian sources.

The basic sources for the project are materials from party and parliamen congresses of the former USSR and materials, which are included in the modern Russia’s government reports; materials of Soviet and modern Russian press; Soviet and Russian archives<sup>5</sup>; historical works about the former USSR; information about the actual situation in Russia, accessible via Internet; strategic conceptions of economic and military reforms, which were prepared and published by various political centers, many other Soviet and Russian sources, which in an indirect way describe the strategic concepts (economic, military etc.). One such example of an indirect source of information may be analysis of the former textbooks of the Soviet military highschools [Soviet military doctrine was mostly concentrated on an offensive manœuvre, and not on a defensive one].

## PART I.

### GEOGRAPHY. TERRITORY. BOUNDARIES.

The Soviet Union was the biggest state of the world. Its territory covered about 22400000 sq.km, which was one-sixth of the Earth. The USSR had easy access to 13

seas and the Pacific ocean; the USSR bordered with twelve states<sup>6</sup> among which only Iran, Norway and Turkey were the states with a political system different from the Soviet one, at the same time being the (two latter states - Norway and Turkey) members of NATO. On the west, the USSR bordered with the states dependent on it - with the exception of Romania all of them were members of the Warsaw Pact. Almost entire southern border of the Soviet Union ran through hostile mountain ranges which gave the state a natural shelter and security. The longest part of the Soviet border was the Soviet-Chinese border, where after the period of friendly relations between the Soviet state and China, the border conflicts (even military) happened rather often. The rest of the states which bordered with the Soviet state on the south were under the strong Soviet influence (Mongolia and Afganistan).

During the last ten years the whole world witnessed enormous geopolitical changes, which mostly touched Europe and Asia. Reuniting of Germany, division of Czech-Slovak Republic, collapse of Yugoslavia, returning Taiwan from Great Britain to China - all these events were extremely important for the two continents. The event which was especially important and had tremendous consequences was the collapse of the Soviet Union, which at the same time led to the revival of Russia as an independent state, and birth of some new independent states. As a result of these changes, the geopolitical picture of the world was completely changed. All these changes are shown on the maps „Geopolitical Situation of the USSR” and „Geopolitical situation of modern Russia” (See: Map No 1, and Map No 2).

As it was mentioned above, modern Russia with its territory of more than 17100000 sq.km is considered by the whole world and by itself the heiress of the former Soviet Empire. In that sense, compared to the Soviet level of possession, Russia lost its power over more than five million square kilometers and lost its

control over some of the alien states. From this point of view, the most important fact for modern Russia is the emergence of a strip of independent states between the Baltic and Black Seas. These newly independent states had thrown away the name „Eastern Europe”, under which they had been functioning since the World War II together with the European part of the USSR. To underline their many-centur history of contacts with the spiritual, material and political culture of the Western Europe, they began to call themselves „East-Central Europe”.<sup>7</sup>

As the states of the former Eastern Europe, which have always been closely linked with the West, are defined today as East-Central Europe, the former name - Eastern Europe - may be used for the region including the former Slavonic republics of the USSR and Moldova. In this case the name „Eastern Europe” can refer to the natural homeland of Russia, the historical area of its influence and interests. The idea of such Eastern Europe has very deep historical roots and may be realised now in a new form, first of all on the basis of the economic integration, what is appreciated as one of the most vital interests of modern Russia.

The emergence of the stripe of new independent states between the Baltic and the Black Sea is very important for Russia; in the territorial and psychological sense o the word it moved Russia away from the centre of Europe and pushed down to the geographical margin of the European world. It is inevitably a sign of times, because both seas (Baltic and Black) were the way of Russia’s integration with the European space, and after the collapse of the USSR went away from Russia’s influence.

From the angle of traditional geopolitics, with the collapse of the USSR in late 1980s - early 1990s, Russia lost almost all geopolitical gains in the West it had conquered since 1700s. The states of the East-Central Europe have always been perceived in the Soviet Union as a more advanced entity which requires a specia

attitude of the Soviet Empire. Contrary to what, eg. Poles, think these states were never accepted as fully reliable allies. Moreover, along with increasing economic difficulties in the USSR, the East-Central European allies were often presented to the Soviet society as a burden to the Soviet economy which had to supply them with oil and gas for artificially low prices in exchange for their loyalty and low-quality consumer goods.

In the atmosphere of disintegration of the Slavic core, which was often perceived as the Russian core, the reinstatement of the Baltic independence was accepted not as painfully as that of Poland, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Ukraine and Belarus. From the traditional geopolitical point of view, gaining independence by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania meant a break-up with another important Russian doctrine. In early 18th century Peter the Great, who is sometimes considered one of the first Russian geopoliticians, started his Westernisation policy from creating a „window into Europe” through securing unlimited access to unfrozen Baltic ports. From the times of Peter the Great up to 1914, the territory of the Russian Empire was enlarging 83 sq. km per day, or 80 000 sq. km per year. It means that the territory of the former USSR in 90% was formed not by the totalitarian communist system, but by the pre-revolutionary Russian absolute monarchy. The territory of the Russian state formed at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries was the common economic and cultural space for numerous conquered ethnoses. The value of the enormous Russian space was many times underlined by great Russian scientists such as Semionov Tian-Shanski and Lev Gumilev, and by the western famous geopoliticians as the „father” of geopolitics F. Ratcel and H. Mckinder.

In the years 1989-1991 Russia, which is politically and morally the heiress of the USSR, lost a position of the world superpower after a half of a century and now it is

facing a fact of NATO's enlargement in its direction. The differences between geopolitical situation of the USSR and modern Russia may be in the clearest way shown on a fact that some years ago the geopolitical border of the Soviet Union ran through the middle of Germany, and now it is less than 200 kilometers away from Moscow. The western border of Russia, which during more than 200 years crept to west, during only two years (1989-1991) with a very high speed moved towards east and returned to the same place where it was in the middle of XVIII century (the border between Russia and Polish State till 1772<sup>8</sup>).

As a result of the changes over western border of Russia (revival of the Baltic independent states and Ukraine) the Russian access to the Baltic and Black Seas was limited. Russia lost its dominating position in the regions of these seas. At the same time the Russian region of Kaliningrad (Königsberg) was cut from the Russian territory. For the first time in its history Russia is staying in front of quickly growing powers in the east and south of the country. On these directions Russia will have to solve two kinds of problems: internal separatism inside the Russian Federal Republic and external threat of the Islamic fundamentalism in the states bordering Russia in the south.

From the moment of the collapse of the USSR the geopolitical situation of Russia changed in the following way:

A. In comparison with the USSR Russia was pushed away to the northeastern corner of the Euro-Asian continent and was deprived of the direct contacts with Europe, Asia and Africa. The Russian access to the European seas, which Russia fought for almost during whole its history, was limited in a very big proportion.

B. The new geopolitical regions emerged between Russia and the rest of the world: western region, which lies close to the western and south-western borders of

Russia; southern region, which is spread along the southern borders of the state. In both these regions complicated desintegrational processes are taking place, which is a real threat for the Russian stability and military security.

C. The developed western states are sure that Russia still remains a military threat for the West. This fact is appreciated by Russian politicians as an emphasis on the Western victory in the Cold War.<sup>9</sup>

D. Russia, contrary to the USSR, cannot be a guarantee to the post war borders of its neighbours and allies. After the collapse of the USSR Russia itself became an object of the territorial claims almost along the whole its border.

Even a very brief analysis of the modern geopolitical situation of Russia in comparison with that of the former USSR, makes possible to declare that the modern situation is almost at catastrophe. But it is too early to talk about tragedy. Russia, which is a successor of the USSR, is going along the same way as all the former empires, as the ancient Rome, Bizantium, and in the modern times Spain, Turkey, Austria, Japan, Holland, Belgium, Great Britain, France and Portugal. The loss of the empire status leads to the fall of former superpower, which, probably, cannot be restored. These events usually lead to the long period of instability in a metropo<sup>10</sup>.

One of the most important national issues for Russia now is its territorial indivisibility. In this sense the most dangerous to Russia is separatism, which lately has changed from the political separatism into the economical separatism. In the Kremlin most of the authorities are sure, that contrary to the Soviet Union, Russian Federal Republik will not be divided into parts. This statement is not absolutely true, because centrifugal regional movements become stronger and in the nearest future may lead to the desintegraton of the Russian state.<sup>11</sup>

There are two groups of important tasks, which modern Russia is facing. The most important one is to reorganise a post-Soviet space, with respect for the newly independent states, and in such a way as to restore all the broken old links. If Russia will not do that, its close neighbours will soon become its far neighbours, and the geopolitical and geostrategical situation of Russia will become worse. Therefore, the main aim for Russia is the integrational process.<sup>12</sup>

Part of the Russian politicians believe that the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) which is dominated by Russia, and includes 12 from the 15 former Soviet republics, may become a very important geopolitical element in this region. The new name of the CIS was invented - Euroasia. The real situation on the territory of the former USSR is developing in another direction. The result of this development are at least three geopolitical regions which were formed on the ruins of the Soviet Union. These regions cooperate with each other in a limited way, but all of them have one common feature - noticeable strong domination of Russia. These regions are: Eastern Europe including Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova; Caucasus, and Central Asia. It must be underlined that Russia is surrounded by the integrational processes similar to those that were observed at the time of the USSR. These processes led to the emerging of the main part of the Commonwealth of Independent States, composed by Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The Russian politicians believe that the negative attitude of the West towards the integrational processes between the republics of the former USSR, which are the independent states now, is the mirror reflection of the Soviet authorities' attitude to the integrational processes in Western Europe. The Russians explain the necessity of this new integration by a fact that the territory of CIS belonged to the same state structures not only during last seventy years, but some centuries earlier. During the

time numerous migrations took place on that territory, which entirely changed the demographic situation. Now more than 26 million Russians live abroad of Russia. The integration of CIS doesn't mean a restoration of the USSR. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia declares that the main directions of the Russian foreign policy are: 1)the reorganisation of the CIS and 2)solving the conflict situation which emerged during this process.<sup>13</sup>

Now Russia is trying to create inside the Commonwealth of the Independent States some integrational polars - for example the union Russia-Belorus or so-called „union of the four”: Russia-Belorus-Kazachstan-Kirgiztan.<sup>14</sup> In the case of the Russia-Belorus union the main aim for Russia was to move the western border of the Russian Federation farther towards East-Central Europe, which allows elimination of Russia's isolation of Russia from Europe, if „Baltic-Black Sea Union” will come to reality.<sup>15</sup> At the same time Czeczen Republic suggested to Georgia to build a highway between Grozny and Tbilisi, which will give Czeczen an access to the Black Sea, and Georgians will get a new market for their goods. The realisation of such a plan may change a geopolitical situation on the western and southern direction of Russia in a decisive way.<sup>16</sup>

The modern borders of Russia are close to those from the year 1650. All the border changes took place over western and southern borders of the USSR-Russia. As a result of these changes between Russia and former neighbours of the USSR emerged a strip of new independent states. Together with the lost of enormous territories Russia lost its empire status. In the historical sense of the word, in the Russian geostrategy in the European direction the most important now is a line Moscow-Berlin.

## Part II

### ETHNO-DEMOGRAPHY

As a result of a collapse of the USSR, Moscow state lost about five million of square kilometers of territory and almost a half of its population. These losses are even more than the estimates of McNamara concerning the losses from the probable nuklear hit. In 1991, at the moment of the collapse of the USSR, abroad of Russian Federation lived about 25 million of Russians, which were chocked by the changes of their social status. At one moment Russians living in the non-Russian republics became not a ruling class but a national minority with no defined rights. At the same time Russia inherited from the USSR many of the ethnic minorities, between which local separatism becomes more and more popular.

The demographic problems of Russia are hidden deep in the Soviet history. As the results of all that problems Russians in the nineteen eighties composed only a little more than 50% of the population of the USSR. Taking into account the birth-rate of that time it was estimated that Russian would compose less than a half of the population before the end of the XX century. This situation was based on the fact, that during all the Soviet time the human resources of the USSR were wasted (repressions, mixed marriages of the Russian in the ethnic republics etc). The natural increase of Russian population was than lower than that of the nations of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Recently the data of the level of suicides in Russia in 1990-1997 were published. In 1990-1992 there were registered about 130000 suicides; in 1993-1996 that number was doubled. In 1997 the number of the suicides was about 5500, or 10% less than in 1996. The prognoses for 1998 are not optimistic, because the conditions of life, which are in the many cases the main reason of the suicide, are becoming worse and worse.<sup>17</sup>

The demographic indexes are giving alarm in Russia. From 1993, the number of the births is lower than the number of dead about 1 million persons. Every year losses of the population so high as if it was Home war taking place in the country. The most of the Russian families have only one child, the fertility of Russian women is about 1.8-1.4, at the time when the index of the renewing of the population is 2.15 children per one woman. According to the estimates of the demographers Russians even in Russian Federation in the half of the XXI century will constitute less than 50% of the population.. The rate of deaths of the Russian children is about 20 on 1000 of births, at the same time in the developed states this index is 8-12 to 1000 birth. The average length of life of a man in Russia is going down from the middle of the seventies and now is estimated as 57 years. Because of the high rate of the male death in Russia now there are 9 million women more than men.<sup>18</sup>

The most important and the most difficult to solve problem of the modern Russia (as well as of the whole territory of the former USSR) is the problem of the numerous ethnic conflicts. When in the late eighties the first ethnic conflicts in the USSR exploded, Michail Gorbatshev declared that the main cause of these conflicts lies in the resignation from the main principles of the Lenin's ethnic policy. So, to solve the conflicts, it is necessary to return to these principles. Soon it turned out that the father of revolution ideas are absolutely powerless in the situation of an ethnic conflict. In December 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed. At that time it appeared clearly that the peoples living in the Soviet Empire did survive as separate entities and preserved their mother languages, traditions, historic memory, attachment to their own, strictly defined piece of land and that they are full of determination to fight for their place in the new reality. They are still alive, despite of the decades of Soviet declarations that in the USSR a new social community was created - a „Sovie

people”. An extraordinarily complicated ethnic structure of the USSR’s population and a low level of the political culture of the former Soviet peoples caused that the ethnic conflicts exploded with an enormous power. They exist in various forms, from newspaper discussions to open wild wars with many thousands of casualties.<sup>19</sup>

The first bloody ethnic conflict exploded in February 1988 between Azers and Armenians in Sumgait. 32 people were killed. Since that time on the territory of the former USSR nearly 160 ethnic conflict have taken place; in 22 cases weapon were used and there were people killed.<sup>20</sup> It is estimated that in the ethnic conflicts in the former USSR in 1988-1995 at least 200 thousands people were killed. The tensions between the former USSR peoples can be seen from the public opinion polls. According to their results among the 280 million of the former Soviet Union inhabitants more than 40% are now ready to fight with weapon in hand for their ethnic rights.

„Perestrojka” in the Soviet Union, which was initiated by Michail Gorbatshev, meant a softening of a half of a century’s repressions which quickly led to the religious and ethnic awakening of the Soviet society. The „perestrojka” had begun in 1985, so it was interesting to analyse how the processes it initiated looked like ten years after the beginning. It may be supposed that all possible ethnic and religious conflicts, which existed in the former USSR showed themselves in 1988-1995. It was decided to use a territorial criterion in their analyses. With this in mind, the territory of the former Soviet Union was divided into four regions. The first region used for the analysis of the ethnic conflict is the territory of the Russian Federation. The second region is formed by the former Soviet republics on the western USSR border: Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The third region include the new independent Caucasian states: Georgia, Azerbejan and Armenia. The fourth region lies

in the Central Asia: Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghistan, Turkmenistan. The results of the research are shown on the maps.

One of the most difficult issue was to decide what definition of the ethnic conflict to choose because of their multitude. It is seen now that the definitions of an ethnic conflict are differ not only between the western researchers and the post-Soviet researchers, but also they differ in the former Soviet states, where now nearly each researcher determing the subject in his/her own way. The most important aspect of an ethnic conflict is the role of ethnic demands of the sides of the conflict. Usually it happens that there are many factors which caused a conflict: social, economic, territorial, religious etc. A proportion of ethnic elements in the conflict decide about its nature. Very close to the „pure” ethnic conflict are territorial claims, sometimes it is even impossible to divide one from other. On the basis of collected information it was constructed a scheme of each conflict analysis. The second stage was an analysis of the stage of development of every conflict. In such way I was able to propose a clasification of the ethnic conflicts. Some of them even is impossible to call conflicts. They may be determined as tensions. The lowest level of these tensions is the level where these tensions function only in an *oral* form. The next stage of the tension functioning may be called „*written*”, at this stage the anti-ethnic articles appear in the local and centrall press. The next stage begins when the anti-ethnic elements are included into the programm documents of the political parties and social ethnic movements - it can be described as a „*political*” stage. The fourth stage begins when the anti-ethnic elements apper in the officia *government* documents. The last to stages include the human casualties (only some of them when conflict has a local karakter and many of them if the ethnic conflict becomes *military* conflict). I have

begun the comparative analysis of the different types of conflicts planning to prepare a detailed characteristics of each type.

During the period of 1989-1995 there some estimates were made of the number of ethnic conflict on the former USSR territory from only some of them with human casualties up to more than hundred. On the basis of the definition I was able to make a list of all the conflicts I described.

Table 1. *The most important ethnic conflicts on the post-soviet space in 1988-1995*

<b>Nr.</b>	<b>Lokalisation of a conflict</b>	<b>Sides of a conflict</b>
1.	Sumgait	Armenians - Azers
2.	Fergan Valley	Uzbeks - Kirghizs
3.	Novy Uzien	Armenians - Azers
4.	Georgia	Georgians - Russians and between various tribes of Georgians
5.	Abchazja	Abchazs - Georgians
6.	Dushanbe	Turks(Meshetins) - Tadzhiks
7.	Tadzykistan	Various tribes of Tadzhiks
8.	Osh	Kirghizs - Russians
9.	Dubossar	Moldavs - Russians
10.	Southern Osetia	Osetins - Georgians
11.	Mountain Karabakch	Armenians - Azers
12.	Chechen Republic	Chechens - Russians
13.	Lithuania	Lithuaneans - Russians
14.	Latvia	Latvians - Russians
15.	Estoni	Estoneans - Russians
16.	Rostov Regi	Caucaseans - Cossacks
17.	Chechen -Ingush Republic	Chechens - Ingushes
18.	Nothern Osetia	Oseteans - Georgians
19.	Eastern Kazachstan	Kazakhs - Russians
20.	Lithuania	Lithuaneans - Poles
21.	Moldova	Moldaveans - Gagaus
22.	Moldova	Moldaveans - Bolgars
23.	Ukraine	Ukraineans - Russians
24.	Krasnodar Region	Russians - Greeks
25.	Krasnodar Region	Rusians - Cossacks
26.	Adygea	Adygs - Russians
27.	Cherkes Republic	Cherkes - Abazins
28.	Cherkes Republic	Cherkes - Karachaevs
29.	Kalmyk Republic	Nogajs - Russians
30.	Kabarda	Caucaseans - Cossacks
31.	Dagestan	Kumyks - Dagestans

32.	Dagestan	Avars - Dargins
33.	Azerbaijan Republic	Lezgins - Azers
34.	Chechen Republic	Chechens - Dagestans
35.	Saratov Region	Germans - Russians
36.	Tatarstan	Tatars - Russians
37.	Bashkortostan	Bashkirs - Russians
38.	Chuvashen	Chuvashs - Tatars
39.	Udmurtia	Udmurs - Russians
40.	Tuva	Tuvins - Russians
41.	Burats Republic	Burats - Russians
42.	Sacha Republic	Jakuts - Russians
43.	Adzhar Republic	Adzhars - Georgians
44.	Eastern Georgia	Avars - Georgians
45.	Azerbaijan	Kurds - Azers
46.	Azerbaijan	Talyshes - Azers
47.	Karakalpakstan	Karakalpaks - Uzbeks
48.	Uzbekistan	Uzbeks - Tadzhiks
49.	Turkmenistan	Kurds - Tadzhiks
50.	Turkmenistan	Beludges - Tadzhiks
51.	Mangyshlak	Turkmens - Kazakhs
52.	Northern Kazakhstan	Kazakhs - Russians
53.	Tuapse	Shapsugs - Russians
54.	Krimea	Tatars - Russians
55.	Tian-Shan Mountains	Tadzhiks - Kirghizs
56.	Balkarian Republic	Balkars - Kabardins
57.	Belarus	Russian - Belaruses

I had prepared a map on which all the conflicts listed in the above table are shown. At the same time, seeing the importance of territorial claims I prepared a map of that phenomenon. These both maps are enclosed (Map No 3, and Map No 4)

x

x

x

From the very beginning Russia was a multi-national state, which, as a result of its history of conquests absorbed more and more territories with various peoples living there. From that point of view the Soviet Union didn't differ greatly from the tsarist Russia. The most reliable indicator of Russian and Soviet attitude to the peoples which lived on their territories was the official number of the peoples (the

total number of all ethnic communities whose existence was accepted by the governing power and which were legalised).

At the end of the nineteenth century the tsarist official experts estimated that there were about 800 ethnic communities on the former Russia's territory. The Soviet administration declared in 1926 that in the USSR lived 194 peoples and various ethnic groups. In 1939 Stalin declared that during the process of the creation of the „Soviet people” the number of peoples and ethnic groups in the USSR grew smaller down to 60. The reduction of the official number of the peoples in the USSR had to lead to the obliteration of ethnic differences, and as a final result of the process was to appear a „new social unit” - a „Soviet people”. After Stalin's death, when the Soviet society began to breathe a little more free, the number of the peoples grew up to 109, but in 1970 again it was reduced to 104, and in 1979 to 101. The process of stagnation of the Soviet power and its way to the collapse can be seen clearly. The above differences in the number of the ethnic units was not a reflection of the real picture, but as so many things in the Soviet Empire - was planned from above and aimed into producing evidence for a Lenin-Stalin theory about the integration of small ethnic units into big ones. The dynamics of the change of the number of the peoples in the USSR shows that Stalin's ethnic policy survived its creator for many decades and was used until the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is possible to say, that even now when there is no new effective ethnic policy in the Russian Federation, many of the old methods of the communist ethnic policy are used.

Russia has a deep tradition in the field of the ethnic research, which began on a wide scale in the second half of the XIXth century. In the pre-revolutionary (before 1917) period of time many ethnographic expeditions were organised, first very detailed ethnic maps of many regions of the Russian Empire were prepared and

published, etc. The research and publications were carried on even after the difficult time of the revolution and home war till the middle thirties, when Stalin „solved” a the ethnic problems of the Soviet Union by the theory of the absolute equality of the communist society members - in the communist mono-ethnic state the research and knowledge about ethnoses were unnecessary. As a result, of that situation now there are few experts who are able to answer the questions about the size, historical rights and independence level of a given ethnic unity (ethnos, ethnic groupe etc.). At the same time, even in the conditions of the evident lack of knowledge and juridica background, new post-Soviet power structures have to decide (and do that from „above”as it was done previously) in very complicated ethnic problems. Sometimes, like in the old Soviet times, the new regional administration decide about the right o an ethnic unit to call themselves an ethnos, about their right to their land, rights, perspectives.

The communist party played the key role in the administrative structure of the Soviet Union. When that party lost its power and influence, the whole structure of the communist state crashed, and the USSR’s collapse inspired in the peoples dependent on Moscow a desire to declare their own independent state forms. As it became known from sources disclosed in the last years, when the Soviet government demarkated the borders of Soviet and authonomous republics, regions and other administrative units, no attention was paid to the historical rights of the inhabitants to their land. The only criteria in delimitating administrative borders were: easy control over the inhabitants, political priorities defined by the communist party, temporary economical conceptions, and even simply a whim of regional or central communist leader. As a result of such attitude to the administrative borders, many of the peoples on the territory of the former Soviet Union found themselves sub-divided int

different administrative units. With the collapse of the Soviet government, the administrative system also crashed and all borders lost their meaning; the peoples of the former USSR began to demand a creation of their own independent states, or sometimes, correction of the already existing borders.

The explosion and widening of the ethnic conflicts on the former USSR territories is also fed by ineffectiveness of the authorities to solve them, and at the same time, making use of the conflicts by the political elites in the new post-Soviet independent states. The mess in the ethnic issues in the former USSR is intensified also by the fact that there are numerous research centers and institutions investigating the problem, but only few are competent; moreover, the decision-makers very seldom make any use of the research. At the same time, it is worth to emphasize that there is no general conception of the regulating of ethnic conflicts on the territory of the former USSR: the Ministry of Internal Affairs has and uses its own conception, Ministry of the CIS Cooperation its own, as well as Ministry of Nationalities, President Administration, Ministry of Extraordinary situations etc.

A very important cause of the ethnic conflicts on the former USSR territory are the repressions which were used against the whole ethnoses during the years of the communist regime. One of the most cruel forms of repressions were deportations, during which millions of people, only on the basis of their belonging to an ethnic group, were entirely and quickly deported to the other parts of the Soviet Empire and settled on the land, which historically belonged to other ethnoses. Deportations entirely changed the natural ethnic geography of the USSR and from the end of the eighties lay at the root of two kinds of conflicts: 1) a conflict between a deported ethnos and the native inhabitants of the region where deportations were directed; 2) conflict between deported ethnos and the peoples which were settled on the lands o

deported peoples ( when the deported got the right to return they had found that their historical land was already taken by newcomers). In the nineties President Jeltsyn had signed some decrees about the rehabilitation of the repressed ethnoses. According to these decrees the repressed may return to their historical land. But as the decrees do not define the principles of the restoration of the former ethnographic administrative units, no one among the modern post-Soviet republics or regions is interested in giving back the land to its real owners - repressed ethnoses. The complications connected with the former Soviet deportations are an important barrier for the revival of the Soviet ethnoses and, at the same time, these complications are a real cause of many ethnic conflicts.

Regardless of the above-mentioned factors, the ethnic conflicts always explode when the new emerging republics try to become really independent from Russia - the successor of the Soviet Union. Such was the Russian-Chechen war, on whose example Russia wanted to warn away every post-Soviet ethnos from seeking real independence.

For the past years the former Soviet territory has been a place of unexpected, violent changes, going on a various scale and with different speed, but in all spheres of the social life. The first sign of the changes was the religious revival of the Soviet society which took place in the mid-eighties. As soon as it became possible, numerous churches, monasteries, mosques and synagogues, closed for decades, were reopened. People began to restore the religious communities of the old „traditional” confessions and to build the communities of new confessions previously unknown in the USSR. Naturally, there are some conflicts over the religious communities' property, about the right to be „the main” confession on a territory, conflicts with the regional churches which do not want to be under the Moscow Patriarchy. Nonetheless, it is

hard to speak about religious conflicts on the former USSR territory. Still, the religious aspect is very important in almost all ethnic conflicts (muslim Azers-Christian Armenians, Orthodox Russians-muslim Chechens etc.) Unrestricted return to the „fathers' faith” is a very important factor for every ethnos in its struggle for independence from the central (Moscow) power. Religious aspect, ethnic consciousness, deportation and other repressions, which sometimes united the peoples with the same fate, were the reasons of the survival of many ethnic groups. Among these groups there are also Cossacks. The Cossacks phenomenon completely unknown on the West, but very important for the internal situation on the former Soviet territory. The Cossacks play a very important role in the process of geopolitical changes in the relations of modern Russia with the newly independent states. The role of the Cossacks, because of the military character of this ethno-social group will be described in the part, devoted to the military aspect of the post-soviet geopolitical situation and strategic conceptions of its development

The causes of the ethnic conflicts on the former Soviet territory have to be sought first of all, in the history (deeds) of the Soviet state. The main causes of the modern ethno-political situation on the former USSR territory are: the attitude of the Soviet authorities towards the ethnic issues, shortage of the scientific research of the ethnic processes and, possibly the major thing, lack of good will of the modern Russian and other post-Soviet politicians in solving ethnic conflicts using non-military methods. The development of a conflict depends on the geographical situation of a region where the conflict is going, the level of the economic development of the region, the religious situation there, political culture of the elites, historical traditions, and the independence will of the ethnoses involved into the conflict. It can be noticed that one of the main roles in the ethnic conflicts on the former USSR territory is

played by Russia which implements an old Roman principle „divide et impera” as a method to keep control over the peoples of the former Soviet Union. It is also a result of Russia’s intentions to keep the position of a superpower in that part of the world. Without a big mistake it can be said that there is no ethnic conflict on the former Soviet territory in which, openly or not, Russia is not involved. There are no grounds to assume that the policy of the modern Russia’s policy is developing into the direction where the state will resignate from the power over the former USSR’s peoples, so it is rather obvious that the ethnic conflicts on the former Soviet territory will continue on during the nearest decades. The prognoses of the situation’s development in the area with a very complicated ethnic structure and numerous ethnic conflicts is possible only in a limited way

### Part III

#### ECONOMIC CONCEPTIONS.

It is hard to define Russian strategic conceptions in an economic field. Neither Russia, nor other post-Soviet states do not know what way to choose in their economic reforms. The situation, the direction of the development (stagnation, crisis etc.) are changing very rapidly. The only stable geopolitical elements in the whole issue of economic conception are the integration economic processes and the issue of oil. The detail analysis of these issues needs more place, and will be done in the book version of the report. Below are only some aspects linked with the strategic conceptions on the post-Soviet space.

According to the last estimates the actual National Product of Russia is about 1/3 of the National Product of the former USSR. The Russian Federal Fund for Estimates that the value of the economics of Russia is now about 320-380 trln USA

dollars worth, when 80-85% of this enormous sum compose value of the natural resources. Based on the mentioned figures the value of the state economics per one inhabitant is in Russia the highest in the world. From the point of view of the sum of the National Profit per one inhabitant, Russia places on the 76th position in the world rankings. The Federal Fund for the Reforms published data, which testify that generally economic and government reforms in Russia already were realised. As a result of the mentioned reforms 56% of the National Property are concentrated now in the hands of 1.5% of Russian citizens. 8-10% of the Russian population earn enough to spend a good life. At the same time 65% of the population lost everything they had before the reforms. The last year deficit of the Federal Budget was about 20 billion dollars, at the same time the estimates of the profits from illegal business in Russia is appreciated on about 120 billion dollars.<sup>21</sup>

In Ashgabat in January 1998 a meeting of the five Central-Asian Presidents was held, where again became clear that the former Soviet Union and modern Commonwealth of the Independent States are desintegrating in the economic sense. The Central Asian Republics „move” in the direction of their southern neighbours: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey and in the same time in the direction of the western industrial states. At the beginning of 1998 President of Turkmenistan Nijazov and the President of Turkey Chateini ceremonially opened a first gas-pipe line between Iran and Turkmenistan. The pipe, which is 200 km long, was built for 190 million dollars. This gas-pipe will transport 4 billion m<sup>3</sup> of gas per year and up to the year 2006 its capability will be doubled. In the Fall 1996 a mixed Russian-Turkmenian firm was organised, in which 51% of actions belong to the Turkmenian state gas-company, 45% possess the famous Russian firm „Gasprom” and 4% of actions are in the hands of American energetic firm ITERA.<sup>22</sup>

In 1996 emerged a new economical union signed by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova (GUAM), which as its first aim declared opposition to the Russian interests (especially economic) on the territory of the states-participants of the union.<sup>23</sup> The leader of the new union is supposed to be Ukraine, which do not hide its aspirations to play a leading role among the united in GUAM states. Together with political issues the second main important issue is oil and the ways of its transporting. During the visit of Piotr Luczinski, President of Moldova, to Azerbaijan it was decided about possibility of building of oil pipe through the territory of Moldova. Such a decision may cover all the needs of Moldova in oil. Ideal variant in this case will be to build an oil-pipe through the territory of Georgia, but Moldova has access to Black Sea itself through the Danube-river and in this place is going to build a big oil-terminal (with the financial help of the World Bank).

#### PART IV.

##### CULTURE AND RELIGION.

As it was mentioned above modern Russia, as a heiriness of the USSR, feels itself not only frustrated by the loss of the superpower position, but also has a very strong and negative feeling of the territorial, political, cultural and military isolation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Evgeny Primakov many times applied to the West not to create new divisions of Europe. Some other steps of the Russian diplomacy, as for example last negotiations with Serbia in the issue of Kosovo prove, that Russia wants to show to the Western world, that its presence in Europe is necessary, that Europe without Russia would not be able to exist, that Russians are Europeans and their place is in Europe.

The term „East-Central Europe”, which includes the countries situated between German and Russian culture in the wide sense of the term, appeared in the second half of the nineteen-fifties. The term became widely known in the scientific and political circles during the last two decades, but its real career started after the collapse of communism. In the most traditional understanding, East-Central Europe includes the following states: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Ukraine, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic and Hungary. Multi-ethnic, multi-religious, differing in political preferences, modern East-Central Europe is an area of special importance for the Euro-Atlantic security. It has to be remembered that it was exactly in East-Central Europe in its wide borders that both World Wars (the First and the Second) broke out. It also has to be remembered that exactly this part of the world initiated the great collapse of the Soviet Empire. This part of Europe, which is not very important at first glance, has to be very attentively observed from the West as well as from the East, from the point of view of the future European security. And observing East-Central Europe means, understanding that its territory is covered with a network of various invisible borders besides the obvious state borders. These invisible borders are ethnic, religious, cultural and social ones. Every observer of these borders has to be able to determine them. Naturally, these invisible borders of East-Central Europe do not exist on any modern political maps, but they have been very important for the history of Europe and the whole world and they will play an equally important role in the field of the Euro-Atlantic security in the future.

For the better understanding of the basic problems of the region the states of East-Central Europe have to be grouped according to their own statehood tradition. The statehood tradition of Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland and Lithuania are hidden deep in the Middle Ages; Latvia and Estonia proclaimed their own states in the

beginning of the XXth century; Belarus and Ukraine really were able to proclaim their real independence after the collapse of the USSR. It must be borne in mind that the East Belarus and the East Ukraine were part of the Soviet Empire during the whole time of its existence; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the West Belarus and West Ukraine were occupied by the Soviets only for about a half of a century; Hungary, Czech and Slovak Republics and Poland for the last fifty years were part of the Soviet Empire's influence area. In practice it means that the communist system, even though very repressive and heavy, never acquired such horrid features like in the states which were included into the Soviet Union. The relatively short duration of the communist regimes in Hungary, Poland, Czech and Slovak Republics was one of the reasons why the Soviet power didn't succeed to implant the communist idea to the degree it was able to do with many other peoples of the world. These East-Central Europe states never accepted the loss of freedom and the communist political and economic system. Again and again they tried to regain their freedom, as we could see on the examples of the Hungarian and Czech uprisings and Polish attempts to be free which were suppressed by the Soviet Union in a bloody way. The stormy existence between Russia and Germany formed among these peoples a specific colourful cultural, historical and political mentality, which is characterised by a burning desire for freedom and democracy, their own ethnic consciousness and strong links with the West-European roots.<sup>24</sup> All these observations can be used also towards Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians and Ukrainians from Western Ukraine who fought with arms in their hands against the Soviet occupants till the end of 1950-s.. Decimated by unbelievable repressions, deported to Siberia by millions, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians and western Ukrainians were at least subdued. But as soon as it only became possible they showed the world their desire for freedom.

To understand the modern invisible borders of East-Central Europe we have to make a short excursion to ancient times, when the newly created states of the region were baptised. Situated within political borders resembling those of today Czech State, Poland and Hungary in IX-Xth centuries were baptised in the western Christianity and found themselves in the area of the Roman culture - *Orbis Romanum*. At the same time, in the Xth century, Rusian duchies were baptised in the eastern Christianity and belong to the Byzantine cultural tradition. By the XIVth century, by way of receiving baptism also the territories of the modern Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia had entered the domain of Roman culture.<sup>25</sup> [See: Map No 5 „The borders of western and eastern Christianity in the IX-XIV centuries” in the Annex below]

Reaching so very far back in history can be rejected as looking for too old analogies only on very superficial grounds. As we can see from the mentioned map, the border which was set up one thousand years ago between western and eastern Christianity with a very narrow deflections is situated in the same place, as it was situated one thousand years ago. It is the first, the oldest, forgotten invisible border which divides East-Central Europe. It has to be added that for the past thousand years the border between eastern and western Christianity has been the border of Cyrillic and Latin alphabet (Map No 6). In practice it means that Estonians, Latvians, Poles, Czechs etc., travelling west from their homeland always, even when they didn't know foreign languages, have been able to read at least the name of a place, street, the most common service places (bank, post-office etc.). In the same situation an average Russian, Belorussian or Ukrainian, who did not speak foreign languages found himself absolutely helpless in front of a Latin spelling inscriptions. The reverse situation happened when a person from the Latin spelling world travelled east of the river Bug. It is common knowledge that such basic abilities as reading inscriptions i

the first criterion to divide the world into „foreign” and „own”. So, the border of eastern and western Christianity and between the Cyrillic and Latin alphabet is, at the same time, the border of „foreign” and „own”. To the east from that border begins the world, which is foreign for Estonians, Latvians, Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Slovaks; for Belorussians, Ukrainians, Russians the foreign world begins to the west from the millenary border.

One thousand old border of the Latin and Cyrillic alphabet, the border of eastern and western Christianity, has, at the same time, been for some centuries the border between different systems of the agriculture and the different attitude towards land property. Built on the basis of Roman law, the Estonian, Latvian, Polish, Lithuanian, Czech, Slovak and Hungarian civil and criminal laws from the very early times have been based on the sacred principle of the human right to possess private property, and the land property as well. Courthouse records of property titles of the Polish farmers are sometimes a few centuries old. That is why the communist administration, in spite of repressions in 1944-1956, was not able to take the land from the Polish farmers and to persuade them into collective farms, promoted by communists. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, as Soviet republics, after they had lost their independence, were forced into collective farms. A similar situation was with Slovak, Czech and Hungarian farmers, where in spite of resistance, communists were able to carry collective farms into effect. At the moment when these states reestablished their independence, one of the first steps was the restoration of the private land property.

Quite a different situation existed east of the river Bug. In the tsarist Russia, from the very early times the traditional form of the land usage was so called „obshczina”(community), which was a collective form of usage of the land divided

between the countryside inhabitants. The free farmers in Russia mostly represented by the Cossacks also used their land in „communities”. To tell the truth, from the XVI up to XVIII centuries on the territories of modern Ukraine and Belorus, and again in 1918-1939 in the western parts of the mentioned states, the Polish law of the land property functioned. But it was, in a some sense, a foreign system, which was brought from abroad and it never became a tradition of the land usage in that part of East-Central Europe. So, it can be said that on the Russian lands as well as on the lands of modern Belorus and Ukraine after the October revolution the „rural communities” just changed their name. The former „obshcziny”(communities) became collective farms. That form of the land usage together with the lack of a private land property had become a traditional form for the Belorussian and Ukrainian societies. That is the reason of the fact that although of the collapse of the communist system several years ago, and Ukraine and Belorus are independent states now, neither of them has established private land property. (Map No 7).

The invisible border of the existence and respect for the private land property, which is the basis of individual farming, is one of the most important invisible borders which crosses the described regions of East-Central Europe. The right of the private land property deeply rooted in the social consciousness, at the same time creates the foundation of respect for the same right of other persons. So, a person whose family has possessed land property for many generations, is able to appreciate the right of the land property, to fulfill obligations connected with that right and to respect the same rights of other persons. The right for private land property or the absence of such right creates a special kind of mentality, conditions people’s behaviour.<sup>26</sup> In that sense the invisible border of the existence or not existence of private property rights as a border of a certain collective mentality is one of the most important borders of

East-Central Europe. It has to be underlined here that with only some slight declinations, the private property border is the same as the border of eastern and western Christianity which has been dividing East-Central Europe for more than a thousand years.

As we can see on the enclosed map No 7, areas to the east of the western-eastern Christianity border are inhabited by peoples who, in spite of the collapse of the USSR, detect the private land property, individual form of farming etc. as elements of the foreign, even hostile capitalist social and political systems. The invisible border of the private property rights divides Eastern Europe into two camps. The people from the territories to west of the border are afraid of the people from the East and are convinced that they wouldn't respect their private property rights. People living east of the border, accept the fact of the existence of private land property.<sup>27</sup>

The attitude to private land property rights and to the way of farming probably is decisive in the issue of the attitude to a free market economy. As it can be shown on the basis of public opinion investigations done in East-Central Europe in 1994 (the results are represented on a Map No 8), the border between positive and negative attitude towards free market economy is just the same, with one exception, as the border of the private land property right and the border of eastern and western Christianity, which have existed here more than a thousand years.<sup>28</sup>

The other kind of invisible borders, which cut the northern part of modern East Central Europe are political borders which disappeared a very long time ago. From the end of the XVIII century till 1914, the territories of modern Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, almost the whole Ukraine and east-central regions of Poland belonged to the Russian Empire; northern and western Poland belonged to the German Empire; southern-eastern region of Poland, lands of modern Czech Republic, Slovak

Republic, Hungary and southern-western regions of Ukraine belonged to the Habsburg Empire.

These borders now they are invisible, but they still exist in culture, architecture, in the people mentality and consciousness. Poles who lived on the territories annexed by Russian Empire and German State, lost their right for any state forms and any local government institutions and through some generations fought for survival: to save their language, religion, ethnic consciousness. Some forms of freedom were granted only to that part of Poles, who inhabited the lands annexed by Austrian Empire, and there it was possible to develop social structures (some forms of parliamentarism, local government, farmers' organisations etc.). As a result of such situation, the Polish society of the former Austrian Empire, have up to now kept the traditions of strong farmers' organisations and local government, desire to decide by themselves about their future etc: everything which is determined as specific features of a civil society.<sup>29</sup>

The similar situation is in the case of Ukrainian state, where inhabitants of the territories of the former Austrian Empire differ from the rest of the state in their anti-communist and civil attitudes. The existence of old, now invisible borders of the Polish state partition from 1914 can be seen on the maps of the results of presidential and parliament election which took place in Poland and Ukraine in the nineties. On these maps we can see the differences along the former Austrian Empire border. Those parts of Poland and Ukraine, which belonged to the Austrian Empire now demonstrate the stronger civil behaviours, active social and local government institutions, and firm preferences in the selection of economic perspective.

In 1918 Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary got back their freedom, the western territories of the modern Belarus and Ukraine were included into the Polish state, when the eastern parts were included into

the USSR. The Polish-Soviet border which cut Belarus and Ukraine in halves existed till 1939. In a political sense this border existed only twenty years. During that time Belorussians and Ukrainians, who found themselves in the Soviet state, were repressed and fearfully indoctrinated in the religious sphere. The Belorussians and Ukrainians, who lived on the Polish territory were not oppressed to show their religious beliefs. Those territories were included into the Soviet Union only after the Second World War. The religious freedom was restored in the USSR only in the end of the eighties. In that time, it turned out that making use of the new possibilities was available first of all to the Belorussians and Ukrainians who lived on the territories, which up to 1939 had belonged to Poland. On the territories of Western Belarus and Western Ukraine, by mid-nineties almost every church and religious congregations, which had existed there during the 1930s were reopened.<sup>30</sup> The inhabitants of Eastern Belarus and Eastern Ukraine didn't need religious beliefs anymore. The religious revival of the modern Belarus and modern Ukraine went along the Polish-Soviet border of 1939. The invisible political border from the past has survived till now, but was changed into the border of „belief and unbelief”. In the same way the pre-war political border of Baltic states now functions not only as a political border, but similar to Polish-Soviet pre-war border, as a „belief-unbelief border between the independent Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation.

The balance of political powers in Europe after 1945 caused that the European space was cut by a new border named „iron curtain”. Into the sphere of the Soviet influence were included all the states of East-Central Europe and Eastern Germany. That border existed only 44 years and was crushed up in 1989. The Berlin Wall finished its existence, and the states of East-Central Europe restored their

independence. During the next couple of years USSR collapsed; Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus and Ukraine declared their independence. The way in which the states of East-Central Europe restore their independence and go out from the communis system causes, that once again, a forgotten invisible border from a thousand years begins to alive. To west from that border, like it was many centuries ago, lay the states of western Christianity, Latin alphabet, democratic traditions, free market economy, private land property, individual farm economy - to east from that border, as many centuries ago, lay states of eastern Christianity( but mostly atheistic now), the states of Cyrillic alphabet, totalitarian tradition, centralised economy, lack of a private land property, and collective farm economy.

We can endlessly enumerate elements which are divided by the invisible millenar border. But some details are especially importnat, as, for example the fakt, that the decribed border divides the usage of some notions which are especially important for the Euro-Atlantic security. In the mid-nineties, I did my private little research in academic circles of East-Central Europe. I had only one question: What is „tolerance”? It appeared the the wide usage of that term is normal only to the west o invisible border discussed above. One of Belorussian professors of philosophy, when asked what „tolerance” meant, answered: „We, Belorussians are tolerant people, we don't care about anything („nam vsio ravno”). After seventy years from Lenin's death authors of press publications, who use the word „tolerance” east of the river Bug have to explain to their readers the meaning of the word.<sup>31</sup> In the state of proletarian morality the words toleration and mentality, which assume individuality of a man, were out of use, forgotten, not needed. In the Soviet world nobody had right to toleration and different mentality.

All the elements mentioned above lie at the bottom of the fact that in a very definite way the eastern border of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, Polish eastern border and its borders with the Kaliningrad region constitute the invisible border of a different understanding of space and one's identification of one's place in the space.<sup>32</sup>

The Soviet power didn't succeed to create „Soviet People”. That statement can be proved by a numerous (about 160 ) ethnic conflicts on the former USSR's territory. But at the same time the Soviet power had succeeded to seed in a multi-ethnic society a feeling of a common house (common space). Many of the people ( not only Russians), in spite of the collapse of the Soviet Union, think about themselves as inhabitants of a common state, linked by one fate and statehood. That imaginative state's western end goes along the former USSR border, where the unknown for the „eastern people” world begins.

The attitude of the post-Soviet people to Poland is ambivalent. On the one side Poland is a foreign, not-known world, different from the Soviet and post-Soviet reality. On the other side, it was used to say: *„A chicken is not a bird, Poland is not abroad”*. In that phrase, whose roots are hidden deeply in the Polish-Russian past and in Russian mentality, there is a big proportion of a contempt, the feeling of own superiority in comparison with Poland, but at the same time a big proportion of fear in front of a foreign world. It is a mentality of invader, who came for an easy plunder. I had several occasions to listen to the people from the former Soviet territory talk during their trade-trips to Poland. For them, though not for all, it is a strange world, where there are so many goods, so many possibilities, but the inhabitants of that world can not make good use of all of them. And here we are, we - the people from Belarus, Ukraine or Russia. We came here for a short trip, we brought our cheap goods with

us, we sold them for a higher price, we will take the best things from Poland and return home.

In is an invador philosophy: to come, to take everything, what is possible and to return to one's own powerful, best homeland. The USSR does not exist, but in the mentality of a post-Soviet man it still exists. It fills a post-Soviet people with a feeling of a special kind of practical wisdom, with a feeling of their own superiority. An invador's philosophy, a feeling of a higher initiation and knowledge of a Soviet man, is exercised not only towards Poland, but the whole western world as well. About the United States in the former USSR it is said that it is a country for fools, where even billiard holes are twice wider than in the Soviet model. Maybe that is why post-Soviet mafia invents such methods of illegal business which can't born in mind of a western man.

Contempt towards Poland, towards the whole western world, is caused by the fact that Soviet people experienced such traumatic events during the communist times that now they are afraid of nothing. They now know that they would be able to survive in any circumstances. They feel contempt towards the western people who, in their opinion, are used to living in cosiness of freedom and economic prosperity, and who do not know, what it means to live and to survive. In many cases a feeling of superiority is a part of Soviet mentality and plays a more important role than ethnic origin of a person. So, the example used below has to be understood appreciated not in the ethnic categories, but in the categories of the post-Soviet mentality, and the West, if it looks for the new formule of an Euro-Atlantic security, has to understand that first of all. The author of an article „We and Europe” writes: *„We, Ukraine, during many centuries were a rampart of Europe , and defended it from the East invasion. Now Europe again needs our help. In Europe the spirit of Crusaders died,*

*the struggle for power ended. The truth is only one: who doesn't want to be a lord, will be a slave. A modern European escapes the fight and is against a war, and this is a position of the weak... Is Europe able to get out from the liberal- pacifistic swamp? To my mind, - it is not. That is why only Ukrainians[ meaning Soviets - S.M.] are able to help Europe to revive a real european spirit not poisoned by the integration ideas.*"<sup>33</sup> Who doesn't want to be a lord, will be a slave. This is a basic truth of the Soviet world, which lies at the background of the mentality and behaviour of the post-Soviet people, which was set in the heads of the former USSR inhabitants not by the ideology, but by their life itself. Who, being free or being kept in GULAG, was able to get at least a little power, survived. Who wasn't able to do that, died or became a slave. The people west of the river Bug, who are not able to put a strong centralised power in their states are perceived as something worse, as a defenseless, foolish mass, a society of slaves.

Everything said above is forming the modern, the most important border of East Central Europe. It is the invisible border of western and eastern mentality, which can be understood as an attitude to space, a place in the life, attitude to democracy, power, law, the scale of values and the understanding of the world. This border lies today almost in the same place where it appeared one thousand years ago, as the border between Roman Christianity and Byzantium, between Latin and Cyrillic alphabet. During these thousand years political borders changed many times. The invisible borders of faith, language and mentality remain in the same place. These borders were especially important for the European security in the Xth, XII, XVII, XIX and XX centuries. It is absolutely clear that this border will be important for the euro-atlantic security in the XXIst century. It is hard to imagine the Euro-Atlantic security not bearing all this in mind.

According to the context of the presented above religious, cultural and mental aspects it can be seen that the isolation of modern Russia, which is described by the Russian diplomats as the conscious isolation of Russia by the structures of the Western Europe is not an invention of the West, but the isolation, which is caused by the many centuries of the differences, deepened in the years of the communist power and continued now by the modern Russian authorities. In other words, Russia now is single and isolated from the western world not because of the West position, but because of Russian history, because of the Soviet and Russian politics, very slow economic reforms and mentality of Russian authorities and society. All these factors may be characterised by the word of the oath of the members of a political party Russian National Unity: „The member of the Party have to remember, that Russia has no friends. Who forget this, become a traitor”.

From the historical point of view we can suppose that on its way to Europe Russia today is in the moment similar to the times of the tsar Peter the Great (1672-1725). The difference between the strategy of that tsar and strategies of the modern Kremlin authorities is based on a fact that Peter the Great was perfectly conscious that the condition of Russia's entry to Europe is the europeization of Russian life. He understood that Europe would accept Russia only when Russia in the sense of law, economics and mentally would be close to Europe. So, the strategy of the tsar Peter the Great was based on a statement, that Russia needed Europe for its, Russian, ingenious development. The strategy of the USSR, which was accepted and developed by modern Russia is based on an opposite statement - that Europe itself needs Russia. The realisation of ideas of the tsar Peter the Great was interrupted in 1917 by the October revolution. Only time would show us, would the chosen strategy lead Russia to its europeization or Russia would for ever be an asian state.

## PART V.

### MILITARY AND POLITICAL CONCEPTIONS.

Integration processes are the most common phenomenon in the world in the end of the XXth century. The whole world from the beginning of nineteen-fifties is changing into one integrity. This is a natural process which is caused by globalisation of economy and by the global character of the many phenomenon, for example pollution. At the same time it may seem that from the nineteen-nineties the area of East-Central Europe and former Soviet Union is overspread by the desintegrating processes. At the moment of the collapse of the USSR many adherents of an idea of saving the USSR used as an argument the fact that the whole world and Western Europe is integrating, but the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact etc. are breaking into parts, as if Russia has again chosen its „specific” way. But at that time only those ties were broken, which were artificially forced upon that region by the Soviet imperialism. These ties had no real integration character. Soon after the states of the region got independence or revived their statehood the real integration process had begun. These processes had geopolitical background and few specific features, which are characteristic only for that part of the world.

The new geopolitic situation in Europe in 1990s from one side liquidated the division into two hostile camps and created conditions for political, economic and cultural cooperation; from another side the big differences in the level of economic development between Western and Eastern Europe complicated the process of European integration. The integrational processes in Eastern Europe are much more weaker than in Western Europe, and they do not spread on all the states of the region. The integration processes may be a specific key for understanding of a complicated mosaic of the post-Soviet world. In dependence of whether a state of East-Central

Europe and a new post-Soviet state open or not for the integration processes, it can be discovered what are its strategic conceptions of development and in what direction this state is going.

The strategic conceptions of Soviet Russia and USSR even when they changed with the changes of the political situation, during more than seventy years were based on the idea of the „world revolution”. In practice it meant that the Soviet struggle with imperialism was held by a direct aggression against the bordering with the USSR states and growth of the Soviet influence in the other parts of the world. For example: the aggression against Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia during the World War II, war in Afganistan, or not officially declared ingerention into the Middle East and African Affairs. The Soviet strategic conceptions functioned in the three periods of time: short perspective - or plans for 3-5 years in future; 2)middle perspective - 5-10 years; 3)long perspective, which was understood as plans of the development of the situation for 15-20 years.

The decisive changes of the Soviet strategic conceptions could be seen only in the last years of the Soviet Union's existence. From the middle of the nineteen-eighties of the XXth century although the Soviet state functioned according the „order-administrative” system and still was subordinated to the ideological dogmas, the political and military external conditions and internal economic situation compelled Michail Gorbachev to declare a „perestrojka” programm. In that time it became clear to the leading Soviet politicians that the Soviet military strategic conceptions based on the idea that the Soviet Army had to defend interests of the super-power and had to be ready to the last worl-wide battle with western imperialism, became impossible for realisation by the Soviet economy (that last world-

wide nuclear battle was supposed to kill 1/3 of the world's population and destroy more than 50% of the world's economy).

The Soviet strategic conceptions of the last years on the USSR became a bridge between the strategy of the stagnating Soviet state and strategy of the modern Russia going in the direction of democratization. In the most common words the modern Russian conceptions are based on the assumption that during the nearest 3-5 years an external threat for Russia will be very little and this time may be used for the Army reforms. In the perspective of 5-10 years Russian politicians take into account a possibility of a military confrontation with Islamic world, which is spread from Bosnia to Tadjikistan and a possibility of some tension with the West in the case of absence of a real mechanism of cooperation between Russia and NATO, when at the same time UN and security systems in Europe and Pacific will not function properly. In the long perspective of 15-20 years Russia is taking into account a possibility of a big sharp rivalry between the world centers of power and attempts to take control over the some parts of the world, as well as over the territory of the Russian Federal State.

The modern Russian state is still a heiress of the Soviet Empire, even it already got rid of ideological dogmas and is trying to get rid of the „order-administrative” methods of ruling and is basing its conceptions on the national and state interests. Among the different strategic conceptions of modern Russia it can be seen at least one feature common with the former Soviet conceptions: intention to restore its superpower position through the reintegration of the former Soviet space and military reforms.

According to the western opinions in the Cold War there was no winners or losers. The most of the Russian politicians and decision-makers are sure that the Soviet Union lost the Cold War, and as a result of this on the world political scene

there is only one super-power now - the United States of America, together with Western Europe. The degradation of Russia, which personifies itself with the former Soviet Union, is hard to accept by the Russian political elites and by the ordinary Russian citizens. The main Russian strategic conceptions, which are prepared by at least several political centers (The Security Committee of Russia, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Headquarters of the Russian Army etc.) are based on one idea - restoration by Russia its position of the world super-power. No one of these conceptions was definitely accepted by the Russian society and Russian authorities.

The extremist nationalistic groups are spreading conceptions of the restoration of Russian super-power by creating a strong army and by threatening to the whole world by a preventive nuclear blow and by the widening of the Russian influence on all the continents together with Africa, which is an exact repeat of the Soviet strategic conceptions. The Russian democrats believe, that Russia will be able to return her position of the super-power, similar with the former USSR, only through an economic development, regional cooperation and participation in the international security organisations. The democrats as well as nationalists are sure that Russia would be able to reach its main aim - the restoration of its super-power status only by the way of the territorial restoration of the former USSR.

So, modern Russia now is struggling hard to return an exceptional position, which belonged to the Soviet Union on the whole world and the Soviet domination regions from the World War II till 1991. The first step in this direction is the integration around the Kremlin all the post-Soviet states.

From the moment of the collapse of the USSR the integration processes on its territory are going in different directions and with the different speed. The states of

the East-Central Europe in spite of the numerous declarations about the meaning of the eastern direction in their foreign policy and the meaning of the good relations with Russia for them, are integrating first of all between themselves and are interested in the integration with the EU, NATO and other international organizations. It can be seen that there is a definite division between the states of the former USSR, which gravitate towards the Kremlin, and states of the so called „eastern block” or former „national democratic” states which are now gravitated to the West. As it was mentioned above this gravitation is caused by the fact, that with the exception of the Baltic states, all the other post-Soviet republics are situated in the area of the post-Soviet and Asiatic influences. The states of the former „socialist camp” and the Baltic states are in the circle of the European influence. Some of the former Soviet republics officially declare their readiness to enter the European structures, but such declarations in many cases seem to be only an attempt to get a confirmation of the European character of the states and a cover of the real situation in them. As an example it can be used modern Belarus, which after Russia declared its intentions to enter EU, but at the same time is doing everything to close the door of EU in front of Belorussian state.

It can be observed a decisive difference in the position of the East-Central European states and the position of the former Soviet republics towards the directions and preferences of the integration. The states of the East-Central Europe are interested first of all to find, as quick as possible, their place in the European and world structures; as for the post-Soviet states, their attitude to the mentioned structures is different, even hostile as in the case of Belarus. The strong will to integrate with the European structures caused that the states of East-Central Europe almost resigned from the creation of the regional structures. The only one such

regional structure - the Wyshegrad Group was created to support the states of East-Central Europe on their way to the European Union and NATO.

At the same time on the territory of the former Soviet Union mainly the processes of the regional integration are going. These processes have to change the old inter-USSR links. During the last years on the territory of the former Soviet Union emerged the following unions and coalitions:

1) Commonwealth of Independent States - CIS, which was organised in 1992 as an imitation of the former Soviet Union, and, which, with the exception of the Baltic states, includes all other 12 post-Soviet republics. CIS is the weak organisation in the international relations, but as well as in the inter-member relations. The source of the weakness lay in the difference of the political interests of the states - members of CIS.

2) In 1993-1994 the Central Asian Union (CSU) was formed. It is first of all an economic Union, which was initiated by Kazakhstan, Kirghiztan and Uzbekistan, in the last time Tadzhkistan also entered this union. The Central Asian Union is realising some economic projects, but also is active in the field of militar cooperation between the states of the region, especially in peace-keeping operations.<sup>34</sup>

3) In 1997 the Union between Russia and Belorus was signed. The main idea of this Union was the idea of „Slavic Union”, which was initiated, strongly supported and widespread by the President of Belorus Aleksander Lukashenko and some candidates on the President of Russia in the future elections from the nationalistic and communist parties. Russia and Belorus are trying to include in their union Ukraine, and have some supporters among the Ukrainian politicians. Ukraine has its own position towards the integration processes among the former-Soviet republics: it underline all the time its independent position, and is afraid of the political integration with Moscow, and agree on the more close economic integration. Belorus, according

to the specific character of the President power in this republic, is copying the Russian position and declare its intentions to enter some European structures. All the interests of Belarus are concentrated on east, as it can be seen from the Belarus-Russia Union and the role of Belarus in CIS, and at the same time from the numerous declarations of President Lukashenko it is clear that his main aim is the restoration of the Soviet Union. There is no understanding of the future way of Russia and its main aims even among the Russian themselves: nor among politician neither among people. The signing of the Russia-Belarus Union was an important step in the militar and economic sense. The road through Belarus and Poland is the only land road which connects Russia with Europe, that is why Russia has activated its politics towards Poland. I can suppose that there are two conceptions which are realised by Russian decision-makers towards Poland: „political-militar” and economic. The first one, which is widely spread by mass-media, is connected with the NATO enlargement to the East. The realisation of the second „economic” conception is very quite, not so open, but is aimed through the economic influences on the stability of functioning of the Russian „Polish gate to west”<sup>35</sup>

4) In 1997 emerged GUAM, union which include the next former-Soviet Republics: Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova.

5) There are some attempts to create the Baltic-Black Sea Union, at the same time the Baltic states are active in the Baltic Sea Council.

An attitude of the Russian authorities to the European and international structures is not explicit. Russia is opposite the enlargement of NATO in the eastern direction, but at the same time Russia is supporting OSCE, and even try to replace NATO by OSCE. The collapse of the Soviet Union and all the structures of the communist camp, created a situation when all the newly independent states have to

find their place in the world. The former Soviet states are different in their attitude to Europe. Even it is not clear in many cases: do these states belong to Europe or not. For example, during the last conference of UNESCO in Paris in the Fall 1997 many former-Soviet states, even some states of the Central Asia region, declared their affiliation to the European space (political, cultural, geographic etc.). Now, it can be definitely said that the Baltic states are really interested in integration with Europe.

The internal integrational and disintegrational processes on the former Soviet territory are going in the different directions. In 1991 the Moscow state was divided again after the period of the Home war of 1917-1921. There are many adherents and many opponents of the idea of the reintegration of the former Soviet Union. But in spite of their discussions it seems to be not real to recreate USSR in any previous form. The main question still actual is: on what proportion Russia, as an heiress of the USSR, would be able to keep its influence in the fields known as fields of its life interests and security.

Military strategic conceptions are a field, where the geopolitical aspects are well seen. The military doctrines of the Soviet Union changed many times and depended on the political situation, level of military techniques, and of the tactics and strategy of a war in accordance with the new technical possibilities. The general basement of creation of military doctrines in the Soviet times didn't change during all the time of the USSR's existence. The basic and non-changeable part of the all Soviet military doctrines was statement, that the Soviet Union had to possess the most powerful Army in the world and the biggest arms potential in the world. All the Soviet military conceptions were based on the statement that the USSR had to struggle by military means with imperialism „up to the end” or up to the moment when socialism would

win in the whole world. In the Soviet doctrines the army was declared to be not only a weapon of a state, but a weapon of a communist party

The process of militarisation of the Soviet state began just after the end of the Home War in nineteen-twenties and was going till the last years of the USSR's existence. The new geopolitic situation formed in the world after the invention of the nuclear weapon. But the new military conceptions, which were connected with a new geopolitic situation, were realised in the USSR to slowly (for example, the conception of the nuclear cessation)

The results of the World War II caused enormous geopolitical changes in the world. That results could be compared only with the results of the World War I and revolution in Russia. The states of East-Central Europe, a half of Korea, Mongolia and China appeared in the sphere of a direct Soviet influence. Such a gigantic growth of the political influences on the world the Moscow state didn't have from the times of the tsar Peter the Great. The Soviet mania to build gigantesque projects and idea of conquering the whole world caused, that when in the 1960s, the colonial system collapsed, the USSR, not paying attention to its real geopolitical interests, invested enormous sums of money in such far away situated states as Chile, Mosambik or Angola.

In all the Soviet political and militar conceptions the most shocking from the modern point of view seems to be a contrast between the ideas and reality. According to the normal logic, the idea of the world conquer had to provide to the emerging of the military conception to realise that idea. But in the USSR there was no normal logic among the political elites. That was why the concrete military strategy how to realise the idea of the world conquer never appeared. The level of the analysis of the

future war and the threats of the state was too low during all the time of the USSR's existence.

In the time, when the leader of the Soviet state was Nikita Khrushchev, the new form of the nuclear weapon caused that the new military conception appeared. According to that conception the war between socialist system and capitalist system was not necessary, and the „peaceful coexistence” was possible. Declaration by the Kremlin leaders of the „peaceful coexistence” didn't influence the arms issue: the whole industrial potential of the Soviet state was aimed on the preparation to the war, as it was during the time of the „world conquering conception”.

The main enemy of the USSR was defined by the Soviet ideologists as USA and their European allies. The conceptions of the war with the defined enemy developed during the sixties up to eighties from the conception of a land war by conventional means to the conception of a nuclear war, when the main role had to play submarines armed with the ballistic nuclear missiles. The war was defined as „probable, but not necessary”. Some of the military theoreticians discussed about the definition of the future nuclear war - according to the some opinions it wouldn't be a war, because it couldn't be any winners of a such military confrontation. The Soviets also widely used an issue that a traditional indestructibility of the USA, as the state situated too far from the USSR, is not important in the era of nuclear weapon.<sup>36</sup>

All the Soviet military conceptions were based on the idea of the superiority of the Soviet Army over the American and Western Armies taken together. The main element of those conceptions was preparation to the World War III, which had to be the last, nuclear confrontation with the world imperialists, and to bring victory to the Soviet regime. In the 1960s, in the Soviet strategy emerged conception of local, limited wars; later in 1970s and 1980s - the conception of a big war with using only

traditional conventional arms; from the seventies in the Soviet military strategic conceptions China, as an alien of the USA and NATO, was compared as one of the probable enemies in the future war.

In fifties and sixties all the powers of the USSR were used to the armament and to keep in the Soviet area of influence three „empires”: the states of the „Third World”, the states of so called „socialist camp” and the territory of the borderland of the Soviet Union itself. The collapse of all mentioned „empires”, the collapse of the USSR caused necessity of a quick taking out of the Soviet troops from the places of their previous location. It caused the enormous problems of the troops location in Russia. In a new economic and geopolitic conditions the Army got many new, unknown previously problems: there is not enough money even for the food for the Russian Army; the necessity of the Army reduction; the necessity of the old arms changes. Russia had to resignate from the previous system of the arms location everywhere it wanted: now the Russian Army is functioning according to the system of the military bases, for which it is necessary to pay.

Even in 1991, when the Army reform started in the USSR and later in Russia, the order of the Minister of Defence defined the list of the main enemies of the state. One year later the Russian Ministry of Defence resigned from the such practice, but now every year it is published an order of the Minister, in which it is defined the concrete task of the Army in the case of a war. The main military problem of the modern Russia is that the Russian Army is bigger than the state can permit itself to keep.<sup>37</sup>

The military strategic doctrine of modern Russia includes, for example, an armament of Kaliningrad region with the nuclear missiles and liquidation of the old submarines base in Severomorsk on the north of European part of the Russia.

The Kaliningrad region has geographical and economic conditions not worse than for example Hong-Kong: is situated in the middle of Europe, possess an unfrozen seaport. The population of the region is not so large (800 000 inhabitants), but at the same time there are a very rich natural resources in the region - the oil resources are estimated on about 22 million tonn, an amber resources are about 70% of the world resources. Like Hong-Kong the Kaliningrad region has the unique geopolitical situation. During the last years more and more obvious become a peaceful economic „invasion” of Germans, Lithuanians and Poles in this region. The absence of the border with Russia creates a very specific situation in the Kaliningrad region: for example, 80% of electric energy used in the region is produced in Lithuania. In spite many official declarations of German Government about the stable character of the post-war boundaries, the ChDS/ChSS fraction in the German parliament formed a group „Northern Part of Eastern Prussia, which is preparing plans of political and economic usage of the Kaliningrad region. From the other side parliamentary fraction of the Free Democratic Party issued a memorandum: „New Tendencies and Cooperation in the Baltic Region -German Perspective”. In this memorandum „the historical German responsibility towards the Königsberg region” is grounded. In 1991 the head of the stateadministration of the Kaliningrad region started organization in Kaliningrad a free economic zone „The Amber”. A special decret was issued by the Russian government about this zone.

Kaliningrad becomes especially important from the military point of view when NATO enlarges to east. Now there it is the main base of the Russian NAVY Baltic fleet. Russia extremely needs the Kaliningrad port, because it is the only non-frozen port in the Eastern Baltic, and it is able to serve every type of ships, not only Russian but also Russia's allies, for example, Belorussian. So, the Kaliningrad region is the place

of concentration of Russian troops. which are in difficult situation being too far from the financial and food sources. May be it was the main purpose, why the Russian Army reform started in Kaliningrad.<sup>38</sup>

From the moment of the collapse of the USSR and emerging of the Ukrainian independent state, Russia is trying to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence. The independent position of Ukraine, which is some years old, weakened economic and military power of Russia so much, that now to keep the geopolitical stability of Russia is almost impossible. The main purposes of such a situation are: 1) in the Soviet times on the Ukrainian territory existed two among four Soviet factories, producing ballistic continental missiles and two among four the biggest centers of the tank production, and the biggest shipbuilding yard in Nikolayev.

Among the other aspects, the fact, that Ukraine came out from the control of Moscow, created many very complicated strategic problems. After the realization of the OSCE agreement it will remain 8000 tanks on the Ukrainian territory. The number of the conventional weapons in Ukraine and in Russia is similar. In this case the number of the tanks, after the realization of OSCE agreements on the European territory of Russia will remain 15 000 tanks. The loss of Ukraine means that the defence system of the western borders of Russia became weaker. The probable defence of Belarus in the hypothetical conflict with using only conventional weapons became too hard for realization. So, it can be said that Ukraine became not only one of the main purposes of the USSR collapse, but at the same time becomes one of the reasons why the revival of the Russian military power is impossible.<sup>39</sup>

From the geostrategic point of view, at the moment of the loss of Ukraine, Russia lost a big part of its military potential. From the military point of view, first time during many decades near the borders of Russia emerged the state, which military

power not too less from the Russian. Moreover, Russia in a very big proportion was cut from the Black Sea, has long problems with the biggest NAVY base in Sevastopol, which status is still not defined.

The Ukrainian aspect of the military situation on the post-Soviet territory is also important because of the point of view that Crimea is a region of the most probable separatism and terrorism. This is an opinion of American experts. American and Ukrainian experts agree that the threat of separatism is going not only from the Slavic inhabitants of Crimea but also from the Crimea Tatars, which proportion in the region's population is growing. May be that is why Crimea is the main point of the Ukrainian National Military Units' dislocation. These units were organized on the basis of the internal troops of the former USSR.<sup>40</sup>

When we touch an aspect of the military conceptions in modern Russia it has to be said some words about the Cossacks and their role in the modern geopolitical situation on the post-Soviet space. Unexpectedly it appeared that the places of the Cossacks' concentration are situated along the new Russian boundaries, taking into account that there are more than 10 million Cossacks and at least 2 million of them possess weapons and want to play a role of Russia's defenders they are one of the main powers of the modern Russian society.

In the days of „perestrojka” and USSR's collapse, turned out unexpectedly that among hundreds of ethnoses which survived the Soviet rule were also Cossacks. The modern problem of Cossacks seems to be beyond comprehension not only for the foreign observers, but for the former Soviet peoples as well. Everyone considers Cossacks as a historical phenomenon, which can be associated with the Napoleon war of 1812, horse-riders in high fur hats, famous painting „The Cossacks writing a letter to the Sultan of Turkey” and with some scenes from the Sholochov's book „Quiet

Don". When the process of democratization began in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980s, very few were aware that the Cossacks had not perished entirely. Their existence, as well as the quick pace of their revival, came as a surprise to almost everyone. The Moscow Cossacks were the first to announce their existence to the world. In January 1990, they organized into „Moskovskoe Cossatskoe Zemlyachestvo" (the Moscow Cossack Society), becoming an example for others. Now there are about 13 million people in Russia who declare their Cossacks origin, more than one million entered into the various Cossack military units. The strongest Cossack organizations exist in the Don and Dniepr river regions, Ural, Far East, Caucasus and in Moscow. The Cossacks are realising their own political and economical programs by creating their own efficient administrative system based on traditional, interconnected ruling structures among Atamans (leaders), Cossack councils, and tribunals of justice. The scale and wideness of the Cossacks reviva forced the Russia's government to declare its position towards the Cossacks: in the Fall of 1992 the State Program of the Cossacks rehabilitation and development was signed by President Jeltsyn. During the President elections in Russia few Cossacks voted for Jeltsyn. More popular among the Cossacks were communists and Zhirinovski with his fashist ideas. So, including Cossacks masses into one of the future political camps during the nearest president or parliament elections in Russia, may change the political picture of the country. The Cossack movement is a dangerous argument in all the conflicts where post Soviet power has its interests. Cossacks made their first appearance in an ethnic conflict in Fall 1991 on the territor of Chechen-Ingush republic. In their battle with Chechens there eight Cossacks were killed and it was only an announcement of the future bloody battles on that territory.

The second time Cossacks took part in an ethnic conflict was the war in Transdnierster republic where they appeared as hired troops.

The Cossacks are often seen in Russia as special military units with a specific task to fight in the ethnic conflicts on the former USSR territory. Such an idea seems to be seen in president Jeltsyn's decree of 1993 year, which restored all 12 pre-revolutionary 12 Cossack military regions (armies). The number of people declaring their Cossack roots is nearing the pre-revolutionary figures. According to the March 15, 1993 Decree, Cossacks now have the right to form into divisions and join up with border guards. In the Zabaikal military district, a Cossack formation was assigned to patrolling towns where the local population is primarily Buriat. The locals perceived the Cossack presence as a threat to their liberty and demanded formation of a Buriat military unit instead. At this point, the Cossacks are heavily concentrated along the Russian-Ukrainian border, and the establishment of a Cossack border guard would only complicate the already complex ethnic mix on both sides of the border. The proximity of Cossack troops near border areas has also created the risk of Cossack separatist movement. Already, the Cossacks are attempting to revive the Don Cossack Republik in eastern Ukraine, a republic that existed briefly in 1918. The Cossack separatist movement is also evident in the North Caucasus where the Cossacks are demanding the formation of the Sunzhensk Cossack Autonomous Region within the Russian Federation, but including a part of the Ingush republic. Next door, the Stavropol Cossacks are demanding the return of the Naursk and Shelkovsk region, which were transferred to Chechens and Ingushetians in 1957 after their return from internal exile. The Semirechensk Cossack are attempting to reestablish the Semirechensk Cossack military district, which existed in 1917 on territory that today comprises Kyrgyzstan and areas belonging to Alma-Ata, Taldy-

Kurgan, Dzhabul and Semipalatinsk Oblast of Kazakhstan. The development of the ethnic conflicts with Cossacks as one side of the conflict may go in many unexpected directions.

The October revolution of 1917 put an end to both the Tsarist regime and everything that made Russia what it was - its religion, its culture, and the distinct character of its Eurasian empire. The Cossacks were a unique part of pre-revolutionary Russia. They were neither serfs nor noblemen, nor an ethnic group, but rather a national community defined by absolute fealty to the Tsarist system, specific traditions, deep religiosity, and absolute devotion to martial duty.

The Cossacks, as a result, found it rather difficult to support the Bolshevik revolution. The Soviet leadership, in turn, considered the Cossacks to be the new system's deadly enemy. There was to be no pity for Generals Krasnov and Denikin, Admiral Kolchak, Ataman Dutov and other Cossack leaders who played such a crucial role in the „White Army” during the years of counterrevolution (1918-1921).

On January 24, 1919, one of Lenin's closest comrades, Iakov Sverdlov, signed a decree „On Unconditional Terror Toward All Cossack”, which legalized both cruel and bloody treatment towards the Cossacks. In accordance with the Soviet decree, for example, Cossack women and children, as well as the elderly, were to be subjected to torture and rape. The truth of the atrocities committed against the Cossacks became known only three or four years ago with the opening of the archives. The current estimate of the number of Cossacks who were murdered is 1.1 to 1.5 million people. The tragedy of the Cossacks did not end with the Civil War. Repression continued. With no place for them in the Soviet state to go, the Cossacks were forced to attempt emigration. When the Romanian government refused to grant the fleeing Cossacks asylum, they preferred honorable suicide at the river border rather than dishonorable

death at the hand of the communist. Only recently has this story of mass suicide come to light.

A small group of Cossacks managed to escape abroad. They were accepted by the Poles, the Chechens, and the Chinese, as well as the other nations. In their countries of settlement, they tried to reconstruct their villages, culture, and ancestral traditions. Such Cossack colonies existed in pre-war Poland, and still remain near Harbin, China.

The Cossacks' hatred towards the communist drove many emigres to side with the Axis powers during World War II. There was, for example, a Cossack unit within the Italian army. After the War, captured Cossack soldiers were sent back to the USSR and executed.

The Soviet authorities were not alone in believing that the Cossacks, like the kulaks and the religious orders, were a historical footnote, a problem of the past resolved in the first decades of Bolshevik rule. The surface of the Soviet scene, with the smoothness and permafrost, confirmed this appearance for decades. But the thaw of the last few years made clear how false this appearance was. A diverse number of oppressed nationalities had survived Soviet rule and the Cossacks, too, could be found amongst the ruins of the crumbling Soviet state.

Is this cause for joy or grief? It is difficult to say, for one hand, the Cossack managed, despite years of suffering and hardship, to preserve crucial elements of Russian culture. On the other hand, the Cossacks are an anachronism, fossilized in a pre-revolutionary shape and form. As such, they could become a source of great problems for Russia.

When the process of democratisation began in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980s, very few were aware that Cossacks had not perished entirely. Their existence, as well as the quick pace of their revival, came as a surprise to most everyone.

The Moscow Cossacks were the first to announce their existence to the world. In January 1990, they organized into the „Moskovskoe Cossatskoe Zemlyachestvo” (The Moscow Cossack Society), becoming an example for others. The Moscow Cossacks set out to organize societies all over the country and were received by kindred people who were familiar and sympathetic to the cause of the Cossack revival, or awakening, as it is also called. In June 1990, the first congress of regional Cossack representatives took place. At the Congress, some 900 delegates founded the Cossack Union and elected their first Ataman, or leader. The position went to A. Martynov, an ex-party functionary, and a son of the first secretary of the communist party in the Kuban district.

The Cossack revival’s connection to party functionaries is actually not surprising. The nomenklatura were the first to comprehend what democratization meant for the old regime. Since the mid-80s, the regime’s functionaries have attempted to find their place in the new order. Accustomed to high standards of living, some have taken advantage of privatisation, becoming „biznesmeny”, while others have joined the new ruling elite by becoming „demokraty”. Some have chosen the Cossack movement, which presented an alternative route to wielding power. Using their polished leadership skills, the party bosses were able to attract support for the establishment of an active, powerful, and independent Cossack Union.

But despite the decades of public silence, there lived the truth of what communism had done to the Cossack people among their heirs. Thus, not all Cossacks would enroll under the banners of the „Red” Atamans. They instead stood back,

patiently organizing independently, and then in July 1991, founded the Cossack Armies Union, which was officially registered in October of the same year. The Cossack Union, known as the „Red” Union, is generally organized from the top-down by former party members who use traditional Cossack hierarchical structures to recreate the authority and power of the party apparatus. The „White” Cossack Armies Union is organized from below and oriented toward more democratic aims.

The two Unions are organized on an all-Russian basis and have nearly equal spheres of influence. The „Red” Union has a large membership on the Don river and in the Ural Mountains, while the Cossack Armies Union draws its strength from Siberia. In addition, there are many Cossack regional organizations that were created independently of the two Unions and remain separate from them. They include: the Cossack Union of Southern Russia (founded in November 1991), the Don Cossack Armies Union, the Union of Siberian Cossacks, and the Anarchic-Green Cossack Union of Kuban. While remaining outside the all-Russian movements, these more extreme organizations often have to fight for their authority and rights with the holdover regional party bosses, who are trying at all costs to hold on their power. The independent Cossack organizations resort to various unconventional means of achieving respect, such as hijacking trains, levying taxes on smugglers, or controlling market prices for goods.

Cossack organizations are also emerging in the other former Soviet Republics, among them the Ukrainian Cossack Union and the Semirechensk Cossack Union in Kazakhstan. Smaller Cossack organizations in Moldova, Tadjikistan, and the Baltic states have been incorporated into the larger all-Russian Unions.

The Cossack movement is thus highly fragmented. Some organizations are characterized by their extremist approach, others by a communist legacy. Still, the all-

Russian unions, as well as the regional organizations, face similar problems: infighting, conflicts with regional political forces, and a ludicrous concentration on issues of ethnicity. The great geographic distances among the Cossack organizations, including those that act as criminal syndicates, allow them completely separate existences. Faced with resolving local issues, an individual Cossack community may often have no sense that there is a national Cossack movement much less what its national leadership is doing. Yet, overall the Cossack movement has vast resources and an efficient administrative system, the latter based on traditional, interconnected ruling structures among Atamans, Cossack councils, and tribunals of justice.

Indeed, the Cossack movement has become one of the most important, even if most difficult to define, trends in post-Soviet politics.

x                      x                      x

The first problem in dealing with the contemporary Cossack movement is to define it. Presently, there are three general ways that social scientists identify the Cossack movement: as an ethnic unit, as a social group, or as an ethno-social community. But in Russian political life, compromise is always hard to come by, and social scientists, and the Cossacks themselves, have difficulty in choosing one definition or another. The Cossack Revival Advisory Council, a branch of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, created in March 1990, has defined the Cossacks as an historical-cultural-military community, a social group originally founded to serve the interests of the Russian state.

The second problem is to ascertain the composition of contemporary Cossacks. It has changed since the first Russian Revolution. Today, it is composed of two groups: ancestral and non-ancestral Cossacks. Ancestral Cossacks are those who have considered themselves Cossacks over the course of many generations. They, in turn,

are divided into two groups: a smaller one, consisting only of descendants in the traditional Cossack sense, through the paternal line, and the larger one, consisting of descendants through the maternal line or another family relationship. Both groups of ancestral Cossacks link their fate with that of the Cossack movement as a whole. Even so, it is important to note that a substantial number of Cossacks descendants are completely uninterested in their historical roots and stay away from any activities connected with the Cossack revival. Some oppose the revival movement, believing the importance of the Cossacks to be irrelevant for contemporary society.

The non-ancestral Cossacks, also known as the „New” Cossacks, can be grouped according to their motives for joining the movement. There are four such groupings. The first joined out of attraction to the hierarchical organizational structure of the Cossack movement, its slogans, and its populism. The Cossack movement satisfies a Russian nostalgia for a pre-revolutionary heritage. The renewal of this tradition within Russia salves the painful wounds of decades of Soviet ethnic and nationality policies. In this regard, the Cossack movement is one of many contemporary manifestations of the „Russian soul” in post-Soviet society. It is akin to the various military and historical societies created in the last couple of years, such as the Grenadiers of 1812 Club, or the Club of Prince Igor, where the uniform and the arms of the era are carefully reconstructed and the communist term „comrade” is always replaced by the pre-revolutionary „gospodin” - „master” or „sir”.

The second group joined the Cossack movement out of patriotic reasons, seeing in it a way to awaken all Russia from its demise and to protect Russian minorities in the other former Soviet republics. Their patriotism often translates into outright chauvinism, aimed against any former Soviet nationalities or the ever-common scapegoats, „Jewish Communists”.

The third group is made up of those seeking personal benefit, among them former communist party leaders who saw in the Cossack movement a chance to keep their top position within Russian society. There also an assortment of mafia elements who, under cover of the Cossack movement, seek to further their criminal interests, especially in their competition with the Caucasus mafia structures. The criminal elements within the Cossack movement often organize a variety of Robin Hood-type spectacles aimed at gaining public support. In 1992, for example, a group of Cossacks in Rostov-on-Don confiscated a truck full of oranges when a Caucasus merchant refused to lower his prices. They later delivered the oranges to a nearby orphanage. The immediate public reaction was sympathetic, but when the offenders were caught and three of the four Cossacks turned out to have past criminal records, the incident took on a different light.

The fourth group comprises the officers of the Red Army. They are joining the Cossack movement also out of an ambition to become Atamans - „leaders by God’s will” as the old saying went - as well as to recreate an elite within Russian army styled on the pre-revolutionary officers corps.

The revived Cossack movement, like its predecessor, is not ethnically homogeneous. Historically, there were four distinct Cossack groups: the Don Cossacks, the Tiersk Cossacks, the Jaik Cossacks, and the Siberian Cossacks. The core of each group were Russians, but there were also representatives of other nationalities. Among the Don Cossacks, the biggest minority were the Ukrainians, and there were also Cherkess, tatars, Poles, Nogai, and Kalmyks. Among the Kuban Cossacks, besides Russians and Ukrainians, there were Moldavians, Georgians, Serbs, and Albanians. The Jaik Cossacks had a high percentage among Volga peoples in its

rnks: Tatars, Bashkirs, Kalmyks, Mordvins, Karakalpaks, and Turkmens. The Siberian Cossacks were comprised of Russias, Buriats, and Evenks.

While the Cossack revival is strongest among Russians, a similar process can be seen among the Ukrainians, the Buriats, and the peoples of the Caucasus. The Cossacks of these different ethnic groups put primary importance on their own nationality issues, especially the independence of their states. Only secondary are the concerned with pan-Cossack issues. This is most pronounced in the Caucasus, with the Cherkes being the largest of the ethnic-based Cossack groups. (The traditional Cossack costume is commonly called „Cherkeska” and is similar to the national costumes of the Caucasus peoples.) These ethnic-based Cossack organizations could pose an array of dangers for Russia along the Caucasus border.

A third problem when dealing with the Cossack movement is to quantify its current population. Before the October Revolution, there were 4.5 million Cossacks organized into 12 armies (the equivalent of today’s „military district”). Ten of these were stationed in (and named after) the following districts: the Don, Kuban, Tiersk, Astrakhan, Ural, Orenburg, Semirechensk, Siberian, Zabaikal, and Ussuri. Two armies, those of Irkutsk and Jenisej districts, were fused together in 1917 into one Jenisei army by order of the Tsar. The table below, based on the Russian census, gives an idea of the population and military make-up of the Cossacks, a point of reference for analyzing the contemporary Cossack revival.

Table No.1 Cossack Population and Cossack Men in Military Service in 1916

District Name	Total Population	Men in Service
Don	1,495,000	100,000
Kuban	1,367,000	90,000
Orenburg	533,000	27,000
Zabaikal	265,000	14,500
Tiersk	255,000	18,000

Siberian	172,000	11,500
Ural (Jaik from 1917)	166,000	11,500
Amur	49,000	3,500
Semirechensk	45,000	3,500
Astrakhan	40,000	2,500
Ussur	34,400	2,500
Jenisei	10,000	600
Yakuck regient	3,000	300
Total	4,434,400	285,400

The Cossacks as an ethnic entity were never a part of the Soviet census, and the size of the revived Cossack community can only be estimated. According to various estimates, people considering themselves direct descendants of the Cossacks living in historical Cossack areas make up between 10 to 15 percent of the total populaion in the central regions and 1 to 1.5 percent in the far East. The Cossacks themselves estimate that there are 13 million ancestral Cossacks living in Russia today - an unlikely figure. The Cossack Revival Advisory Council at the Institute of Ethnograph and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the highest existing authority on Cossacks, used an estimate of 14 percent for the central and southeastern regions. Cross-referencing the 14 percent ratio with the 1989 census gives the following results:

Table No 2. The Cossack Population as Estimated from the 1989 Census

District	Total Population	% Cossack	Cossack Population
Rostov	4,304,000	14	602,000
Donetsk	5,328,000	14	746,000
Krasnodar	5,115,000	14	716,000
Stavropol	2,855,000	14	400,000
Orenburg	2,174,000	14	305,000
Chabarovsk	1,824,000	1.5	34,000
Primorsk	2,260,000	1.5	27,000
Amursk	1,058,000	1.5	16,000
Total			2,826,000

Of course, one must subtract the large number of Cossack descendants who are not interested in the revival process from above total. One must add to the figure, however, the substantial number of non-ancestral Cossacks joining the revival. A safe estimate of contemporary Cossacks would match its pre-revolutionary total; the current number may even surpass it. Regardless, all experts on the subject agree that there are now some 1 million Cossacks under arms.

The Cossacks, in addition to crossing traditional ancestral boundaries, have crossed their geographical boundaries. Contemporary Cossacks no longer live only on the Don river, near Kuban, Orenburg, or Tiersk, but also in Moscow, St.Petersburg, and other large cities.(See map for Cossack population concentrations).

The changes in Cossack demographics were caused by the years of communist rule. Unofficial sources estimate that some 70 percent of the Cossack population was killed in the years of the „Red terror”; those who survived were subject to deportation to other parts of the USSR. These practices led to the present day location of Cossacks, mostly cities and industrial centers of southeastern Russia. According to Ataman V.Vetrov, commanding officer of the Jenisei Cossack Army, over 75 percent of the Siberian Cossack Army today is composed of descendants of the Don and Kuban Cossacks, who were deported in the 1930s.

Interestingly, Cossacks find themselves returning to their previous geographical locations and their pre-revolutionary geo-political roles. While in the former Soviet Union the Cossacks always lived far from the state’s frontiers, practically at its center, the empire’s deterioration and the formation of independent republics has meant that the Cossacks are now - as under the tsars - on Russia’s borders. This new proximity to Russia’s borders has helped to consolidate the Cossack movement, by giving it the

purpose of defending Russian state interests. But it also creates the risk of potential conflict with neighboring states in the event of insubordination.

x

x

x

The Cossack revival has religious, ethnic, political, social, military, and psychological dimensions.

The Cossacks were always a deeply religious people belonging to the Orthodox faith. They were highly traditional in their beliefs - faithful to their land, their sabres, and their God. When the Orthodox Church underwent reforms in the pre-revolutionary period, a large proportion of Cossacks, more religious than the general society, were opposed to any changes in the church. They continued to practice the old rituals and formed puritanical Cossack sects, among them the Niekrasovcy. Today, in the chaotic religious reawakening taking place in post-Soviet society, the Cossacks, too, are looking for their own, distinct religious identity. The Orthodox Church, shamed by decades of collaboration with the KGB, has lost its appeal to many Cossacks. The few remaining Old Believers, having survived the years of communist rule in Russia, are gaining increasing respect and attracting more followers.

The Cossack revival is a fait accompli. All twelve of the tsarist Cossack armies have been recreated. Although no one knows the exact number of the Cossack population, some estimates of the number of people claiming Cossack heritage exceed their pre-revolutionary total. They remain 90 percent Russian.

The fall of the Soviet Union and the communist system - the only structure known to the Soviet citizen, one which seemingly had no escape - has created a social vacuum. The new government is weak and unstable. But due to its communist roots and administrative structure, it can only serve as a modified version of the old system.

The only non-communist, historical reference point of the Russian people is Tsarist Russia. Just as Russians are once again discovering their great achievements in the arts and literature, which were until recently censored, they are also rediscovering prohibited social traditions.

The attraction of millions of ancestral Cossacks and „new” Cossacks under the banners of the new Atamans reflects a strong desire within post-Soviet society to restore a sense of what was the Russian heritage: order and stability resulting from strength of leadership, an effective organization of the economy, and a pride and sense of greatness as soldiers of a great Russia. For those who join it, the Cossack movement is a way of recovering from decades of Soviet savagery and dehumanization. It is an indicator both of how much Russians were fed up with communism and how much they wanted to express themselves as being Russian. Thus, the Cossacks have recreated the pre-revolutionary order with minute detail, down to their typical costume and incongruous sabre.

But the Cossacks have also revived their paradoxically ambivalent relationship with authority. The traditional Cossack definition of this relationship was simple: „The tsar is in far away Moscow Palace, and we are on the quiet Don river”. It meant that while the Tsar may be their highest superior, the Ataman is a substantially closer one.

The Cossack movement remains a question mark in post-Soviet politics.

## CONCLUSION

The military conception of modern Russia from the moment of the collapse of the USSR came through an entire transformation. It was caused mainly by the fact that the former Soviet space was a homogenous unity, which borders didn't change from the World War II, but after the year 1991 it had appeared that a big part of the

militar infrastructure of the state was lost. This infrastructure was located in the borderlands, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was left on the territories of the newly independent states.

The next factors influenced the necessity of creation of a new Russian strategy: 1) moving out of the Soviet troops from the states of East-Central Europe, Baltic states and Ukraine; 2) the necessity of paying for the military bases on the territories of the former-Soviet republics, which are newly independent states now; 3) the presence of NAVY units of the other states, and NATO as well, on the seas, close to Russia; 4) necessity to take into account the military power of the newly independent states; 5) explosion on the territory of the former USSR of many regional conflicts, in which the local military units are taking part; 6) the loss of the former Soviet markets of weapons and the attempts to regain them (first of all markets of the South-Eastern Asia), creation of the new markets of weapons; 7) usage of the Russian troops for the local aims. The changes of conception of the main aims of Russian Army - from the global, international to local needs a new territorial organization of the Army. According to the new programs of the military reform in Russia it has to be created 6-10 new military regions, where all the military formations (not only Army itself, but police, internal military units, various paramilitary structures) will be coordinated. There is a big threat of the local separatist movement in such a conception. The new territorial organization of the Russian Army will have a strong influence on the whole geopolitical situation on the territory of the former USSR.

From the military point of view in all the strategic conceptions of the USSR, tsarist and modern Russia, the main threat for the state was concentrated on the western „facade”, which means the states of the Western Europe and North America.

The possibility to change that old strategical paradigm appeared in 1990 and meant a signing of the „peace treaty forever” between Russia and the states of the West, demilitarization of the relations, and development of the many aspects of the partnership. But a realisation of this possibility, needs many conditions, some of them very difficult for acceptance of the whole world. But even the worst variant of the Russian-Western world relations not foreseen any militar confrontation, but only return to the „cold war” situation.

The Southern fasade, which includes mainly Moslem countries, has been a traditional direction of Russian expansion. The collapse of the USSR has highlighted the problems which Russia always had with mountainous rebels like the Afghans or Chechens. Despite such a sad historical and modern experience it is here that Russia’s efforts to reconstruct the defence space of the former Soviet Union. From the militar point of view the southern direction will remain very important for years to come.

The Esatern fasade, from Mongolia and China to Japan and Korea, was for a long time a moving frontier which offered Russia the most opportunities, and presented the least dangers. The reconciliation with China in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, coinciding with the end of the Cold War, dramatically improved the geostratigec situation along Russia’s eastern fasade. Now the situation is changing very rapidly. If there is going to be major strategic challenge to Russia, it is more likely than not to come from its greatest neighbor, China. While Russia is griwing weaker, China is growing stronger, turning into both an economic and a military superpower. For the first time in history Rusia is losing out to China. This means that, in the medium term, the eastern fasade can become Rusia’s most vvulnerable one.

Thus, Russia’s three fasades point to the three epochs of Rusia’s geostrategy. The Western direction most probably belongs to the past; the Southern occupies the

present; and the Eastern is likely to emerge as the most important one in the future. Partnership in the West, stability-building in the South, and finding the right balance in the East appear to be the main direction of the modern Russian geostrategy.

The analysis of the Russian military and strategic conceptions and their geopolitical aspects wouldn't be complete without some words about the trade of weapons and military technologies. In that field the geopolitical aims of the former Soviet Union and modern Russia are especially good seen. According to the Russian opinion, the USA are using economic and financial crisis in the Eastern Asia to eliminate Russia from the military markets in this part of the world. According to the estimate of „Rosvooruzhenie”, this region is the most perspective from the point of view of weapon trade. Now, the position of „Rosvooruzhenie” in the Eastern Asia are weak and not stable; but without the weapon and armament trade on a big scale Russia wouldn't be able to return its former geopolitical position.

One of the main important aspects of the military strategic conception of modern Russia is a prognosis of the probable future war and its character. The Soviet conceptions from the moment of the nuclear weapon invention till the moment of the USSR's collapse changed a little: it was planned, that if the western imperialists would start a world war, would be held with usage of the nuclear weapon on a big scale and territory, and that the Soviet Union would be fighting till the entire victory over its enemies. Through all the years of the USSR existence it was discussed would it be possible to win in the nuclear war. During that discussions Soviet military experts often returned to the conception of a big war with only conventional methods. In the Soviet strategic conceptions from the end of 1980s there was no words about the necessity of military superiority over the West to reach the „communist bright future”. In that time appeared conception of the military-strategic balance.

The modern military conceptions of Russia are based on a fact that Russia possesses the nuclear weapon, but there are very low chances on the world nuclear war or even a big war against Russia with conventional military means, but without nuclear weapons. Such a conception doesn't mean that Russia doesn't consider a possibility of the local regional military conflicts in the area of the Russian interests. According to the opinion of the Russian strategs there is a big possibility of the big wars in the areas which are not bordering with Russia, but which may destabilise the whole international situation.

Now everybody is conscious that during some last years the Russia-USA relations slowly become cool. In Russia it is often said about the possibility of a new Cold War. This possibility influences the geopolitical situation and the Russian strategic conceptions. On the example of the Russian Balkan politics we can see, that Russia by all means tries to return the status of the superpower, which possessed the USSR, when every conflict in Europe or Asia was solved only with the Soviet participation. In comparison to the Soviet times the only difference is that the USSR its sphere of influence spread over Africa and Southern America; Russia didn't do that in 1991, but now the situation is changing in the direction of „old geopolitical thinking”.

---

<sup>1</sup> F. Braudel, *Historia i trwanie*, Warszawa 1971, pp.46-89

<sup>2</sup> The term „geopolitical analysis” needs, first of all, to define what „geopolitics” is. Most encyclopaedias define geopolitics as a research of the „relations between the natural geographical conditions and the politics of the

states". Such a definition has noticeable connections with the German geopolitical school, represented, among others, by F.Ratcel, R.Chellen, K.Chauschofer. According to the French geopolitical school, linked with „Herodot” magazine (M.Fusche, I.Lacost and others) the main role in geopolitics is played by the following factors: political, economical, military, ecologic, demographic, ethnic, cultural and ideological. Space and borders of the states, according to that conception, are passive factors. The Russian school of geopolitical sciences (V.Kolosov, N.Kaledin, V.Pirumov etc.) is closely linked with the French school. Geopolitical analysis can be divided into: geopolitical situation researches from the point of view of concrete geographical conditions and the development of this situation; prognoses and recommendations for the political changes of space. See: T.Parchalina, *Geopolitical Prognoses and Russia*, in „International Economy and World Relations”. Moscow, No 3, 1996

<sup>3</sup> Большая Советская Энциклопедия, Москва 1975, т.6, с.316. Under „geopolitics” we find „a bourgeois, reactionary concept (...) used to motivate militarism and territorial claims”.

<sup>4</sup> G.Ziuganów, *Geopolitics of Russia*, Moscow, 1997; S.Baburin, *Russian territory and its borders*, Moscow 1996; К.Гаджиев, *Геополитика*, Москва, 1997; Э.Позняков, *Геополитика*, Москва, 1995; А.Дугин, *Геополитика*, Москва, 1997(98); etc.

<sup>5</sup> Central State Archives of the National Economy (Moscow), Central State Archives of the Soviet Army (Moscow).

<sup>6</sup> The Soviet Union bordered with the Pacific and the following seas: Sea of Japan, Sea of Okhotsk, Bering Sea, East Siberian Sea, Laptev Sea, Kara Sea, Barents Sea, White Sea, Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea. On the land the Soviet Union bordered with the following countries: Norway, Finland, Poland, Czech-Slovak Republic, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Iran, Afganistan, China, Mongolia, Northern Korea.

<sup>7</sup> The term East-Central Europe was widely spread by Oskar Halecki and Jenő Sucz in late fifties [O.Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History*, London and New York 1950, J.Sucz, *Le trois l-Europe*, Paris 1985]. The term East-Central Europe is now widely used in the states of that region and in the West. For the Russian politicians and researchers even in the middle of the nineties the mentioned term was new and just now became really used in connection with the NATO enlargement to the East. Discussions about clear criteria of delimitation of the East-Central Europe borders are not finished yet, especially concerning its northern and southern borders. According to Joseph Rotschild, *Return to Diversity - Political History of East-Central Europe Since World War II*, New York-Oxford, 1989, East-Central Europe includes the following countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Romania, states of the former Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria. The director of the East-Central Europe Institute in Lublin, prof. Jerzy Kloczowski ( *Między Europą Zachodnią a Bizancjum*, in: „Przegląd Akademicki” Lublin, 1991, Nr 10, p.9) proposed to include into East-Central Europe Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Hungary. Now there are some problems with the final definition of the borders of Europe as a whole. This issue is a key one in the process of the new states entering the European institutions and organizations (For example, some Caucasian states want to enter such institutions).

<sup>8</sup> The personal Union was signed between Poland and Lithuania in Krev in the year 1385. That agreement was renewed several times till 1569, when the Lublin Union was signed. As a result of that agreement emerged a new state - *Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodó* (The Polish State of the Two Nations), which was inhabited in reality by four peoples: Poles, Lithuanians, Belorussians and Ukrainians, together with the numerous Jews and Tatars. That state organization existed till 1772. The boundaries between Russia and the Polish State were in that time situated in the place of the modern Russian boundaries of Russia with Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine.

<sup>9</sup> The characteristic feature of the modern geopolitical discussions in Russia is the fact that the most active in this discussion are representatives of the nationalistic right wing of the political scene (from the Liberal-Democratic Party of Vladimir Zhirinowski etc.). At the same time the voices of the real democrats in this discussion are not so numerous. The positions of the military experts in the field of geopolitics are close to the nationalistic position.

<sup>10</sup> There is a theory that the collapse of the USSR was caused by the enormous size of the state. But after the loss of 5 million sq.km Russia is still the biggest state in the world, which lies on the two continents. The geopolitical space, which Russia is able to create has to become smaller in the nearest years, but even in this case Russia will be one of the biggest geopolitical powers in the XXI century. Some of the Russian geopoliticians declare that the world and Russian history shows the benefits of a big state territories (See, С.Лавров, *Геополитическое пространство России: мифы и реальность*, *Известия Русского Географического Общества*, No 3, 1997. At the same time other researchers, as for example В.Родоман suggest that the big size of Russia is a purpose of its isolation (See: Б.Родоман, *География и судьбы России, Знание - Сила*, 1993, март). Technocratic explanations in this case do not work. It is widely known that from

the point of view of energetics, the smaller states have more chances for the easier development. But at the same time geographical situation, for example, also influences a state development: states from the far North and from the „far” south have to overcome certain difficulties.

<sup>11</sup> The big discussion in the Russian geopolitical circles was initiated by the book of prof Zbigniew Brzeziński „Geostrategy for EuroAsia”, where the author suppose that in the XXI century Russia will be divided into three independent states: European Russia, Siberian Republic and the Republic of the Far East. According to Z.Brzeziński these states will form a konfederation.

<sup>12</sup> According to the Russian ultra-nationalists, closely linked in this case with the communist ideology, the territory of the Russian state is the place where Euro-Asian super ethnos was formed, this is the space of the long coexistence and cooperation of the forest and step ethnoses where a diversification of a landscapes was one of the purposes of development. Therefore, now nationalists are declaring the loss of the common economic, military, informational, ecologic etc. space. At the same time among the many of Russian politicians and in some social stratas there is a tendency towards desintegration and regionalization of Russia. There are some prognoses, made on the base of the market reforms in Russia, that in the nearest future Russia will divide into several smaller, democratic, highly developed states (See: Виктор Гущин, Мы устали страдать за других, Век, Москва, 10.04.1997). There are many opponents of the interational (or pseudo-integrational in their opinion) processes on the post-Soviet space. For example, J.Gaidar, G.Javlinski, B.Berezovski, A.Chubais etc. were against the Russian-Belorussian Union. Against this Union were also Presidents of Ukraine and Kazakhstan. As a negative result of this Union may be appreciated the growth of the popularity of President Lukashenko among the Russian population. The number of his adherent grew from 17% to 34%. (See: Андрей Угланов, Договор: Россия - Беларусь, Аргументы и Факты, Москва No 14, April 1997)

<sup>13</sup> In June 1996 the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Evgeny Primakov in his referate in the Institute of International Affairs in Moscow defined the main aims of the Russian foreign policy. He underlined that the prioritic task of his Ministry is to create a conditions to keep the Russian territorial entity and to strengthen the integrational processes on the post-Soviet space.

<sup>14</sup> Алан Касаев, Четвертый перенос, „Независимая Газета”, 28 January 1997

<sup>15</sup> Аркадий Мошес, Не свое временное государство, „Московские Новости”, 26.01.1997

<sup>16</sup> Александр Иметашвили, Прямая автосрада соединит Грозный и Тбилиси, „Московский Комсомолец”, 07.06.1997

<sup>17</sup> „Навины”, Минск, 18.03.1998

<sup>18</sup> „Аргументы и Факты”, Москва, No 22, May 1998.

<sup>19</sup> During the last years many ethnic conflicts research center emerged in the West and in the East. Among them there are for example The Center for Ethno-political Researches and the Center for Geopolitical Researches in Moscow, or the similar centers in London and New York. The number of international conferencies about the ethnic conflicts is growing rapidly.

The biggest data bases in this field possess the researchers from the former Soviet Union, but the number of these researchers is too little (at the beginning of 1990s there was only about 1000 ethnologists in the whole USSR, at the same time 2500 in Norway, or more than 12000 in the USA). Because there is a very big need in such a specialists in the ethnic field, everybody declares him- or herself a specialist. There are a plenty of articles in the post-Soviet press signed by a „politologs”. But it is widely known that many of them are graduated wform the newly created departments of political sciences at the post-Soviet universities. In reality, these department are only slightly reformed departments of the yistory of the Communist party. So, the level of these „specilaists” is not very high.

At the same time there is a problem with the graduated from the departments of ethnography at the former-Soviet Universities. It is because of the lack of the ethnic theory in the post-Soviet science. Many of the researchers are still basing their works on the famous Stalin-Lenin’s thesis: tribe-ethnos-nation, which was widened by Akademician J.Bromley by a fourth stage - „socialistic nation”. There were only some researchers who were in the opposition to the official Soviet ethnic theories, among them was Lew Gumilew, and some other representatives of the Leningrad-Petersburg school.

<sup>20</sup> There is a discussion about the number of existing ethnic conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union, as well as about the prognoses of the number of the conflicts. At the end of 1980s American researchers estimated that there was a possibility of about 40 territorial conflicts in the USSR. In the beginning of 1991 the Moscow Center for Political Geography researches indicated 76 ethnic and territorial conflicts, in the beginning of 1992 the number grew up to 164. One of the prognoses of the number of the ethnciconflicts in the former USSR was prepared by the experts of the Headquarter of the Ameican Army in the Western Europe. According to that prognoses there was a possibility of 12 big regional wars: tree of them on the European territory of the USSR, 5 - on the Caucasus, and 4 - in the Central Asia. The estimates of the human casualties in the case of

explosion of the mentioned wars were the following: in the war between Russia and Ukraine it have to be killed about 200 000 soldiers, 40 million of civills will die from the starvation, and 3 million from the diseases. According to the same prognoses in the war between Moldova and Ukraine in have to be killed 67000 soldiers, and 2,8 million of people have to become refugees. All the 12 wars together according to estimates have to bring more than 500000 killed soldiers, 20 million of refugees, and 4 million of civil died from the diseases.

<sup>21</sup> Сколько стоит Россия, „Сегодня” 28.05.1998

<sup>22</sup> Василий Сафрончук, Потерявши голову, по волосам не плачут, „Советская Россия”, 17.01.1998

<sup>23</sup> As a result of the ethnic conflicts with a big participation of Russia in them, Georgia lost the control over Abkhazia, Azerbaijan lost the control over Mountain Karbakh, Moldova lost Over-Dniest Republic.

<sup>24</sup> We can see a strong feeling of common mutual fate of the East-Central Europe states for example in the creation of the Wyshegrad Groupe after the collapse of the communist system. This regional agreement is signed by: Hungary, Czech Republik and Poland. Although commonly believed that this agreement was signed only to help these countries enter NATO and EU, it has to be underlined that the roots of the agreement are hidden deeply in the common history of the peoples of the region, which began from the baptism of Poland received from Czech; through Polish-Czech and Polish-Hungarian dynastic connections in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, up to the XXth century, especially the last half-century of the communist regimes and fight for freedom.

<sup>25</sup> In the XVIth century Latvia and Estonia, which were under the strong German influence, were baptised into protestantism and till now the majority of believers in these countries belong to that religion, but it did not matter much in the cultural sense as the territories remained in the circle of western Christianity and Roman culture.

<sup>26</sup> When it became widely known that Poland had begun the negotiations about entering the EU, a lot of Poles, especially the inhabitants of the western regions of Poland which were included into Poland after 1945, - numerously went to notarial offices to put in order their real estates records. This apparent curiosity shows how deeply and sincerely Poles believe into the efficient functioning and European respect for the property rights. Poles who came to the notarial offices were convinced that if they had their property records in order no German or French man would be able to take their property from them because they are bound by the same respect for the right of the private property.

<sup>27</sup> Zachar Szybieka, Belarus History, „Litaratura i Mastactva”, Minsk, 1994.

<sup>28</sup> The research of the public opinion which was done by the EU Commission together with the public opinion centers in the states of East-Central Europe. The results of the researches were published also in Poland: Agnieszka Kubik, Smutna Europa - Eurobarometr o państwach postkomunistycznych, in: „Gazeta Wyborcza” of the 1st of March 1994.

<sup>29</sup> As social researches show the biggest difficulty for the post-soviet societies is to come over the passive attitude which was created by the communist regimes. A person who lived under a totalitarian system had no influence on quality of the social and economic life. The state gave a person work, dwelling, school. A person who lived in a Soviet system had to accept the status quo and to keep silent. From generation to generation a Soviet man lost initiative - the most important problems were solved by the state. It was not enough, but it was accepted. The collapse of communism and of a „welfare” state caused that the post-Soviet societies without an preparation and absolutely helpless were put in front of new realities.

<sup>30</sup> The religious revival on the western territories of Belarus and Ukraine is characteristic to all religions, which existed there before the Second World War: Orthodox, Catholic, Greek-Catholic, Jews, Muslims etc. See: S. Matiunin, Granica pomiędzy Kościołem Katolickim a Cerkwią Prawosławną na terenie współczesnej Białorusi w wieku XX, in: *Katolicyzm w Rosji i Prawosławie w Polsce (XI-XXw.)*, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>31</sup> D. Oreszkin, Między Wostokom i Zapadom, in: „dialog”, Nr6 Moscow, 1991.

<sup>32</sup> Some time ago in the Polish television was emitted a documental film, in which an ordinary Polish farmer told a story of how during the Second World War he, as a soldier of Home Army, executed an order from London to get some details of the missiles V1 and V2 and to send them to London. When the parts were ready the plane flought from London and took them. When that farmer described in film those events such close contacts with London were normal for him. London in mind of a farmer from a countryside in Belarus or in Ukraine lies in a completely unknown civilisation. Even a travel to Poland is normally a journey to a foreign world. At the same time during the years of the Soviet Empire the feeling and consciousness of a one „our” big country was created. Once I was a witness of how women after the crossing the Bug-river from west to east were happy to be at home again. As it became clear in a moment, next morning they had to take a plane from Moscow to Novosibirsk, there only after three hours of waiting in Novosibirsk on a plane to Habarovsk. Without any excitement they were planning to prepare dinner for their families next evening, even not paying attention to a fact that there are ten thousand kilometers from their real home.

<sup>33</sup> My i Europa, „Nowa Ukraina”, Sumy 1993, Nr 2(461). It will be a mistake to think that this is an opinion of Europe represented only by Ukrainians. Just the same opinion we can meet in press all over the former Soviet Union. See: W. Żyrynowskij, Krach czwórtogo Internacjonału, in: „Izwestia” 29th of August 1993; W. Żyrynowskij, Ruskie idut, in: „Moskowskaja Prawda” 11th September 1993; E. Limonov, Izwraczenija nacjonalizma, in: „Moskowskaja Prawda” 4th September 1993; J. Pokrowskij, Prizrak nacjonalizma, in: „Niżgorodskaja Prawda” 19th July 1993; S. Kliszina, Ruskaja ideja kak towar polityczeskoj spekulacji, in: „Izwestia” 18th September 1993.]

<sup>34</sup> Russia without any results is trying to organize work of the so called „group four” - the customs union of four post-Soviet republics: Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kirghizstan. At the time when Russia makes an attempt to save CIS on the regional level the regional processes of integration are going. See: Гаяз Алимов, Центральная Азия России ждать не будет, „Известия” 28.03.1998

<sup>35</sup> It can be said from the Russian point of view that the „eastern gate” doesn’t work as well as Russia wants. I suppose that Russian politicians are conscious that there are no real threats to Russia, may be except of China. That is why in the Russian geopolitical conceptions China takes so much place (it was several times underlined by the Minister of foreign Affairs Evgeny Primakov) and can be seen from the numerous actual press publications for example about the delimitation of the Russian-Chinese border.

<sup>36</sup> А. Кокошин, Армия и политика, Москва, 1995, с.144; Россия в поисках стратегии безопасности, Москва 1996; Концепция национальной безопасности России в 1995 году, Москва, 1995.

<sup>37</sup> Николай Кучин, Маршал реформирует Армию, „Новое Время”, Москва, 13.12.1997

<sup>38</sup> Елена Семенова, Калининград не станет Кенигсбергом, „Век”, Москва, 11-27.06.1997

<sup>39</sup> Ukraine declared that is going to get rid of the nuclear missiles. It is planned to do during the next seven years - to transport the missiles to Russia and liquidate them there.

<sup>40</sup> Probably the Russian Duma will not ratificate the Russian-Ukrainian Agreement about the division of the Black Sea fleet. See: В. Георгиев, Завершились учения национальной гвардии Украины, „Независимая Газета”, 22.02.1998